

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: The Economy, Arts, Sports & Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 29/04/2025

Subject: Cultural Compact Update

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Responsible Director: Mark Raisbeck, Director of Public Realm

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the work of the Where Culture Connects cultural compact and its future plans. The compact is the Borough's stakeholder partnership for cultural planning and delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee is recommended to review and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: ALL

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Corporate Plan and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	Where Culture Connects compact is effectively the delivery board for the Borough's cultural strategy, whose themes are Destination, Creative, Inclusive and Working Together. The actions of the strategy support the local creative and visitor economy, contributing to the aims of the Upstream strategy by helping to attract investment, boost cultural tourism and creating opportunities for local businesses and artists.
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	The compact comprises representatives from different backgrounds, including specialist providers of disability arts. It champions diversity and inclusion with initiatives that widen access to cultural opportunities.

Doing things with local residents, not to them	The compact has an associated open access group – the Cultural Forum – which is a space for collaboration and codesign, and it has community voices embedded in its governance.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Through Working Together, the compact leverages external funding, shared resources and in-kind support to deliver cultural impact in the most cost-effective way. It aims to co-ordinate and align activities in pursuit of strategic objectives.
Taking pride in H&F	The Compact promotes local heritage and creativity helping to build pride of place and celebrate H&F's cultural identity and assets, including the unseen culture of the Borough.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Through its programming and partnerships, the Compact encourages sustainable practices and supports environmentally conscious approaches across the sector.

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None

BACKGROUND

1. Hammersmith and Fulham's Cultural Compact "Where Culture Connects" was established in line with recommendations from the Cultural Cities Enquiry and supported by Arts Council England and DCMS.
2. Designed as a constituted cross-sector partnership, the Compact brings together stakeholders from culture, community, education and business to deliver a shared vision for culture across the Borough, supported by the Council.
3. Locally, the Compact plays a strategic leadership role, acting as the governing body for cultural collaboration in Hammersmith & Fulham. A key function is to oversee delivery of the Cultural Strategy, *Where Culture Connects*.
4. The aims of the cultural strategy and the work of the Cultural Compact align closely with Hammersmith & Fulham's industrial strategy, *Upstream London: Accelerating Inclusive Growth*. In particular, the focus on creative and cultural skills supports economic development, while the emphasis on destination

development supports inward investment, business tourism and building our reputation.

STRUCTURE

5. The Compact operates through a defined governance structure, as set out in its Terms of Reference. It is the principal partnership for overseeing delivery of the Borough's cultural strategy, resourcing and monitoring progress.
6. Key structural elements include:
 - An independent Chair supported by two Co-Chairs providing leadership and continuity across the Compact's work.
 - A strategic steering group responsible for setting direction, co-ordinating investment and aligning efforts across sectors¹.
 - Constituted sub-partnerships lead on the delivery of key projects.
 - An open access Cultural Forum involves the wider sector and supports collaboration, learning and feedback.
 - The Council's cultural team supports the Compact by servicing the meetings and providing policy advice and practical actions within available resources.

PROGRESS TO DATE

7. The Cabinet Member for Public Realm initially invited the Compact members and is a member of the group on an equal footing. Since its inception, the Compact has held eight meetings across the Borough, each hosted by one of the partners.
8. The Compact was launched at a meeting of the Cultural Forum, hosted by the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and attended by over 80 borough-wide stakeholders. The Cultural Forum is a practical network, designed to build capacity in the local cultural sector through collaboration between artists and organisations and by providing information briefings and training sessions.
9. An early action was to appoint an independent Chair, to facilitate the partnership and acting as a figurehead for culture in the Borough. The Chair represents the Compact at meetings of the national Compact Chairs Network. Using an open recruitment process, Harris Bokhari OBE, was appointed and took up the role at the end of 2024.

¹ See the Appendix for the membership of the Compact

10. Three sub-groups have been established²:

- i. Destination Management Partnership, focussing on developing the visitor economy
- ii. Cultural & Creative Education and Skills Partnership, expanding young people's engagement in the arts and linking them to opportunities for work
- iii. Heritage Partnership, with a remit for inclusive heritage development

PROJECTS

- 11. Destination Management Partnership (DMP) comprises representatives of cultural and entertainment attractions, Business Improvement Districts, developments, hoteliers and hospitality businesses and is supported by the Council's visitor economy officer. It is the principal stakeholder body for tourism in the Borough.
- 12. The DMP has been working to improve the knowledge of the local visitor sector, through visitor data and research in order to support the development of visitor-oriented product (such as events or conferences) that can utilise projected hotel availability or link to other planned programmes in order to build a stronger presence and support our reputation as a place to live, work, visit and invest.
- 13. To help build its priorities, the DMP held a workshop facilitated by London & Partners to shape a collective vision and begin work on brand identity for key locations within the Borough. This is being followed by more detailed work on the opportunities which were surfaced and prioritised by the members such as improving wayfinding and welcome, optimising the riverside and finding ways to amplify the impact of sports. This work contributes directly to the placemaking ambitions of the industrial strategy, stimulating growth in the visitor economy, developing local businesses, and linking to the promotion of the Borough as a home of innovation and a venue for quality cultural content.
- 14. The DMP undertook a collaborative campaign to promote Christmas in H&F, resulting in increased footfall and visitor spend in the festive period 2024. It is now continuing to collaborate on promotional activity year-round, while developing campaigns to support Summer and Christmas in 2025 under the banner VisitH&F.
- 15. The Cultural Education & Skills Partnership is working with the University of the Arts London (UAL), University College London (UCL) and London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art (LAMDA) which are all part of the Creative Education Coalition, a national network of specialist providers of cultural skills, training, qualifications and research. This partnership is responding to changes in

² See the Appendix for a diagram of the Compact governance

cultural education nationwide (such as reducing provision in schools) which limit the opportunities for some young people to have a fulfilling cultural life.

16. The creative economy is a fast growing sector locally, identified in the Upstream London strategy as an opportunity for the Borough and the partnership will collaborate with local businesses and the Creative Enterprise Zone to create a clear pathway linking local young people to the opportunities around them.
17. This partnership will map the Borough's cultural and creative education ecosystem, from early years to adult learning. The findings will inform the development of a new model for a Cultural and Creative Education & Skills Partnership, aligning with national agendas and supporting local creative talent to make the most of the links between creative skills and the innovation economy, supporting the ambitions of Upstream.
18. The Compact has established a new 'Schools Art Week' in summer 2025 which it hopes will become an annual event. Local artists will deliver workshops for Year 5 children in 36 schools across H&F. In 2026, the partnership will foreground the cultural lives of children and young people in the Borough. Activities will be developed and projects co-produced with young people to be showcased across Hammersmith & Fulham.
19. The Heritage Partnership is in its early stages and is being convened by Fulham Palace Trust (FPT). In time, the Heritage Partnership could take responsibility for the co-ordination of Heritage Open Days, the processing of Blue Plaque applications, the framework for prioritising local bids to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and for ensuring that Heritage (including Archives) is engaging and accessible to all. The partnership links cultural heritage, local identity and civic pride with inclusive place-based development and will support the Upstream London objective of creating a borough where identity, community engagement and innovation are better connected.
20. FPT is the lead partner for delivering the Black History Community Collecting and Engagement project which forms the initial development stage of the Black History Museum. The museum project steering group sits under the Heritage Partnership and comprises specialists in black history, community development and heritage education. FPT is the Borough's principal museum and has specialist knowledge in curatorial and collections management as well as being a member of the national Anti-Racist Museums programme.
21. Building on the needs identified by the Cultural Forum, an Arts Audit is currently under way. This will create a comprehensive view of cultural activity across the Borough and map hard and soft assets, enabling a reliable overview of provision and improving opportunities for local collaboration. The mapping will build on the Greater London Authority's Cultural Infrastructure Map and the West Midlands Cultural Infrastructure Map, which use GIS data.

Appendix One

Members of the Where Culture Connects Compact

Harris Bokhari OBE (Independent Chair)

Will Bagnall - Co-Founder of HQI

Amy Belson - Executive Director of the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and board member of Hammersmith BID

Tom Branton - Development Director of Earls Court Development Company

Jazz Browne - CEO of Nubian Life

Rachele Caltagirone - Head of Place-making at Olympia

Mimi Findlay – CEO of Bush Theatre

Georgina Firmin - Commercial Director at LAMDA

Sian Harrington - CEO of Fulham Palace Trust

Cllr Sharon Holder – Cabinet Member for Public Realm

Alison King - CEO of Turtle Key Arts

Rebecca Richardson - Strategic Lead for Prevention in H&F Public Health

Stella Subbiah – Artistic Lead for Bhavan

Nina von der Werth - CEO of Sands End Arts & Community Centre