

A

# Culture Plan

for the

Sheffield  
Culture  
Consortium

2017-2022



*A Dementia Friendly  
Tea Dance at Sheffield Theatres.  
**Photo:** Chris Saunders*

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# Culture in Sheffield

*“Sheffield is a city of great spaces – buildings, squares and public places – where anything can happen.” ‘A City with Edge’ DHA*

Sheffield is the third largest English district by population but a third of it lies within a National Park and the urban core is fringed by 250 woods, parks and gardens. It is a place with space to think, create and innovate; where boundaries between field and factory and work and leisure merge and where high quality, small scale creativity and culture is engrained in the character of the people.

From the proliferation of the *Little Mesters* - the self-employed cutlers and tool makers who formed the early backbone of Sheffield’s steel industry - to their inheritors, the artists, musicians, entrepreneurs, and pioneers in advanced manufacturing, Sheffield is a city of makers. They have made Sheffield the edgy, vibrant city it is today and defined the unique character which is the starting point for transforming the city’s fortunes for ever. Historically we are a place of industry, not commerce, and our lack of ingrained sales patter and showy shop windows may be why we sometimes operate below the national and international radar.






*Textile sculptor  
Seiko Kinoshita.*

**Photo:** *Nigel Barker for  
Our Favourite Places*

Sheffield's cultural institutions have become beacons for audiences across the region and beyond. Many buildings and open spaces were gifted by philanthropists in the late 19th and early 20th century, including the Graves Gallery/Central Library and Weston Park Museum. The City Hall was developed by the local authority in the 1920s, followed by the Crucible Theatre in the 1970s and the Kelham Island Industrial Museum and the Showroom cinema in the 1980s. These corner stones of our city's cultural offer are now managed by trusts, Sheffield Theatres Trust, Museums Sheffield, Sheffield City Plus and Sheffield Media and Exhibition Centre, who have improved and expanded their building portfolio with significant capital investment.

With over 61,000 students, the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University play a growing and essential part in the cultural life of our city. The Festival of the Mind and Catalyst Festival of Creativity engage with large audiences and the universities have, together, taken over the Off the Shelf festival from the local authority. A programme of cultural research is being led by the University of Sheffield, leading to reports on Art, Beer, Music and Creative & Digital, and a new art school has been opened by Sheffield Hallam University in a long-neglected historic building.

The beating heart of Sheffield culture is a fiercely independent, authentic offer from smaller organisations, many of whom have big plans for growth. Site Gallery, S1 Artspace, Theatre Delicatessen, CADS and Yorkshire Artspace are all embarking on new capital projects.



*Docfest's Free Screen  
on Tudor Square.*

*Photo: Ines Alves*

# 10 Sheffield

1. The award-winning **Sheffield Theatres** offers the largest theatre complex outside of London - the Crucible, Lyceum and Studio theatres present over 700 performances playing to over 400,000 people annually.
2. Museums Sheffield's **Millennium Galleries** is the most visited free attraction in the North of England and a custodian of a collection of 13,000 items of metalwork awarded Designated Status in 1999 in recognition of its outstanding national and historical significance.
3. The **Showroom** is one of Europe's largest independent cinemas, home to Sheffield's annual, internationally acclaimed documentary festival **Sheffield Doc/Fest**.
4. Sheffield has 19 studio groups providing 362 artists with studios, 50 small independent arts organisations, 3 major art galleries and 23 smaller galleries.
5. Sheffield has a strong reputation for **street art** with internationally acclaimed artists such as Kid Acne, Faunagraphic, Rocket01 and Phlegm having emerged from our city where over 200 pieces of notable wall work have now been mapped.



