DEVELOPING ST HELENS AS A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR SOCIALEY ENGAGED ARTS PRACTICE

WARDS AFFECTED

All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

NO

1. PROPOSED DECISION

The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the development of St Helens as a centre of excellence for socially engaged arts practice and for Cabinet to endorse the ongoing approach.

Specifically, Cabinet is asked to approve:

- Council investment in the design work for a ‘St Helens Arts and Cultural Centre’ – a physical centre as part of the St Helens Town Centre proposals
- Continued engagement with key partners in the Borough to bring forward the St Helens Arts and Cultural Partnership
- Following the withdrawal of funds to both the World of Glass and Citadel that a one off grant be made available to support both organisations in transitioning to the new Arts Partnership
- Investment in a 2018 programme of events that cements the towns reputation as a centre for social engaged arts and culture and that celebrates the 150th anniversary of St Helens

2. RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION

St Helens has a growing reputation as a centre of excellence for arts and culture and particularly for socially engaged artistic practice. Socially engaged practice (also referred to as social practice or socially engaged art), can include any art-form which involves people and communities in debate, collaboration or social interaction using arts and culture as the medium for doing so.
St Helens has recently had St Helens libraries Cultural Hubs programme and Heart of Glass added to the Art Council’s National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) list, securing them on-going revenue funding until 2022. These designations are significant in that no other Borough within the Liverpool City Region has any NPOs other than Liverpool while across the whole of the County very few places the size of St Helens have any whereas St Helens has two. A map of North West NPOs showing the prominence of St Helens is provided at Appendix A.

It should also be noted that Cultural Hubs won the best national lottery arts project award in 2016, and that there has been significant investment by the Arts Council in local initiatives. The Arts Council support for St Helens is evidenced through the Chief Executive of the Arts Council’s positive messages regarding the Borough (Appendix B).

Local organisations, such as the World of Glass and the Citadel have received funding from the local authority and from other national bodies. Austerity has impacted on these organisations ability to continue to fund arts and cultural activity and the Council has had to withdraw our existing financial support.

St Helens has therefore been considering how it can further develop its reputation for arts and culture, whilst at the same time supporting organisations to become more self-sustaining over the longer term.

The Council has also launched its Vision for St Helens Town Centre that recognises the need to have a unique selling point that attracts people into the Town Centre to make it viable at a time when retail is undergoing such significant change. The masterplanning proposes a St Helens Arts and Cultural Centre be created by modifying the World of Glass to house a greater array of arts and cultural activities to inspire and engage our population.

3. FACTS SUPPORTING THE PROPOSED DECISION

Town Centre's such as St Helens are struggling to attract people in what is a highly competitive environment for retail centres. St Helens Council has taken steps to take control of assets in the Town Centre and intervene to improve the Town Centre and improve its long-term viability.

In St Helens: Transforming Our Town we have stated a vision to rejuvenate the Town Centre by being ‘a nationally recognised centre for arts and culture’ and included within the project we have listed an intention to create a St Helens Arts and Cultural Centre focusing arts and cultural activity within the heart of the Growth Quarter.

To investigate the feasibility of doing this it is proposed the Council initially invest up to £30,000 into design works on how the current World of Glass building, which sits within the identified Growth Quarter, could be modified to deliver the ambition of a ‘St Helens Arts and Cultural Centre (SHACC)’. The vision for the SHACC is an expanded building(s) on the current World of Glass site that would accommodate innovative learning experiences celebrating and recognising the heritage of the borough and with current arts and cultural providers integrating to
maximize opportunities and raise aspirations. The building would also be used to showcase the expertise being developed in St Helens in relation to socially engaged practice and would therefore include conference and exhibition facilities.

The exact arrangements for the SHACC would be subject to the design works and it would need to be designed within the context of the wider Town Centre regeneration proposals. The ambition is that this would become a destination venue for people in St Helens and further afield to engage in arts and cultural activities. With designs produced, St Helens would be looking to bid to grant funding bodies such as the Arts Council, the recently announced Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund, and potentially the Liverpool City Region Strategic Investment Fund to fund the actual development works required.

