

CREATIVE ECONOMY STRATEGY

2026 - 2030

For the
future
Lambeth
Now



A borough of
equity and justice





Alvin Kofi contemplates his artist commission 'Memories of Our Future' at Lambeth Town Hall

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LAMBETH'S CREATIVE ECONOMY STRATEGY

Lambeth is home to a vibrant and diverse creative sector. From the internationally renowned cultural institutions of the South Bank to the creative hubs of Brixton, Vauxhall and Clapham, every part of the borough has a story to tell.

This strategy sets out a bold, practical roadmap for ensuring Lambeth's creative economy is inclusive, ambitious and centred on the unique people and places that make it so special.

It builds on what's already working. It responds to current pressures. And it sets a clear direction for the future. It outlines our mission, defines the difference we want to make by 2030, and sets out our commitments to get us

there, aligning with our Borough Plan and Growth plan at every step.

Creativity is key to unlocking inclusive growth for the borough. This is our commitment to the people and organisations who make up Lambeth's creative economy: we will use every lever we have available to help strengthen this vital and vibrant sector and make sure Lambeth continues to be a borough where creativity thrives.



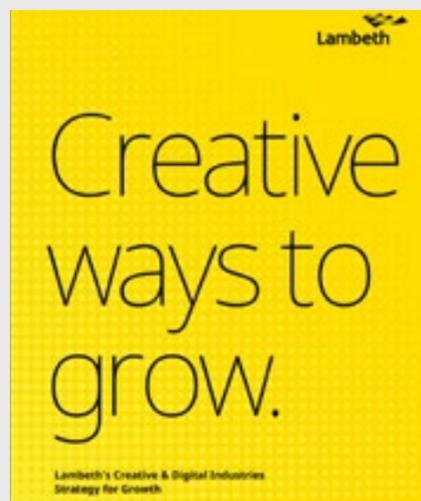
**Cllr Marcia Cameron,
Cabinet Member
for Economic Inclusion**

Exterior of the former Streatham Space Project,
reopening in 2026



SETTING THE SCENE

In 2018, Lambeth Council launched our landmark creative and digital industries strategy.



Creative Ways to Grow laid the foundations for long-term investment in the sector. Since then, we've helped secure over £50 million in funding, backed major cultural capital projects, and created pathways for more than 6,000 young people to experience careers in the creative industries.

The creative industries are now recognised as one of Lambeth's priority growth sectors. The creative economy contributes to both cultural and economic life in the borough. As part of Lambeth 2030: Our Future, Our Lambeth, it plays a central role in our vision of a borough where everyone can thrive, with opportunities for businesses, residents and young people alike.



Celebrating and reviewing Lambeth's inaugural Creative Industries strategy, launched in 2018

However, the past five years have brought major challenges.

Nationally the creative industries are still lacking in diversity, and the sector continues to feel the impact of austerity, Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the cost-of-living crisis. At the same time, local authorities are under unprecedented financial pressure. Yet creativity has remained a source of resilience and an engine of recovery, and our commitment to supporting it is stronger than ever.

With a new government and shifting national priorities, now is the time to reflect and renew our ambition.

Like many local authorities, Lambeth faces significant financial pressures. With rising complexity, demand and costs for services over the past decade, it's even more important that we make the most of the people and opportunities we do have to improve resident's lives.

The creative industries are a recognised growth sector. We are committed to attracting external investment, building strong partnerships and targeting our resources to unlock wider economic and social value for Lambeth's communities.

Growth is this government's top priority, and we want Lambeth's creative sector to be at the heart of it.

Lambeth's Growth Plan sets out how we will work in partnership over the next decade to attract and enable investment that grows and strengthens our economy while tackling social injustice and the climate crisis.

Creative industries are one of our fastest-growing sectors, and central to our vision for the future. By investing in infrastructure, skills, and enterprise support, we can unlock their full potential. This will help generate high-quality jobs, nurture diverse talent, and drive innovation that benefits communities across the borough.

A STRONG FOUNDATION

Over the past five years, the council has laid the groundwork for a stronger, fairer creative economy - backing bold ideas, shaping policy, and supporting the people and places that help our creativity thrive.



Rambert River Stage 2024 at the National Theatre, credit: Foteini Christofilopoulou



Artist Studio Company in Streatham, funded by Future Workspace Fund



RE:Purpose renovations in progress at Whippersnappers CIC credit: Whippersnappers CIC



Future Connected cohort 2024

The Engine of Recovery report, published in partnership with South Bank Business Improvement District, Southbank Centre, National Theatre, Rambert, The Old Vic, and Young Vic. Through data and stories, the report demonstrated the significant value that these

South Bank and Waterloo organisations contribute to both the local and national economy, as well as their impact on local residents and borough-wide opportunities.

From 2018-2023 the council helped secure over £50 million inward investment for the creative industries from a range of capital and revenue funding sources that enabled programme delivery.

innovative planning policy can champion culture-led growth by delivering over 90,000 square feet of affordable workspace and cultural infrastructure, including delivery and protection of vital space for creative businesses across the borough.

Our Future Workspace Fund and Affordable Workspace Policy demonstrate how thoughtful,

Our RE:Purpose capital grants programme, launched in 2024, has awarded £300,000 in UKSPF funding to 12 creative and community organisations, providing grants of up to £25,000 to improve buildings and strengthen business models. The programme demonstrates

how targeted capital investment for the creative industries and cultural sector can deliver cross-cutting benefits, supporting increased access and inclusion, and is being expanded to support climate resilience and the night-time economy.

Future Connected was our values-led leadership development initiative to empower diverse and underrepresented leaders within Lambeth's creative industries. A collaboration between Arts Ideas Realised, Act 4, and Lambeth Council, the programme provided

grassroots and smaller-scale creative businesses with the tools to grow, thrive, and represent their communities effectively. Over two years the programme supported 65% female and 43% Black and Multi-Ethnic leaders.



Brixton Summer Streets Fund, credit: Magnus Andersson

The Brixton Creative Enterprise Zone, accredited in 2018, has unlocked funding, affordable space and a support ecosystem for local creatives supporting nearly 400 businesses. Recently, through IB Create delivered by Impact Brixton, we offered a dynamic programme of workshops and mentoring

designed to empower and elevate creative businesses and entrepreneurs. The programme engaged over 100 participants, with half receiving tailored mentoring and a quarter benefiting from expert guidance provided by industry leaders.



New façade of The Old Vic Backstage, credit: Phillip Vile

The Old Vic's new Backstage building, supported by the council through the Future Workspace Fund and a council loan, is now ready. The building will provide dedicated space for education, skills development and community engagement - expanding access to training,

employment and wellbeing programmes for Lambeth residents. The Old Vic will also provide 300 tickets per year to Lambeth residents via links with schools and community groups in the borough.



CGI image of 72 Upper Ground building, credit: CO-RE

72 Upper Ground is set to become a major cultural innovation hub on the South Bank, with ringfenced affordable space - demonstrating how regeneration can prioritise community benefit and cultural infrastructure. Working with CO-RE we were able to secure the inclusion of significant

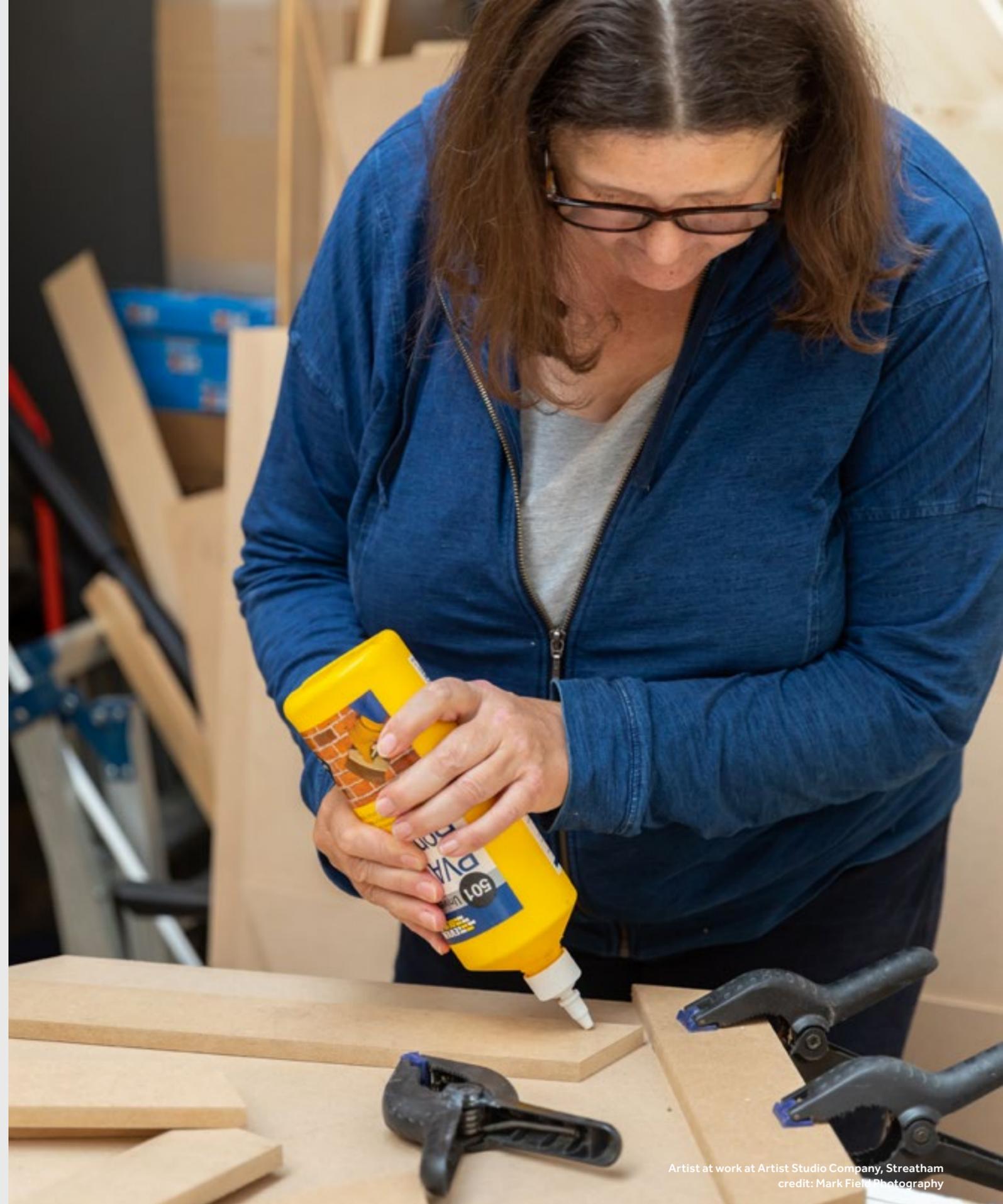
cultural infrastructure into the development, connecting with organisations across the borough and including a dedicated hub for supporting the next generation of creatives.



School children taking part in Windrush 75 procession

ELEVATE, our flagship programme for creative equity, has reached over 6,000 children and young people, 80% of Lambeth schools, and over 70 partner organisations, embedding youth leadership and creative opportunity across the borough.

Our Adult and Community Learning programme engages over 100 adults each year in a creative curriculum, delivered with partners including Morley College, a key provider of adult learning and creative skills, alongside 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, and Photofusion.



Artist at work at Artist Studio Company, Streatham credit: Mark Field Photography

Creativity in numbers...

Lambeth's largest creative industries by employment are IT, software and computer services; music, performing and visual arts; and publishing.

The borough's creative economy also spans the other recognised creative industry sectors: film, TV, radio and photography; architecture; advertising and marketing; design and designer fashion; museums, galleries and libraries; and crafts, reinforcing Lambeth's position as a major centre for the creative economy.



31,726

adults work in Lambeth's culture and creative sector, including residents and those travelling into the borough for work. This is more than double the national average and higher than the London average, reinforcing Lambeth's role as a major centre for the creative workforce.



2,000

Around 2,000 creative businesses, spanning sectors such as visual arts, theatre, film, digital media and design, call Lambeth home, reinforcing its role as a major centre for the creative economy.



27 NPOs

There are currently 27 Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) based in the borough, up from 21 in 2018. This reflects Lambeth's role as a nationally significant centre for cultural production, community engagement and participation.



400

Lambeth has over 400 public artworks, monuments and sites of historical significance, visible in the public realm, parks and open spaces, reflecting the borough's cultural identity, communities and history.



Trash Gxng Bootcamp participants
credit: Trash Gxng, Chloe Fernandes

CHALLENGES WE FACE

Our conversations with the sector highlight both the potential and the pressures facing Lambeth's Creative Industries.

At a local level

- Rising costs, uncertain funding and a shortage of affordable space are making it harder for businesses to grow and stay in the borough.
- Skills gaps in digital production, technical skills and leadership are making recruitment and retention more difficult.
- Freelancers face financial precarity, limited access to training and career progression, and increased isolation.
- Many residents still feel disconnected from cultural life, due to cost, visibility, relevance or a lack of inclusive pathways.
- A shift in national funding priorities away from London has increased pressure on local authorities and cultural institutions to deliver more with less.
- The borough's over-50s population experiences some of the highest levels of unemployment and are particularly vulnerable in a rapidly changing labour market, with limited access to upskilling and reskilling opportunities due to a lack of age inclusive pathways into creative employment.

The National Picture

Inequality in the creative industries persists and the creative workforce remains unrepresentative.

- The proportion of people working across arts, culture and heritage who are White is 90%; higher than the general workforce figure at 85% (Creative PEC, 2024).
- People from Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic and working-class backgrounds are estimated to have a one in ten chance of working in this sector nationally – half the odds of those from a white and privileged background (GLA, 2023)
- Women comprise only 34% of 'managers and directors in the creative industries.' (Creative PEC, 2024)
- Disabled people from a working-class background are 2.7 times less likely to find employment in these industries than non-disabled people (GLA, 2023)



DJ at Mighty Hoopla Festival 2023
credit: Emily Marcovecchio

The case to act now

THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ARE AN ECONOMIC SUCCESS STORY. THEY ARE A MAJOR UK EMPLOYER, EXPORTER AND A PULL FOR INWARD INVESTMENT.

They drive innovation and productivity, improve our living standards and drive growth in the wider economy. They create good jobs across the country, shape the way we talk about ourselves as a nation and are the face and voice of our reputation abroad.

In short, they play a unique role in both an economic and social sense, and they are at the heart of our Industrial Strategy and our Growth Mission”.

Creative Industries Sector Plan

London is the engine of the UK's creative economy and Lambeth is at the heart of it.

