

Medway Heritage Open Space

Notes from the sessions

13th July 2024

These notes are from the Open Space held on Saturday 13th July 2024 at Rochester Corn Exchange.

They were written up by Katie Dale-Everett and edited by Ben Morgan. Photographs by Katie Dale-Everett. These are written up from handwritten notes – our apologies for any misspellings or misinterpretations.

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Conversations

21 conversations took place over two sessions. Conversations A1 to J1 took place in session 1, A2 to K2 in sessions 2.

For each conversation that took place, we noted:

- The table and topic
- Those facilitating
- Those in the conversation
- Photographs of the notes and related materials.
- Discussion points.

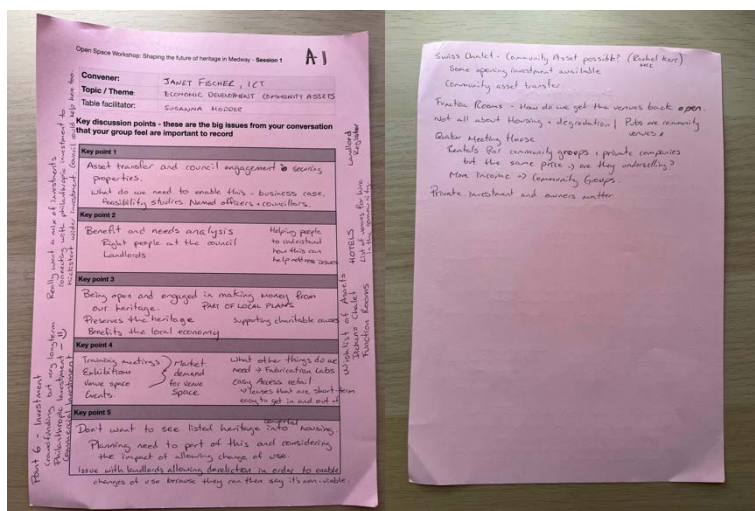


A1: Economic Development Through Community Owned Heritage Assets; How, What, Who?

Convener: Janet Fischer. ICT / Table Facilitator: Susanna Hodder

In the conversation:

1. Mel Moss, Quaker Meeting House
2. Duncan MacBain, Hydriflex
3. Alex Cameron, ICT
4. Terrie Zbyszewska, Friends of Eastgate House
5. Billy Dutton, CFRF
6. Janet Fischer, ICT



Point 1

- Asset transfer and council engagement in securing properties. What do we need to enable this - business case, feasibility studies, named officers and councillors?
- We really want a mix of investments connecting with philanthropic investment to kickstart wider investment. Council could help here too.

Point 2

- Benefit and needs analysis, to help people to understand how this can help address issues. Who are the right people at the council/landlords? Is there a landlord register and a list of hotels and venues to hire in the community?

Point 3

- Being open and engaged in making money from our heritage. Form this as part of the local plans. This will support the preservation of the heritage and benefit the local economy whilst supporting charitable causes.

Point 4

- There is a market demand for the following venue spaces; training meetings, exhibitions, venue space and events. What other things do we need? Fabrications labs, easy access retail and leases that are short-term and easy to get in and out of.

Point 5

- We don't want to see listed heritage converted into housing. Planning needs to be a part of this and we need to consider the impact of allowing change of use. There are issues with landlords allowing dereliction in order to enable changes of use because they can say it's non-viable.

Point 6

- Investment crowdfunding but very long term is needed. Philanthropic and commercial investment.

Point 7

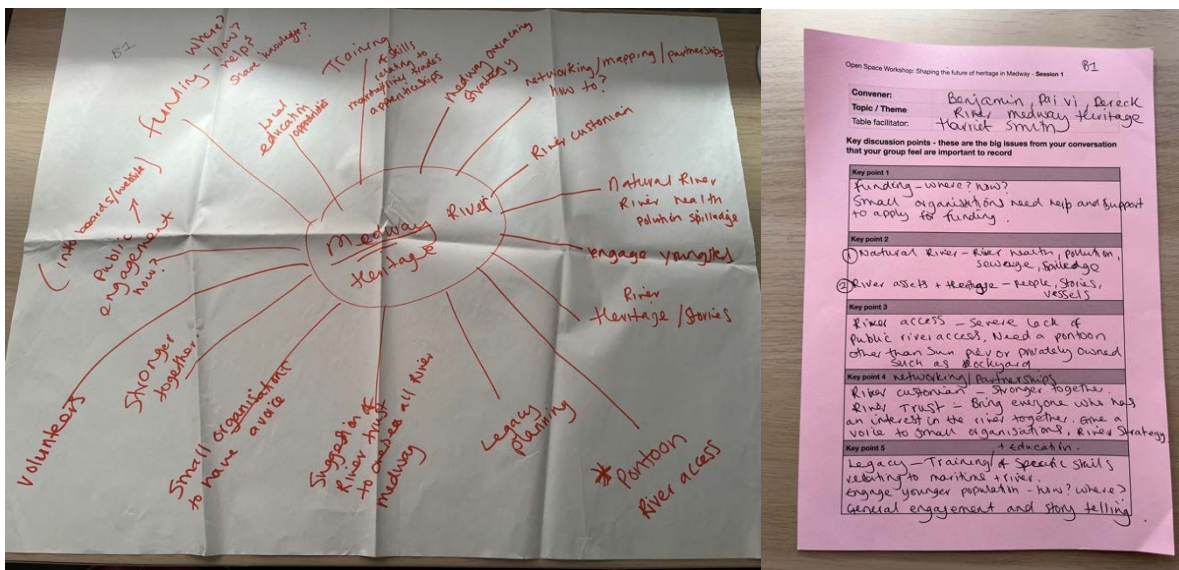
- Wishlist of Assets; Dickens Chalet Function Rooms.
- Swiss Chalet: Community asset possible? (Rachel Kerr MCC). Some opening investment available. Community asset transfer?
- Function Rooms: How we do we get the venues back open? Not all about housing and degradation. Pubs are community venues.
- Quaker Meeting House: Rentals for community groups, private companies but the same price: are they underselling? More income = investment in community groups.
- Private investment and owners matter.

B1: Medway River Heritage; How do we secure the rich heritage of the River Medway?

Convener: Benjamin, Páivi and Derek / Table Facilitator: Harriet Smith

In the conversation:

1. Simon Curry, Medway Council
2. Carmen Smith, South X Too Society
3. John Puplett
4. Páivi Seppälä, LV21
5. Peter Garrett, Medway Council
6. Heather Burgess, Tiller & Wheel CIC
7. Terry Maps
8. Douglas Kengall, Medway Towns Rowing Club
9. Martin Hubbard, Short Brokers Commemoration Society
10. David Hinford
11. Benjamin Christie, Friends of the River Medway
12. Jane Pitt, Artist
13. Derek Grandson, Vic96 Trust



Point 1

- Funding; Where? How? Small organisations need help and support to apply for funding. How can we better share knowledge around this?