For any such bid to be successful the Council would need to have an investment ready proposal developed in advance of submission hence why the Council would need to make such an investment at this time. The costs of developing such a proposal could be capitalised downstream if a capital bid to a funding authority was successful and could effectively be repaid to the Council. The Council would therefore be undertaking the development work to secure a new capital investment at risk but within the purpose of bringing forward the far wider ambitions for the Arts and Cultural Partnership and Town Centre Regeneration.

The Council has already, due to budget pressures, determined to withdraw ongoing revenue funding from the World of Glass who have indicated that without an alternative business model the World of Glass may be forced to close – potentially as early as 2018. The intention for the SHACC would be that it would be designed to be a more sustainable facility for the sustaining of arts and cultural activities in St Helens beyond just the activities of the current World of Glass. The intention is also that it the SHACC would house some internationally unique features and therefore would drive up visitors to the borough (for example by housing the first ever archive of socially engaged practice).

The Council has been working with various arts organisations in the Borough for some time to try and establish a more sustainable way by which the activities of the organisations can continue in an environment where public grant funds such as that provided previously by the Council are not available. This approach is referred to as the Arts and Cultural Partnership.

The approach intends to retain the strengths of organisations within the Borough as St Helens is already recognised a centre of excellence in arts and cultural practice as a consequence of the success of Heart of Glass, the success of Cultural Hubs, and the work of organisations such as the Citadel and World of Glass.

However the financial model supporting such organisations needs to shift and it is intended that the organisations should work more collaboratively while the Council will also look at opportunities to provide income but on the basis of a new model whereby delivery activity also produces desirable outcomes. For example, the new model needs to use income sources through initiatives such as social prescriptions. St Helens already has a strong reputation for working in this way and have dedicated resource located within the St Helens Cares design team looking at how social prescriptions for arts and cultural programmes can be embedded within the models for health and social care integration.
The need for new models is heightened by the Council need to save £20.6m by 2020 which has resulted in the Council withdrawing all annual budgeted expenditure to both the World of Glass and the Citadel.

Both organisations have expressed a commitment to the new model but have indicated that the transition to a new model, combined with the funding cuts announced by the Council, places them at risk of having to close before the new model can be put in place. It is proposed therefore that a one off grant is made to each organisation to support the transition arrangements but on condition that they commit to the new model of working and work with the Council and other partners to allow its implementation. A one off grant of £150k to World of Glass and £20k to the Citadel will allow them to transition.

In addition, 2018 represents the 150th anniversary of the Borough receiving its Royal Charter. Funds totaling £1.5m have been obtained, predominantly from the Arts Council, via Heart of Glass to fund a programme throughout the 2018 year. The securing of the £1.5m requires a contribution of £500,000 (25%) from St Helens Council. The Council has already committed to cutting its events budget in future years due to the need to meet a £20.6m reduction by 2020 and hence the commitment of £500,000 would be a one off investment to support our borough objective of raising aspiration and ambition. The Council will work with Heart of Glass to promote the activities which will occur in a number of places throughout the Borough but to also to focus some activities within St Helens Town Centre to support the regeneration of the Town Centre and footfall through Town Centre assets including those owned by the Council.

This would be the main element of a series of events taking place in 2018. The programme of events being supported by the £2m funding is at Appendix C. These core events will be “presented by St Helens 150”. To support public recognition of the 150th anniversary branding consistent with that being used for the Invest in St Helens approach has been developed. This branding will be made available to a range of community led events and activities which will be delivered “in association with St Helens 150”. These events will be advertised and promoted via a microsite and via traditional means as part of a whole borough programme.

4. IMPLICATIONS / RELEVANCE TO MEETING SAVINGS TARGET / PLANNING FOR 2020

The four objectives for the Borough moving towards 2020 are; to raise aspiration and ambition grow the economy, support a sustainable health and social care system and to improve connectivity.