# culture facts

6. In Sheffield there are over **460 bands and artists**, 65 recording studios, 69 venues that host live music and 24 recording labels, over the years producing the Arctic Monkeys, Pulp, Heaven 17, Human League, ABC, Babybird, Def Leppard, Richard Hawley, Moloko, Reverend & the Makers, Toddla T and the Long Blondes.
7. Sheffield's annual **Tramlines** festival has grown over 8 years to become the UK's biggest inner-city music festival attracting 100,000+ festival goers over 3 days.
8. From September-June each year, the **Sheffield International Concert Season** attracts some of the world's finest soloists, most revered orchestras and highly regarded conductors to the city.
9. Sheffield is home to **Music in the Round** the largest promoter of chamber music outside London and their resident ensemble of eleven internationally renowned musicians, Ensemble 360.
10. Sheffield has a **year-long festival season** including Doc/Fest, Art Sheffield, Sheffield Design Week, Sensoria, Festival of the Mind, Off the Shelf, Tramlines, Art in the Gardens, Open Up Sheffield, Children's Media Conference, Last Laugh Comedy Festival and Sheffield International Concert Season.

*Folk Forest at Endcliffe Park. Part of Tramlines music festival.  
Photo: Tramlines Festival*





# Sheffield Culture Consortium

*“The Sheffield Culture Consortium is one of the best things to happen to Sheffield in decades. The consortium works hard together to make things happen in the city, things that wouldn’t otherwise happen, things that make me proud.”*

**John Hamshere, CEO of Sheffield Industrial Museums, 1995-2017**

Sheffield Culture Consortium was founded in 2012 as an alternative to a top-down Director of Culture post, to lead on the city’s strategic cultural direction. Modelled on LARC in Liverpool, the consortium was founded by the CEOs of Sheffield’s building-based cultural organisations, including galleries, museums, theatres, music venues, independent cinemas and studios, and both the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University.

The consortium is not a representative body, but aims to provide strategic leadership for the sector in Sheffield. Since January 2014, additional members have been invited to join to ensure that artform voices are heard. The consortium is supported by a 0.5 post, funded by Sheffield City Council.

We meet monthly as a consortium and hear from inspirational speakers from the wider cultural sector as well as sharing developments within our own organisations and the strategic networks that we are part of locally and nationally. Meetings support and enable new collaborations between members, working together rather than alone or acting in competition.

When opportunities arise to bid for funding to further our aims, a bid making sub-group is brought together, often including partners from outside the consortium and usually supported with resources from one or more consortium members. To date we have raised over £2m of additional funding for cultural projects in Sheffield.

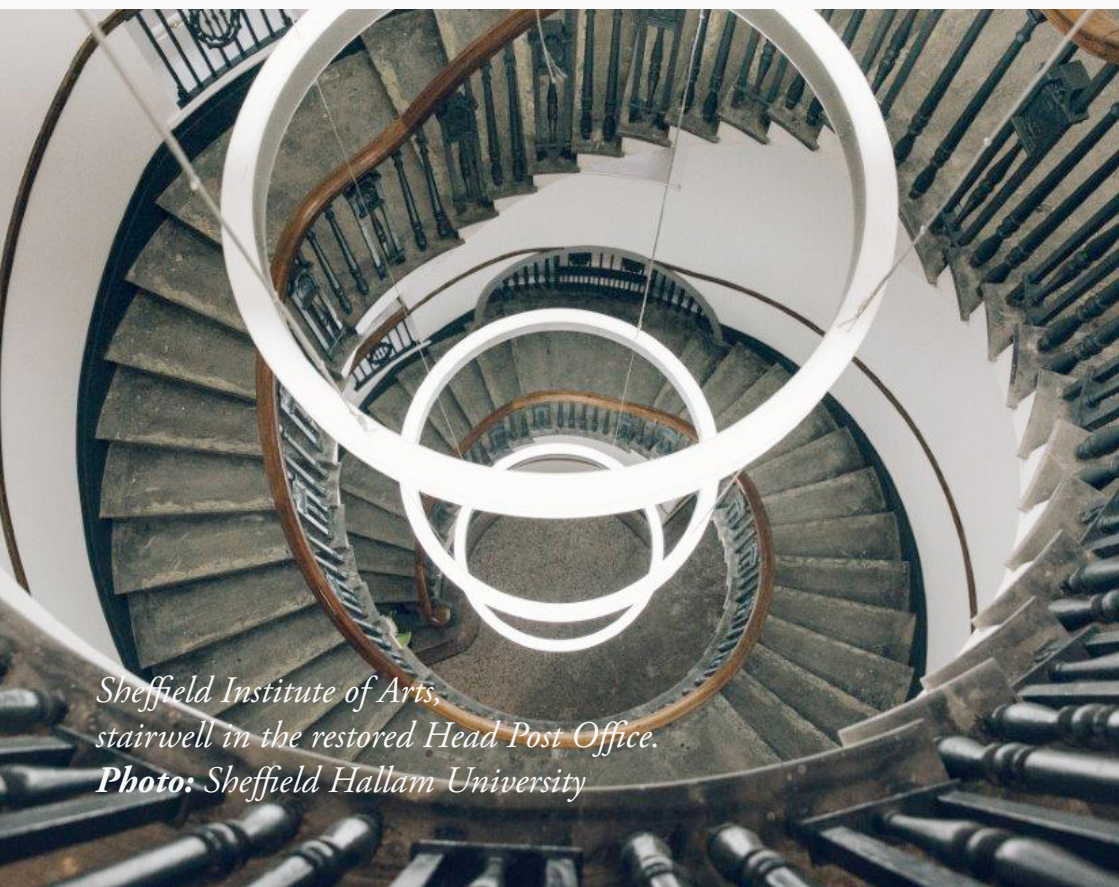
Sheffield Culture Consortium also supports the creation and development of new organisations and networks to take forward strategic initiatives, such as the SNAP network, the Festival Network and the Sheffield Creative Guild.