Point 2

- Natural river; river health, pollution, sewage, spillage.
- River assets and heritage; people, stories, vessels.

Point 3

- River access; severe lack of public river access. We need a pontoon or pier or something other than privately owned things such as the dockyard. Can we display historic vessels?

Point 4

- River conservation; stronger together.
- River Trust; Could they bring everyone who has an interest in the river together and give voice to smaller organisations to build an overarching river strategy?
- What other ways can we network, maps out and develop partnerships? Who is the river custodian?
- Pilgrimage September 2025.
- Water information centre?

Point 5

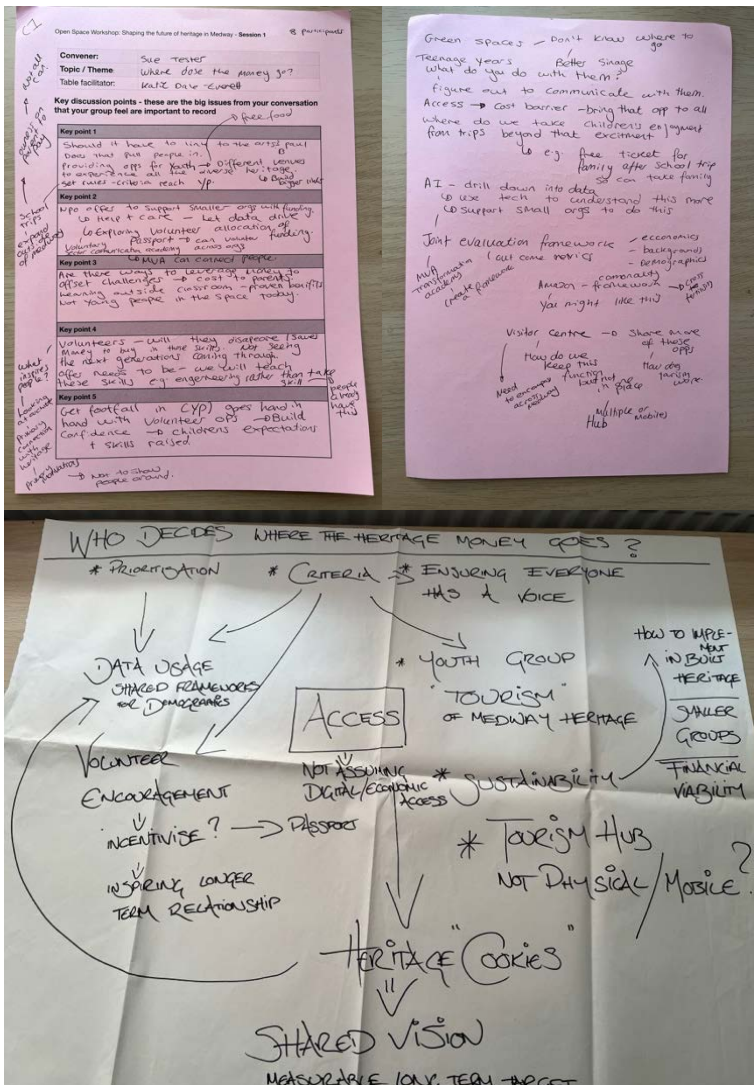
- Legacy - Training and education of specific skills relating to maritime and river trades. Could these be apprenticeships?
- How and where can we engage the younger population?
- How can we build general engagement through storytelling and info boards and clear websites?
- Need for more volunteers?

C1: Who decides where the heritage money goes?

Convener: Sue Tester / Table Facilitator: Katie Dale-Everett

In the conversation:

1. Nigel Howard, CHDT
2. Paul Barnard, CHDT
3. Claire Sanders, MVA
4. Alan Moss, Friends of Eastgate House
5. Rosie Beattie
6. Matt Homes, Royal Engineers Museum
7. Fazle Chowdhury, CHM
8. Shafique Syed, CHM
9. Fayaz Iqbal, CHM
10. Rupa Sen, Medway Diversity Forum



Point 1

- o Should it have a link to the arts? Does that pull people in? Paul B

- We need to provide opportunities for youth to experience all of the diverse heritage across different venues, therefore building more connected and bigger links.
- Can we create a collective set of rules/criteria in order to reach young people? E.g. could school trips expand to venues outside of Medway? At the moment it feels like more often than not the onus is on parents to pay for entry for their children to heritage venues, but not all can afford this. Providing free food can also be a good strategy for engaging young people in activities.

Point 2

- Can NPO's offer support to smaller organisations with funding.
- Can data drive the allocation of the funding so that it is informed.
- Help and Care are exploring a volunteer passport so that people can volunteer across different organisations through the Voluntary Sector Communication Academy. There is a reduction in volunteers noticed by all. MVA is happy to help connect people.

Point 3

- Are there ways to leverage money to offset challenges e.g. cost to parents? Learning outside of the classroom has been proven to have extensive benefits for young people but it is not happening enough. How to implement inbuilt heritage? Smaller groups? Financial viability? How can we make sure that everyone has a voice?

Point 4:

- We are not seeing the next generation of volunteers coming through. The offer currently is using people's skills, but it was felt that this should change so that people who want to volunteer can be taught the skills they need (e.g. engineering), rather than taking skills from people who already have them for free. Money is needed to buy in training to develop these skills. We had a discussion about what we think inspires people; looking at archives, having a primary connection with heritage, not having the role of showing people around. Increasing the footfall of young people in heritage spaces goes hand-in-hand with volunteer opportunities. If we can build confidence and skills, it increases children's expectations.

Point 5

- Green spaces need to be more clearly talked about. Some people on the table didn't know where to go to access it, so better information and signage is needed.
- What is there to do with teenagers? We need to find new ways to communicate with them. Where do we take children's enjoyment from school trips beyond that exciting. e.g. offering a free ticket for the family after the school trip so that they can show their family (this is being trialled already in one venue, possibly the Dockyard). This may support bringing the opportunity to all.

Point 6

- Can we build a joint evaluative framework with shared metrics? e.g. economics, backgrounds, demographics. MVA Transformation Academy could create a framework. Can we use AI to drill down into the data? How can we use tech to understand our audiences more and support smaller organisations to reach them? A possible inspiration could be the Amazon commonality framework; you liked this so you like this, leading to cross fertilisation across organisations.