The activities proposed within this report support:

- Raising aspiration and ambition – the plans for St Helens Town Centre and a high quality arts and culture venue is part of our wider efforts to raise aspiration in the Borough while the 150th anniversary of St Helens receiving the Royal Charter and the programme of arts and culture events are designed to also raise public confidence and aspiration in St Helens
- The Town Centre regeneration plans are a key element of growing the St Helens economy with the SHACC a key element. St Helens reputation as an arts and
cultural location is a key differentiator with many other areas and therefore needs to be built upon

- The sustainability of our health and social care system is dependent on new ways of working – as a leading place for the development of new models of care and social prescriptions we wish to build on this to support the sustainability of health and care services which also growing the economy of the Borough

5. **RISKS**

6. **Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision**

Any major events have a number of key risks, and each event will be risk assessed in accordance with procedures.

There is a risk that we will be unable to fully develop a sustainable social care and health model if we do not have the capacity and facilities to offer socially engaged arts and culture, including further development of social prescribing.

There are also some reputational risks surrounding “St Helens 150”, including:

- It has been publically stated that 2018 will be a celebratory year in St Helens and therefore there is a level of expectation for events next year.

- There is a risk to our relationship with the Arts Council if a programme of arts and culturally centred events are not supported by the Council, which could impact on future ambitions for the borough. The Arts Council are funding 75% of the proposed programme and this would be threatened if no match was provided.

- There is likely to be some negative publicity around the Council supporting a celebratory year in a period of austerity. However, the risk of not offering an inclusive, accessible programme to increase wellbeing and participation is greater, as this would undermine public confidence in our key objectives in the borough.

7. **Should this Risk be added to the Corporate Risk Register?**

NO

8. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

**Legal** - The implications are that one-off grant agreements are to be put in place for The World of Glass, the Citadel and the Heart of Glass. These grant agreements will be drafted in conjunction with the Council’s legal officers to ensure that the necessary conditions are met.

**Financial** - The implications are that the Service Transformation Fund will be accessed to provide one off funding for the World of Glass, the Citadel and the
Heart of Glass, for the procurement of design work for the SHACC, for legal advice for the development of the SHACC and for the one off continuation of some council events.

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Developing the SHACC- transitional funding</td>
<td>The World of Glass</td>
<td>£150,000</td>
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<td>Developing the SHACC- transitional funding</td>
<td>The Citadel</td>
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<td>Developing the SHACC – design costs</td>
<td>St Helens Council to procure</td>
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<td>150th Anniversary celebrations</td>
<td>Heart of Glass</td>
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<td>150th Anniversary celebrations</td>
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Human Resources - The implications are that the Heart of Glass will provide the majority of staff that will work on the 150th anniversary celebrations. Some project management and events management support will be provided by council officers as part of their existing duties.

Land and Property (Asset) – As designs develop in relation to the SHACC, the land and property implications will be considered.

Anti-Poverty - The implications are that the development of St Helens as an area of socially engaged arts and cultural practice should support the anti-poverty agenda by bringing people into the borough, and particularly the town centre, and by raising aspirations and ambition amongst residents.

Effects on existing Council Policy – None

Effects on other Council Activities - The implications are that the programme will support existing Council activities of developing more sustainable models for arts and cultural provision and health and social care. The 150th anniversary programme will support the continuation of some council events in 2018.

Human Rights - None

Equalities – The implications are that the development of socially engaged arts and cultural practice supports equality of opportunity to participate in arts and cultural activities.

Asset Management - None

Health - The implications are that the proposal supports our health and wellbeing ambitions as it contributes to wider determinants of health, through community participation and raising aspirations.

9. **PREVIOUS APPROVAL/CONSULTATION**

“Forming a Cultural Partnership in St Helens” – June 2016
10. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS THEREOF**

The alternative option would be not to develop St Helens as a centre of excellence for socially engaged arts and cultural practice. This would have a significant reputational risk for our place developments and in particular on our positive relationship with the Arts Council.

11. **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A** - Map of North West NPOs taken from Arts Council website showing the significance of St Helens

**Appendix B** – Arts Council Chief Executive Darren Henley’s letter about St Helens

**Appendix C** – Proposed programme of events “presented by” St Helens 150.

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**Name of Chief Officer: Mike Palin**

**Title: Chief Executive**

The Contact Officer for this report is Sarah Bullock, Assistant Director, Helena Central, 4 Corporation Street, St Helens, Merseyside WA9 1LD.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following list of documents was used to complete this report and they are available for public inspection for four years from the date of the meeting, from the Contact Officer named above:

*None*
The two organisations that have received NPO status from the Arts Council are:

Heart of Glass – designated in the discipline of Combined Arts with a total investment between 2018 and 2020 of £1,400,000

St Helens Council Library Service – designated in the discipline of Libraries with a total investment of £440,000 between 2018 and 2022
Appendix B – Arts Council Chief Executive – Darren Henley – letter on St Helens

As chief executive of the Arts Council, I spend a lot of time travelling around England – and I see how investment in art and culture can transform lives and help bring jobs and fresh confidence to communities.

Whenever I visit St Helens, I am struck by the town’s pride and sense of identity – it’s not overwhelmed by its proximity to the two major metropolitan centres of Liverpool and Manchester.

That sense of individuality has been boosted by the town’s growing reputation as a centre for art and culture, and its determination that they should reflect and play an integral part in everyday life.

Look at Dream, for example, Jaume Plensa’s stunning, enigmatic sculpture at Sutton Manor Colliery, which celebrates the town’s industrial past.

The Arts Council is the national development agency for arts and culture. We invest money from Government and the National Lottery to support the arts, museums and libraries. We invest in world famous organisations, but we also fund music in schools, reading programmes for young children and dance for older people - activities for all the family, in villages, towns and cities across England.

We want to make sure people all over England can experience the pleasure that art and culture can bring. And that includes the people of St Helens.

We want to help St Helens continue to grow and thrive as a cultural centre and as a town.

This week we announced how we will be investing the major part of our funds from 2018-22, and I’m delighted to say there’s great news for St Helens.

While we’ve been consistent investors in the town’s cultural scene, it hasn't had an organisation in our “National Portfolio” – those organisations that receive regular, ongoing funding and form the backbone of the work we do.

That’s changed. From 2018, St Helens will have not one, but two members of the National Portfolio – collaborative arts agency Heart of Glass and St Helens Libraries.

Heart of Glass has been doing exceptional work since it started in 2014. The ambitious arts project has drawn together an impressive group of supportive partners from across the spectrum, from the council, St Helens College and the town’s Arts Partnership, to carer groups and health organisations, and – a core supporter of the initiative from the outset - St Helens RFC, to help develop creative work with, for and in the community.

The Arts Council made an initial investment of £1.5 million in the organisation from our Creative People and Places programme, which is aimed at increasing cultural engagement at community level, followed by another £1 million last year. And Heart of Glass has made a real difference to people’s lives in the town through the arts.
It has also received £485,000 from our Ambition for Excellence scheme to create a new work in time for the borough’s 150th birthday in 2018.

I’m especially pleased that St Helens Libraries has entered our National Portfolio – this is the first year that we’ve opened it up to libraries, and it’s a tribute to the success of the community-focussed, arts related programming that St Helens libraries have run. I’ve seen first hand how they have been trailblazers in showing the enduring importance of libraries.

Wherever I go, I see how public investment in arts and culture makes a huge difference to us all - in every village, town and city in England.

The arts improve our health and wellbeing, bring education to life, attract new business and rejuvenate town centres. Our world leading national arts institutions are an incredible calling card for our nation, while across the country thousands of smaller arts organisations create the shared culture that brings communities together.

By investing in St Helens, we are proud to invest in the town’s ambition for its future. As taxpayers – and National Lottery players - this is your money, coming back to support creativity in your community, for you and your families.