- Our potential for inclusive growth and investment is recognised at a regional level in the London Growth Plan which cites the strength and opportunity in our internationally renowned creative clusters and visitor destinations.
- Lambeth's diverse and residential centre at the heart of London offers a powerful opportunity to shape how growth reaches local communities.
- The borough's diverse communities and public spaces offer a platform to challenge representation gaps - just 15% of London's statues honour women, while more depict animals (ArtUK, 2021).
- Strong cultural infrastructure, from Waterloo to Brixton, positions Lambeth as a key borough for creative production, performance and participation.
- The council has built up a reputation as a leader in support for the creative economy, since the production of Creative ways to grow in 2018, and our sector has historic and world leading strengths.
- With world-class institutions, a dense ecosystem of businesses and freelancers, and a young, diverse population, Lambeth has the assets and ambition to lead the way in growing a stronger, fairer creative economy.



75TH ANNIVERSARY OF FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN

As Lambeth launches its Creative Economy Strategy, it does so as home to some of the country's leading cultural institutions.

The Southbank Centre, the UK's largest arts centre, based in the borough, celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2026, a significant milestone for the organisation and for Lambeth's cultural life.

First held in 1951, with its heart on the South Bank in Lambeth, the Festival of Britain was a landmark national event that celebrated post-war recovery through design, science and the arts. In 2026, the 75th anniversary will be a milestone moment to reflect on that legacy while looking to the future. Working in partnership with Southbank Centre's Creative Engagement team, we will connect schools, communities, freelance creatives and local businesses to the celebrations.

Every school in Lambeth will be invited to create a piece of visual

poetry, with all contributions forming a borough-wide public art commission installed on the Southbank Centre site, building civic pride and a sense of shared ownership. The Southbank Centre has bold and exciting ambitions for the programme through large-scale participatory public art, digital projects and creative interventions, ensuring residents of all ages - from early years to older generations - are part of the anniversary.

Future-facing opportunities in creative technology and digital storytelling will also be

spotlighted, so the festival is as much about innovation as commemoration. Collaboration will be at the heart of this initiative. The 75th anniversary is a chance to celebrate Lambeth's creative spirit, deepen connections with one of its most iconic cultural institutions, and ensure local people are at the centre of this national moment.

"1951 WAS THE MOMENT AFTER THE WAR THAT THE UK TRANSFORMED FROM BLACK, WHITE AND GREY INTO FULL GLORIOUS TECHNICOLOUR, AND THE VIBRANT, OPTIMISTIC, FORWARD-LOOKING ENERGY IT CREATED STILL RADIATES FROM THE SOUTHBANK CENTRE.

Now, more than ever, that energy feels vital to harness and we're doing that with a year-round programme that brings people together in a joyful communion with the art, ideas and technologies that will shape our future".

Mark Ball, Artistic Director, Southbank Centre



Young people exploring the Southbank Centre estate
credit: Pete Woodhead



Victorian Vauxhall, part of the Vauxhall Cultural Programme

ACHIEVING OUR MISSION

By 2030, Lambeth's world-leading creative economy will be stronger and fairer, with its communities at the heart of the UK's creative growth

In a time of significant challenge and opportunity, we need a clear, joined-up approach that puts creativity at the heart of inclusive growth.

We commit to strengthening Lambeth's cultural and creative economy, so that it grows in ways that everyone can contribute to and benefit from.

We will stimulate investment, generate more jobs and achieve an accessible, innovative and modern economy.

We've identified three strategic aims that set out the difference we want to make by 2030 and guide the commitments that will get us there.

AIM ONE

Our Creative Economy is more resilient and sustainable, strengthened through connection, knowledge sharing and advocacy.

The Challenge

Our creative organisations have told us that they want to be more connected.

That, too often, they are working in isolation without access to the networks, peer support, or collaborative infrastructure needed to thrive. Freelancers and small businesses, in particular,

face time and capacity constraints that limit their ability to plan ahead, collaborate, or engage with wider sector opportunities.

At the same time, the policy landscape is growing more complex. From climate action to digital innovation, the sector is expected to adapt but access

to skills, funding and networks isn't evenly distributed. Without stronger connections and a more coordinated voice, the sector risks becoming more precarious and less able to access investment and opportunities or influence the decisions that affect its future.

The Opportunity

Creativity thrives on connection. Stronger networks help organisations share insight, respond to change, and unlock new opportunities. As a council, we're uniquely placed to convene and connect – joining the dots between creative practitioners, cultural organisations and education institutions, funders, policymakers and other growth sectors like health and tech.

Emerging technologies like virtual and augmented reality are opening up new ways of making and sharing creative work. But to take advantage, organisations need access to the right skills, tools and investment. Universities and research institutions have a critical role to play here.

Evidence shows that clustering and cross-sector collaboration

support innovation, resilience and shared growth – between commercial and publicly funded organisations, between creatives and universities like London South Bank University (LSBU), and across sectors where creative thinking can drive innovation. Clustering and collaboration are proven to support resilience and shared growth.

Our Approach

We will build a more resilient, sustainable and joined-up creative economy by stepping into our leadership role – convening the sector, strengthening advocacy, and driving knowledge exchange, skills-sharing and business development.

We'll strengthen the relationships, knowledge and advocacy that help Lambeth's creative sector thrive.

By building connections, supporting knowledge exchange and championing the sector's value locally and nationally, we will help creative businesses and practitioners navigate change and grow together.

What success looks like

A better-connected creative economy with stronger sector networks, more visible support, and increased collaboration across sectors. Creative organisations will be better equipped to adapt, share

knowledge, access opportunities (including national and regional funding) and shape the policies that affect their future.

"AS A COUNCIL, WE ARE PROUD TO PLAY A ROLE IN CONVENING AND CONNECTING OUR CREATIVE ECONOMY, WORKING ALONGSIDE AN EXCEPTIONAL RANGE OF ARTISTS, ORGANISATIONS AND BUSINESSES ACROSS THE BOROUGH. IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO SUPPORT SUCH A VIBRANT SECTOR."

Ian Davis, Chief Executive, Lambeth Council

AIM TWO

Our Creative Economy grows in size and reputation, with more good jobs, thriving businesses, and affordable workspace.

The Challenge

Lambeth is home to world-class venues, creative workspaces and enterprise zones - but many creative organisations are still struggling to grow and stay in the borough.

Rising costs, funding gaps and a shortage of affordable space are driving talent and opportunity elsewhere. Even major institutions like the Southbank Centre are

under pressure, facing rising running costs and unfunded capital needs.

Across the sector, skills shortages are worsening – organisations report difficulty hiring for areas like digital production, theatre management and traditional making skills. Freelancers remain financially insecure, often working in isolation with limited access to

training and support. Low pay, unclear career pathways and lack of leadership development further impact staff retention and progression.

Trustees and boards have also raised the need for more support to navigate ever increasing sector complexity and enable them to provide valuable, strategic leadership.

The Opportunity

Despite these challenges, Lambeth remains one of the UK's most dynamic creative centres.

With its cultural infrastructure, talented population and global reputation, the borough has a strong foundation and competitive edge. There is huge potential to make more of our

people and places - reimagining underused space, building new partnerships, and shaping local policy that enables growth.

By investing in leadership, skills, and career progression for freelancers and creative businesses we can help individuals build long-term, rewarding

careers in the sector. A more resilient sector delivers more than artistic excellence, it contributes to social value, supporting jobs, skills and wellbeing.

Our Approach

We will grow Lambeth's creative economy by securing affordable, high-quality workspace, supporting good jobs, promoting our creative places, and driving ambitious, innovative investment through infrastructure, planning policy and partnership.

We will protect and grow the spaces that enable creativity to thrive, securing affordable workspace, supporting

infrastructure and creating the conditions for people and businesses to grow via programmes like the Future Workspace Fund, RE:Purpose and embedding culture into our new Local Plan.

We will work with landlords, developers to unlock space and shape policy that protects affordability and long-term use, like Streatham Space Project.

We'll grow our industry-leading ELEVATE programme - building pathways from entry-level to leadership, with a focus on technical, producing and management roles.

We'll invest in skills, repeat successful models like Future Connected, and support trustees and boards to lead with confidence.

What success looks like

A thriving creative economy with more good jobs, stronger leadership, and a pipeline of skilled talent. An expansion in affordable, fit-for-purpose workspaces and existing spaces safeguarded. More freelancers and small businesses have access to training, networks and financial stability. Lambeth becomes a place that creative businesses can start, grow and stay.

"THE CREATIVE ECONOMY PLAYS A VITAL ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE COUNCIL'S VISION OF INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE GROWTH ROOTED IN OUR DYNAMIC PLACES AND TALENTED PEOPLE:

Generating good jobs, unlocking talent, building pride of place, and powering innovation that benefits everyone"

Cllr Claire Holland OBE, Leader of Lambeth Council

AIM THREE

Our Creative Economy is more representative, equitable and inclusive, accessed and enjoyed by local communities.

The Challenge

Lambeth's creative sector has international recognition, but too many residents still feel excluded from it. The creative workforce is unrepresentative, with disabled people and Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic creatives significantly underrepresented, especially in mid and senior roles.

Access to creative education in state schools has declined, limiting opportunities for young people from underrepresented backgrounds to develop their skills or see a future in the sector. Without early exposure, it's harder for young people to imagine themselves in creative careers.

The Opportunity

There is renewed national focus on equity in the creative industries, alongside stronger calls to invest in creative education, training and employment.

Lambeth is well-placed to lead this shift by embedding creative learning in schools through the National Centre for Arts and Music Education, to partnering

with our cultural venues to ensure every child can access creative learning, arts subjects and progression routes into the sector.

Creative health is another growing field, offering opportunities to embed arts in healthcare and improve wellbeing across the borough.

Creative businesses have also told us they want to widen resident engagement and better connect with local communities ensuring events, opportunities and leadership reflect Lambeth's diversity.

Our Approach

We will build a more inclusive and equitable creative economy by embedding creative learning, celebrating local voices, and widening access to culture, careers and decision-making.

We will build on ELEVATE's success and invest in creative pathways that enable those furthest from the labour market, and we will work with employers to improve progression, leadership

diversity and retention. Through our Local Education Partnership, we'll deepen engagement with schools and educators to embed creative learning early, align with national frameworks, and support clear, inclusive routes into the sector. We'll expand youth leadership and ensure our programmes are co-created with young people.

We'll also help the sector better reach and reflect the borough supporting inclusive programming, championing community voices, and prioritising those who face the greatest barriers to participation. The Townhall Art Programme will be a key means for us to trailblaze inclusive and innovative approaches to community engagement and creative representation.

What success looks like

A creative economy that is more inclusive and representative, where residents see themselves reflected in leadership, programmes and opportunities. Creative learning is embedded in every school, enabling young people to imagine and access a future in the sector.

Organisations are connected to their communities and equipped to reach and retain diverse talent. And across every part of the borough, creativity is a visible part of daily life.

WE OPEN 2026 BY CELEBRATING A MILESTONE IN BRITISH ART: NNENA KALU WON THE TURNER PRIZE 2025, BECOMING THE FIRST ARTIST WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY TO WIN THE AWARD. HER WORK, KNOWN FOR ITS BOLD, TACTILE APPROACH, SHOWS HOW ORIGINALITY THRIVES WHEN ARTISTS ARE GIVEN SPACE TO EXPLORE AND BE THEMSELVES.

Nnena has developed her artistic practice at ActionSpace's studio at Studio Voltaire in Clapham since 1999. Lambeth Council is proud to have supported Studio Voltaire through our capital programme, STRIDE, investing in its redevelopment and helping sustain and strengthen an accessible space that supports inclusive creative practice. It also reiterates the importance of long-term investment in inclusive cultural spaces that enable organisations such as ActionSpace and Studio Voltaire to nurture local talent.

OUR COMMITMENTS

Through in-depth consultation with creative businesses, freelancers, cultural partners, educators and young people, we have identified shared priorities:

Securing investment, supporting leadership and business development, diversifying routes into creative careers, and ensuring all residents feel confident engaging with culture.

To achieve these aims, we've set out a bold and practical A-Z of commitments.

Each one contributes to one or more of our strategic aims, reflecting the way people, places and priorities intersect in the real world. Together, they form a roadmap for action connecting policy, programmes and partnerships to help Lambeth's creative economy thrive.

Young artist discusses her work with family and visitors to the 'Memories of Our Future' exhibition at Lambeth Town Hall



ART IN THE PUBLIC REALM

Enable inclusive, innovative and high-quality public art that reflects Lambeth's communities and helps transform public spaces across the borough.

Public art connects local communities, welcomes visitors, and builds local pride.

In Lambeth, projects like 'Welcome to Little Portugal', 'Holding the Flame', and 'The World Reimagined Art Trail' show how innovative approaches to public art can improve representation and platform previously unheard stories.

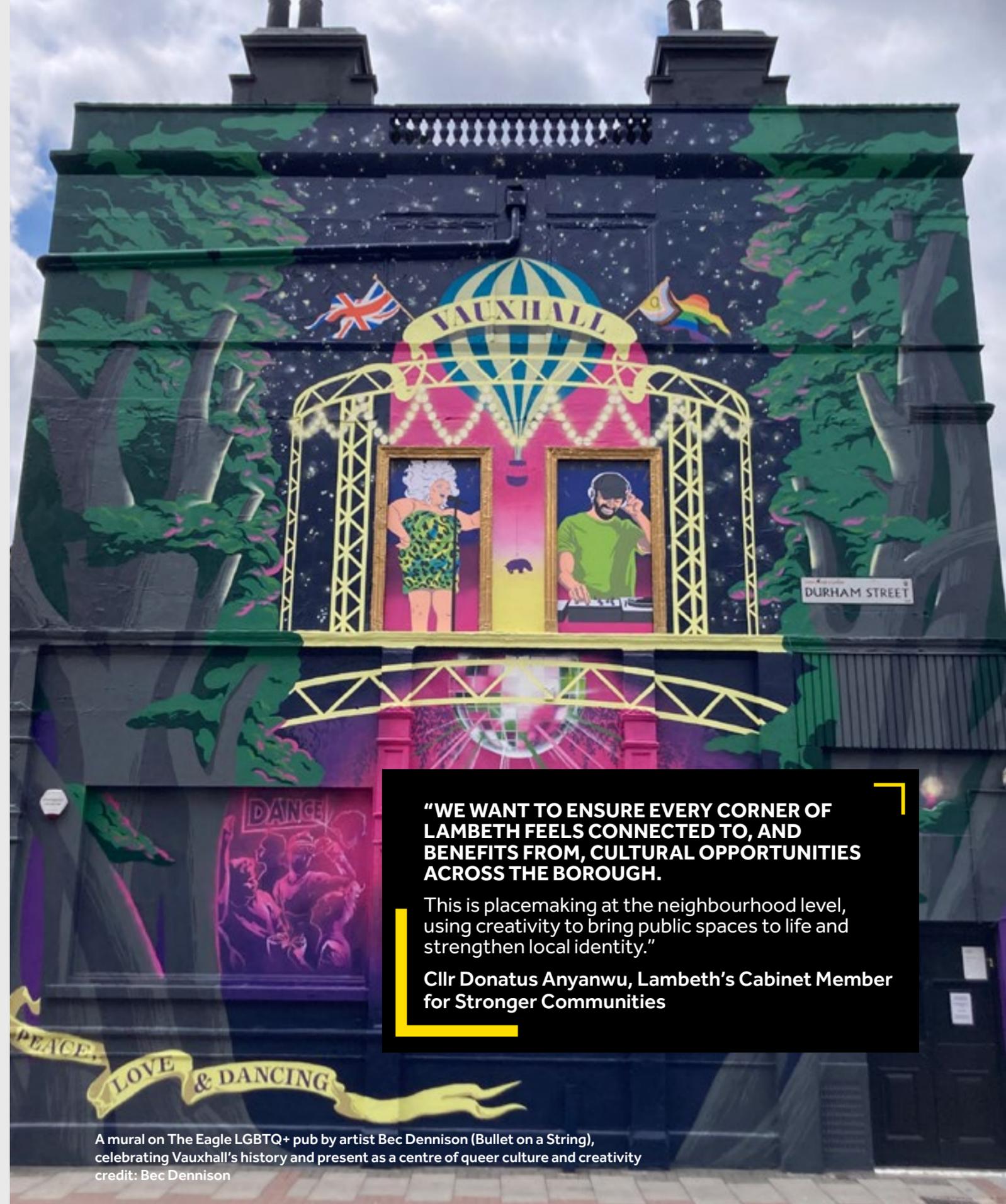
However, our stakeholders tell us that, from permissions and planning to technical

requirements, the process of producing public art and cultural activations in the borough is hard to navigate, especially for smaller organisations and creative practitioners.