Point 7

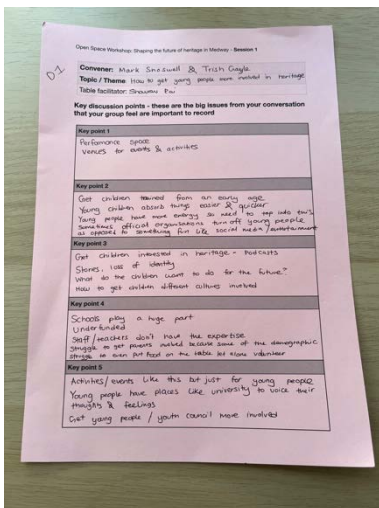
- Can the Visitor Centre share more opportunities that heritage venues and small organisations are offering? How does tourism work and how can we encompass this across the whole of Medway? How can this function but not just in one place? Could this look like multiple or mobile hubs?

D1: Young People Empowerment in Heritage

Convener: Mark Snoswell and Trish Gayle (Jane was on the original post it note) / Table Facilitator: Shavrou Rai

In the conversation:

1. Jane Brown, MACA
2. Trish Gayle MACA
3. Peter Joyce, CKMM/MMS24
4. Bilkis Malek, Transculturalvisions
5. Mark Snoswell, King's School Rochester
6. Bora Suluk, Lighthouse Educational Society
7. Ali Bayindir, Lighthouse Educational Society
8. Treodoe Hoare, The Garage Museum
9. Mary Bacon, St-Johns Chatham
10. Sue Cook, St Johns Church
11. Cllr Paula Hamilton, Medway Council
12. Sam Diploid, Browsing History
13. Kate Mechedou, Mrs Baker's Medway Theatre Co/Medway Arts Tours
14. Vicky Schulz, St Margaret's Rainham



Point 1

- Performance space.
- Venues for events and activities.

Point 2

- Get children trained from an early age as young children absorb things easier and quicker. Young people have more energy so need to tap into this. Sometimes official organisations turnoff young people as opposed to something fun like social media/entertainment.

Point 3

- Get children interested in heritage, perhaps through podcasts.
- Share more stories to reduce loss of identity.
- What do the children want to do for the future?

- How to get children with different cultures involved?

Point 4

- Schools play a huge part in this and are underfunded. Staff and teachers do not have the expertise needed. There is a recognised struggle to get parents involved because some of the local demographic struggle to even put food on the table, let alone volunteer.

Point 5

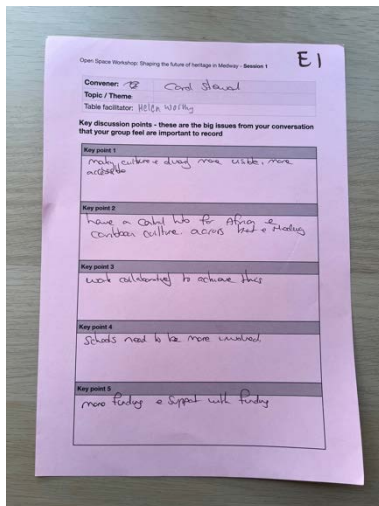
- Activities/events like this but for young people would be great. Young people have places like universities to voice their thoughts and feelings. How can we get young people/the youth council more involved? Putting together arts and drama activities to engage with young people (King's School Rochester).

E1: To establish Medway's first African and Caribbean Cultural Centre and bring the heritage of African and Caribbean communities to life more visible in partnership.

Convener: Carol Stewart / Table Facilitator: Helen Worthy

In the conversation:

1. Gemma Corbin
2. Luqman Abolaji
3. Esther Johnson
4. Pat Cooper, MDCD
5. Luke Bacon, St John Chatham
6. Michi Masumi, The Black Art Hub
7. Clare Tierney, RCCF & Lighting Board
8. Trish Gayle, MACA
9. Carol Stewart, MACA/Creative Medway



Point 1

- Make culture and diversity more visible and accessible.

Point 2

- Have a central hub for African and Caribbean culture across Kent & Medway.

Point 3

- Work collaboratively to achieve this.

Point 4

- Schools need to be more involved.

Point 5

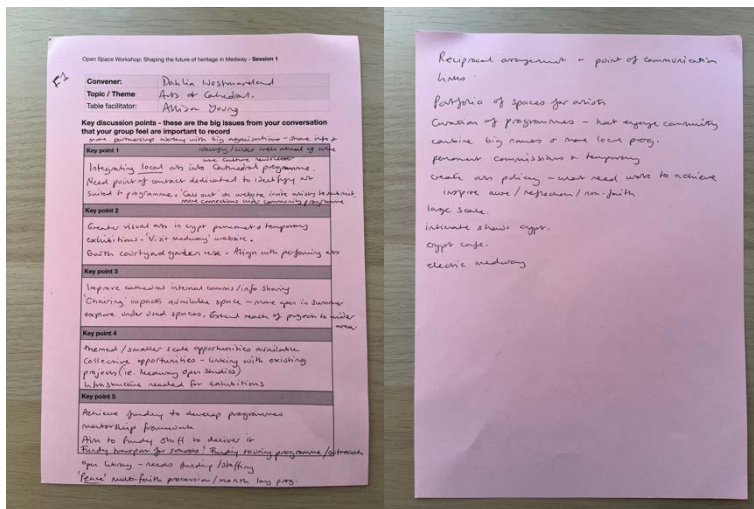
- More funding and support with funding.

F1: Arts at Rochester Cathedral

Convener: Dahlia Westmoreland / Table Facilitator: Ahsa Young

In the conversation:

1. Dahlia Westmoreland, Rochester Cathedral
2. Adela Austin, Resident & Creative Health Foundation
3. Rikard Österlund, Photographer
4. Wendy Ansley
5. Gerry Turner, Rochester Lights Board
6. Terry Wood, Friends of Rochester Cathedral



Point 1

- Integrating local arts into the cathedral programme.
- More partnerships working with big organisations - share info and industry links well ahead of time.
- We need a point of contact dedicated to identifying art suited to the programme. Perhaps a callout on the website inviting artists to submit. We need more connections through a wider community programme.
- Is there a reciprocal arrangement that could be put in place - point of contact for communications and link development?
- Is there a portfolio of spaces available for artists to use?

Point 2

- Greater visual arts in crypt permanent or temporary exhibitions shared via the 'Visit Medway' website. Earth courtyard garden use, aligns with the performing arts well.

Point 3

- Improve cathedral internal comms/info sharing.
- 'Charing' impacts available space - more open in summer to explore under used spaces. It would be good to expand the external reach of projects to a wider area.

Point 4

- We could offer smaller scale, themed opportunities.
- Perhaps collective opportunities, linking with existing projects (i.e. Medway Open Studios).

- Infrastructure needed for exhibitions to happen.