I am sure that it will help St Helens flourish over the coming years.
The year 2018 marks the 150\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of St Helens’ incorporation as a municipal Borough. In this year we will ‘pay generous and caring attention to the demands of the old culture while midwifing the new’\textsuperscript{1}, with the strategic aim of articulating the ambition and aspiration that resides in the borough. The year will acknowledge and reflect upon the history and heritage of St Helens, renowned for glass making, pharmaceuticals and rugby and will also launch the new narrative of the borough, as a place for ingenuity, innovation and culture.

Our 2018 borough programme will be ‘place driven’, inviting our diverse communities to join us in the making of meaning, establishing in the process a range of events, activities and opportunities which will appeal to a wide range of people throughout the year. The year will also mark the formation of the St Helens’ Cultural Partnership (Heart of Glass, The Citadel and World of Glass with

\textsuperscript{1} http://maureen.ohara.net/pubs/TenThings.pdf
support from Art in Libraries and St Helens Music Service), a new consortium of partners, strategically working together to deliver a nationally significant arts and cultural programme for the borough. This live project will be a statement of our shared ambition to realise St Helens as a ‘national centre for social and collaborative arts practice’.

Our vision sees a thriving, dynamic and sustainable arts ‘ecology’ as the basis for cultural engagement and citizenship in a confident, vibrant and revitalised St Helens. It is a vision which embraces diversity, inclusion and equality, and which has collaboration, cultural democracy and collective action at its core.

Our vision positions St Helens as a recognised national and international centre for socially engaged artistic practice, underpinned by a commitment to strengthening the artistic infrastructure across the borough, promoting new ideas, experimentation and innovative practice, and supporting artists to grow and develop as St Helens grows and develops.

We will launch the year with ‘Where Things Are Different’, a new public art commission by photographer (and lecturer at St Helens College) Stephen King on January 6th 2018. The project has seen Stephen collaborate with former workers from the glass, coal and pharmaceutical industries across St Helens and the resulting work will be a floating public art light sculpture, on the Sankey Canal, first used some 260 years ago in 1757. This work will launch a year ‘WHERE THINGS ARE DIFFERENT’ in St Helens.
ST HELENS 2018 - OUR PROGRAMME

“If we all did the things we are really capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves…”

Thomas Edison, Inventor

There are a diverse range of events that take place each year within the St Helens borough. For the celebratory year St Helens 2018 will present a diverse and dynamic arts and cultural programme. It is envisaged that a range of other events, will incorporate the St Helens 2018 branding, and will be delivered “in association with” St Helens 2018.

The events presented by St Helens 2018 are ‘culturally focussed’ events which will be recognised for their ambition, their collaborative ethos and will allow the opportunity for a range of diverse voices to be part of the making of meaning. They will be ‘place driven’ but connect St Helens to the region, as well nationally and beyond, establishing a borough as place from where bombastic and significant ideas and knowledge emerges.
A new major artwork by photographer Stephen King exploring the connections between the many varied industries to have resided and continue to reside in St Helens and the workforces that make them function. Employees make a work space into a work place, creating microcosms that reflect cultural patterns and social orders, the miniature characteristics of something much larger. These miniature characteristics will be amplified through a new collaborative work which will take the form of a series of floating light boxes, incorporating iconic locations throughout the borough and the social rhythms that lie beneath the surface. Launching in January 2018, the project will signify the beginning of the year of celebration.
Anniversary Performance Dinner

Friday 2\textsuperscript{nd} February 2018

Heart of Glass in conjunction with St Helens Council

To mark the anniversary of the date of the signature of the Charter by Queen Victoria, a celebratory performance dinner will be held in St Helens Town Hall. The historic Assembly Hall will provide an animated performance space. This event will celebrate those that have developed and created our culture.
From Industry to Ingenuity

Friday 13th, Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th April 2018

Heart of Glass

Over three nights in April, state of art projection mapping technology will be used to light up the Dream, Jaume Plensa’s public art sculpture in Sutton. This event, supported by the Forestry Commission will bring people together for picnic evenings. These evenings will acknowledge the industrial past of St Helens, including offering talks on the history of the collieries and lived experience of mining, whilst at the same launching the new narrative of ingenuity, through state of the art digital performance.
A creative gathering will be held at the newly commissioned St Helens Skate Park / Artwork – commissioned and produced by young people in collaboration with Heather and Ivan Morrison. This new public space, located in the town centre, and funded by proceeds of crime act funding, will be emblematic of the way in which art and culture are driving new conversations and innovations in the town. This event will be presented in partnership with the Youth Council. On this day we will programme a series of intergenerational food based events, film screenings and public programmes, animating this new public asset and placing young people at the heart of a new conversation about the town’s future, on this the anniversary weekend of its founding.
Takeover Festival 2018

April – May 2018

Frank Cottrell Boyce with St Helens Council Arts Service, St Helens Council Library Service & Heart of Glass


Festival curated by son of St Helens’ Frank Cottrell Boyce, taking the town’s birthday as a starting point for programme. There is a particular interest (but not exclusively) in literature for the library element of the take-over, but this project will see work take place in shops, public spaces, venues, the college, people’s homes, taxi cabs, etc. turning St Helens into a creative landscape, where every wall is a screen and every space a stage. Running in the Springtime, this event based programme will see a range of work take place across artform speaking directly to diverse audiences.
On Sunday 13th May 2018, a group will leave Haydock Racecourse at 4am to “Beat the Bounds”, undertaking a 46 mile walk around the borough boundary. It is envisaged that people will join the walk as a personal or charitable challenge. Groups can also join sections of the walk at various points of the day, e.g. Rainford in the morning, Rainhill at lunchtime, Newton and Earlestown in the afternoon. The walk will finish back at Haydock Racecourse at around 8.30pm.

A form of light/torch will be created to pass through people without the borough as we ‘beat the bounds’. This will then be passed from the outgoing Mayor to the incoming Mayor at St Helens Day the following week.
St Helens Day

Saturday 19th May 2018

Heart of Glass in conjunction with St Helens Council

On the 19th of May, we will host a civic parade, led by the Mayor, celebrating the breadth and depth of our community across the borough. This will be a moment to acknowledge the characters, the wisdom and the idiosyncratic individuals and communities that make our borough tick. Taking the form of a ‘people’s parade’, the event will culminate in a family friendly musical event.
Westfield Street Music Festival

Saturday 2\textsuperscript{nd} and Sunday 3\textsuperscript{rd} June 2018

St Helens Council

2018 will be the 5\textsuperscript{th} year of the popular Westfield Street Music Festival and the first year that it will take place over 2 days. This celebration of our music, arts and cultural heritage will attract music lovers and their families to enjoy live music on and around Westfield Street. The event will celebrate talent from the town and across the region.
The Pavilion Project – A centre for creativity

June – August 2018

Heather Morison, Joshua Sofaer and Ian Brownbill with the St Helens Voluntary and Amateur Arts Sector

In partnership with The World of Glass

The Pavilion Project is about visioning new spaces and approaches for the future, in line with the emerging Town Centre regeneration.

The project will support the existing local arts community (including a number of individual artists, arts groups, choirs, bands, theatre groups, dance troupes, schools etc.) to present new ambitious work in unexpected spaces within the town; an opportunity to showcase what they do to new audiences and to be recognised as important to the fabric of the town.
Artist, Heather Morison will work with the creative community during 2018 to test, explore and creatively vision a number of ‘Pavilion’ structures for the future of the new ‘cultural quarter’ of St Helens, including Vera Page Park, the area surrounding World of Glass and the back of St Mary’s Market. These pavilions will be barn raised into existence in 2019. A legacy of 2018 the structures will be both striking sculptural additions to the landscape and provide a structural catalyst to the creative community of St Helens to claim a space and raise their ambitions. We anticipate this project being of national significance and a major visitor attraction in the future.
Armed Forces Day – We Stand Together

Saturday 23rd June 2018

St Helens Council in conjunction with Heart of Glass

For the first time in 2018, this event will take place in the surroundings of Victoria Park. This commemorative ceremony marks the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. The ceremony will include the naming of paths within the park after Victoria Cross winners from St Helens and the launch of memorial art to accompany this. A veterans artistic project will be commissioned to take place on this day.
Twin Track - St Helens International Wine Festival

Friday 29th and Saturday 30th June 2018

St Helens Council

This weekend will focus on the celebration of St Helens’ international relationships, particularly those with our partner towns of Stuttgart and Chalon-sur-Saone. 2018 marks the 70th anniversary of the twinning agreement between St Helens and Stuttgart, which was the first of its kind in Europe. An International Wine Festival will be held, centred around Victoria square.
Summer Streets Reimagined

Friday 10th and Saturday 11th August 2018

The Citadel Arts Centre in partnership with Heart of Glass

Led by The Citadel, for 2018 we will reimagine Summer Streets as a family friendly town centre programme of activity, connecting with leading performance and event based work nationally. This will include pop up performances, music based events, workshops and drop-ins. Plans to include a series of “work in progress” performance tryouts, linking St Helens to work taking place in Hamburg, Melbourne and London are underway as are plans to bring a Marvelous Imaginary Outdoor Menagerie to the borough, an outdoor event like no other, packed with Vaudeville acts, live musicians and puppeteers.
**St Helens Heritage Weekend**

*Friday 7th, Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th September 2018*

*Heart of Glass in partnership with St Helens Council*

In our bricks and mortar lie the stories of a town and in our walkways lie the paths of a population. For Heritage Open Day in 2018, we will lift the lid off some of the hidden spaces that the town that tell our story. Working with the Northwest Museum of Transport, we will navigate the town in old buses, taking in the iconic locations of the borough as well as the forgotten locations that shine a line of our proud 150 year history.
In 2016, Heart of Glass, along with project partners’ idle women and ANU Productions were awarded a special funding award by Arts Council England under the Ambition for Excellence scheme. The award of £485000 was made to develop a ‘once in a generation’ project with the women of St Helens. Between now and 2019 we will use genealogy, unconventional practices and historical research to explore the personal everyday histories of the women of St Helens as the basis for a new set of ambitious productions in 2018 - the year the borough celebrates its 150th birthday. The project will animate the George Street Quarter of the borough, identified as a potential cultural zone, with a long-term legacy linked to women, women’s services and arts provision.
Spark in the Park

Monday 5th November 2018

St Helens Council

The annual firework display will light up the sky of St Helens from Sherdley Park on Bonfire Night. The event will start with a Children’s Firework display and cumulate in the Grand Fireworks display.
In addition to the usual Armistice Day parades, St Helens will participate in the national tribute event to commemorate the end of World War I, the Beacons of Light tribute. In remembrance of the end of the war and the many who were killed and wounded, a Beacon of Light will be lit at 7pm on 11th November 2018. The Beacon symbolises the “light of hope” that emerged from the darkness of war.
St Helens Christmas Lights Switch On

Saturday 17th November 2018

St Helens Council

The annual Christmas Lights Switch On will take place in Victoria Square on 17th November. The Lights Switch on will continue to be an opportunity to showcase both local and regional musical and theatrical talent. A full programme and line up will be announced nearer the time.
Light Up St Helens! Finale event

Friday 30th November 2018

Artist Simon Mckeown, members of the disability community and contributing artists from across St Helens

St Helens has a fantastic and rich history as a site and location for invention and innovation. This energy is still present today, taking form through artistic and cultural experiments, making St Helens a fertile ground for community and collaborative based arts practices. To cement this status Light Up St Helens, a new commission led by artist Simon Mckeown, will work with the local community and in particular, disabled artists, to create a series of works which will not only reflect on 150 years of the town's history but also project into the future, exploring St Helens and its people as a creative force. Mckeown will develop through a co-production programme, a number of events leading up to a mass outdoor video projection finale in December 2018. Having completed large scale mapped projection projects throughout the country, including as part of the Paralympic Opening Ceremony, Mckeown will launch the inaugural St Helens light festival, and a special commissioning strand support local artists to work with shop owners to create a light trail throughout the town.
Presented by St Helens 2018 - Programmes throughout 2018

“Creativity is the process of having original ideas that have value. It is a process, it’s not random.”

