



Press Release

21 February 2025

Fenland Culture Fund awards over £55,000 to arts, culture and heritage organisations across the district

Grants totalling over £55,000 have been awarded from the second round of the Fenland Culture Fund, boosting arts, culture and heritage opportunities across the district.

Local artists, writers and musicians and museums, festivals, theatres and community groups are among the 35 applicants to receive a share of the fund.

Each recipient has been awarded a grant of up to £2,000, enabling them to continue their vital contributions to Fenland's vibrant cultural scene.

The Fenland Culture Fund is managed by Fenland District Council and made possible this year thanks to joint funding from Arts Council England and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The second round of the fund was even bigger than the first, with over £20,000 more funding available. It also offered an expanded scope, with capital funding to support local creatives and improve cultural spaces, in addition to revenue funding to help deliver arts projects and activities.

Cllr Chris Seaton, Fenland District Council's Portfolio Holder responsible for heritage and culture, said: "We are thrilled to support so many incredible local organisations and individuals through the Fenland Culture Fund. This funding plays a crucial role in fostering a thriving cultural sector, creating opportunities for artists, and ensuring our communities have access to enriching cultural experiences."

Hazel Edwards, South East Area Director, Arts Council England, said: "The Arts Council is delighted to contribute to the Fenland Culture Fund as it demonstrates perfectly the power of local investment in arts and culture. This latest round of funding supports a fantastic range of creatives and organisations, creating new opportunities for people to engage with Fenland's burgeoning cultural scene. It is inspiring to see such a strong commitment to creativity and community."

MP for North East Cambridgeshire, Steve Barclay, added: “Congratulations to the 35 organisations that were successful in the second round of the Fenland Cultural Fund. Up to £2,000 has been awarded to these groups that are so important to our community.”

The Cambridgeshire Community Reuse and Recycling Network (CCORRN) has received £1,800 from the fund to help deliver their Communitree arts project. The funding will enable the group to run art workshops for around 100 people, and create arts resource boxes, through which people can create a piece of artwork for a Communitree sculpture. The sculpture, which will be adorned with leaves, blossoms, minibeasts, butterflies and dragonflies made by participants through different art forms and themes, will then be showcased in the newly created atrium at CCORRN’s REMO Eco Hub in March.

Nikki DiGiovanni, Development Director of CCORRN / REMO, said: “We are so delighted to be one of the organisations receiving a grant from Fenland Culture Fund. A programme of exciting creative workshops will be hosted at The REMO Eco Hub where The Communitree sculpture will be created.”

Creative practitioner Peggy Mends received £2,000 from the fund to deliver an arts project for the residents, friends, family and staff members of Lyncroft Care Home in Wisbech.

The funding will be used to run ‘Simple Pleasures: through Touch, Memory and Colour’, a series of three creative workshops at the home with artist designer Sadie White. The activities will benefit residents by being encouraged to engage with creativity through wellbeing, learning new skills, community and sensory activities. Some of the activities will invite mindfulness and relaxation, with tactile experiences to inform old and new memories.

Peggy said: “I am super excited about being awarded this funding and we hope the workshops will have a really positive impact on the participants involved at Lyncroft Care Home.”

A grant of £400 was awarded to Chatteris Community Choir to invest in lighting equipment for its performances. Members of the choir sometimes struggle to read their music in venues with low lighting, but new portable music stand lights will help them to perform without this worry, improving their confidence and enhancing performances.

The choir’s musical director Chris Hennen said: ““We’re so grateful to the Fenland Culture Fund for helping us brighten up our performances—literally! This grant will enable us to purchase the much longed for lights for our music stands, making performances so much easier for our choir members. As a community choir, it means so much to feel supported, and we’re excited to keep bringing people together through music.”

Theatre producer Harrison Fuller received £2,000 from the fund to deliver his interactive play, ‘Henry VIII Used to Hate Us’, in Whittlesey. The show tells four tales of the Fens – Hereward the Wake, St Guthlac, The Lincoln Uprising, and 19th century opiate usage – and invites the audience to become rebels against Henry VIII and sample traditional Fen foods.

He will also use the funding to deliver a youth workshop and hold ‘community conversations’ to find out what cultural/heritage events and activities residents would like to see happen in their town.

Harrison said: “I am thrilled and humbled to receive this funding from the Fenland Culture Fund. The creative industries are a vital part of our society and economy and for Fenland District Council to support activities and individuals in this way is wonderful. I am looking forward to bringing some work to Fenland and continuing to work closely with different groups and organisations on cultural delivery, made possible by this funding.’