Point 5

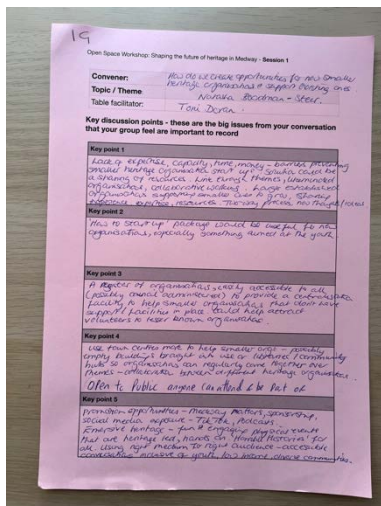
- We would need to achieve funding to develop the programme and to create a mentorship framework to support it.
- Aim to fund; Staff to deliver the project. Transport for schools. A touring programme/outreach.
- We could also have an open library, but this would require funding/staffing.
- We would also love to do a month long programme called 'Peace' a multi-faith procession.
- How do we engage all the community? Do we programme big names and more local projects?
- Perhaps permanent and temporary art would be useful to commission?
- Could we create an arts policy? What would be needed to achieve this and inspire awe/reflection/non-faith interactions?
- Could it be large-scale or intimate small shows in the crypt or crypt cafe.
- Can we make links with Electric Medway?

G1: How do we create opportunities for new, smaller heritage organisations and support existing ones?

Convener: Natasha Boardman-Steer / Table Facilitator: Toni Doran

In the conversation:

1. Jackson Fraser-Hague, Coordinator Archers Local
2. George Atzw, Arches Local
3. Natasha Boardman-Steer, Creatabot
4. Lara Dix, Operations Manager Huguenot Museum
5. Vicky Schulz, St Margaret's Rainham
6. Elaine Gardner, Friends of Medway Archives
7. Rupa Sen, Medway Diversity Forum
8. Richard Bourne, Friends of Chatham Traction
9. Wendy Mesher, Friends of Chatham Traction
10. Sam Diplock, Browsing History
11. Mizan Syed
12. Fazle Choudhury, CHM



Point 1

- Lack of expertise, capacity, time, money - barriers preventing smaller heritage organisation start-ups. The solution could be a sharing of resources; links through themes, likeminded organisations and collaborative working. Larger established organisations supporting smaller ones to grow, sharing resources, expertise and experience. Two-way process will generate new ideas / thoughts.

Point 2

- 'How to Start-up' package would be useful for new organisations, especially something aimed at the youth.

Point 3:

- A register of organisations easily accessible to all (possibly council administrated) to provide a centralised facility to help smaller organisations that don't have support/facilities in place. This could help attract volunteers to lesser known organisations.

Point 4

- We could use the town centres more to help smaller organisations - possibly empty building brought into use or libraries/community hubs so organisations can regularly come together over themes - collaboration between different heritage organisations. These events should be open to the public so that anyone can attend.

Point 5

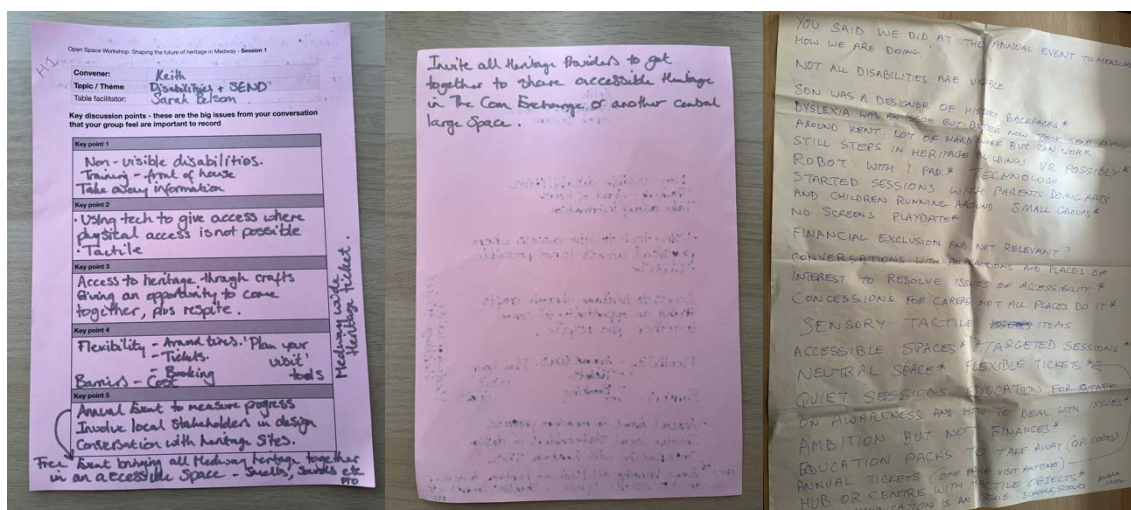
- Promotion opportunities
- Medway Matters sponsorship, social media exposure through TikTok/podcasts?
- Immersive heritage - fun and engaging physical events that are heritage led such as 'Horrible Histories' for all. Using the right mediums to attract the right audience - accessible conversations inclusive of youth, low income families and diverse communities.

H1: How will we make sure that ideas and opinions of people with special needs and disabilities are heard in a project like this and how to make heritage and culture accessible for people with SEND?

Convener: Keith Clear / Table Facilitator: Sarah Belsom

In the conversation:

1. Keith Clear, Medway Parents and Carers Forum
2. Phil Bungay, Medway Neurological Network
3. Jane Joyce, MHS24, CKHH
4. Camilla Baker, Herbert Baker Society and Lost Crafts CIC
5. Mark Breathwick, Medway Council
6. Andrew Freeman, Rochester Bridge Trust



Point 1

- Front of house training on non-visible disabilities.
- Providing take away information.

Point 2

- Using tech to give access where physical access is not possible.
- Developing tactile exhibitions.

Point 3

- Access to heritage through crafts.
- Giving an opportunity to come together, plus respite.

Point 4

- Flexibility around: times, tickets, booking and removing barriers such as cost.
- Implementing 'Plan Your Visit' tools.
- Is there a Medway wide heritage ticket possibility?

Point 5

- What about an annual event that we can use to measure progress? This could be a free event bringing all of Medway's heritage together in an accessible space. It would be great to include smells, sounds etc.
- It would be great to involve local stakeholders in the design process and to have meaningful conversations with heritage sites.
- We could invite all heritage providers to get together to share accessible heritage in The Corn Exchange or another central large space.