Sir Ken Robinson

HOW TO LISTEN – A ‘Creative Schools of St Helens’ initiative

With lead Artists Mark Storor and Sophie Mahon


In 2018, we will connect with schools across the borough on a creative challenge. Using St Helens history of innovation and experimentation as a departure point, we will create and activate a series of assets, training opportunities and provocations led by Artists Mark Storor and Sophie Mahon for students and teachers across the borough. Unlocking the creative potential of our schools and educational frameworks will allow us to reconnect with our history of innovation through a vision of the future, shaped by young people. This work will include, touring projects, workshops programme, community exhibitions, and artists in residence, creating the opportunity for St Helens to become a
‘creative learning environment’. An additional strand of this work would include a competition element, running across schools and also provide an enhancement opportunity for the successful World of Glass’ run *Youth Open*.

*Youth Open Art Competition – March /April and Open Art Competition – July-Sept*

An additional category “From Industry to Ingenuity” will be launched for all age groups in the Youth Open Art competition and for the Open Art competition.

*The Citadel Presents*

*On-going*

The Citadel has a rich musical heritage (The Happy Mondays, Stone Roses, legend has it Richard Ashcroft decided to form a band – that became The Verve – while watching a band at the Citadel). In 2018, we propose working with a reputable Northwest promoter to create a series of intimate and unique gigs in diverse locations across the borough – cafes, shops, work places, resident homes. St Helens, a place where things are different!
From Industry to Ingenuity Exhibition

Curated by Yellow Door in partnership with the World of Glass and Heart of Glass

Yellow Door Artists, working with Heart of Glass and World of Glass will produce an exhibition celebrating the journey of St Helens the place. This will include the longstanding relationships between St Helens and our twin towns of Stuttgart and Chalon. Yellow Door have been making frequent visits to both town’s, building a network of collaborators and in June we will host a sharing event, and exhibition acknowledging St Helens reputation within the International community.

Communications

An identifiable branding, including a logo and accompanying brand guidelines are to be developed for the 2018 celebrations. The logo is required to be compatible with the existing branding.
Bespoke campaigns for each signature event, including targeted local and regional (and national marketing where appropriate). Examples of marketing assets include website (micro-site), social media advertising, radio broadcast and radio advertising, print marketing including St Helens Star insert/programme announcement, partnership campaigns with Marketing Liverpool and other major regional partners.

PR Campaign with recognised national arts and culture PR agency to develop campaign locally, nationally and internationally for signature events focusing on St Helens as a Centre for Socially Engaged Arts Practice and as a visitor economy drive for the Borough. We will also use this year as an opportunity to trial a new St Helens Visitor Centre at the World of Glass.

Volunteers

Working with a diverse range of people in the creation of the work we produce is a vital part of our success, and we are seeking to offer the people of St Helens new opportunities that are interesting, engaging and rewarding. We will do this in a number of ways through open calls and targeted recruitment through a wide range of partners, offering people from St Helens the chance to participate in a number of ways, that will offer skills development, meeting new people and feeling involved in the story of the 2018 programme. We will be offering opportunities to become a participant working with an artist/s to create new work, to deliver public tours of the works, to act as an ambassador of the events programme by welcoming the public and enhancing their visitor experience and by working behind the scenes.

Heart of Glass will also be employing at least two St Helens based early career producers to work alongside the team to deliver this ambitious programme as a skills development and career progression opportunity, as part of one of our driving objectives of supporting and nurturing local talent.

Merchandising

In accordance with the St Helens 2018 branding a range of supporting merchandise will be developed to be sold from the glass museum and at all 2018 events.