

Sheffield City Council



Creative futures:
Southey Owlerton area regeneration

Partners

- Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration (SOAR) – community-led regeneration partnership working in six neighbourhoods in north Sheffield
- SOAR Cultural Strategy Group – oversees the delivery of the area's Cultural Action Plan
- Eventus Ltd – delivers Creative Futures project
- Cultural Industries Quarter Agency (CIQA) – delivers Creative Exchange project
- City Council Leisure Services and Parks – delivers Liveability project

Priorities

- promoting the economic vitality of localities
- transforming our local environment
- creating safer and stronger communities
- promoting healthier communities, by targeting key local services

SOAR was set up in 1999, to help revitalise neighbourhoods in the north of Sheffield, with £20 million of Single Regeneration Budget funding for ongoing regeneration until 2006. Southey Owlerton is a classic inter-war, garden city estate, whose once pleasant suburbs have been transformed into areas of multiple deprivation, after the contraction of the steel industry in the 1980s. Southey Green, the only ward entirely within the area, is the most deprived ward in the city and ranked in the top one per cent in the Index of Multiple Deprivation – nationally.



SOAR has always recognised the potential of culture, to help take forward the social, environmental and economic elements of its regeneration programme. This was originally a priority in the original SRB5 bid to the Government and one of the first-ever projects, commissioned by the SOAR Board, and a Cultural Action Plan (CAP) by Eventus in 2000.

Delivery of the CAP – the strategic framework for creative interventions across all the regeneration themes – demonstrates the cultural planning approach to neighbourhood development that has been taken. A number of strands of cultural activity currently take place in the Southey Owlerton area. The intention is to improve the coherence, quality and sustainability of the programme, more integrated with city-wide initiatives, so that it can become a hallmark of the area. Through the relationship between SOAR and CIQA, there is the opportunity to develop and test a unique model that connects a cluster of outlying neighbourhoods with the training, employment and enterprise opportunities provided by a burgeoning creative industries sector in the city centre. This approach to neighbourhood development could be replicated across the city.

The core aims are to:

- facilitate the strategic use of cultural resources for the integrated regeneration of the area
- explore the potential of culture and creativity as an economic driver for neighbourhood regeneration
- ensure that high quality design is an integral part of the local transformation of the built and green environment

The delivery of the CAP is now moving into a new phase through three key projects:

Creative Futures phase two: this is led by Eventus and will renew the Cultural Strategy group, broker higher level art activities with the Sheffield City and other partners, support the further development of two creative hubs and add an arts dimension to SOAR's physical projects.

Outcomes:

- cultural profile of area enhanced
- high quality creative opportunities provided
- sector-specific advice and support given to existing creative hubs
- connection of creative activity to existing community regeneration themes

The Creative Exchange pilot – led by CIQA will be piloted in the area, to develop workspace and pathways of employment and enterprise in the cultural industries, and in particular, to link neighbourhoods activity to city centre activity.

Outcomes:

- development of creative industries sector economic opportunities in a priority community regeneration area
- development of projects, facilities and infrastructure in targeted communities
- expansion in the sphere of influence and rate of growth of the creative industries sector and the creative and digital industries (CDI) cluster

Liveability Fund project – will develop green spaces through improved design, management and maintenance, leading to an improved area identity, sense of place and the development of cultural links

Outcomes:

- the provision of safe and active public realm reinforcing local community pride
- the development of projects, facilities and infrastructure in targeted communities

All three projects will link local projects to city and regional initiatives to provide long-term sustainable benefits.



For further information please contact:

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