Point 6

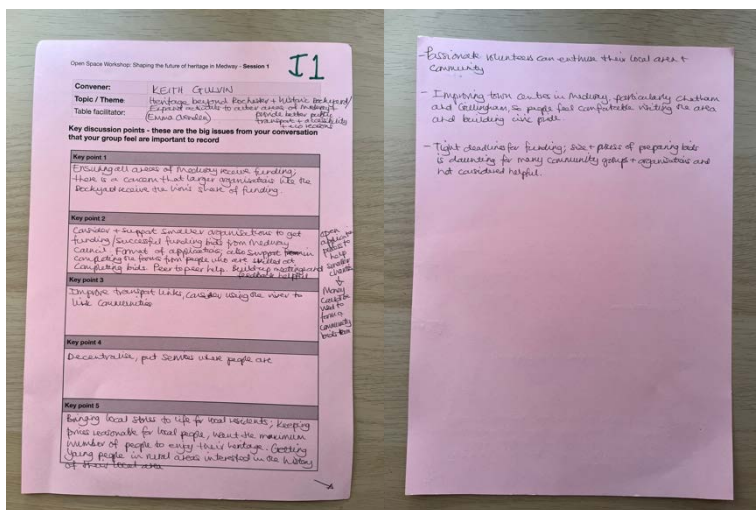
- Son was a designer of history backpacks. His dyslexia was an issue but it is better now. Took SEND people around Kent, a lot of hard work but it can work.
- Still steps in heritage buildings. Is VR a possibility to limit this barrier?
- Robot with Ipad?
- Could we start sessions with parents doing art in smaller groups and children are allowed to be themselves and run around?
- No screens playdate?
- Financial exclusions and not relevant?
- Conversations with attractions and place of interests to resolve issue of access.
- Concessions for carers, not all places do it yet!
- Sensory tactile items to create accessible spaces.
- Flexible tickets; one price, but visit any time/annual tickets.
- Target sessions.
- Neutral space.
- Quiet sessions.
- Education for staff on awareness and how to deal with issue that could come up.
- There is the ambition for the above, but not the finances.
- Education packs to take away (QR codes).
- Hub or centre with tactile objects.
- Better communication with other local services such as schools.

1: How can we expand activities to the outers areas of Medway and provide better public transport for accessibility and eco reasons? There is heritage beyond Rochester and the historic dockyards. This should not be forgotten.

Convener: Keith Gulivan / Table Facilitator: Emma Ovenden

In the conversation:

1. Theresa Murphy, Resident
2. Michelle Trumpar, Medway Champions
3. Chris de Coulon Berthoud, FOMA / CORS
4. Rob Schulz, St Margaret's Church, Rainham
5. Alec King, Resident
6. Keith Gulvin, Slough Fort Preservation Trust
7. Emma Ovenden, Medway Archives Centre
8. Rob O'Hanlon, St Margaret's Rainham Eco Hub



Point 1

- Ensuring all areas of Medway to receive funding.
- There is a concern that larger organisations like the Dockyard receive the lion's share of funding.

Point 2

- Consider and support smaller organisations to get funding/successful funding bids from Medway Council. Format of applications; also supporting completing the forms from people who are skilled at completing bids. Peer to peer help. Perhaps we could build up meetings and feedback as this would be helpful. Open application process to help smaller charities. Money could be used to form a community bids team. Tight deadlines for funding, size of proceeds and preparing bids is daunting and many community groups and organisations do not consider this helpful.

Point 3

- Improve transport links, consider using the river to link communities?

Point 4

- Decentralise and put services where people are.

Point 5

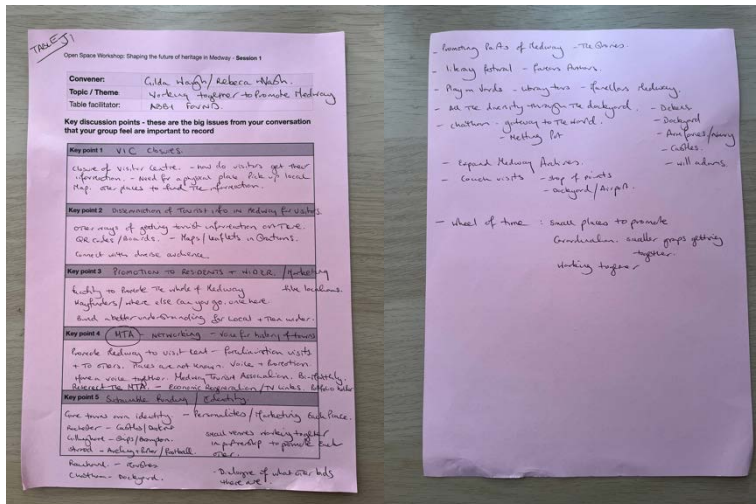
- Bringing local stories to life for local residents.
- Keep prices reasonable for local people, helping to increase the number of people to enjoy their heritage.
- Getting young people in natural areas and interested in their local area.
- Passionate volunteers can enthuse their local area and community.
- Improving town centres in Medway, particularly Chatham and Gillingham so that people feel comfortable visiting the areas and building civic pride.

J1: How can we work together to promote Medway?

Convener: Gilda Waugh and Rebecca Nash / Table Facilitator: Abby Found

In the conversation:

1. Kate Mechedou, Mrs Baker's Medway Theatre Co/Medway Arts Tours
2. Robert Flood, City of Rochester Society. Friends of Medway Archives and Iotra Community Trust
3. Dr Ingrid van Dooren, Human Rights Office
4. John, Ex Head Custodian of Rochester Cathedral
5. Gilda Waugh, Actor and Custodian Restoration House
6. Bill Fowler, Fort Amherst
7. Rebecca Nash, Royal Engineers Museum
8. Sovra Newman, Independent and The Strand
9. Wendy Mesher, Friends of Chatham Traction
10. Richard Bourne
11. Paul Cowell, Medway Council



Point 1

- With the closure of the visitor centre, how do visitors get their information? We need a physical place to pick-up information and a local map. Would other places jointly fund the information?

Point 2

- Dissemination of tourist information in Medway for visitors: Other ways of getting tourist information out there could include QR codes/boards, maps and leaflets in stations. This may help us reach more diverse audiences.

Point 3

- Promotion to residents and the wider community.
- There needs to be a facility to promote the whole of Medway. Can we get some way-finders made, that can direct people to where else they can go.
- Provide a better understanding of local and then wider.
- Share interesting facts such as where films have been filmed.

Point 4

- MTA network; a voice for history of towns to support networking. Promote Medway to visit Kent. Places are not known. Is there a way to formalise this information so that people visit other places? How can we better have a voice together to ensure longevity? Medway Tourist Association? Bi-monthly portfolio holder? Resurrect the MTA - Economic regeneration/TV links.