Fenland Culture Fund recipients (revenue grants):

- £1,240 to Wisbech Stanza Group, to help deliver a five-year anniversary open mic event and associated poetry collection publications.
- £2,000 to Chatteris Town Council, to help fund attractions at the Chatteris Midsummer Festival.
- £2,000 to theatre producer Harrison Fuller, to deliver his interactive play, ‘Henry VIII Used to Hate Us’, for free in Whittlesey, along with a youth workshop and ‘community conversations’ work.
- £2,000 to artist Lisa Banks, to curate an art exhibition at Wisbech Gallery.
- £2,000 to March Summer Festival, to deliver art and craft skills workshops at the festival.
- £500 to Gail Burgess School of Ballet, to help deliver a ballet show at Neale Wade Academy in March.
- £2,000 to The Anglian Players, to help deliver their new production, Harvey.
- £300 to artist Katrine Cousins, to deliver a ‘walk, talk, sketch and print’ workshop.
- £2,000 to Playground Proms, to deliver interactive performances at 20 schools in the Chatteris, March and Wisbech areas.
- £2,000 to artist Syrah Arnold, to deliver a series of weekly creative, mindfulness sessions for parents/carers during school hours.
- £1,750 to Wisbech Projects CIC, to deliver engagement work with artists and hold a Visual Arts Trail exhibition.
- £1991 to Nene Art School CIC, to deliver a series of heritage craft workshops to young people in Wisbech, exploring endangered heritage crafts such as boat building, canal art and boat painting, straw making, and fairground art.
- £2,000 to creative practitioner Peggy Mends, to deliver a series of creative workshops – ‘Simple Pleasures: through Touch, Memory and Colour’ – for the residents, friends, family and staff members of Lyncroft Care Home in Wisbech.
- £1,845 to the Friends of Wisbech Park, to commission a new giant horse sculpture by metal artist Michael Caveney, for Wisbech Park.
- £1,800 to Cambridgeshire Community Reuse and Recycling Network (CCORRN), to deliver a series of workshops, and create resource boxes, for people to create art that will contribute to a new CommuniTREE sculpture at CCORRN’s REMO Eco Hub in March.
- £2,000 to Youth Step to Success (Y-STs), to help create a new Community Drumming Choir.
- £1,888.80 to Safe Soulmates, to help deliver creative arts workshops to neurodivergent and disabled adults across Fenland.
- £2,000 to Critical Mask Pictures Ltd, for the production and screenings of a new short film to raise awareness of Men’s mental health.
- £2,000 to Ramnoth Junior School, Wisbech, for children to work with an urban artist to design and create a large piece of art for the school playground.

- £2,000 to WIDE, for a community quilting project aimed at disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and groups.
- £1,200 to artist Moira Millman, to deliver a series of after school creativity workshops in March.
- £850 to Bricstan Concert Band, to help the band develop following its launch in August 2024, including funding rehearsal space and purchase of music.

Fenland Culture Fund recipients (capital grants):

- £400 to Chatteris Community Choir, to invest in portable lights for music stands, helping the choir to read their music in venues with low lighting.
- £2,000 to Octavia Hill Birthplace Museum Trust, Wisbech, to invest in the design, fabrication and installation of a bespoke sculpture for Centenary Green.
- £2,000 to the Bramley Line Heritage Railway Trust, to carry out works on the Bramley line (March – Wisbech branch line), with the aim of preserving the line and passing on its heritage.
- £588 to artist Sarah Heather, to invest in a vlogging camera so she can start a YouTube channel and promote her work to a wider audience.
- £600 to Manea historian Martin Hindry, to invest in exhibition boards enabling his 'Manea Archive & Library Project' to be exhibited at the annual Manea Gala and other venues in Fenland.
- £1,993.14 to Nine Lives Theatre Company, to invest in a replacement dance floor for the group's performance space, helping to elevate future performances.
- £1,800 to March Camera Club, to invest in exhibition panels, for use by the club and other community groups and artists.
- £992.04 to 20Twenty Productions CIC, to invest in two dance mirrors at March Town Hall, for the benefit of its young members and other groups using the hall.
- £1,996 to March Civic Trust, to invest in LED theatre lights at March Town Hall, improving theatre/stage performances at the hall.
- £200 to Wisbech and Fenland Museum, to invest in retractable wall barriers, enabling areas of the museum to be sectioned off for family sessions.
- £1,600 to artist Marian Savill, to invest in materials for art journaling workshops.
- £1,800 to Remarkable Entertainment and Events Ltd, to invest in stage lighting for a variety of shows and events.
- £1,898 to the Wisbech Theatre Trust, to invest in an Apple iMac and Mac Mini, to enable young people to create high-quality films, graphics, and digital media, fostering creativity and digital skills development.

Ends

Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk