

FLUX
ROTHERHAM

CREATING
SHARING
CONNECTING

BUSINESS PLAN

2024 - 2026

Flux will enable a thriving arts and cultural scene in Rotherham. Residents will have more access to high quality creative activity, the existing arts offer will be strong and visible and our communities will be the driving force in our cultural strategy.



fluxrotherham.org.uk



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



FLUX VISION

10-YEAR VISION THAT BY 2030...

Rotherham is established as a new cultural democracy, ensuring that everyone has regular and frequent opportunities to experience high quality culture and to explore and express their own creative ambitions, heritage and identity.

FLUX MISSION

Flux will enable a thriving arts and cultural scene in Rotherham. Residents will have more access to high quality creative activity, the existing arts offer will be strong and visible and our communities will be the driving force in our cultural strategy.

FLUX VALUES

- ❑ Community-led and relevant
- ❑ Generous and inclusive
- ❑ Creates positive change
- ❑ Caring

FLUX OVERALL AIMS

- ❑ More Communities Creating Together
- ❑ Raising Aspirations
- ❑ Telling Our Stories

FLUX PROGRAMME STRANDS (TO SUPPORT AIMS):

1. Amazing events
2. Rotherham Wide Creative Programmes
3. Community led Projects
4. Creative Training and Development (inclusive of the Festival Network and Community Associates Development)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FLUX Rotherham is the Creative People and Places (CPP) programme for Rotherham, South Yorkshire.

FLUX
ROTHERHAM

**CREATIVE
AND PEOPLE
PLACES**

Since 2019, it is made possible through significant Arts Council England (ACE) investment to co-create art projects and events with communities across the town, where involvement in the arts is 10% below the national average.

Flux operates from the offices of its lead organisation, Voluntary Action Rotherham, which hosts a small but dynamic team to deliver the ambitious and inclusive aims of this refreshed Business Plan (2024-2026). Flux has a committed consortium of four cultural organisations who are instrumental in Flux's journey to embed cultural democracy as mainstream practice beyond the lifetime of the CPP funding. The members are Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance (ROAR), Grimm & Co, Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC).

Since its inception, FLUX Rotherham has been a creative catalyst for high-quality community engagement and cultural enrichment, offering diverse artistic experiences to residents in its neighbourhood areas, plentiful green spaces and iconic town centre landmarks.

Evaluators attest that the Flux programme has quickly become a cornerstone of Rotherham's cultural landscape, developing in:

“...reach and scope, becoming a key node in Rotherham's growing cultural ecology, building capacity and extending leadership in a high-quality cultural offer that residents take part in and shape, in a variety of ways.”

Hugh Ortega Breton, Evaluator
University of Lancashire (UCLAN)

In the past year alone, FLUX has seen significant participation in its programme, with over 11,000 individuals engaging in local arts and cultural activities, and over 28,000 attendees enjoying flagship events like WOW Rotherham and the Museum of the Moon.



Over 28,000 attendees enjoying flagship events like WOW Rotherham and the Museum of the Moon.



Museum of the Moon, 2023

This vibrant engagement has been made possible through FLUX's commitment to involving local people in the co-creation of its programme enabling meaningful connections and inclusive activities.

“ I have absolutely loved finding my creative side... and reconnecting with people. ”

Threads That Connect Us, Participant

“ It never felt like them and us, always a 'what do you think?' ”

Sue Armstrong, Assistant Curate
Rotherham Minster

To serve the right for Rotherham residents to have everyday access to great arts and culture and to align with Arts Council England's 'Lets Create' 10-year strategy, Flux has a highly ambitious yet attainable 10-year vision:

Rotherham is established as a new cultural democracy, ensuring that everyone has regular and frequent opportunities to experience high quality culture and to explore and express their own creative ambitions, heritage and identity.

This means Rotherham is a place people want to visit and stay, our compendium of destinations will draw visitors to experience our imaginative work, characterised by our reputation for pushing boundaries, engineering excellence, living green as well as by the warmth of our Rotherham welcome.

Co-created with our residents, our cultural activities will be popular, relevant, and much-loved.

Flux's vision aligns perfectly with the cultural strategy's overarching goal for Rotherham 'to enable everyone to get active, get creative and get outdoors, more often' and assures Flux a number of committed, strategic partnerships that understand the benefits of arts and culture and support Flux's socially-engaged approach.

To complement its vision, Flux's mission is:

To enable a thriving arts and cultural scene in Rotherham. Residents will have more access to high quality creative activity, the existing arts offer will be strong and visible and our communities will be the driving force in our cultural strategy.