Point 5

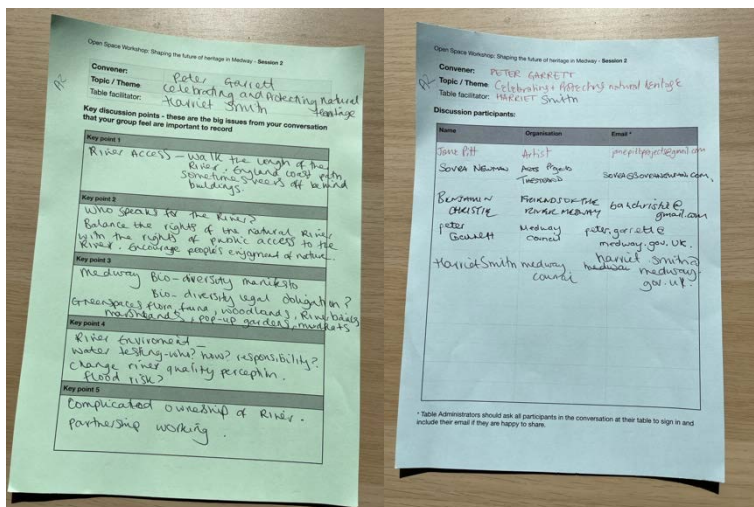
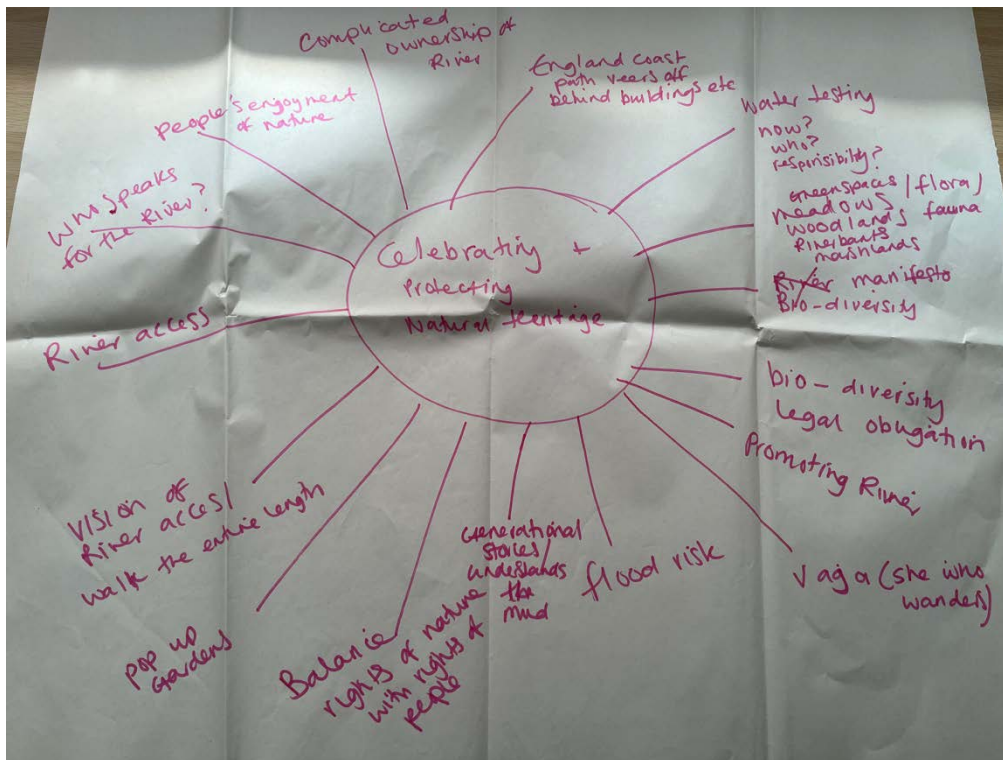
- Give the towns their own identity and give them personalities that supports with marketing each place.
- Rochester: Castles/Dickens,
- Gillingham: Ships/Brampton,
- Strood: Football/Aveling & Porter,
- Rainham: Marshes
- Chatham: Dockyard
- Promoting the stories of Medway.
- Possible literacy festival.
- All the diversity through the Dockyard.
- Play on words, library tours celebrating Medway; Dickens, Dockyard, - Arm-forces/Navy, Castles, Will Adams.
- Can we expand Medway's archives?
- Can small venues work better in partnership to support each other.
- Can we better share what bids we are putting together so that we can find crossovers and shared interests?
- Chatham: Gateway to the World and Melting Pot.
- Coach visits: stop off points, Dockyard/Airport.
- Wheel of time: small places to promote correlation between smaller groups getting together and working together.

A2: Celebrating and protecting natural heritage

Convener: Peter Garrett / Table Facilitator: Harriet Smith

In the conversation:

1. Jane Pitt, Artist
2. Harriet Smith, Medway Council
3. Peter Garrett, Medway Council
4. Sovra Newman, Independent and The Strand
5. Benjamin Christie, Friends of the River Medway



Point 1

- River access: Walk the length of the river. England's Coast Path sometimes veers off behind buildings. Vaga, she who wanders.

Point 2

- Who speaks for the river? Balance the rights of the natural river with the rights of public access to the river. Encourage people's enjoyment of nature.

Point 3

- Medway bio-diversity manifesto. Bio-diversity legal obligation?
- Green-spaces flora, fauna, woodlands, river banks, marshlands, pop-up gardens and mudflats.

Point 4

- River environment: water, testing-who? How? Whose responsibility is it? Change the river quality and therefore perception. Is there a flood risk?

Point 5

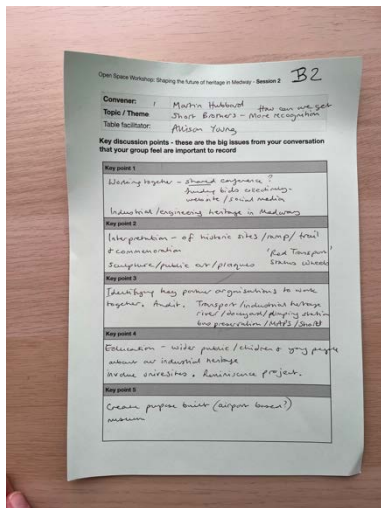
- Complicated ownership of the River. Do we need better partnership working?

B2: How can we get more recognition for the Short Brothers by preserving Medway's pioneering aviation heritage?

Convener: Martin Hubbard / Table Facilitator: Allison Young

In the conversation:

1. Alex King, Resident
2. Duncan MacBain, Local Business,
3. Trevor Horre, The Garage Museum
4. Richard Bourne
5. Esther Johnson
6. David Hubbard, Short Brothers Commemoration Society
7. Martin Hubbard, Short Brothers Commemoration Society
8. Wendy Mesher, F.O.C. Traction
9. Terry Maps



Point 1

- Working together- shared conference?
- Applying for funding bids collectively?
- Using websites and social media more.
- Celebrating industrial/engineering heritage in Medway.

Point 2

- Interpretation of historic sites/ramp/trail of commemoration.
- Sculpture/public art/plaques.
- 'Red Transport' status wheels.