We need to support our stakeholders while championing best practice in commissioning, representation, and importantly the sustainability and maintenance of public art, while highlighting the potential of new and emerging technologies in activations alongside traditional art forms.

By 2030 we'll...

Publish a guide on producing art in Lambeth's public realm, promoting innovation, supporting co-creation with local communities, and aligning with the Greater London Authority's Diversity in the Public Realm framework. Applying this approach ourselves, we'll test the concept through council-led initiatives including the Waterloo Masterplan, Festival of Architecture, the Low Line Extension, Windrush 80, and Festival of Britain 75.



"WE WANT TO ENSURE EVERY CORNER OF LAMBETH FEELS CONNECTED TO, AND BENEFITS FROM, CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE BOROUGH.

This is placemaking at the neighbourhood level, using creativity to bring public spaces to life and strengthen local identity."

Cllr Donatus Anyanwu, Lambeth's Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities

A mural on The Eagle LGBTQ+ pub by artist Bec Dennison (Bullet on a String), celebrating Vauxhall's history and present as a centre of queer culture and creativity credit: Bec Dennison

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Embed culture in the growth of the borough's cultural infrastructure by strengthening collaboration between creative industries and the built environment sector.

Creative businesses tell us they are often brought into planning discussions too late, missing opportunities to shape inclusive, vibrant cultural spaces. The council is well placed to change this by building stronger relationships between creative organisations, workspace operators and developers, and influencing planning decisions so that culture is better represented and creative spaces are more sustainable across the borough.

We will encourage developers to embed co-design from the outset, ensuring that new spaces are genuinely affordable and designed to meet the needs of makers, producers and other creative specialisms.

By brokering conversations between landlords and grassroots organisations, we can help break down barriers to accessing space – from negotiating leases to signposting organisations to register on the Charity and Not for Project register which enables us to recommend creative businesses to developers seeking cultural partners during the planning process.

Alongside this, we will strengthen skills for the future. Linking with initiatives such as ELEVATE and Future City Makers, we will support the next generation of planners, designers and creatives to shape the neighbourhoods where they live and work.

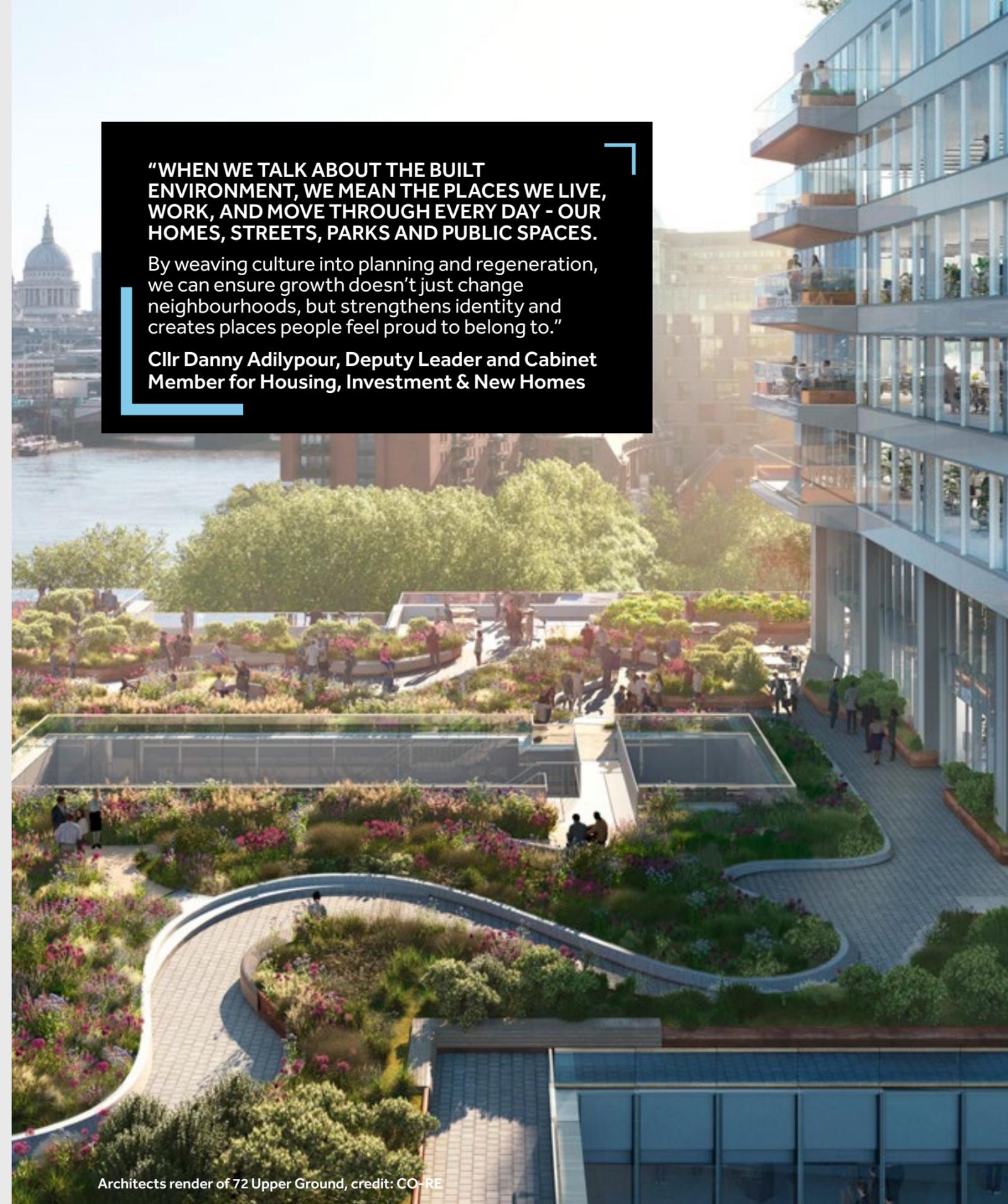
By 2030 we'll...

Pilot Lambeth's first Creative Industries x Built Environment Summit to bring together creative businesses, developers, planners and policymakers to embed culture in growth. The summit will showcase best practice, share models of culture-led regeneration, and highlight the need for long-term, affordable creative space.

"WHEN WE TALK ABOUT THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, WE MEAN THE PLACES WE LIVE, WORK, AND MOVE THROUGH EVERY DAY - OUR HOMES, STREETS, PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES.

By weaving culture into planning and regeneration, we can ensure growth doesn't just change neighbourhoods, but strengthens identity and creates places people feel proud to belong to."

CIr Danny Adilypour, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Investment & New Homes



Architects render of 72 Upper Ground, credit: CO-RE

COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIES

Build stronger relationships with commercial creative industries to open up new opportunities and strengthen Lambeth's creative economy.

Our recent mapping of Lambeth's creative sector against our network shows clear gaps. Many of the fastest-growing industries – including advertising, video games, fashion, architecture and design – are under-represented in our current connections. This limits opportunities for collaboration, investment and talent development.

We want to ensure the full breadth of the creative industries is represented in our network, both to attract new businesses and to support those already here. For residents, this means access to a wider range of career pathways, from fashion to gaming, with visible routes into

local partnerships and initiatives. For businesses, it means stronger networks, greater access to talent and more opportunities for inclusive growth.

Advertising and video games are identified as frontier industries in the government's Creative Industries Sector Vision, making it vital that the council is connected with those businesses already in the borough, and that we position Lambeth as a place for their growth. At the same time, sectors such as architecture and fashion face challenges around diversity, where the council can help connect employers with Lambeth's diverse talent and community networks.

Where we'll start:

Targeted outreach to advertising, gaming, fashion and architecture; mapping our network against sector size and scope. We will grow our relationships with Further and Higher Education providers who are carving out specialisms related to these commercial sectors, including London South Bank University Technical College gaming department.



Local makers sell their wares at the Black Culture Market

DIGITAL INNOVATION

Embed digital skills development into the council's support for the sector and advocate for increased investment in digital infrastructure.

New and emerging digital technology is reshaping how creative work is being made, shared, and experienced. But right now, not everyone feels able to engage with it. If we want a creative economy that's open, future-proof, and fair, digital must be part of the solution. We want to make sure digital tools and technology support creativity in Lambeth, rather than making things harder or less accessible.

That means listening to what creative organisations need and understanding what support is out there for them to access – whether that's skills, infrastructure, or funding. We'll work with partners to understand the barriers and opportunities around digital, and the potential of Createch partnerships, especially for smaller and community-based organisations.

We will advocate for greater investment in digital skills and infrastructure across arts and culture, with a focus on supporting smaller organisations. Without this commitment, innovation risks deepening rather than reducing inequalities. As new technologies like Artificial Intelligence continue to evolve, we'll join others in pushing for fair protections around creative rights and ownership.

We'll also make the case for investment in Lambeth's creative digital industries – from gaming to immersive design – and highlight the borough as a place where innovation can be tested in the real world. Lambeth's diversity, complexity and creative depth make it a powerful testbed for new ideas. If it works here, it can work anywhere.

Where we'll start:

Fund organisations via RE:Purpose to strengthen their digital capacity by purchasing new equipment and upgrading broadband and WiFi infrastructure, enabling them to reach wider audiences and improve operations.

Portico's new digital suite, funded by RE:Purpose capital grant from the council, credit: Portico Studio



E DUCATION AND ENRICHMENT

Enhance children and young people's access to culture and grow the role of creativity in education, both inside and outside the classroom.

Every child in Lambeth should have the chance to grow up feeling creative, confident and connected to culture. Yet access to high-quality creative learning is still unequal, with too many young people missing out. Building on our strong foundations, we will deepen our engagement with schools, families and cultural partners, embedding creativity across education at every stage.

Through ELEVATE's Local Cultural Education Partnership and our Music Education Service, we will continue to connect educators to professional development opportunities and young people to creative pathways.

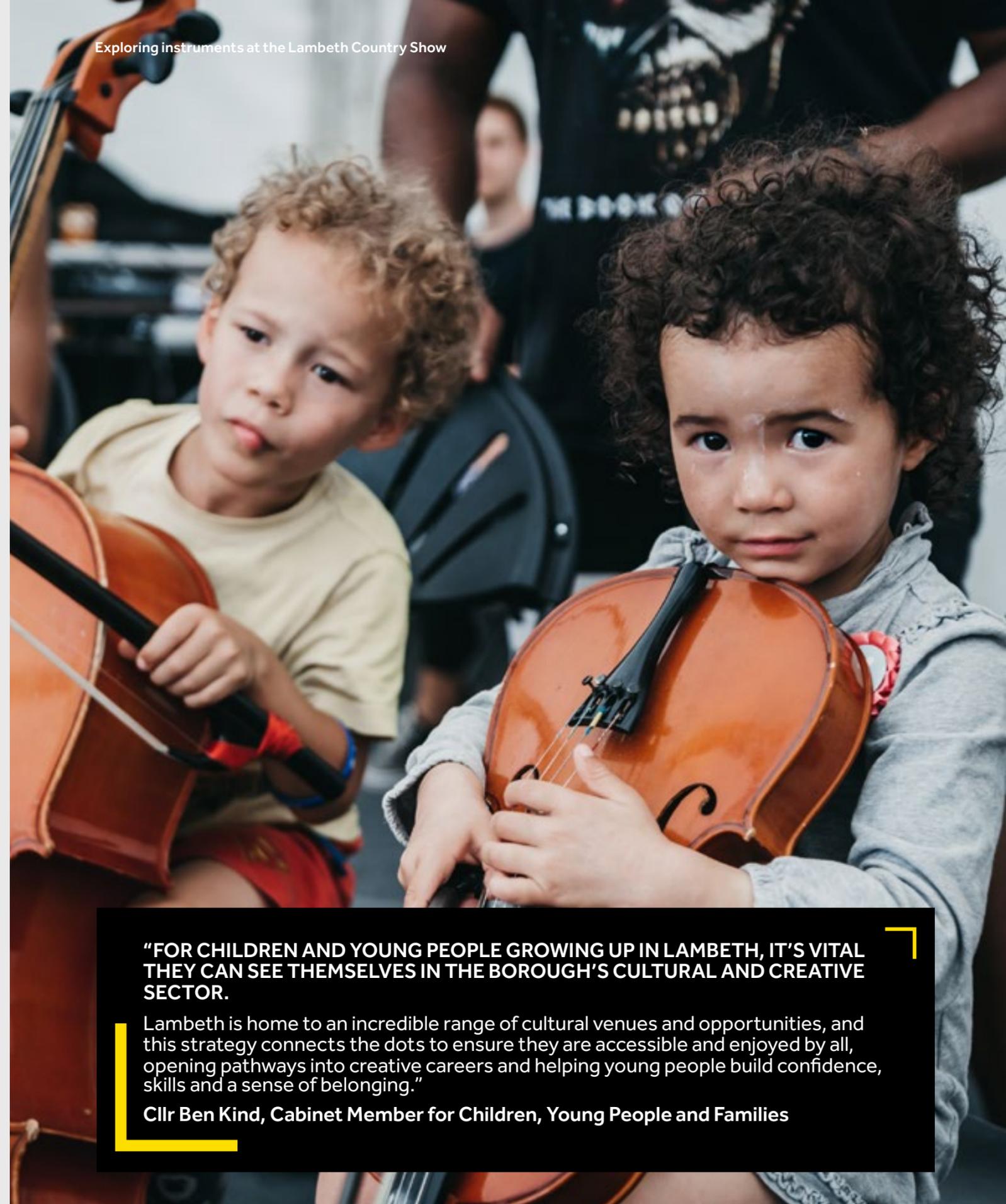
We will also support schools and cultural partners to align with national priorities such as the National Centre for Arts and Music.