We know access to high quality creative activity matters to the people of Rotherham because consultation for the Cultural Strategy evidenced that talent is everywhere, but opportunity is not. Additionally, the last two years of Flux's practice informs this refreshed Business Plan which aims to deepen the impact of the Flux programme in local neighbourhoods while expanding its reach through contemporary projects such as Gallery Town and joyous experiments with nature in Green and Growing.

Between 2024-2026, the Flux Programme will focus on 4 core strands of work: Community-led Projects, Amazing Events, Creative Training, and Rotherham-wide Programme, ensuring that all voices are heard, expressed and represented.



With that bold vision to establish Rotherham as a 'cultural democracy by 2030' and on a mission to 'position communities as the driving force' in its cultural strategy. Flux Rotherham will deliver against 3 key aims:

1 More Communities Creating Together

This means more people who (traditionally) do not participate in the arts have many opportunities to get involved. By delivering exciting and accessible activities resonant with resident's lives, Flux will enable greater collaboration and embed solidarity in community life.



2 Raising Aspirations

Through skills development, networking opportunities, and exposure to world class cultural experiences. FLUX will elevate creative expectations and enliven confidence in its resident, artist, young people and partnership forums.



3 Telling Our Stories

Through the leverage of new analogue and digital platforms to expand reach and accessibility, Flux will provide new spaces for residents to tell their stories and present their artworks, fostering a greater sense of pride and belonging in Rotherham.



Specifically, in the extension year of the 2024-2026 Business Plan, Flux will:

 **Engage 11,500 participants**

 **Increase audience numbers for Flux events to 32,300**

 **Engage 80 active volunteers**

By achieving our aims and practising our values of generosity, relevance and inclusion, FLUX's impact will extend beyond excellence in the arts, and contribute to social cohesion, economic growth, and community health and well-being.

Flux is best suited to wend across these diverse outcomes as it is funded to be an action-research project that actively seeks unique and unusual collaboration between non-sector and sector partners.

This permission to experiment can reframe fears around success and failure and by doing things differently can precipitate different results.

FLUX gave us the contacts and 'the way in'. It has been a real, vision maker and a lot of the doubters who weren't sure about doing that sort of thing inside our building have kind of realized that actually, if we really want to engage with the community, the arts is one of the most powerful ways of doing it.

Different results are entirely possible in Rotherham as 2025 will see the world's first Children's Capital of Culture delivered across the Town. This will be a universal and creative endeavour that can inspire a host of communities and civic partners to get involved not only to make a positive difference to resident's lives but also shape the future of Rotherham's cultural identity. Success will look like families from Rotherham engaging with this celebration of children's lives by attending, choosing and actively creating content for the programme.

Flux's vision builds upon the rich heritage of innovation and industry in Rotherham, from steel and coal to glass, pottery, and artisan crafts. But, as the name suggests, while rooted in these proud traditions Flux also seeks to look forward to a time when the borough is known is for its culture, art, creativity and quality of life, and our communities are its bold, confident, and empowered architects.

With ongoing support from ACE, a dynamic consortium and strong partnerships FLUX is poised to continue its transformative journey which is having the best of starts:

It's inclusive of all ages, inspiring and worthwhile... and it's been amazing.

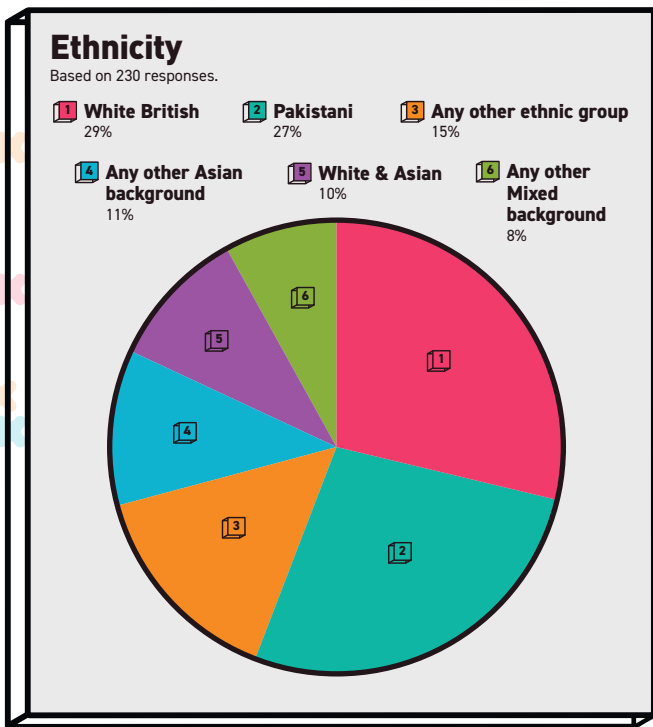


INTRODUCTION

From festivals filled with music, dance and outdoor arts experiences to exhibitions, creative workshops and conversations, since 2021 Rotherham's residents have joined FLUX Rotherham to explore and express their own creative ambitions, heritage and identity.

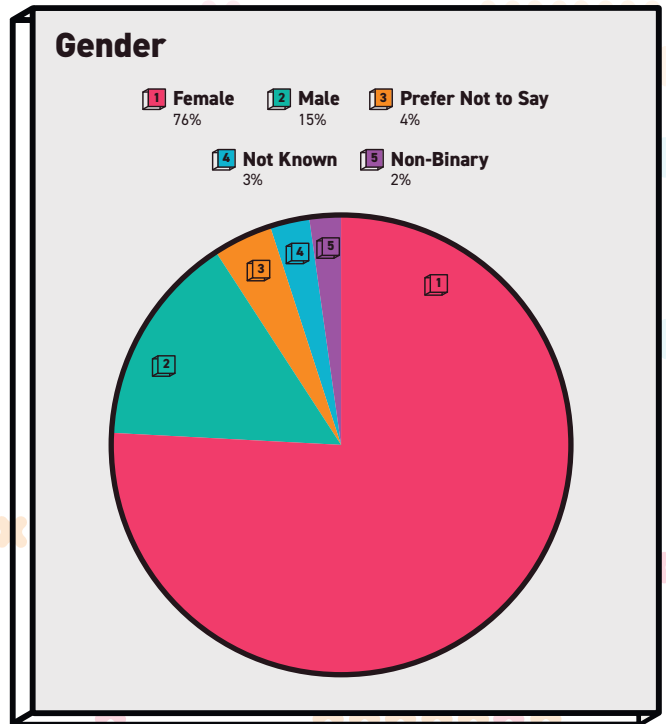
This updated Business Plan capitalises upon the success and learning of the Flux programme so far and sets out refreshed ambitions for 2024-2026 which align with the extension year award from Arts Council England the core funder of FLUX Rotherham. In addition, the next two years of action-research that is scoped within this document will serve as a foundation for the creation of the Flux Phase 2 Business Plan and application (2026-2029).

The Story So Far...



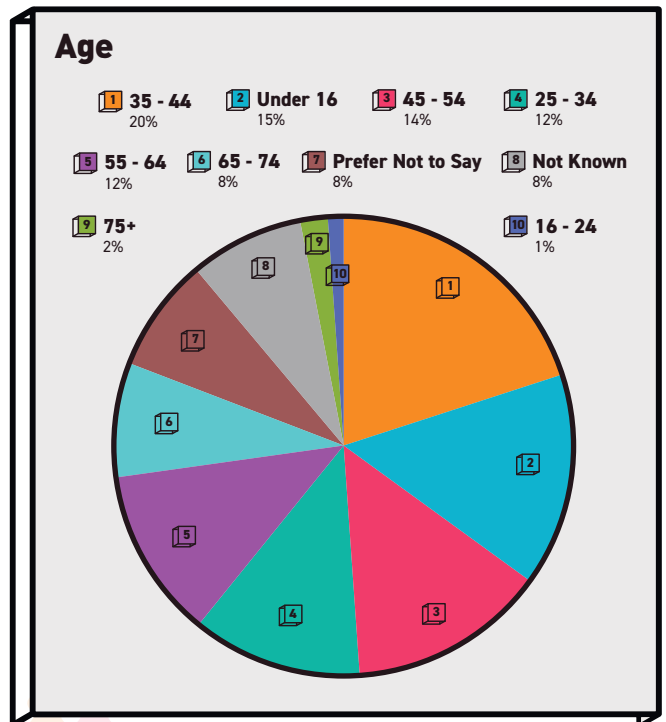
28,094
physical audience members

11,400
participated in activities



78%
haven't taken part in another creative workshop or event in the last year

11%
identified as disabled



In the last twelve months, 11,400 people participated in local arts and cultural activities and there were 28,094 physical audience members for events such as the WOW Rotherham and the Museum of the Moon festivals. In a very short timescale, Flux is...

“ Bringing Rotherham to life. Teenagers writing what they love about how they look. Different cultures coming together. Using local cafés I never have before. Using the beautiful buildings and areas of town. This is all so important to our area; we need more of it. ”

S62 Women Supporting Women group member

Evaluators attest that the Flux programme has been building capacity and opportunity in Rotherham through a high-quality and locally grounded cultural offer that also includes skills development for artists and young people intending to pursue a career in the cultural sector.