Point 3

- Identifying key partner organisation to work together by carrying out an audit.
- Transport/industrial heritage/River/Dockyard/pumping station/bus preservation/MAPS/Shortt.

Point 4

- Education - wider public/children and young people about our industrial heritage.
- Could we involve universities?
- Could we commission a reminiscence project?

Point 5

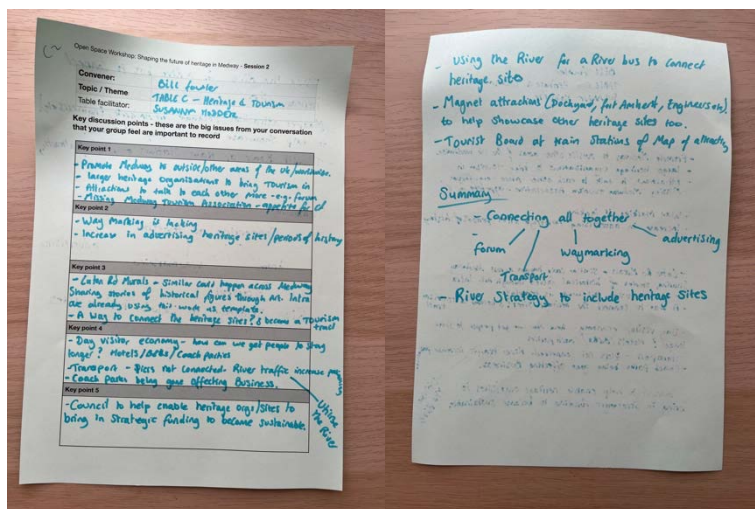
- Create purpose built (airport based) museum?
- Derek Gramsden Vicg6 Trust: Looking for passport for painting interest in historic vendors.

C2: Stronger link-up between heritage, tourism and economic development

Convener: Bill Fowler / Table Facilitator: Susanna Hodder

In the conversation:

1. Mark Breathwick, Medway Council
2. Nigel Howard, C.H.D.T
3. Bill Fowler, Fort Amherst
4. Keith Clear, Medway Parents and Careers Forum
5. Alex Cameron, ICT
6. Cllr Paula Hamilton, Medway Council,
7. Gilda Waugh, Actor and Custodian Restoration House



Point 1

- Promote Medway to outside/other areas of the UK/Worldwide.
- Larger heritage organisations to bring tourism in.
- Attractions to talk to each other more .e.g. forum.
- Missing Medway Tourism Association - appetite for it.

Point 2

- Way marking is lacking.
- Increase in advertising heritage sites/period of history.

Point 3

- Luton Rd Murals, similar could happen across Medway sharing stories of historical figures through art. Intra are already using this work as a template.
- A way to connect the heritage sites is missing? This could help build a tourism trade.

Point 4

- Day visitor economy - how can we get people to stay longer? Hotels/coach parties/B&Bs.

- Transport - piers not connected. River traffic increase pollution, how can we use the river in other ways?
- Coach parks being gone affecting businesses.
- Using the river for a river bus to connect heritage sites.
- Magnet attractions (Dockyard, Fort Amherst, Engineers etc) to help showcase other heritage sites too.
- Tourist Board at train stations of map of attractions.

Point 5

- Council to help enable heritage organisations/sites to bring in strategic funding to become sustainable.
- Summary: Connecting all together though forum, transport, way-marking and advertising all wrapped around a river strategy to include heritage sites.

D2: How do we encourage research and involve young people?

Convener: Peter Joyce / Table Facilitator: Shavrou Rai

In the conversation:

1. Sue Cook, St Johns Church
2. Rikard Österlund, Photographer
3. Peter Joyce, CKHM/MHS24
4. Dr Ingrid van Dooren, Human Rights Office
5. Fazle Chowdhury, CHM
6. Jane Joyce, CKHM/MHS24
7. Rebecca Nash, Royal Engineers Museum
8. Keith Guerin, Slough Fort Preservation Trust
9. John, Ex Head Custodian of Rochester Cathedral

Point 1

- "You got to know where you come from to know where you are going."
- Stories are important.
- "Research' = any stories that haven't been told.

Point 2

- How to get the attention of young people?
- Sponsors for young people?
- Work experience (DOFe)
- Younger people have shorter attention spans.

Point 3

- Different generations have different interests.
- A volunteer has to actually have interest/a passion in what they're researching.

Point 4

- History education feels restricted. It needs to be more engaging.
- Museums want to work with more schools and universities.

- There are many archive sites but people don't know about them.

Point 5

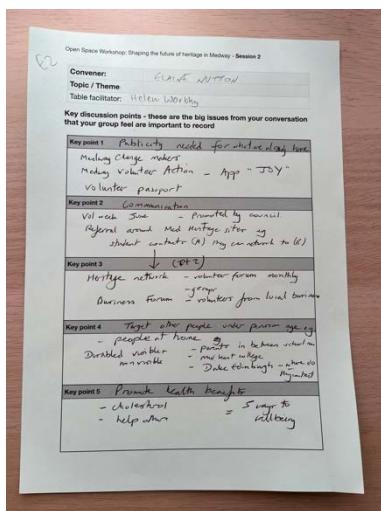
- There should be a community for researchers.
- No one knows about other researchers in the area. Could there be a collective database?
- Who could provide mentoring for young people?

E2: Heritage Volunteering

Convener: Elaine Nutton / Table Facilitator: Helen Worthy

In the conversation:

1. Mel Moss, Quaker Meeting House
2. Elaine Nutton
3. Wendy Ansley, Resident
4. Luqman Abolaji, Resident
5. Terry Wood, Friends of Rochester Cathedral
6. Phil Bungay, Medway Neurological Network
7. Theresa Murphy, Resident



Point 1

- Publicity needed for what we already have:
 - Medway Change Makers,
 - Medway Volunteer Action - App "JOY"
 - Volunteer Passport

Point 2:

- Volunteer week in June, can this be promoted by the council?
- Referral around Medway Heritage sites e.g. Student Contracts that can link one site to another network.

Point 3

- Heritage network: volunteer forum that is held monthly or can we set up some more specialist groups?
- Business Forum that includes volunteers from local businesses?

Point 4

- Target other people under pension age - for example, People at home, Mid Kent College, Duke Edinburgh - where do they contact? Parents in between school. People with visible and non-visible disabilities through increased work on accessibility measurers.

