

Wednesday 8 April 2020

Joint statement regarding support for Luton's creative industries during COVID-19

A message from Luton Council, Revoluton Arts, Tangled Feet, The Culture Trust, UK Centre for Carnival Arts and the University of Bedfordshire

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on Luton's creative industries is being felt throughout our town. We are aware that a number of Luton's creative organisations and individuals are experiencing financial hardship and that this has left audiences, children, young people and vulnerable adults without the essential services the arts provide.

We recognise the immense personal impact this is having on the large number of individuals and small companies here in Luton. We welcome the financial support offered by the government and Arts Council England but know that the sector needs more in order to survive. We do not want to replicate national initiatives, nor do we have the financial resources to implement localised funding streams, so this is why we are working together to support Luton's creative community by offering the following:

- Support for self-employed artists and small creative businesses to apply for emergency funding from the government, Arts Council England and other funders
- A survey of the lost income experienced by local creatives to enable further advocacy
- Mechanisms for artists to earn income through digital commissions
- A range of digital platforms to enable connection with audiences
- Opportunities for the creative community to connect digitally to reduce isolation, share information and improve emotional well-being
- Advice via the Luton Cultural Education Partnership to ensure our children and young people retain access to vital cultural learning opportunities
- Honouring wherever possible all artist contracts to deliver artistic programmes
- Rental holidays for Culture Trust creative tenants
- Emotional support and advice for any creative in need of a peer to talk to and
- Advocacy for the urgent needs of Luton's creative workforce.

Importantly, we are also working with national funders and partners to plan responsive, long-term initiatives to support the recovery of the sector beyond the COVID-19 crisis.

Our number one priority at this time is supporting the local and regional creative industry to survive this crisis. We are a strong and resilient community which is best demonstrated by the generosity and creativity that we have seen amongst you all over the past weeks. We are honoured to be a part of this community and will do all we can to ensure its survival.

With Regards,

Luton Council
Revoluton Arts
Tangled Feet
The Culture Trust
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