Throughout 2023, residents have had many opportunities to take part in and shape projects and events, in a variety of ways. The extension year will build upon this action-research to deepen relationships with existing communities whilst reaching out to others in new areas. This growth will gradually build new audiences and regular cultural participation not just for Flux's work but also for other cultural initiatives taking place in and around Rotherham, for example Children's Capital of Culture in 2025.

From its inception, Flux has been responsive to feedback which it has used to inform programme development. It has supported community commissioning panels, and opportunities for communities of interest to shape programming.

“ This commitment to local engagement has contributed to making events meaningful, inclusive and relevant to participants and attendees. ”

Evaluator, UCLAN Psychosocial Research Unit

An important element of the engagement process has been regular commissioning of Rotherham and Sheffield-based artists who have previously worked successfully with new participants and are invested in Flux's vision to develop cultural democracy (for example, Mandy Keating, Ray Hearne, Vic Leeson, Grace Jandrell, Charu Athsana, Calindy Ballantine, Alastair Flindall, Sughra Begum, Emma Wilson, Karen Hall, Uzma Rani, Amanda Minx Daley and Pif-Paf Theatre).

Embedding creative activities into existing annual events has provided a continuity of presence and profile amongst artists and communities whilst respecting existing community-based cultural offers led by other organisations. This engages people 'where they are at' whilst enhancing and growing the creative aspect of these events.

Another success story of the current Flux programme is its engagement with all of Rotherham's diverse communities, inclusive of age and race. Through targeted projects with community groups and in hyperlocal spaces, trust has been built seeing a cross pollination of attendance from small first interventions, leading to durational projects, through to large scale events. Examples include Pakistani and Yemeni women first accessing a project linked to textiles, pottery and food, relationships built between the women, key workers and FLUX Creative Engagement Officers, with longer term engagement on the WOW Year-round programme through to them attending WE Wonder festival and then independently accessing events such as Maltby Skate Festival in a community previously unknown to them.

Through the Flux programme, the Town's assets are being reframed as places of benefit to the future social wellbeing or social interests of Rotherham's communities. For example, taking the Museum of the Moon to the Minster turns the function of the church 'inside out' and rather than it be perceived solely as a place of worship, it is a space where residents can connect, share experiences and have their assumptions about place challenged.

“It was such an unexpected event and being held in Rotherham Minster it was lovely to see how many people of all ages attending the event who wouldn't necessarily visit the Minster.”

Museum of the Moon, Rotherham Minster



Over the past 12 months, as well as building an authentic, socially-engaged creative practice, Flux has quickly established its agility to be a 'fleet of foot' and 'can do' arts and cultural programme. Flux has made itself invaluable to a broad set of stakeholders by shape-shifting from consultation, to co-curation, to advice and guidance, to co-production and promotion.

Whilst this can be confusing for an audience when a new initiative is seeking to position itself in a sector or a town, the joined-up nature of Rotherham's cultural offer and the consistent advocacy of the Flux Consortium is enabling the programme to positively (and deliberately) identify itself as a responsive cultural change agent in Rotherham.

Looking Ahead

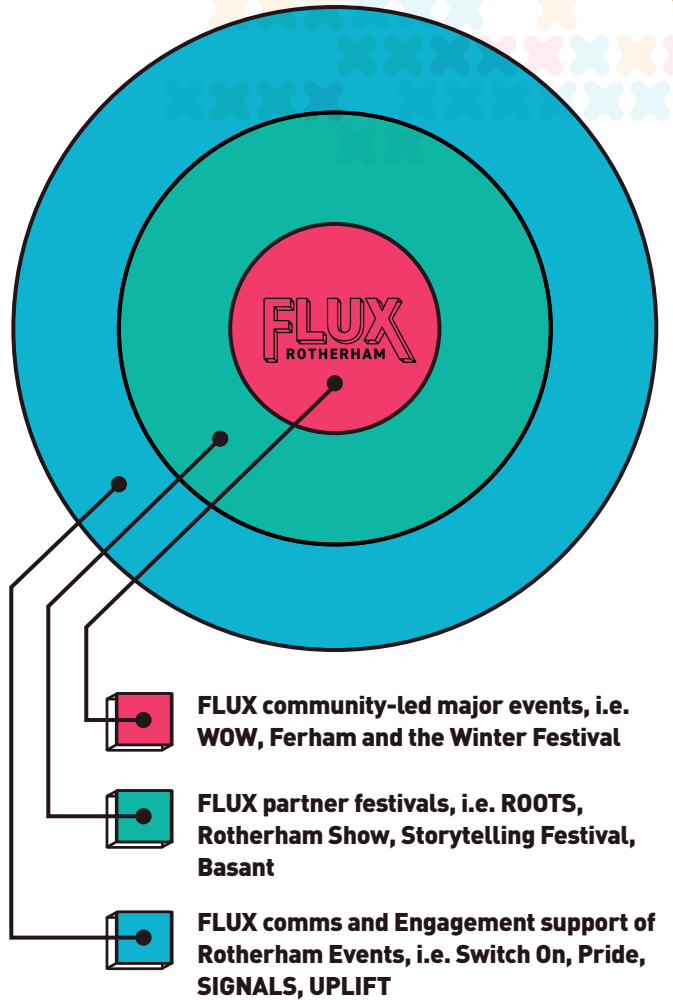
For the duration of this updated Business Plan, the 3 Programme Aims remain the same as those at the programme's inception:

- 1 More Communities Creating Together**
- 2 To Raise Aspirations**
- 3 To Tell Our Stories**

However, objectives and outcomes have been refined in accordance with two years of practical delivery and project success. In this plan, Flux have clearly identified its refreshed priorities in terms of local neighbourhoods and town centre festivals/events.



This means deeper work in Swinton, Maltby, Wath, Canklow, Greasbrough, East Dene/ Eastwood and a three-tier approach to Flux's community involvement in Major Events:



As per the original business plan, as part of the Raising Aspirations aim, Flux will support targeted artist commissions and creative engagement programmes for ROOTS festival, WOW Rotherham - Women of the World Festival, Ferham Festival, We Wonder and the Winter Festival.

In tandem, the development of the Festivals Network will continue to increase capacity of the cultural sector through building knowledge, connections and relationships with artists and creatives. This is part of a 'systems-change' to take the impact of the Arts Council England's CPP investment much wider beyond the directly funded creative activities.



To meet the aims of both the Flux Rotherham and national CPP programmes, the asset-based approach to Raising Aspirations will continue to evolve. As part of Flux's contribution to the Town's events programme, Flux will continue to challenge and support residents and partners to try new and different things. Flux will introduce broader creative and cultural choices (local, national and international) and support different ways of working with communities.

The third strand of the Flux Business Plan will continue to build on Resident stories. From the delivery so far, the Flux team have realised there are unrecognised capacities and assets in every participant community especially within everyday wisdoms, memories, anecdotes and dreams. In the next two years, Flux will uncover more of these assets and provide opportunities for people to share their stories and offer them to a wider audience.



In an exciting development, between Summer 2024 and Spring 2026, Flux will take over Gallery Town. This is the UK's largest open air art gallery which hosts 100+ public art installations in over 60 Town Centre locations.

With Flux at the helm, Gallery Town's calendar will host an array of Professional and Amateur activities for residents and visitors to enjoy. The re-imagined platform will champion the artistic talent that exists within the area and further connect art with audiences that it doesn't usually reach.

With the revised town centre development plan, new sites for Gallery Town could be identified on Forge Island, along the riverbank development and around/within the new markets area.

Collaboratively, Flux will devise Gallery Town as a curated (and evolving) mix of murals, sculpture, wall-based and other playful public artworks.

Also new to the 2024-2026 Business plan is more Green and Growing projects. Residents have been sharing with the Flux team that being in green spaces and nature is one of the best things about life in Rotherham and they want to get outside and get creative in those spaces.

Rotherham boasts a rural landscape covering over 70% of its area, featuring acclaimed destinations like the 80-hectare Clifton Park and picturesque open water sites like Manvers and Thrybergh which can offer unique experiences. The River Don, meanders through the heart of Rotherham, serving as a sanctuary for diverse wildlife including otters, fish and birds. Parks, playing fields, and village greens can serve as vibrant hubs for creative expression, hosting a variety of events ranging from impromptu performances to theatre productions, workshops, and festivals.



At the heart of the Green and Growing Programme FLUX Rotherham will be working with a wide range of community partners and residents and artists to focus on raising awareness of the climate emergency and activating positive change for the environment. Flux will connect into Rotherham's green and blue social prescribing network to join up opportunities around creating and siting arts in outdoor places, encouraging more varied and active use of Rotherham's rich and plentiful green spaces. Allotments, parks and woodland will be the new creative hubs for growing, collecting and telling resident's stories.

The consortium partners will continue to charge Flux to create systemic and behavioural change within the cultural sector, the VCS and beyond, prioritising community voice through a process of user-centred design, co-creation and commissioning. The development of new work, cultural ambition and creative capacity during the tenure of this Business Plan is a Flux priority as Rotherham steps up to host the world's first Children's Capital of Culture in 2025. Whilst this gauntlet will not be without its difficulties, the consortium recognises that Flux provides a responsive and dynamic vehicle to drive through new processes of transformation and devolved leadership between cultural partners. And, with Rotherham's status as a priority place, the ongoing investment put into the town's green parks, it's Grade 1 listed buildings and cultural venues, makes transformation feel exciting and entirely possible.

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Flux Vision

The long-term goal of the Flux programme and the vision we are working towards (by 2030):

Rotherham is established as a new cultural democracy, ensuring that everyone has regular and frequent opportunities to experience high quality culture and to explore and express their own creative ambitions, heritage and identity.

Flux Mission

The purpose of the Flux programme and the desired impact of our work up to 2026 is captured in this mission statement:

Flux will enable a thriving arts and cultural scene in Rotherham. Residents will have more access to high quality creative activity, the existing arts offer will be strong and visible and our communities will be the driving force in our cultural strategy.

Flux Values

To attract artist, partners and employees to the Flux team culture and creative approach we will uphold the following values:

- ☑ **Community-led and relevant**
- ☑ **Generous and inclusive**
- ☑ **Creates positive change**
- ☑ **Caring**

These values will also apply to our consortium practices and our marketing and communications practices.



The Borough is progressive and ambitious and whilst responding creatively and compassionately to support Rotherham people, partners have also undertaken major projects including:

- ❑ **The ongoing restoration of Wentworth Woodhouse, Rotherham's grade 1 listed stately home continues, including the March 2024 opening of the Grade II* listed Camellia House as a daytime cafe and events venue, a 5.1 million pound restoration of the derelict Georgian stables which will in become the main arrival point for Wentworth Woodhouse visitors – and will house a production kitchen, café and events space.**
- ❑ **Grimm and Co have recently opened the incredible Emporium of Stories at the heart of Rotherham's ceremonial central square.**
- ❑ **Rotherham Civic Theatre have completed a £350,000 refurbishment, including a new coffee shop, a new relocated box office, refurbished reception area, new bar and additional smaller performance spaces for alternative shows. They are about to develop The Annexe into a 100 seat development space.**
- ❑ **Funding for a feasibility study has been secured for the development of a new performance venue in the heart of Rotherham.**
- ❑ **The Arc Cinema will open on Forge Island in Summer 2024 - opening Rotherham's first cinema in 30 years.**
- ❑ **Along with the cinema at Forge Island, there will be a new hotel, food and drink outlets and parking. The new leisure facilities will be set within an attractive public square with a new pedestrian bridge connecting the scheme to the wider town centre, creating an exciting mixed-use destination.**
- ❑ **Future High Streets Funding will secure a new library and children's gallery space for the town centre, planned for opening in 2026.**
- ❑ **Clifton Park Museum is now part of the Arts Council National Portfolio.**

In addition, Rotherham is one of Arts Council's Priority Places. One of 54 places identified by Arts Council to effectively increase investment and engagement to create positive cultural change as identified by partners and communities. To complement this the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority have identified Creative and Cultural Industries as one of their priority areas of focus and are keen supporters of the South Yorkshire Creative and Cultural Industries Network.



Rotherham's current Cultural Strategy runs to 2026 and will be rewritten in 2025. Flux will play a key role in the rewriting and delivery of the next strategy which will be designed as a collaborative partnership approach.

The next two years are incredibly exciting and with ongoing funding from Arts Council England, the Flux team/consortium are in a strong position to build on our collective strengths to capitalise upon these opportunities:



AIMS (our main goals), OBJECTIVES (how the Flux Approach will achieve them) & OUTCOMES (the difference we will make)

The Flux vision is that by 2030 Rotherham is established as a new cultural democracy, ensuring that everyone has regular and frequent opportunities to experience high quality culture and to explore and express their own creative ambitions, heritage and identity.

“It is fantastic to see this kind of exhibition and series of events come to Rotherham. There is a bit of a void in terms of cultural and arts events of this scale which Flux and many others are trying to address.”

Museum of the Moon, Rotherham Minster

To realise the Flux vision, and to meet its ambition, for the tenure of this updated Business Plan (2024-2026), the aims will remain as:

**1 More Communities
Creating Together**

2 To Raise Aspirations

3 To Tell Our Stories

And the following strands of work - with their objectives - will serve these aims:

A Community Led, Hyper Local Projects

B Amazing Events

C Creative Training and Development

(Inclusive of the Festival Network and Community Associates Development)

D Rotherham Wide Community Programmes



Targets

Based on Flux activity to date we will achieve the following targets in our extension period:



Engagement will be maintained and deepened with 11,500 individuals



Audience numbers will increase by 15% from 28,094 to 32,300



Volunteer number will increase by 10% to 80 active volunteers

We will deepen and continue to develop practice with the 125 artists we have worked with to date.

1 More Communities Creating Together

This Flux aim of more communities creating together is in alignment with Arts Council's first aim for the national CPP Programme:

Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by creativity and culture and what are the most effective ways to achieve this?

The Flux programme will continue to successfully co-create cultural activities that have multiple points of access for residents who do not usually engage.

This access will be in terms of geographic spread (responding to specific demographics in the Rotherham area) as well as being co-designed to be as inclusive of the whole place as possible.

In the past year (2023/4), 78% of Flux participants had not taken part in another creative event or workshop in the last 12 months which evidences the work is reaching its intended audience. The Flux delivery model of employing 3 Creative Engagement Officers (and 3 Creative Engagement Trainees) means that most of Flux's capacity is on the ground, to meet people 'where they are at' and create trusted and safe spaces for creative collaboration in their neighbourhoods.

This appears to be an effective way to staff the programme and the team will continue to facilitate community participation activities at the same levels during the extension year.



In keeping with Flux's values, our Creative Engagement officers will ensure the work is relevant and able to deliver positive change by understanding where the most effective partnerships can be made, which isn't always from within the sector- we have successful and embedded co-delivery partnerships with everyone from Neighbourhood Officers to Walk Leaders to Curates, Imams and Social Prescribers.

During 2023-24, Flux worked alongside 71 non-arts partner organisations to find new routes to reach people and share local resources. Flux is constantly testing and evolving what is distinct about our approach and through these eclectic partnerships we will continue to grow approaches that are innovative and unique to Rotherham. Flux will not replicate the programme in each neighbourhood; we will use the intelligence of community panels, partners and our own Creative Engagement Officers to inspire a bespoke programme in each place.

To complement the visible and physical engagement activity in communities, the communications function will ensure that people can 'see themselves' reflected in Flux's marketing activity, especially in promotional materials or on Flux's social media platforms. Inarguably, digital poverty remains an ongoing issue in some resident communities but it is still important to use these channels to find a new audience, especially when targeting some of the hardest to reach 'Facebook Families'.

Our Community Led strand takes Flux into the heart of Rotherham's social housing estates, with an activity programme to co-produce content for both Rotherham's Festivals or Gallery Town (the town-wide artistic platform that Flux will co-curate throughout the remainder of Phase 1). From exploring creative play with Pif-Paf Theatre, producing murals, co-designing allotment spaces and producing creative trails, the objective of these activities is to support local residents in actively shaping local arts and culture.

The Creative Engagement team will use their learning from Phase 1 to continue to use a mix of new and repeated activities to serve the aims of the programme. As above, this is inclusive of attaching the outputs/artworks of the creative programme to major events/festivals in the Town which might have a bigger reach than the current Flux programme.

From experience and anecdotal evidence, we know special festivals of celebration can become important occasions in resident's lives and Flux can facilitate a role for art that enables them to be co-collaborators rather than spectators in these civic and significant events.

"It was original, energetic, inclusive, and brilliant. I loved seeing this in Rotherham. This could become Rotherham's answer to Tramlines."

Uplift Festival, Rotherham Town Centre

Since the beginning of the Flux programme, we have seen how our active co-curation and co-creation role in festivals has enabled multi-generational and multi-ethnic congregation in Rotherham. It leverages pride in the Town and builds relationships between diverse communities:

“I really enjoyed seeing the diversity of families, children and people. It felt like a real connection of women from different communities, and I think it feels unusual to see this in my local area.”

WOW Rotherham Festival, Rotherham Town Centre

This will continue from 2024-2026 as Flux (directly) delivers the Festival Village at the Rotherham show, and co-commissions both WOW Rotherham, WE Wonder (Basant), Ferham and The Winter Festival. In tandem Flux will share expertise and develop its partnerships with communities of interest on Uplift, Signals, and Plug in and Play events.

2

To Raise Aspirations

This Flux aim of raising aspirations is in alignment with Arts Council's second aim for the national CPP Programme:

What approaches enable us to deliver on our aspiration for excellence, both in the process of community engagement and the creative and cultural experiences on offer?

To create the excellent methodology that empowers the local (non-arts) community to make decisions, it feels important for all stakeholders committed to that endeavour to be motivated and inspired, with access to new learning/skills and the confidence to enable wonderful, creative adventures. Flux will take participant communities and the Community Steering Group on Go Sees to demonstrate the realms of what is possible and raise collective ambition and imagination. Visiting places to encounter national and international artworks will enable residents to conceive of what might be possible on the streets of Rotherham.

During the extension year of this Business Plan, Flux will continue to build a pipeline of socially-engaged artists and creative practitioners in Rotherham to be employed beyond the Flux programme and deliver creative activities that result in positive outcomes (potentially) for social prescribing programmes or environmental projects.

In the original Flux Business Plan, a key driver of this aspiration strand was to stretch people beyond one-off engagement activities and, through longer-term collaborations, foster artistic curiosity and criticality in cultural activities.

Whilst this is a complex outcome to measure, in Flux's practice we can see our more established groups (eg. The Spread the Word poets) are beginning to understand the creative process, the value of working with a skilled facilitator and the need for experimentation and discipline-led research to keep getting better at their art.

“The sessions have been, and continue to be, inspiring for me. Vic has raised up a group of hesitant scribblers into poets, many of whom have found the confidence to read their poetry at local events. We now have something we didn't have before: a local group that in its own small way is helping to put culture on the map of Rotherham.”

Spread the Word, Poetry Sessions with Vic Leeson

It feels important to continue working with these groups in the extension year, not just to further their understanding and learning but to contribute their words to the 'Telling Our Stories' strand of the Flux programme and ensure their contribution to the Community Knowledge Store.

3

To Tell Our Stories

This Flux aim of Telling Stories is in alignment with Arts Council's third aim for the national CPP Programme:

What else are we learning that facilitates better public engagement in creativity and culture?

This aim speaks to what Flux is learning through our action-research approach and how that learning is being shared more widely.

However, it also speaks to us in terms of how social cohesion is built around the stories communities tell themselves.

In a short space of time, Flux has observed that community performances and events have inspired and motivated groups of people, usually defined by their social and material place, to share their stories and memories more widely across the Town.

The Spread the Word, Ferham Festival and the WOW festival workshops are enabling participants to experience the possibilities of positive change in their lives through personal and collective expression.

“Joining these workshops helped us become more empowered... it helped us gaining more independence and confidence.”

Ferham Festival

We can see the ‘trust’ that is generated (in self and others) on Flux’s projects is an avenue for collective worth and civic engagement; which expands the scope of individuals’ social networks and begins to tackle thorny issues such as social isolation and poor mental health.

It feels important to sustain the aforementioned activities until the end of Phase 1 to achieve more longitudinal outcomes and benefits for participants from the Flux programme.

As part of our third aim, to conserve and elevate collective storytelling Flux will operate two fresh platforms to connect the local and the global. We will co-create The Community Knowledge Store, a digital archive of resident’s stories and creative writing and deliver an artistic ‘takeover’ of Gallery Town, a town wide, arts platform in the public realm (see the Introduction section). Both will use digital technologies to facilitate project outputs and reach.

From our experience, it can be argued that services do not create meaningful outcomes but people do. Compassionate and committed partnerships facilitate better public engagement in creativity and culture. This is why it is important that funders concur that resilient and resourceful relationships between people are relevant and credible project outcomes.



GOVERNANCE

Looking Ahead

Flux has an active and collaborative consortium who are responsible for the strategic direction and development of Flux's business plan. In terms of good governance, they provide both support and stretch for the Programme Director, whilst holding the operational/delivery team to account on behalf of ACE for the integrity and the effective delivery of the CPP programme. The Programme Director provides the consortium with the relevant reports and data to enable this scrutiny. No members of the Flux team are part of the governance body.

Currently, the Flux Rotherham Consortium comprises of:

- ❑ **VAR (Voluntary Action Rotherham) - Lead organisation**
- ❑ **ROAR (Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance)**
- ❑ **Grimm and Co**
- ❑ **Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust (WWPT)**
- ❑ **Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC)**
- ❑ **Arts Council England observe consortium meetings for items relevant to their funding and partnership agreement with Flux**
- ❑ **Independent Chairperson**

The consortium meets every three months, with other special meetings according to capacity and/or (special) programme need. The consortium is currently independently chaired by Auriel Majumdar as a commitment to ensuring fairness and transparency.

The Flux Programme Director reports to the Chair on a monthly basis.



All current consortium members can demonstrate that they possess the experience, skills and knowledge to provide best practice governance. The last consortium Skills Audit took place in 2021.



FLUX ROTHERHAM

CREATING
SHARING
CONNECTING

Co-created arts with the communities of Rotherham

Flux Rotherham creates art projects and events with communities. From festivals filled with music, dance and outdoor arts experiences to exhibitions, creative workshops and conversations. Join us to explore and express your creative ambitions, heritage and identity.

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