The consortium operates a rolling chair programme and to date has been chaired by; Laura Sillars, Site Gallery; Kim Streets, Museums Sheffield; Dan Bates, Sheffield Theatres; Professor Vanessa Toulmin, University of Sheffield; Kate Dore, Yorkshire Artspace and Professor Sally Wade, Sheffield Hallam University.

# Members

The Sheffield Culture Consortium includes the following members:

*Museums Sheffield / Sheffield Theatres Trust / Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust / Showroom-Workstation / Site Gallery / Yorkshire Artspace / Sheffield International Venues / Sheffield Music Hub / Sheffield Creative Guild / Sheffield Cultural Education Partnership SNAP / Dance Network Sheffield / DocFest / University of Sheffield / Sheffield Hallam University / Sheffield City Council*



*Sheffield Institute of Arts,  
stairwell in the restored Head Post Office.  
Photo: Sheffield Hallam University*

*Tool explosion in the Made in Sheffield exhibition.*  
**Photo:** Museums Sheffield





*Furniture designer Finbarr Lucas.  
Photo: Nigel Barker for  
Our Favourite Places*



*Music in the Round schools concert,  
organised in partnership with  
Sheffield Music Hub.  
Photo: Andy Brown*

# Our Founding Aims

The consortium's founding aims were developed through a series of public workshops held in 2012/13. They are;

- ◆ To enable people to develop the skills needed to **lead, administer and sustain the future development** of the cultural sector.
- ◆ To influence **policy and decision making** to establish a clear understanding of the role that cultural organisations can play in social and economic renewal.
- ◆ To strengthen the **capacity of cultural organisations** and **gain new investment** for arts and culture to deliver against our aims.
- ◆ To work with tourism and other agencies to **give visitors and local people the best possible experience** when they take part in the cultural life of the city and achieve additional **national and international media profile** for the city.

# Our Achievements So Far

As a result, dynamic new partnerships have formed across the cultural sector, the city council, higher education and the private sector, inspired by moments of incredible opportunity. A few highlights;

**Cultural Destinations 1 & 2** / This Arts Council funded project highlights Sheffield's cultural offer with reasons to visit and linger. CD2 markets the city to targeted audiences in the UK and Europe through content for hotels, festivals promotion and online guides including further development of Our Favourite Places.

**Year of Making** / In 2016 Sheffield celebrated a Year of Making, showcasing all forms of making in the city and region as our heritage and our future. Led by the University of Sheffield and Museums Sheffield this has now developed into #cityofmakers

**Making Ways** / An ambitious three-year Arts Council Ambition for Excellence project that demonstrates, celebrates and develops exceptional contemporary visual art produced in Sheffield 2016-2019.

**Sheffield Creative Guild** / A creative cooperative packed with members of all persuasions and positions, actively talking, working, sharing and seeking other creative people, skills, events and opportunities. Launched in 2016, the Guild has grown to over 300 members, organised more than 25 events and traded nearly 250 hours of time banking.

**SNAP** (Sheffield Network for Arts and cultural Practitioners) / SNAP is a network for arts and cultural providers who work with children and young people – both for organisations and individual practitioners. This network is designed to support and raise the profile of those who provide quality creative opportunities for children and young people to engage with arts and culture in Sheffield.

**Great Exhibition of the North** / Sheffield was in the final four to stage this exhibition in 2018. Although Newcastle/Gateshead were ultimately successful, the consortium's bid showed that Sheffield has the ambition to play on a national and international stage.



*Krebs Festival the University of Sheffield.  
Photo: Andy Brown*



SNUFF MILL LANE II  
PRIVATE ROAD



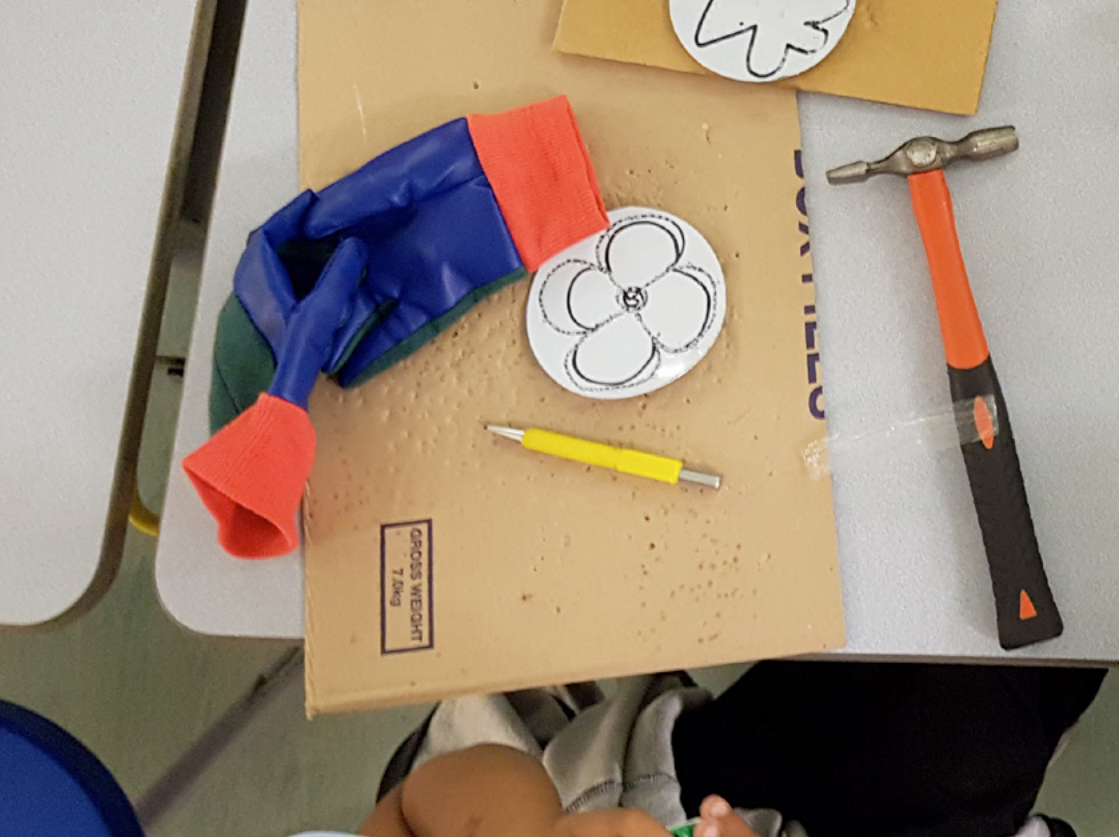


*Feature Walls curated by B&B Gallery.*

*Artist: Phlegm*

*Photo: Ian Cox*





# Our Culture Plan

Sheffield Culture Consortium has worked together to develop this culture plan to guide our own strategic development over the next five years. It sets out our vision, our ambitions and the cross cutting themes that are important to us. The action plan shows how and when we aim to achieve our ambitions. Our culture plan will guide our thinking and our actions, and will be updated annually.