We will work collaborate to ensure teachers have access to creative professional development (CPD) and champion the role of Expressive Arts in the curriculum. These subjects are valuable in their own right and support learning across the board. This work is about closing the arts entitlement gap and making sure every young person in Lambeth has the chance to thrive through creativity.

Where we'll start:

Develop a clear framework for creative engagement across early years, schools and youth settings, mapping opportunities for every child and young person aged 0–18 to access cultural experiences. The aim is to maximise and build on Lambeth's existing cultural offer, starting with a borough-wide public art commission in partnership with Southbank Centre to mark the Festival of Britain's 75th anniversary.

Exploring instruments at the Lambeth Country Show



"FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GROWING UP IN LAMBETH, IT'S VITAL THEY CAN SEE THEMSELVES IN THE BOROUGH'S CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTOR.

Lambeth is home to an incredible range of cultural venues and opportunities, and this strategy connects the dots to ensure they are accessible and enjoyed by all, opening pathways into creative careers and helping young people build confidence, skills and a sense of belonging."

Cllr Ben Kind, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Attract and enable festivals, showcasing Lambeth as a place of celebration, creativity and innovation.

We want to host festivals and events that celebrate Lambeth's identity, creativity and communities, while making it easier for new and existing festivals to thrive.

Lambeth is a place of gathering, protest and celebration. From grassroots street parties to the Lambeth Country Show, our borough is home to one of London's most distinctive and diverse festival scenes.

We want to build on this strength by positioning Lambeth as London's leading festival borough – a place where festivals of every kind can thrive, whether that's a comedy festival in West Norwood or the festival of architecture in Waterloo, classical music, design and visual arts.

Our ambition is to be more proactive in attracting a broader range of cultural festivals, while strengthening and expanding those that are already established. This includes working with community organisations, cultural institutions and commercial promoters to support festivals that celebrate local talent, create jobs and training opportunities, and attract new audiences to experience Lambeth's vibrant neighbourhoods, parks and open spaces.

Festivals can generate significant value for the wider local economy: driving footfall to high streets, supporting hospitality and nightlife, creating jobs and supply chain opportunities, particularly for food and beverage providers.

By 2030 we'll...

Work with community organisations, residents and festival organisers to identify opportunities for growth, and ensure investments in events deliver benefits of our communities, like the Brockwell Live Community Fund that has distributed £160,000 to local projects.



Mighty Hoopla Festival 2023, credit: Luke Dyson

GREENING THE SECTOR

Empower Lambeth's creative sector to lead on sustainability and circular economy practices - amplifying what's already working and building momentum across the borough.

As London's first council to declare a climate emergency, we are committed to supporting creative organisations to adopt sustainable practices. Creative organisations are a large part of our growing Lambeth Climate Action Partnership, the network supporting the sector in championing circular economy approaches, piloting climate technologies and sharing learning across the sector.

Initiatives such as the Theatre Green Book, the National Theatre Green Store, Lambeth Innovation

Challenge and the Culture Neighbours Forum provide strong models, and we will connect organisations to practical tools, funding and frameworks that help embed change.

Smaller businesses often face the greatest barriers, so we will focus on providing accessible guidance and opportunities that make sustainability achievable in practice. We will also lead by example by reviewing the sustainability of council-run festivals, events and advertising.

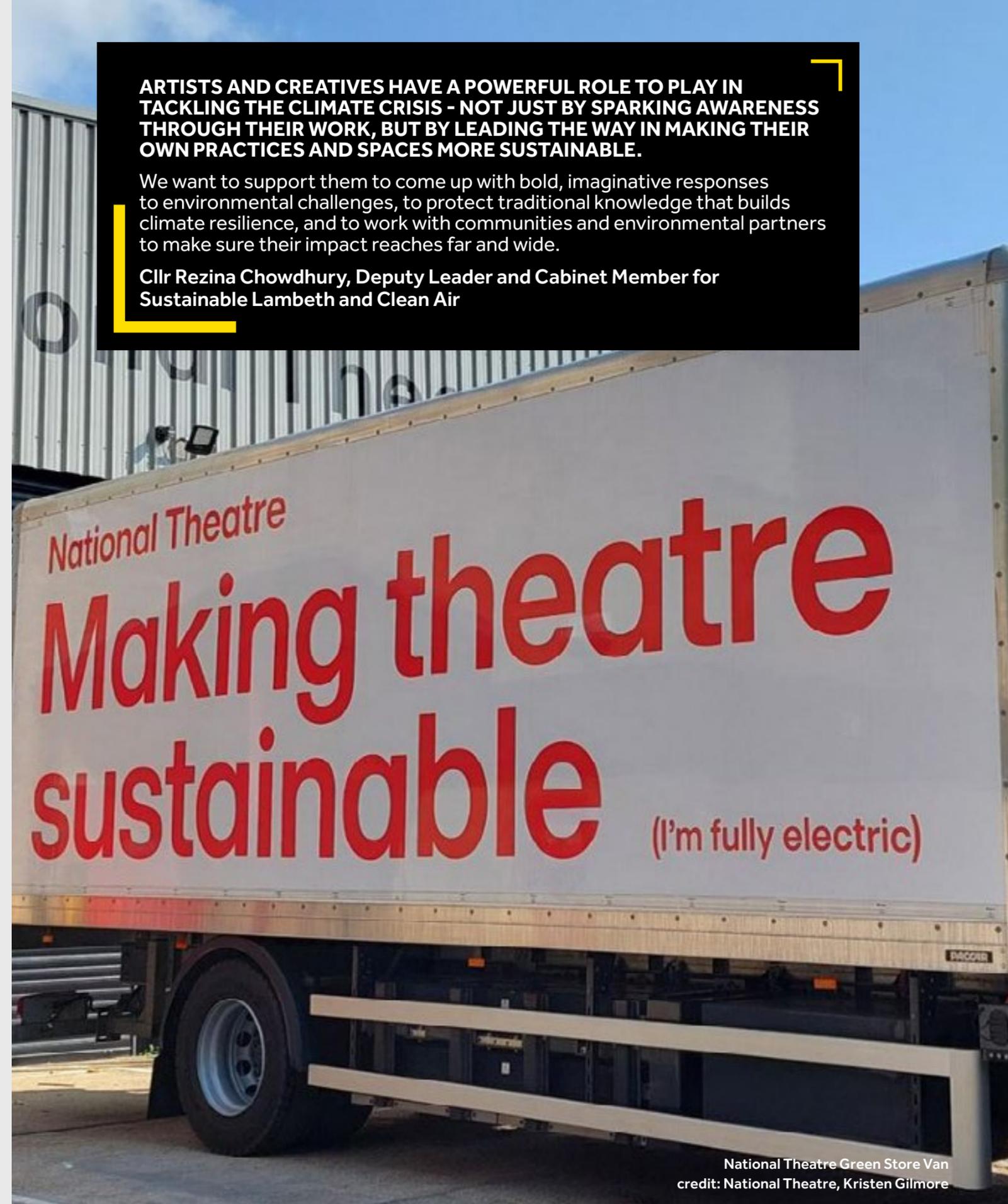
Where we'll start:

Build momentum and membership of our Climate Action Partnership and fund projects via RE:Purpose to deliver net zero and climate resilience improvements. In addition we will work with the BFI to encourage other Lambeth venues to join the Cool Off in Culture campaign.

ARTISTS AND CREATIVES HAVE A POWERFUL ROLE TO PLAY IN TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS - NOT JUST BY SPARKING AWARENESS THROUGH THEIR WORK, BUT BY LEADING THE WAY IN MAKING THEIR OWN PRACTICES AND SPACES MORE SUSTAINABLE.

We want to support them to come up with bold, imaginative responses to environmental challenges, to protect traditional knowledge that builds climate resilience, and to work with communities and environmental partners to make sure their impact reaches far and wide.

Clr Rezina Chowdhury, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air



National Theatre Green Store Van
credit: National Theatre, Kristen Gilmore

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Grow the role of Lambeth's creative sector in tackling health inequalities.

Creative approaches and activities that benefit people's health and wellbeing deliver wide-ranging impact: improving residents' physical and mental wellbeing, reducing healthcare costs, and supporting productivity. For the creative industries, they open new markets and funding streams and for the health sector, they provide innovative responses to community challenges.

We want to make it easier for organisations to engage in creative health work and by sharing tools such as the Creative Health Quality Framework and Impact Framework. We will build a common language and capacity across the sector and facilitate connections, raise awareness and integrate creative health into priorities such as Integrated Neighbourhood Health Teams, Child Friendly and Age-Friendly Lambeth.

We will build visibility of existing programmes including Southbank's Creative Health Centre for young people and ELEVATE's Pupil Wellbeing Ambassadors, and dance projects across the borough that engage residents of all ages.

We will also develop partnerships with SC1 London and Lambeth HEART, a local partnership focused on health, equity and research. Lambeth is also home to a thriving network of creative health practitioners, from Mindheart Creative Therapies and South London Art Therapy to Coram's Creative Therapies and Let's Grow CiC. These links will strengthen evidence, build capacity and grow impact.

Where we'll start:

Host a creative health 'marketplace' with 60 partners working in health and culture/creative industries to embed creative health in Neighbourhood Health Teams and launch a new Lambeth Creative Health Network.

CREATIVE HEALTH SHOULD FORM AN INTEGRAL PART OF A 21ST-CENTURY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SYSTEM – ONE THAT IS HOLISTIC, PERSON-CENTRED, AND WHICH FOCUSES ON REDUCING INEQUALITIES AND SUPPORTING PEOPLE TO LIVE WELL FOR LONGER.

THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CREATIVE HEALTH REVIEW 2023



Craft workshop at Art4Space
credit: Art4space

INWARD INVESTMENT

Attract investment and help Lambeth's creative sector become more investment-ready by building confidence, skills and networks that support long-term, values-led growth.

Access to long-term funding and investment remains one of the biggest challenges facing Lambeth's creative sector. Smaller businesses often struggle to move beyond project to project funding, and larger organisations face increasing pressure to secure financial sustainability in an ever more competitive landscape. Attracting inward investment is vital, going hand in hand with strong business planning, governance and leadership within organisations themselves.

Through platforms like the London Real Estate Forum and the UK Real Estate and Inward Investment Forum, we will showcase the sector's potential to unlock inclusive growth, regenerate neighbourhoods, and deliver long-term social and economic value.

By connecting creative organisations with investors, developers and policymakers, we'll help build the partnerships needed to sustain and scale Lambeth's creative economy.

The council plays an important role in attracting and brokering investment into the borough, making Lambeth's creative strengths more visible to funders, developers and partners.

We will help build the confidence and capacity of local organisations, so they are ready to benefit from new funding and investment opportunities. That means supporting the sector to strengthen business planning, diversify income streams, and develop the governance and leadership needed for long term growth.

Where we'll start:

Deliver a business support programme for creative businesses that have received council capital investment to make the most of their new or improved infrastructure and promote our creative industries on our newly refreshed Lambeth Now portal.



IMAGINATION DRIVES INNOVATION: THE BENEFITS OF BACKING CREATIVITY

Hosted by Steph McGovern, with speakers: Ida Levine (Board Director, Impact Investing Institute), Siena Pakington (Head of Content Acquisition, Prime Video, Amazon), Stephen Welton (Non-Exec Chair, British Business Bank), and Jenny Tooth (Executive Chair, UK Business Angels Association).



#bigsummit26



Panel discussion at The Big Creative UK Investment Summit, attended by a cohort of Lambeth creative businesses credit: Amy Wicks Young

JOB AND SKILLS

Support a fairer, more resilient creative workforce in Lambeth by improving career progression, championing good work, and strengthening support for freelancers.

The Government's Creative Industries Sector Plan, identifies skills and talent as critical to unlocking sector growth. Skills shortages across the creative industries have become increasingly acute, with many organisations reporting challenges in recruitment and retention, particularly in technical, producing and mid-career roles.

To tackle these issues, we will build on the success of ELEVATE and strengthen our networks to create clearer progression routes and widen access to mid and senior level roles, particularly for local creatives from underrepresented backgrounds.

We will work with local creative employers to offer inclusive recruitment and employment training, and seek increased Adult Skills Funding to respond to the evolving needs of the creative and cultural sectors, with a focus on

age-inclusive adult learning and employment outcomes. In line with the Inclusive Talent Strategy, we will champion the use of the new Growth and Skills Levy as an opportunity for employers to invest in apprenticeships and training pathways that support Lambeth residents.

We will also highlight creative professions in high growth sectors such as health and life sciences and the green economy, working with the council's Skills and Employment team to connect residents with pathways into these areas.

Freelancers remain central to Lambeth's creative workforce but face distinct challenges, including financial insecurity and limited access to training and networks. We will ensure they are included in initiatives around leadership development, mentoring and Continuous Professional

Development. A commitment to good work will underpin all of this – promoting fair pay, inclusive practice, wellbeing and long-term career development.

By 2030 we'll...

Deliver a pilot project with local theatres and further education providers that addresses identified skills gaps and delivers 6,000 hours of industry placements in backstage roles, preparing participants to progress from entry-level into mid-career roles, while gaining relevant qualifications.

Raw Material music studios
credit: Raw Material Music & Media Education



"FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FELT A GENUINE SPARK OF EXCITEMENT ABOUT WHAT I WAS LEARNING."

I was introduced to the world of graphic design, and it felt like I had finally found my interest and found a way to express my ideas visually, creatively, and with impact.

Elevator Emmanuel Dohou

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Build a culture of knowledge sharing and connection across Lambeth's creative sector so people can exchange insight, build trust and collaborate more easily.

Lambeth is full of creative talent and expertise, but during our sector engagement many practitioners and businesses told us they often feel isolated, missing out on opportunities to connect, learn or collaborate. Stronger networks can unlock ideas, build resilience and spark the trust needed for future partnerships, consortium funding, and advocacy.

We will use the Lambeth Now platform to better share the sector's knowledge - highlighting toolkits, case studies, learning resources and peer support and develop our touchpoints, including our digital newsletters and linkedin, to ensure more timely sharing of information and opportunities.

We'll spotlight models like Norwood Women's Network, who are building trust and confidence through local peer support.

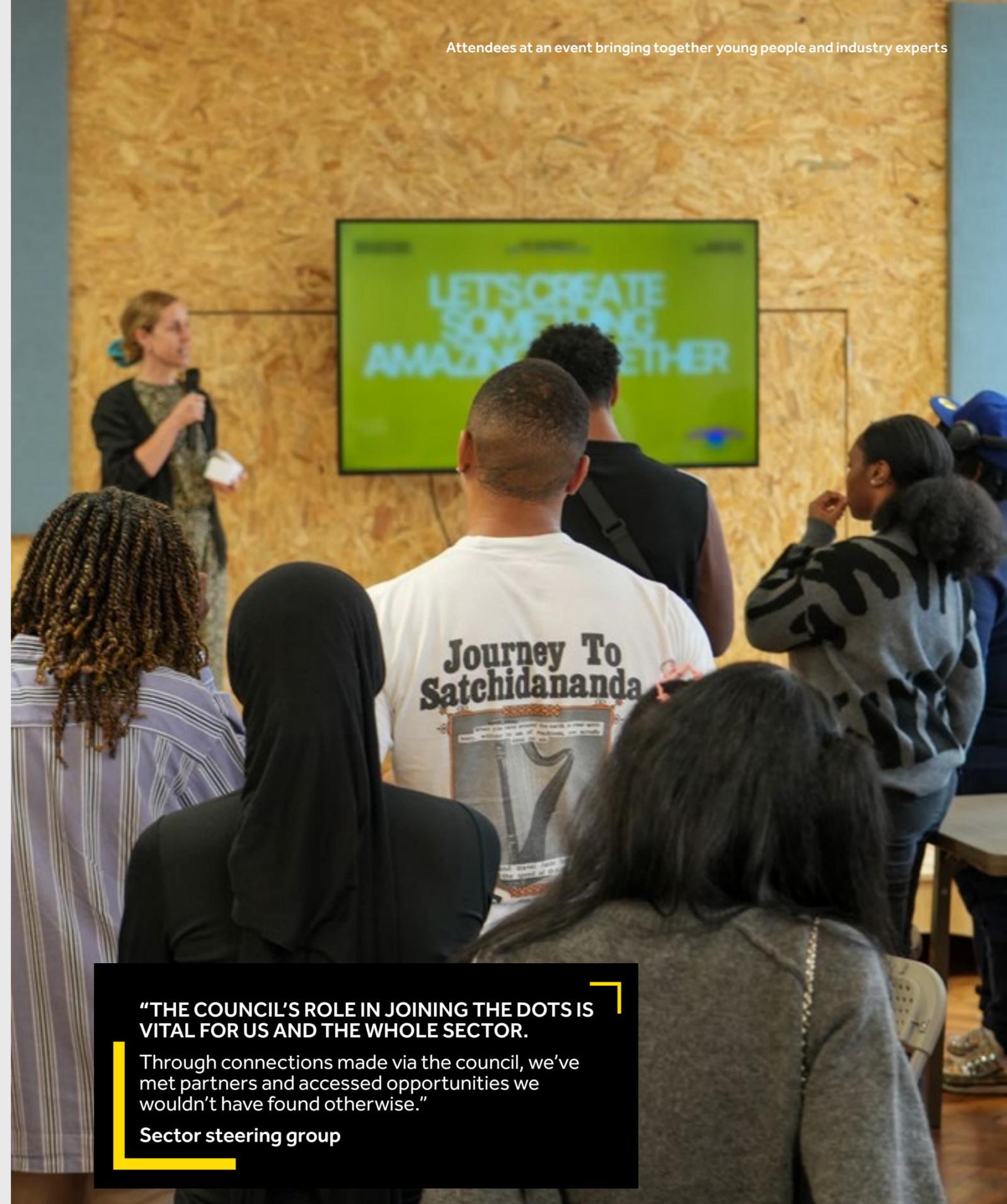
Freelancers remain central to Lambeth's creative workforce but often feel isolated or excluded from opportunities. We will ensure they are part of our networks and sector forums, making it easier for them to connect, share learning and access information about local opportunities.

This commitment underpins many others across the strategy: stronger relationships between organisations will support investment readiness, cross-sector partnerships, and a more joined-up voice in lobbying and advocacy. By creating space for connection, we'll unlock shared value and long-term impact.

By 2030 we'll...

Pilot a year-long knowledge sharing programme co-designed with sector stakeholders. It will be action-focused, inclusive, and tailored to the needs of Lambeth's diverse creative community. The programme will include in-person events, online forums, and themed working groups to bring people together across subsectors to share practical insight and build stronger connections.

Attendees at an event bringing together young people and industry experts



"THE COUNCIL'S ROLE IN JOINING THE DOTS IS VITAL FOR US AND THE WHOLE SECTOR.

Through connections made via the council, we've met partners and accessed opportunities we wouldn't have found otherwise."

Sector steering group

L LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY

Champion the sector locally, regionally and nationally, advocating for the investment, infrastructure and policy environment it needs to thrive

Lambeth's creative economy is one of our greatest assets, and it deserves its voice to be heard on the decisions that shape its future. That's why the creative industries is front and centre of Lambeth's Growth Plan, laying out our commitments to the sector alongside life sciences and the green economy.

We are already using our voice to champion Lambeth. In our response to the National Industrial Strategy we called upon the Government to focus on 'the stage' alongside 'the screen' in recognition of the borough's incredible performing arts landscape.

As a council, we will continue to engage with national and regional bodies including the Greater London Authority, Arts Council England, Creative UK and the new Creative Industries Taskforce. We will draw on local insight and trusted relationships to ensure Lambeth's creative sector is represented.

This includes responding to national consultations, bringing the sector together to shape our submissions, and sharing local evidence and experience with decision-makers.

We will champion the needs of creative freelancers in our advocacy work, aligning with the Government's new Creative Freelance Champion to ensure Lambeth's freelancers are represented in national debates about rights, investment and sector growth.

We will also advocate for the value of creativity across council services, making the case for culture as a contributor to education, health, climate action, community wellbeing and economic growth.

Over the next five years we'll...

Continue to engage with national and regional bodies including the Greater London Authority, Arts Council England, Creative UK and the new Creative Industries Taskforce. We will draw on local insight and trusted relationships to ensure Lambeth's creative sector is represented.



Cllr Claire Holland, OBE, championing Lambeth's growth sectors'

MEANWHILE SPACES

Make better use of temporary vacant spaces—supporting creative and community uses that generate social value and test longer-term potential.

Bringing vacant properties into meanwhile use is widely recognised for its potential to revitalise underused areas, providing affordable space for local businesses, community groups and artists, to stimulate economic growth and build social cohesion.

We will encourage landlords and developers with vacant plots of land and empty buildings to activate the space with meanwhile tenants.

We will work to match cultural organisations looking for space with developers, encouraging temporary, pop-up activations where appropriate, and exploring temporary uses as a proof of concept, helping to test and

prove the viability of including a cultural space or venue within the longer-term plans for a scheme.

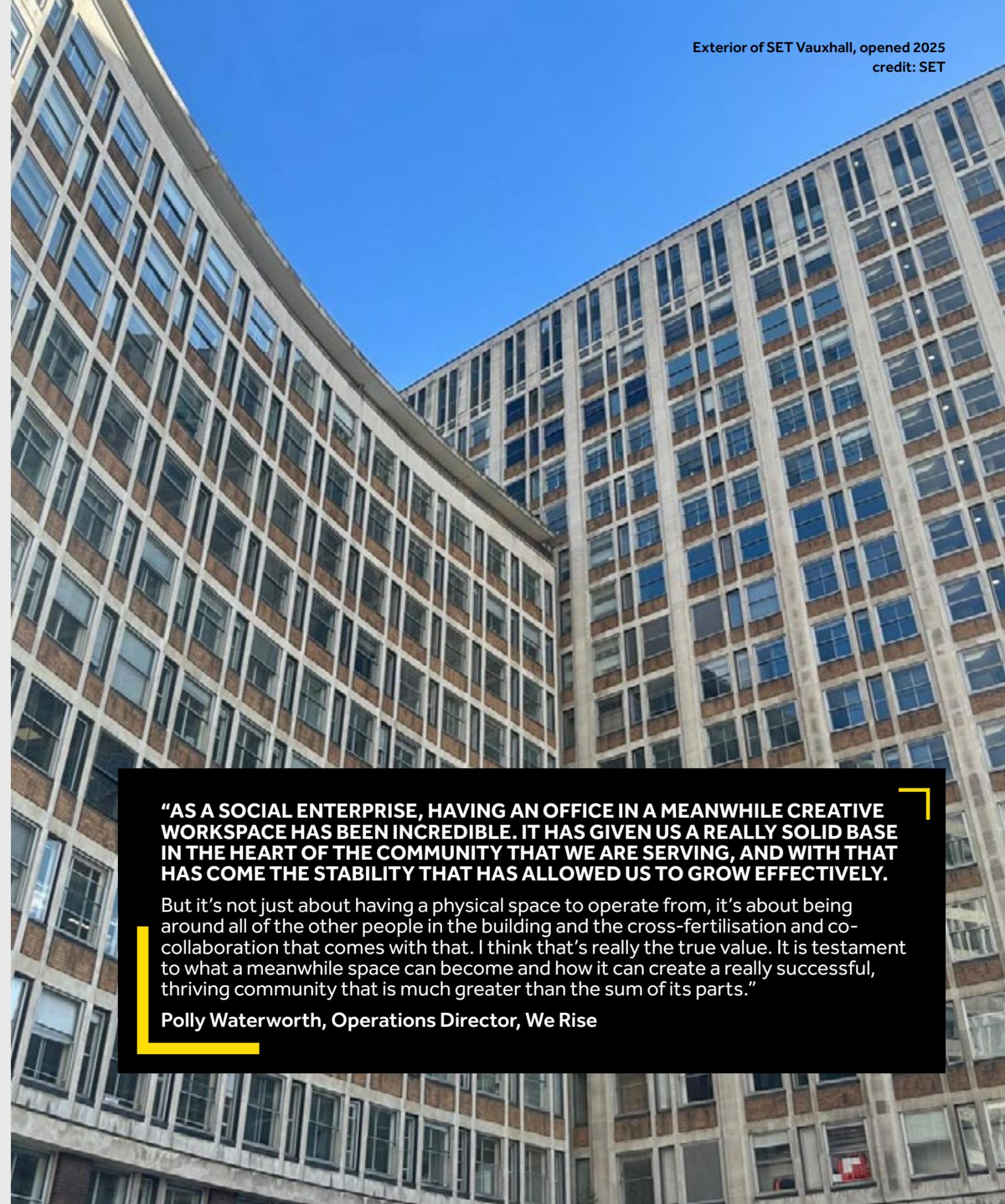
We will explore potential opportunities within the High Street Rental Auction scheme to enable creative uses in empty high street properties, and work to build capacity in the sector to take up these opportunities.

Meanwhile projects can often become very successful in their own right, and it can be difficult for the tenants when meanwhile sites need to close. We will work with landlords and developers to encourage transparency in the tenancy process and encourage beneficiaries of temporary space to plan independently for their next move.

Where we'll start:

Support creative Voluntary and Community Sector organisations in meanwhile or temporary spaces by sharing information about affordable workspace opportunities, signposting to relevant providers such as SET Vauxhall, and facilitating connections with landlords and partners where appropriate.

Exterior of SET Vauxhall, opened 2025
credit: SET



“AS A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE, HAVING AN OFFICE IN A MEANWHILE CREATIVE WORKSPACE HAS BEEN INCREDIBLE. IT HAS GIVEN US A REALLY SOLID BASE IN THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY THAT WE ARE SERVING, AND WITH THAT HAS COME THE STABILITY THAT HAS ALLOWED US TO GROW EFFECTIVELY.

But it's not just about having a physical space to operate from, it's about being around all of the other people in the building and the cross-fertilisation and co-collaboration that comes with that. I think that's really the true value. It is testament to what a meanwhile space can become and how it can create a really successful, thriving community that is much greater than the sum of its parts.”

Polly Waterworth, Operations Director, We Rise

NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Champion a thriving and inclusive night-time creative economy that supports local businesses, celebrates Lambeth's cultural identity, and ensures safety, accessibility, and opportunity for all.

Much of Lambeth's creative economy comes to life after 6pm. From grassroots music venues like the Cavendish Arms and regionally important venues like the O2 Academy and Electric Brixton, to outdoor cinema and dance classes - the sector's night-time offer plays a vital role in local economic growth.

But many businesses are coming to us because they are facing challenges to thriving at night: rising costs, licensing challenges, or community concerns around safety and antisocial behaviour.

We will align our Creative Economy Strategy with Lambeth's Night Time Strategy to support an ambitious, joined-up approach that strengthens local culture and businesses after 6pm. This means increasing creative programming at night, improving safety and making the local environment more welcoming. Working with

Business Improvement Districts, cultural venues and community partners, we will support more inclusive and imaginative uses of public space across the borough after 6pm, including events, art installations and outdoor performances.

We will integrate the night time economy into sector support by helping businesses access funding, promote events, or navigate planning and licensing. By doing so, we will help Lambeth's creative economy to flourish beyond the 9-5, grow safer and more inclusive neighbourhoods, and support local businesses and communities to thrive at night.

We will champion Lambeth's music venues as vital cultural and community assets, strengthening planning policies, including the Agent of Change principle, to support venues like Electric

Brixton, to safeguard them from the impact of new development, while also supporting them to thrive as part of the borough's growth and night-time economy.

Where we'll start:

Invest in new night-time cultural activity and help businesses enhance their premises via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Interior of Electric Brixton
credit: Electric Brixton, Robert Stainsforth



“ELECTRIC BRIXTON IS MORE THAN A MUSIC VENUE - IT'S A CULTURAL LANDMARK AND A VITAL STEPPING STONE FOR EMERGING ARTISTS.

As one of London's few mid-size venues, it plays a critical role in the UK's music ecosystem, offering artists a space to grow their audiences and take the next step in their careers. It's vital we champion their creative and economic impact and make use of our Planning Policies to protect them so they continue to thrive as part of the borough's night-time economy.”

CIlr Claire Holland, Leader of Lambeth Council

OLD VIC BACKSTAGE

Collaborate with The Old Vic to embed its new Backstage building in the borough – amplifying opportunities for learning, wellbeing, and employment.

We are excited for the launch of The Old Vic Backstage building. Supported by Lambeth through a Future Workspace Fund grant and a council-backed loan, this six-storey extension will provide new affordable workspace, community facilities and education space.

The project will create employment opportunities, strengthen Lambeth's cultural infrastructure and enhance The Old Vic's learning and participation offer, with a particular focus on employability, wellbeing and mental health.

For the first time, The Old Vic's education programmes will be brought together under one roof, in a building designed to be more open and welcoming to the local community and 10% of places across their Education and Community projects are ringfenced for participants who live, work or study in the boroughs of Lambeth or

Southwark. This new space will expand opportunities for Lambeth residents to gain skills, training and experience through initiatives such as Take the Lead, which supports students at key education transitions; Backstage, offering technical theatre training; and Frontline, which provides on-the-job experience in theatre roles across London.

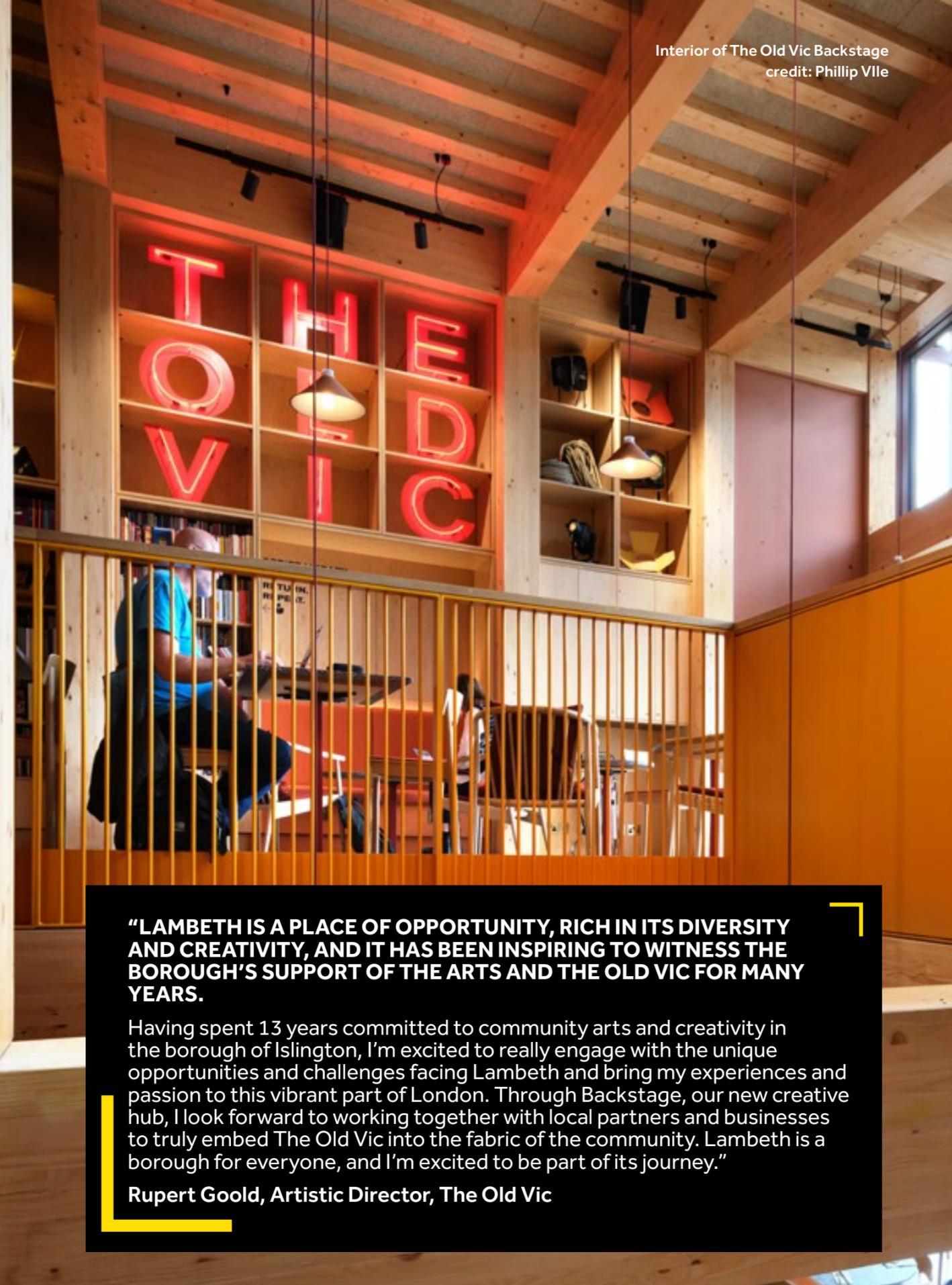
The programme will also open up the theatre to local people by offering 300 free tickets to young people and community groups, creating a schools club for Lambeth schools, and delivering wellbeing initiatives such as social prescribing, community choirs and Matinee Idols for older residents.

The council will help amplify these opportunities, ensuring residents are aware of and benefit from the expanded offer, contributing to Lambeth as a Child Friendly and Age Friendly borough.

Where we'll start:

Support and promote the launch of the Old Vic's Backstage building, co-design creative careers pathways opportunities for Lambeth students, and distribute 300 tickets free theatre tickets for schools and community groups.

Interior of The Old Vic Backstage
credit: Phillip Vile



“LAMBETH IS A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY, RICH IN ITS DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY, AND IT HAS BEEN INSPIRING TO WITNESS THE BOROUGH'S SUPPORT OF THE ARTS AND THE OLD VIC FOR MANY YEARS.

Having spent 13 years committed to community arts and creativity in the borough of Islington, I'm excited to really engage with the unique opportunities and challenges facing Lambeth and bring my experiences and passion to this vibrant part of London. Through Backstage, our new creative hub, I look forward to working together with local partners and businesses to truly embed The Old Vic into the fabric of the community. Lambeth is a borough for everyone, and I'm excited to be part of its journey.”

Rupert Gould, Artistic Director, The Old Vic

P LANNING POLICY

Strengthen planning policy to embed culture in development decisions and protect Lambeth's creative infrastructure.

A lack of clear cultural policies often means the needs of creative industries are overlooked in development proposals. We want to change this by ensuring cultural considerations are integrated much earlier in planning decisions, so that creative spaces are designed in from the outset rather than added as an afterthought.

Through the upcoming review of Lambeth's Local Plan, we will embed a stronger policy framework for the creative industries. This will provide clear guidance for planners and developers, protecting existing cultural assets, attracting long-term investment in new space, and ensuring developments reflect Lambeth's diverse communities.

Securing Section 106 contributions for our creative industries will enable us to protect and grow our cultural assets and opportunities. To support this, we will

collaborate with the Greater London Authority to ensure the cultural infrastructure map is kept up to date, providing an accurate picture of Lambeth's creative spaces, gaps and opportunities.

The government's December 2024 reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework require planning policies to reflect the National Industrial Strategy, enabling faster development of major creative infrastructure such as film studios, music arenas and large-scale performing arts venues.

These reforms will also strengthen implementation of the Agent of Change principle, placing responsibility on new developments to mitigate potential impacts on existing venues. This ensures housing and cultural infrastructure can co-exist, protecting Lambeth's music venues and other cultural assets that are vital to the borough's identity and creative ecosystem.

Over the next five years we'll...

Embed cultural infrastructure into policy via the Local Plan review and any accompanying Supplementary Planning Documents, ensuring better designed developments, increased protection for creative space, and a planning framework that actively supports Lambeth's creative sector.



Q UANTIFY OUR IMPACT

Help creative organisations measure and communicate their impact – strengthening the case for culture, funding and long-term investment.

For creative businesses to grow, secure funding and influence policy, being able to demonstrate their social and economic value is vital. Yet what we hear is that many lack the time, tools or resources to measure and communicate their impact effectively.

Recognising these pressures, we will focus on building capacity across the sector. This means providing business support to help leaders integrate monitoring and evaluation into both day-to-day operations and long-term strategy.

We will source and share guidance, tools and training that make it easier for organisations to collect and interpret data, demonstrate their value, and tell compelling stories that resonate

with funders, policymakers and planners. Stronger evidence will not only help organisations attract investment but also amplify Lambeth's collective voice in decisions that shape the sector's future.

At a borough-wide level, we will build on the Engine of Recovery report in collaboration with Lambeth's Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to expand our understanding of the sector's role in the local economy, capturing the full scope and impact of the creative industries across the borough. By strengthening this evidence base, we will champion Lambeth's creative economy, ensuring their social and economic value is recognised.

Over the next five years we'll...

Design and pilot a Creative Sector Health Check to track the resilience, growth and inclusivity of Lambeth's creative economy. This annual 'pulse' survey will combine existing data with sector insight, strengthening our understanding of local challenges and opportunities, ensuring we are better able to identify earlier any cultural organisations at risk.

Engine of Recovery

Culture on the South Bank and Waterloo

Southbank Centre
National Theatre
The Old Vic
Young Vic
Rambert

Funded jointly by Lambeth Council and Southbank Business Improvement District, the 2021 report made a data driven case for the role of culture in economic and social recovery as we emerged from the COVID pandemic.
credit: Playne Design



ROUTES INTO EMPLOYMENT

Expand and improve knowledge of, and access to, creative employment pathways for under-represented young people, based on evidence, feedback and long-term impact.

We are committed to continuously evolving our employment pathways to ensure they meet the needs of young people from under-represented backgrounds.

ELEVATE is Lambeth's mission to enable children and young people to fulfil their creative potential, and to shape a creative and cultural sector that reflects their diversity and talent.

While initiatives like ELEVATE have created valuable opportunities, it is essential that we adapt our approach in response to evidence and feedback, so they remain relevant and impactful. Research will play a central role in refining our offer, ensuring opportunities are not only attractive but

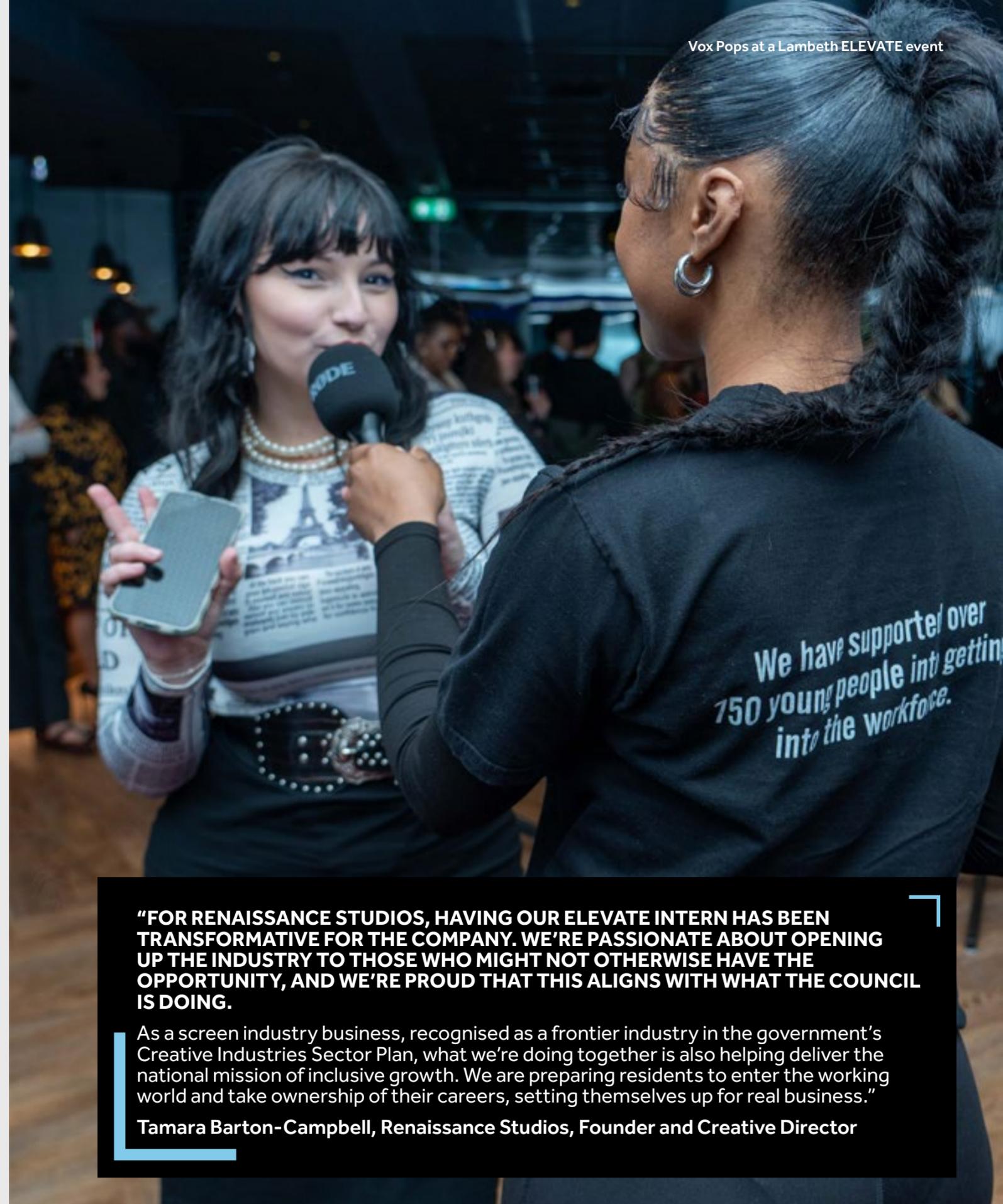
genuinely beneficial to young people's long-term career development.

This includes measuring the impact of initiatives such as Creative Bootcamps, identifying gaps in the market, and working with smaller organisations that may not be able to offer full-time jobs but can provide valuable stepping stones.

We will also broaden awareness of the wide range of roles in the creative economy, highlighting non-creative roles within creative industries, as well as creative roles across other sectors such as health, education, retail and tech. These roles are often invisible to young people but are essential to innovation and growth.

Over the next five years we'll...

Refine the ELEVATE Pathways model of internships, placements and bootcamps, supporting 120 young people this year through our Next Us employment offer. Organisations who partner with us to deliver opportunities for young people will get access to training CPD sessions such as inclusive recruitment, working with "marginalised" young people and the chance to network. We will also partner with ERIC and Lambeth employers to promote non-creative roles and refine our Creative Careers programme in schools, helping young people and Careers Leads explore the full breadth of opportunities.



"FOR RENAISSANCE STUDIOS, HAVING OUR ELEVATE INTERN HAS BEEN TRANSFORMATIVE FOR THE COMPANY. WE'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT OPENING UP THE INDUSTRY TO THOSE WHO MIGHT NOT OTHERWISE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY, AND WE'RE PROUD THAT THIS ALIGNS WITH WHAT THE COUNCIL IS DOING.

As a screen industry business, recognised as a frontier industry in the government's Creative Industries Sector Plan, what we're doing together is also helping deliver the national mission of inclusive growth. We are preparing residents to enter the working world and take ownership of their careers, setting themselves up for real business."

Tamara Barton-Campbell, Renaissance Studios, Founder and Creative Director

SPACE TO CREATE

Protect and grow the borough's cultural infrastructure, supporting both long-term development and short-term creative use.

Lambeth's creative economy depends on access to high quality, affordable space. From permanent space to make curate and consume culture to temporary activations, the borough needs a mix of options that support the full range of creative businesses and organisations.

We have an excellent track record in securing affordable workspace commitments via our Affordable Workspace Policy which has reaped success such as The London Studios in 72 Upper Ground, demonstrating that our innovative approach to policy can have big impact.

We will invest in the development of new creative workspaces and help existing ones adapt and grow. Through initiatives like the Future Workspace Fund and RE:Purpose, we will provide capital grants and strategic support to make spaces more sustainable, accessible and financially viable.

At the same time, we will make better use of underused and vacant spaces, including council-owned sites, school buildings and properties in between development phases. We will work with landlords and developers to encourage cultural use of sites outside the planning process, helping creative organisations access affordable space while supporting community value and local economic activity.

We will also strengthen how we track the supply and demand for space, going beyond directories to offer practical support, matching creative businesses with available properties, liaising with landlords and connecting providers with those who need space most.

We will work with the GLA to monitor Culture at Risk. By protecting existing cultural infrastructure and unlocking new opportunities, we will ensure Lambeth remains a resilient, inclusive home for creative talent and innovation.

Where we'll start:

Bring Streatham Space Project back to life by collaborating with London Square to identify a new cultural tenant that meets local needs and strengthens the area's creative infrastructure.



Rambert Works, funded by Lambeth's Future Workspace Fund
credit: Peter ghobrial Photography

TOWN HALL ARTS PROGRAMME

Open up Lambeth Town Hall to the borough's communities through inclusive exhibitions, installations and events.

The Town Hall Arts Programme is a platform for collaboration between artists and communities, embedding creativity in the heart of civic life. We will support local artists to co-create new work with residents, using the Town Hall as a space to share stories, explore identity and reflect on what it means to live in Lambeth today. Through participatory exhibitions, artist residencies and cultural commissions, we will develop more opportunities for residents to contribute to and curate creative content.

The programme builds on projects such as Afro Supa Hero, My Heart Will Always Be in Brixton and Spectemur Agendo (By Our Actions May We Be Known),

which celebrated local heritage and platformed emerging artists and community voices. The first immersive project to animate the Town Hall was Orchitecture, a collaboration with Aswarm and Chineke!, Europe's first majority Black and ethnically diverse professional orchestra. The project brought Chineke! musicians together with young people and residents to explore the architecture and heritage of the building through sound, movement and live orchestral performance.

The programme supports Lambeth's wider ambitions to be a Child Friendly, Age Friendly and Sanctuary Borough, with a focus on visibility, inclusion and civic pride.

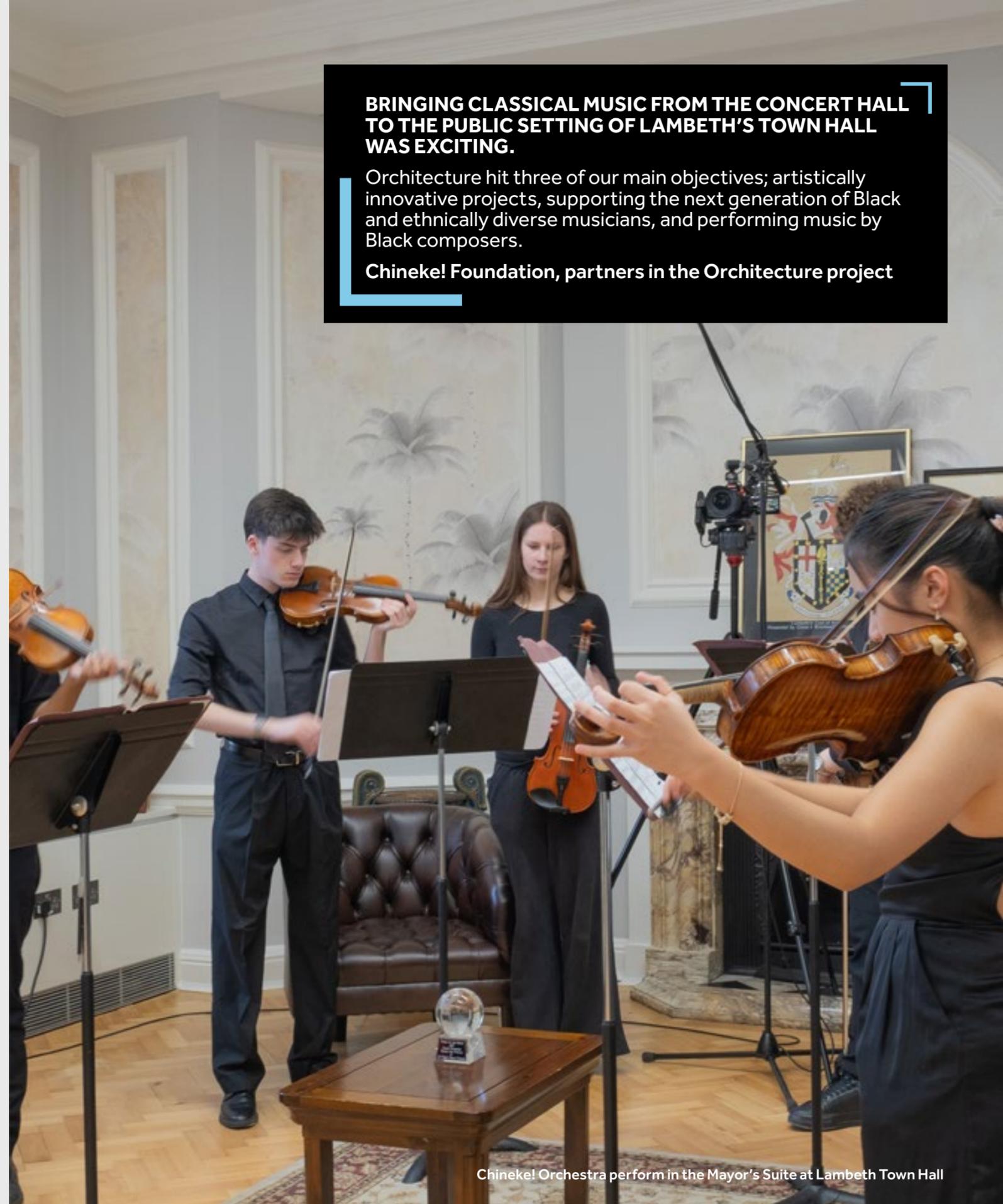
Where we'll start:

Commission a new programme of creative projects, funded by the UKSPF, that invite deeper collaboration with Lambeth residents. Projects will be developed in partnership with local cultural organisations and creative practitioners, offering meaningful ways for people to create, curate and connect through art in civic space.

BRINGING CLASSICAL MUSIC FROM THE CONCERT HALL TO THE PUBLIC SETTING OF LAMBETH'S TOWN HALL WAS EXCITING.

Orchitecture hit three of our main objectives; artistically innovative projects, supporting the next generation of Black and ethnically diverse musicians, and performing music by Black composers.

Chineke! Foundation, partners in the Orchitecture project



Chineke! Orchestra perform in the Mayor's Suite at Lambeth Town Hall

UPPER GROUND

Collaborate with Mitsubishi Estates and CO-RE to shape a major new cultural hub at 72 Upper Ground, growing Lambeth's creative infrastructure and reaffirming the South Bank's role as London's leading culture and creative economy hub.

The 72 Upper Ground scheme, on the site of the former London television Centre and ITV Studios, will deliver a range of benefits including nearly one million square feet of commercial space and over 4,000 jobs. The scheme includes a commitment to deliver a cultural innovation hub known as The London Studios - a bespoke affordable workspace that will promote the strategic cultural importance of the area.

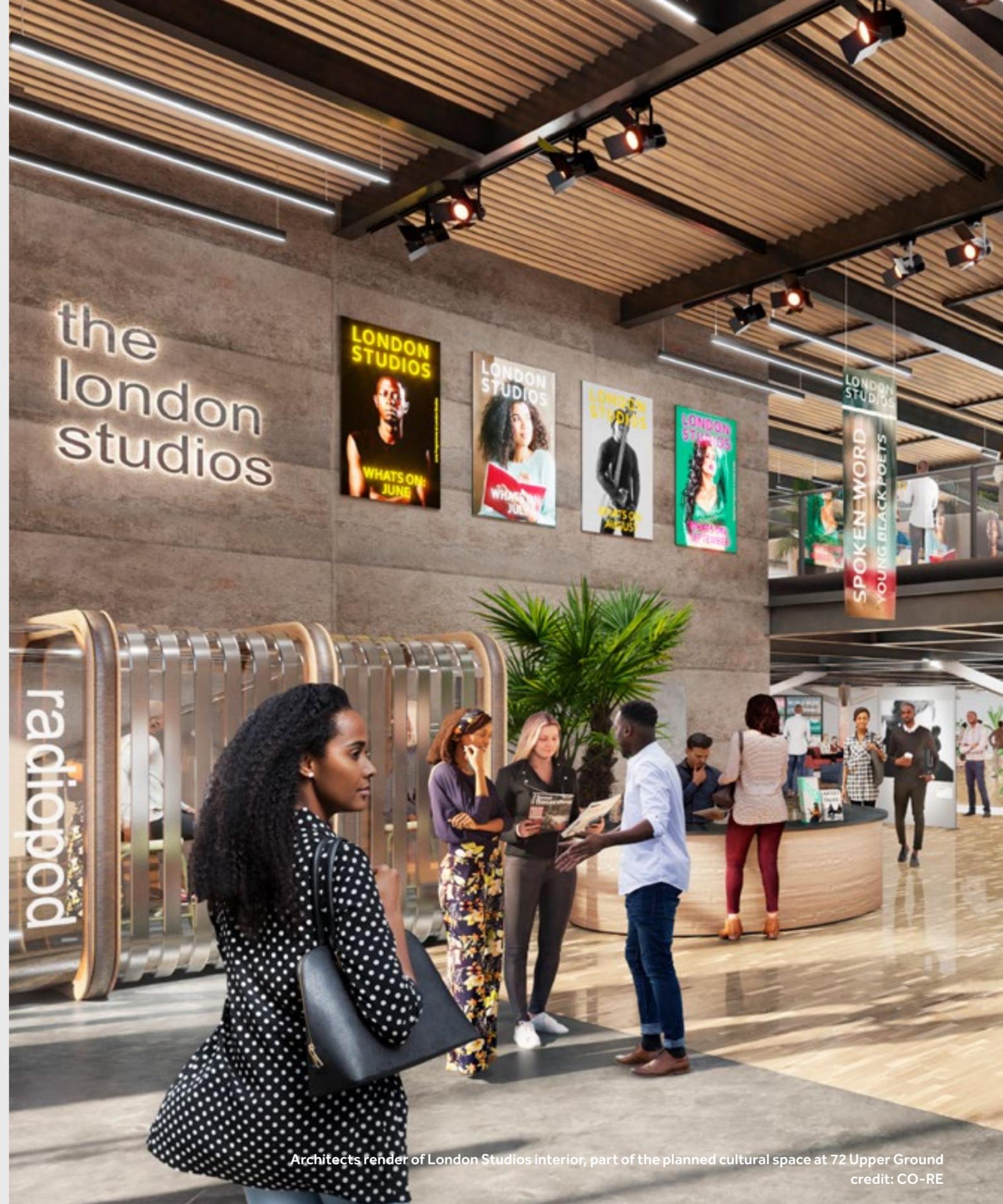
The London Studios proposes to deliver a multi-level cultural and innovation hub extending across the basement, ground

and first floors in the centre of the development. This space would provide affordable workspace for the creative industry sector and enable on-site cultural production and consumption.

The hub will provide heavily discounted spaces for not-for-profit organisations committed to supporting disadvantaged young people in the creative and tech economy and local creative entrepreneurs from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Where we'll start:

Work with Mitsubishi Estates and CO-RE to shape the Section 106 affordable workspace offer and play an active role in securing tenants for 72 Upper Ground.



Architects render of London Studios interior, part of the planned cultural space at 72 Upper Ground
credit: CO-RE

VISITOR ECONOMY

Grow Lambeth's cultural reputation as a visitor destination-while making sure local people and businesses feel the benefit.

Lambeth is home to world-class cultural institutions including the Southbank Centre, National Theatre, BFI and Rambert Dance Company, whose international reputation is matched by their commitment to local engagement and a strong local identity shaped by creativity, culture, and activism.

Our ambition is to grow the borough's reputation as a cultural destination for both national and international visitors, as part of the wider experience economy that creates growth for local businesses, celebrates our neighbourhoods, and benefits residents.

Central to this ambition, as laid out in both the Lambeth Growth Plan and the London Growth Plan, is Brixton - a hub of culture and heritage. But our focus spans the whole borough-from the South Bank to Streatham, Clapham to West Norwood.

We'll work with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), local businesses and cultural organisations to amplify Lambeth's distinctiveness - highlighting our creative economy, music venues, public art, festivals and neighbourhood identities through coordinated campaigns and shared strategies.

To extend our international reach, we will build on the Brixton X Harlem partnership to explore new twinning opportunities, while also learning from international models such as Tokyo's Art Triangle, which links institutions through shared programming and ticketing.

Together these approaches will help connect Lambeth globally while enriching the local cultural offer.

Over the next five years we'll...

Work with London and Partners to promote Brixton, Clapham, South Bank and Waterloo, and other parts of the borough across council platforms, Visit London, and beyond.



Summer 2025 at the Southbank Centre
credit: Southbank Centre, Pete Woodhead

WIDEN PARTICIPATION

Help Lambeth's creative industries to ensure that cultural opportunities are visible, accessible and shaped by local needs.

Lambeth's creative sector thrives when it is rooted in the lives, voices and experiences of its communities, and cultural organisations tell us they want to reach more Lambeth residents. But too many residents still face barriers to cultural engagement, whether through lack of visibility, relevance, or a sense that it's 'not for them'.

We want every resident to feel that creativity is part of their daily life, and that cultural spaces are not exclusive. That means supporting organisations to build stronger relationships with our communities, so that creative opportunities reflect the borough's diversity and stories.

It means the council playing its part in amplifying activity, making it easier for people to participate, whether on their doorstep or across the borough. And it means working with partners to improve how we communicate, so residents know what's happening, how to get involved, and feel genuinely invited.

When cultural opportunities are visible and accessible, they build confidence, create jobs, improve wellbeing and bring people together. We are committed to making sure everyone in Lambeth feels the benefit of that.

Over the next five years we'll...

Use the council's communications channels to promote upcoming opportunities, events and ticket deals for our residents and promote opportunities via Lambeth Library Service. We'll connect our Libraries with the wider cultural sector in the borough and beyond, building partnerships with organisations including the Southbank's National Poetry Library, the Black British Book Festival and The Old Vic's Homework Club.



Corali Dance Company workshop
credit: Corali, C Archdeacon

XR/AR INNOVATION WITH LSBU

Partner with London South Bank University to help Lambeth's creative sector experiment with emerging technology including their extended reality / augmented reality (XR/AR) suite.

New technologies like virtual and augmented reality have the potential to change the way creative businesses work, but many organisations don't yet have the tools or confidence to make the most of them.

We will work with London South Bank University (LSBU) to help Lambeth's creative sector explore, experiment with, and understand the potential of immersive technology.

LSBU's XR Studio is a state-of-the-art digital creation space, equipped with tools for virtual production, 3D modelling, motion capture, and interactive design. It is already being used by creative

businesses through the Business Innovation and Growth (BIG) South London programme, which supports companies to develop new ideas and expand their work.

By working with LSBU, we will make this cutting-edge technology accessible to Lambeth's creative businesses and freelancers, ensuring they feel confident using it in their work.

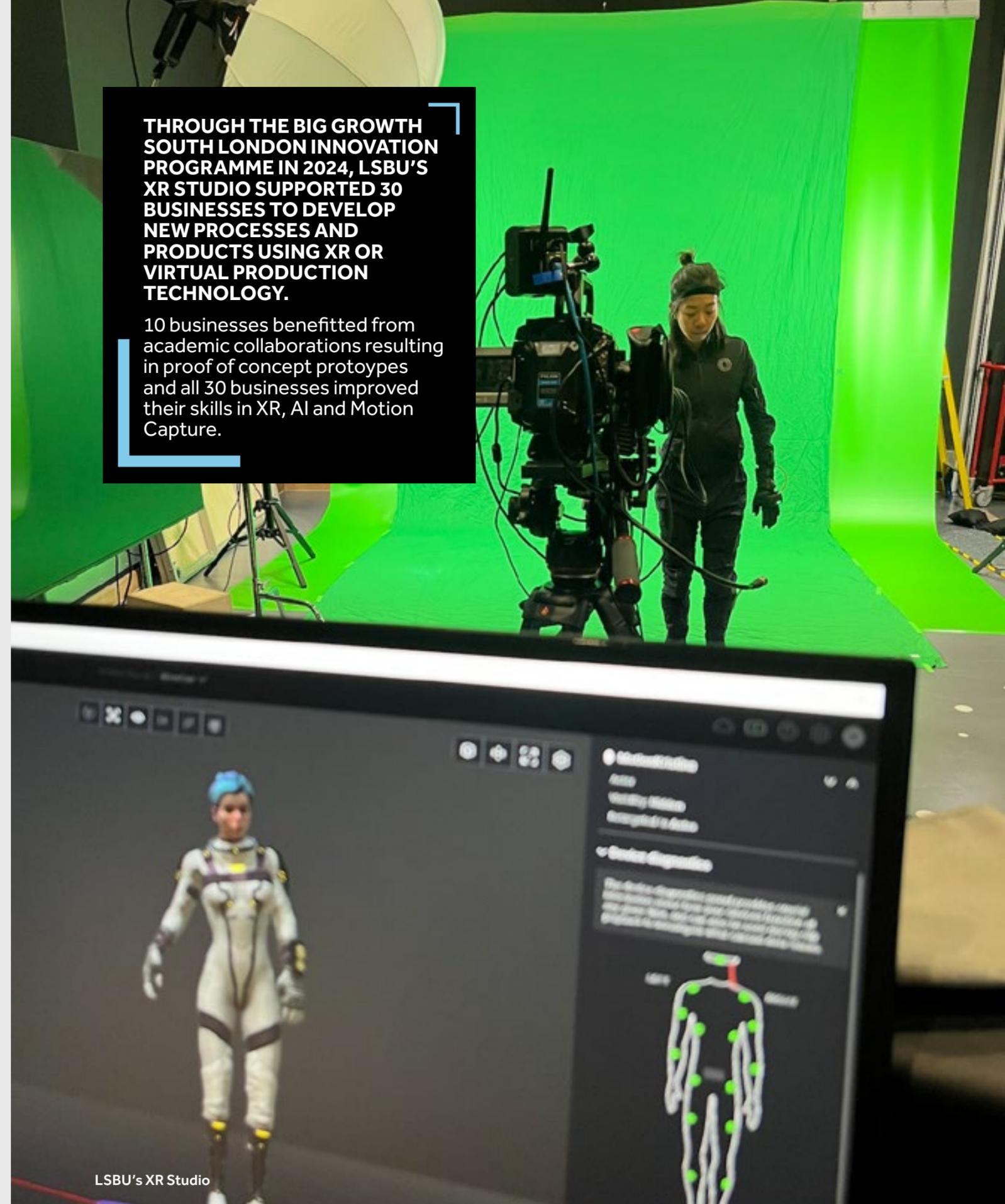
This partnership will help ensure that Lambeth's creative sector stays ahead of industry changes, building skills, confidence, and new opportunities in digital creativity.

By 2030 we'll...

Work in partnership with LSBU to provide a programme of hands-on learning and collaboration, helping creative practitioners understand how virtual and augmented reality can be used in different fields. This will help connect creative businesses with industry networks, funding, and training opportunities linked to emerging technologies.

THROUGH THE BIG GROWTH SOUTH LONDON INNOVATION PROGRAMME IN 2024, LSBU'S XR STUDIO SUPPORTED 30 BUSINESSES TO DEVELOP NEW PROCESSES AND PRODUCTS USING XR OR VIRTUAL PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY.

10 businesses benefitted from academic collaborations resulting in proof of concept prototypes and all 30 businesses improved their skills in XR, AI and Motion Capture.



YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Embed youth co-creation across the council, our creative industries, and beyond.

Young people are not just the future of Lambeth's creative economy - they are actively shaping it today. We are committed to embedding their voices in decision-making processes at every level. For ELEVATE, youth leadership is a core foundation, giving young people real influence over policies, programmes, and opportunities that directly impact them.

We will strengthen youth leadership within council programmes by ensuring young people have structured, paid opportunities to co-design and deliver projects within the council, and across our network. This approach will help the creative economy, and the council, become more inclusive and accessible, with young people's insights guiding recruitment, commissioning, and engagement practices.

Working with the Youth Council on the Reclaim the Night event re-emphasised the importance of a diverse youth voice and need to embed their voice into all decision making and points of change. Now upskilled in data collection and peer relationship building, the Elevators will continue to advocate for young people in the borough and ensure a rich diverse voice is at the core of the work they do.

During the development of this strategy, our youth steering group highlighted that ELEVATE lacks dedicated youth-led and focused communication channels, creating a potential barrier to participation for many of our young residents. We will work with the steering group to rectify this, making sure opportunities reach young people through the channels they use, including social media and peer networks.

Over the next five years we'll...

Embed youth leadership across the council by creating structured opportunities for members of our youth steering group, the Elevators, to contribute to policy, programme delivery and strategic decision-making. Working with different service areas, we will match Elevators' interests with live projects that build their understanding of council priorities, leadership and governance. Their insights will help shape how we design and promote opportunities across the Creative Economy Strategy and beyond.

Elevators, the young creatives who shape and lead our ELEVATE programme
credit: Mikaela Smile



BEING A PART OF ELEVATE AND WORKING WITH COUNCIL OFFICERS AND THE REST OF THE ELEVATORS HAS BENEFITED MY PERSONAL GROWTH SO MUCH.

I have people in my corner that push me to strive for more and want even more for myself. Self-identity and my values is something that has been a big part of my ELEVATE journey.

Elevator, Skye Cozier

ZONES AND CLUSTERING

Champion new and existing creative clusters across Lambeth.

Creative clusters are a proven driver of growth in the creative economy. They foster collaboration, attract talent, and help build stronger local networks. In Lambeth, we've already seen this in action, from the transformation led by the Brixton Creative Enterprise Zone, Vauxhall Night Time Enterprise Zone and the wider impact of the South Bank's cultural district.

Working side by side with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), we'll build our knowledge of the

type of creative clusters across the borough that are forming and could be better supported to grow. We'll work with local partners to understand what's needed—from space to skills to investment - and how we can help.

Our long-term ambition is to have a creative corridor that connects Lambeth's creative neighbourhoods across the borough from Streatham to the South Bank, improving infrastructure, connections and pathways.

Where we'll start:

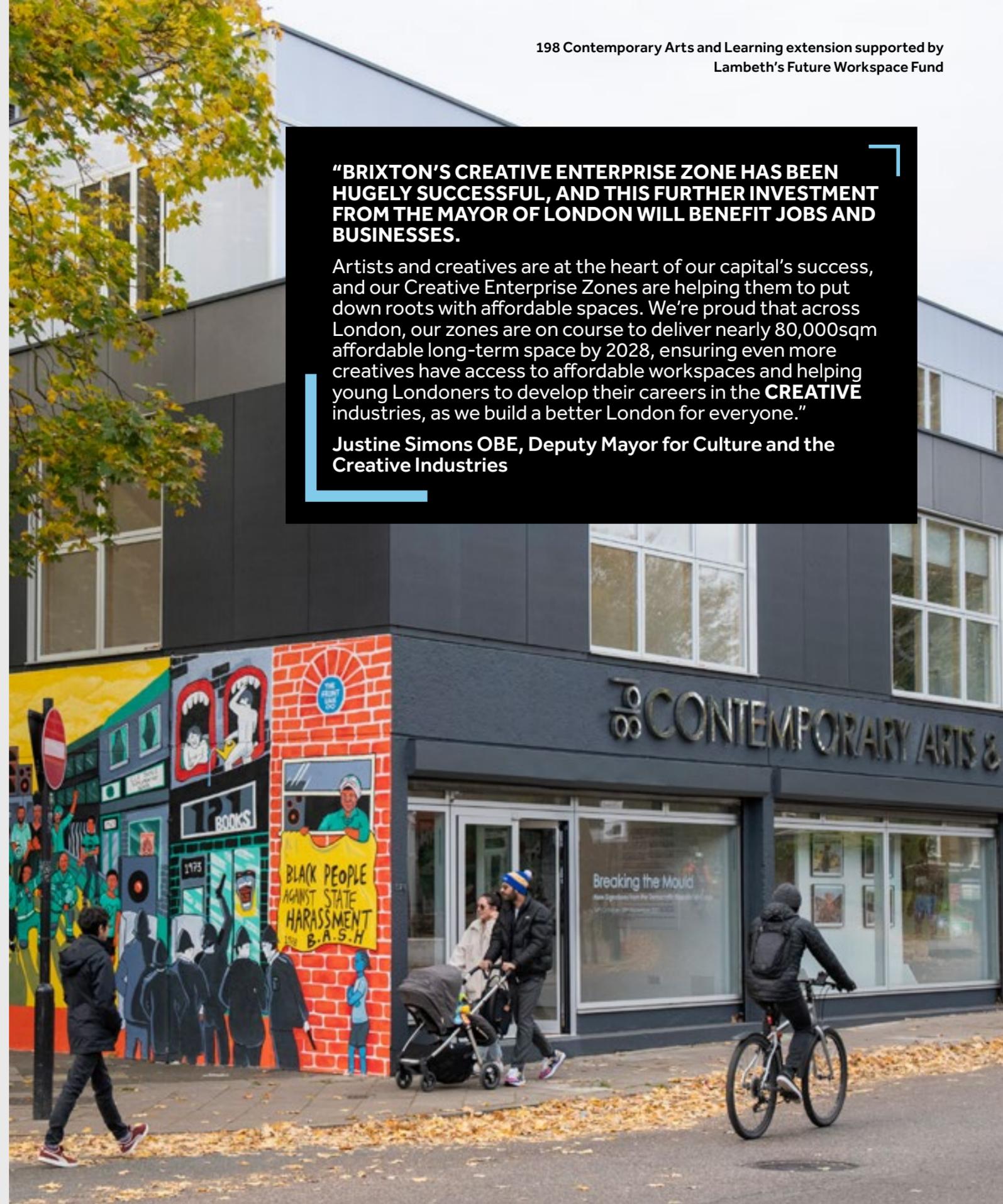
Deliver the Brixton CEZ programme 2025-2028, ensuring it builds as a thriving hub for creative and cultural enterprise. This includes improving workspace affordability and the visibility of the programme. This strategy will play a part in achieving the growth plan ambition of promoting Brixton as an international destination.

198 Contemporary Arts and Learning extension supported by Lambeth's Future Workspace Fund

"BRIXTON'S CREATIVE ENTERPRISE ZONE HAS BEEN HUGEY SUCCESSFUL, AND THIS FURTHER INVESTMENT FROM THE MAYOR OF LONDON WILL BENEFIT JOBS AND BUSINESSES."

Artists and creatives are at the heart of our capital's success, and our Creative Enterprise Zones are helping them to put down roots with affordable spaces. We're proud that across London, our zones are on course to deliver nearly 80,000sqm affordable long-term space by 2028, ensuring even more creatives have access to affordable workspaces and helping young Londoners to develop their careers in the **CREATIVE** industries, as we build a better London for everyone."

Justine Simons OBE, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries



MEASURING IMPACT

To demonstrate the value of Lambeth's creative economy, we will track progress against a set of clear measures. This will help us evidence impact, adapt where needed, and make the case for investment, policy change and long-term support.

If we are successful, by 2030 Lambeth's creative economy will:

- Be more resilient and sustainable, strengthened through connection, knowledge sharing and advocacy.
- Grow in strength and visibility, with more good jobs, thriving businesses and affordable workspace.
- Be more representative and inclusive, with more residents able to access and take part in creative opportunities.

Key measures:

Creative space

Change in the total square metres of affordable, fit-for-purpose creative workspace supported through council programmes and planning.

Schools engagement

Number of Lambeth schools engaged in creative learning initiatives, including the Cultural Education Partnership and 75th anniversary of the Festival of Britain.

Good work

Number of paid opportunities created through programmes and placements, and number of hours of work paid at London Living Wage.

Skills and knowledge

Participant-reported changes in skills, knowledge and confidence.

Networks and connections

Number and diversity of creative businesses engaged through networks and programmes, including representation across sectors such as architecture, fashion, gaming and publishing.

Funding and investment

External funding and investment secured through programmes and partnerships.

Equity and community impact

Diversity of participants engaged, alongside reported changes in wellbeing, confidence and sense of belonging.

Advocacy, policy and process

Record of policies, processes and advocacy initiatives developed or influenced that support the creative economy.

Sector resilience

Case studies and qualitative evidence of business sustainability and growth.

These measures will be reported through our annual action plan review, with headline findings shared publicly to ensure transparency and accountability. They will also feed into our 2030 Outcomes Framework and Growth Plan, showing how work on the creative economy contributes to our wider ambition to be a borough with social and climate justice at its heart.

THANK YOU

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed ideas, images and energy to the development of this strategy, and more widely to Lambeth's creative economy.

This document has been shaped by a wide range of voices, experiences and practices. From artists and freelancers to organisations, educators, businesses and community groups, your contributions reflect

the depth, diversity and ongoing evolution of the borough's creative life.

We would like to say a specific thank you to the members of our Strategy Advisory Group for their time, insight and generosity throughout the development of this strategy.

Your contributions have helped to shape our thinking, challenge our assumptions and ensure that

this work reflects the realities, ambitions and diversity of Lambeth's creative and cultural sector.

We look forward to continuing these conversations as we move into delivery.

Special thanks to...

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**Rachel Thomas,
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Brixton Learning Collaborative**

Skye Cozier, Elevator, ELEVATE

Vicky Long, Artist, Studio Long



Open Rehearsal of New Creation by Emma Evelein at Rambert Studios
credit: Foteini Christofilopoulou



A borough of
equity and justice