While this plan is intended to benefit the city, it is a plan for the consortium, endorsed by its members, and makes no claim to be the equivalent of a local authority culture strategy. Sheffield City Council has supported its creation, but it is an independent document.

*Sculptor Gillian Brent's Year of Making Residency at Manor Lodge school. Photo: Yorkshire Artspace*



## Our Vision

To celebrate the ingenuity and energy of our creative people, and use this story to make Sheffield a magnet city for a new generation of wealth creators. To give every one of our children and young people an inspiring cultural education, and to harness the power of creativity to support the wellbeing of the people of Sheffield.

# Our Four Ambitions



## 1. Ambition for people

Without audiences, there is no culture. We want our audiences to be engaged and inspired, to be local, to be visitors, to happen upon creativity, to book months in advance, to look on in wonder, to roll up their sleeves and take part.



## 2. Ambition for creative practitioners

Sheffield is a City of Makers, and to thrive they need clear career paths, routes to market and new voices in the city.



## 3. Ambition for infrastructure

Our cultural offer is anchored by world-class facilities and venues, but there are relatively few large cultural organisations for a city the size of Sheffield.

The ability of the consortium to deliver this culture plan will be dependent on changes to the way we manage and deliver projects, which is almost entirely dependent on consortium partners' time and their organisation's resources.



## 4. Ambition for influence

Working together as a consortium we have developed projects and secured culture funding for the city that we could not have done as individual organisations.

With this track record the time is right to extend our ambition and reach to working effectively with non-culture partners in the city and extending our impact regionally, nationally and internationally.

*Ceramicist Penny Withers.*

***Photo:*** *Nigel Barker for Our Favourite Places*



# Our Seven Goals

In developing this culture plan, seven themes emerged that cut across all four of our ambitions. These themes are important to all of us and are the goals for every aspect of our proposed development.

*An Open Ground.*

**Artists:** Peter Martin,

Joanne Coates, Dust

**Photo:** Will Roberts for  
*Our Favourite Places*



## **1. Enhancing wellbeing**

Art and culture enhance people's sense of wellbeing, offering the opportunity to develop skills, confidence and learning. Our creative practitioners are supported as the key to enhancing wellbeing. We work with partners to advocate for improved access to culture and remove barriers to participation.

## **2. Championing diversity**

Our cultural provision is relevant to diverse audiences and participants, and supports celebration and cohesion. Diversity is celebrated among our creative practitioners and we have appropriate ways of working and facilities to support this.

## **3. Inspiring children and young people**

Every child and young person receives an inspiring cultural education and participates in cultural activity. Creative practitioners are supported to work with children and young people as part of their portfolio careers. We have appropriate structures and facilities for cultural education and experiences and celebrate the cultural achievements of our children and young people.

## **4. Developing leadership**

We nurture the next generation of cultural leaders and support leadership development among our creative practitioners. We develop as a consortium to become better resourced, supporting the development of consortium members as cultural leaders on a local and national stage.

## **5. Celebrating Festival City**

Many of our ambitions for audiences are achieved through our support for Sheffield's festivals. Sheffield is festival ready, and even more festival friendly, with better cross-festival mentoring and flexible outdoor public spaces for events, to support established and emerging festival programmes.


## **6. Forging Connections**

Good communication lies at the heart of everything we do. We make the most of online and print communications as well as networking and strategic partnerships.

## **7. Promoting cultural visibility**

Our cultural activity is visible and widely celebrated, both by audiences and influencers, locally, nationally and internationally. Sheffield 'Looks Good on the Dance Floor', celebrating the vibrancy of our creative talent.

# Our Culture Action Plan

A young man with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue jacket over a patterned t-shirt, is sitting on a wooden bench in a workshop. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. To his left is a large wooden wheel with a cross-shaped frame. The background is a stone wall.

*“I Made This” - a poem by Chris Bush commissioned for Sheffield’s Year of Making.*

*Photo: Will Roberts*

## **We will ensure the resourcing of the consortium is fit for purpose with sufficient capacity to deliver the Culture Plan.**

In 2018, the consortium will meet for workshop sessions to look at how we resource bid writing, financial and programme management, marketing and promotion. By July 2018 we will agree conclusions and funding options.

## **We will work to improve the visibility of the consortium through:**

- ◇ Endorsement of this plan by consortium member boards and strategic partners in November/December 2017
- ◇ An annual public event
- ◇ Maintaining an engaging and current website
- ◇ Encouraging consortium members’ use of our branding

## **We will demonstrate the impact and reach of culture by:**

- ◇ Mapping members’ current audience reach and creating an influence map of consortium members’ trustees and directors
- ◇ Capturing and disseminating the voices of people who have been drawn to Sheffield by its culture and quality of life



**We will engage more effectively with partners, agencies, funders and stakeholders, advocating for culture as a tool for regeneration, wellbeing and economic development by:**

- ◇ Mapping consortium members' current areas of strategic engagement and influence
- ◇ Reviewing members' representation to maximise impact and reduce duplication
- ◇ Taking opportunities to advocate for culture, and the consortium, at local, national and international events
- ◇ Engaging with public realm projects and regeneration which support the cultural development of our city, as individual consortium members (City of Ideas, Castlegate Partnership) and through our network of influence
- ◇ Supporting the development of new cultural facilities to meet proven need through consortium briefings, leading to supportive relationships and strategic advocacy
- ◇ Promoting the re-use of heritage buildings, including meanwhile-use, through networked city strategies and partnership representation

**We will form a Wellbeing sub group tasked with:**

- ◇ Using the All Party Parliamentary Group report on Creative Health to advocate for culture in the city
- ◇ Working with Adult Social Care on how cultural organisations can support wellbeing through social prescribing
- ◇ Advocating for improved access to culture for people who may experience barriers
- ◇ Supporting public art projects in our outdoor city that encourage physical activity
- ◇ Making links with the Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre to champion the positive effects of culture

**We will raise awareness of our cultural offer locally, and promote Sheffield as a Magnet City nationally and internationally by:**

- ◇ Reaching a wider audience through our funded programmes, such as **Cultural Destinations** and **Making Ways** events and **Our Favourite Places** (website, Cultural Calendar, Culture Map)
- ◇ Reaching a wider audience through strategic partnerships, including our work with the Sheffield Brand Partnership, to ensure that festivals are used as core city marketing

- ◇ Developing a strong and imaginative on-street presence for the city's cultural offer
- ◇ Promoting and developing the city's public art offer in partnership with the Public Art Officer to celebrate existing public art through interpretation, digital and print trails
- ◇ Exploring a public art panel to champion new public art projects
- ◇ Supporting the development of virtual and printed culture, heritage and street art trails, maps and guides to celebrate the city's creative practitioners past and present
- ◇ Using the Welcome to Yorkshire and other venue-based print distribution to promote the city's cultural offer locally and regionally
- ◇ Creating bespoke activity for opinion-formers and national media through **Cultural Destinations**, the **Festivals Network** and **Making Ways**
- ◇ Using the consortium website to promote and advocate for culture in the city

**We will use our funded programmes to support creative practitioners by:**

- ◇ Supporting and celebrating later-career, as well as early career, practitioners through **Making Ways**
- ◇ Offering Continuing Professional Development for individuals and organisations through **Making Ways**
- ◇ Advocating for the inclusion of local creative practitioners in festival programmes through **Cultural Destinations**
- ◇ Creating opportunities for Sheffield's creatives to be given greater national prominence through **Making Ways**, **Cultural Destinations** and the **City of Makers** brand
- ◇ Supporting volunteering, work experience, apprenticeships and routes to employment through the Sheffield Hallam FABS scheme (**Making Ways**)

**We will use our funded programmes to reflect the diversity of our city by:**

- ◇ Aiming to represent diversity of practice and culture in the **Making Ways** steering group and artists panel
- ◇ Programming in unusual, community and pop-up venues to bring culture to people across the city through **Making Ways** and **Cultural Destinations**
- ◇ Considering transport implications of our cultural offer, for local people and visitors, based on audience mapping data
- ◇ Supporting **Our Favourite Places** in promoting a diverse cultural offer through **Cultural Destinations**

## **We will use our funded programmes to support the growth of our festivals by:**

- ◇ Convening twice-yearly joint festivals mentoring sessions
- ◇ Supporting the **Community Festivals Network** to meet annually
- ◇ Supporting all our festivals to continue programming and marketing with national/international as well as local audiences in mind
- ◇ Inviting practitioners to share ideas for new festivals at consortium meetings

## **We will share good practice and resources, focussing on:**

- ◇ Developing cultural programming that reflects the diversity of the city
- ◇ Programming that celebrates age and the voices of older people
- ◇ Programming for people with dementia
- ◇ Diversity in selection processes, including guest selectors
- ◇ Providing successful apprenticeships

## **We will work closely with three key strategic partners**

The Sheffield Culture Consortium has supported the development of **SNAP** and **Sheffield Creative Guild** to support and celebrate our creative practitioners. We have also been closely involved in the development of the new **Sheffield Creative Education Partnership (S-CEP)** which makes achievable the consortium's long-standing aim to bring culture back to the curriculum for every child in our city. We will:

- ◇ Support the **S-CEP** Board to develop effective governance, including Sheffield Culture Consortium representation on the **S-CEP** Board and vice versa and to champion the positive effects of cultural education
- ◇ Embed a learning element for children and young people as part of cultural and economic projects and plans through **S-CEP** and partners.
- ◇ Support the provision of professional development for creative practitioners who want to work with children and young people through **SNAP**
- ◇ Help develop the **SNAP** steering group leadership skills through annual professional development days
- ◇ Support city-wide volunteering, work experience, apprenticeships and routes to employment through the **SNAP** 'What's your Culture?' project
- ◇ Develop a mentoring and work shadowing programme with consortium members and the **Creative Guild**
- ◇ Support wellbeing for practitioners through mentoring and networking as part of **Making Ways** and the **Creative Guild**
- ◇ Support the **Creative Guild** and **SNAP** to embrace diversity of practice and culture within their membership

# Glossary

**Arts Council England (ACE)** - The national development agency for the arts in England, providing funding for a range of arts activities.

**Cultural Destinations 2 (CD2)** – an Arts Council-supported project building on the success of CD1, highlighting Sheffield’s cultural offer and giving reasons to visit and linger.

**Magnet City** – term coined by KPMG: Cities are like magnets. A city with a strong cultural offer draws in new residents, visitors and business investment. People, ideas and money ferment in magnet cities, and new ideas help to establish new businesses, social networks and infrastructure. Visitors appear and spend money. Big business is lured in by the buzz, new operations are established and new jobs are created. The city’s economy grows.



*Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust,  
Disabled Access Day 2017.*

*Mark Addy as Bobby Spokes in  
The Nap at Sheffield Theatres.*

*Photo: Mark Douet*



**Making Ways** – ACE-funded project to: provide Continuing Professional Development for Sheffield artists; strengthen routes to market; and raise the profile of the city nationally as a place of artistic excellence.

**Our Favourite Places** – Culture Guide website for Sheffield, run by Eleven Design Studio, with associated publications and city promotion.

**Sheffield Brand Partnership** – collaboration between Sheffield City Council, Sheffield Hallam University, the University of Sheffield and other city partners to develop and promote a city vision.

**Sheffield Cultural Education Partnership (S-CEP)** – ACE has asked art and cultural organisations, educational institutions and local authorities to come together to drive a joined-up art and cultural offer locally, to share resources and bring about a more coherent and visible delivery of cultural education through Cultural Education Partnerships.

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MuseumSheffield



SITE  
GALLERY



*“People ask what the Culture Consortium does - we work together, in partnership, to make ambitious cultural events happen and to leave a lasting legacy. As well as keeping the day job going.”*

**Kate Dore, Chair 2016/17, Sheffield Culture Consortium**

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**More information on Sheffield Culture Consortium can be found on our  
website: [www.sheffieldculture.co.uk](http://www.sheffieldculture.co.uk)**