Point 5

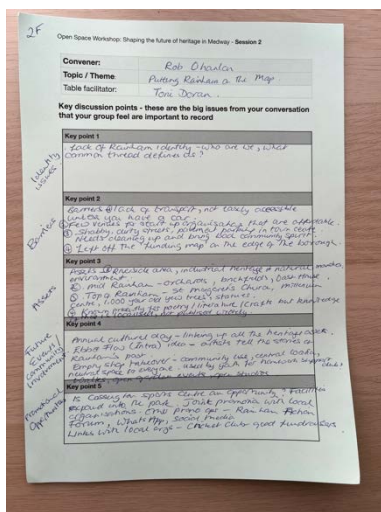
- Promote more the health benefits
- 5 ways to wellbeing
- Cholesterol
- Helping others

F2: Putting Rainham on the map

Convener: Rob O'Hanlon / Table Facilitator: Toni Doran

In the conversation:

1. Toni Doran, Medway Council
2. Michi Masumi, The Black Art Hub
3. Maya Sevell, Medway Council
4. Rob O'Hanlon, St Margaret's Rainham Eco Hub
5. Heather Burgess, Resident and Business Owner
6. Fayaz Iqbal, Medway Youth
7. Vicky Schulz
8. Rob Schulz, St Margaret's Church, Rainham



Point 1

- Identity issues: Lack of Rainham identity - who are we? What common thread defines us?

Point 2

- Barriers:
 - Lack of transport, not easily accessible unless you have a car.
 - Few venues for start-up organisations that are affordable.
 - Shabby, dirty streets, pavement parking in town centre. Need cleaning up and to focus on bringing back community spirit which is bad.
 - Left off the 'funding map' on the edge of the borough.

Point 3

- Assets:
 - Riverside area, industrial heritage and natural marshes; environment.
 - Mid Rainham - Orchards, Brickfields, Oast House.
 - Top of Rainham - St Margaret's Church, Millennium centre, 1,000 year old yew trees, statues.

- Known positively for poetry, literature, crafts but knowledge on this is localised, not published widely.

Point 4

- Future events/community involvement:
- Annual Culture Day - linking up all the heritage assets.
- Ebb & Flow (Intra) idea - artists tell the stories of Rainham's past.
- Empty shop takeover - community use, central location, neutral space for everyone. Used by youth for homework support club?
- Walks, open gardens events and open studios.

Point 5

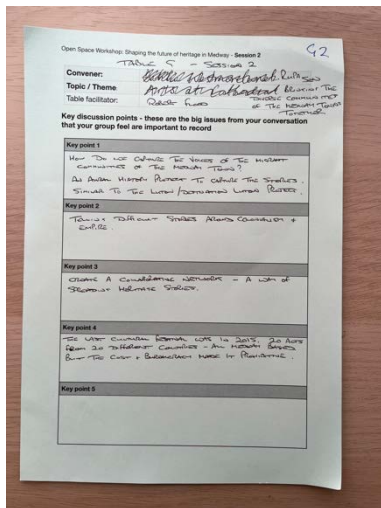
- Promotional Opportunities:
- Is losing the sports centre an opportunity? Could facilitate expanding into the park? Could there be joint promotion with the local organisations. Other promo ops - Rainham Fiction Forum, WhatsApp, Social Media.
- Links with local organisations - Cricket Club are good fundraisers.

G2: How can we have a space/hub available to BME community groups to celebrate culture/heritage?

Convener: Rupa Sen / Table Facilitator: Robert Flood

In the conversation:

1. Bola Suluk, Lighthouse Educational Society
2. Ali Bayindir, Lighthouse Educational Society
3. Matt Thomas, Royal Engineers Museum
4. Rupa Sen, MDF
5. Robert Flood, City of Rochester Society. Friends of Medway Archives and Intra Community Trust,
6. Fazle Chowdhury, CHM
7. Mizan Syed
8. Chris de Coulon Berthoud, FOMA / CORS
9. Pat Cooper, MDCD



Point 1

- How do we capture the voices of the migrant communities of the Medway towns?
- An aural history project perhaps to capture the stories similar to the Luton/'Destination Luton Project'.

Point 2

- Telling difficult stories around colonialism and empire.

Point 3

- Create a collaborating network as a way of spreading heritage stories.

Point 4

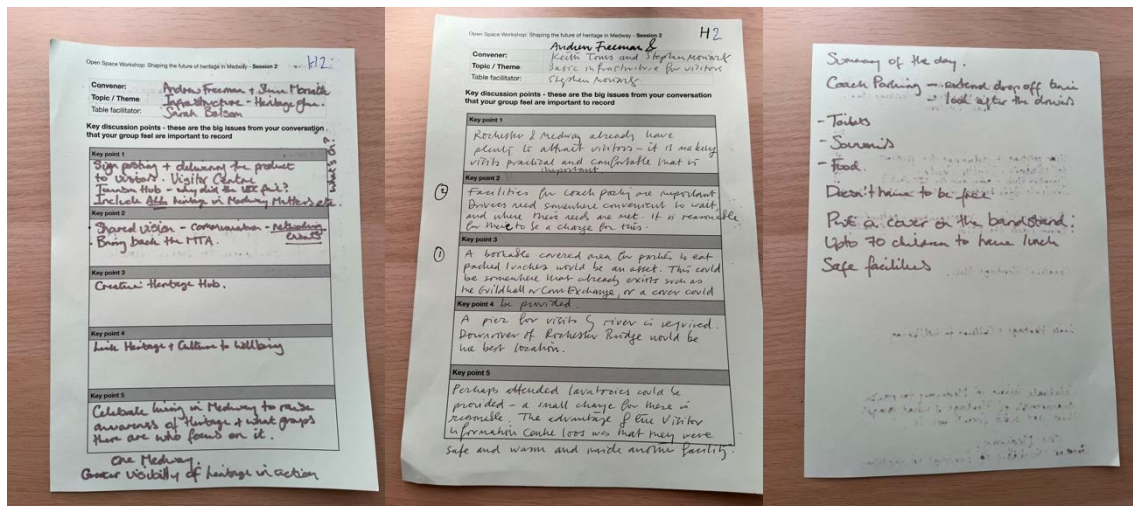
- The last cultural festival was in 2015. 20 acts from 20 different countries. All were Medway based, but the cost and bureaucracy made it prohibitive.

H2: Basic infrastructure for visitors

Convener: Andrew Freeman, Keith Toms and Stephen Moriarty / Table Facilitator: Stephen Moriarty

In the conversation:

1. Elaine Gardner, Friends of Medway Archives
2. Rosie Beattie
3. Alan Moss, Friends of Eastgate House
4. Trish Gayle MACA
5. Jane Brown, MACA
6. Stephen Moriarty, Tour Guide
7. Carol Stewart, MACA/Creative Medway
8. Kate Mechedou, Mrs Baker's Medway Theatre Co/Medway Arts Tours
9. Becci Balton
10. Andrew Freeman, Rochester Bridge Trust
11. Lara Dix, Tours Huguenot House



Point 1

- Signposting and delivering the product to visitors through a visitor centre or tourism hub. We need to learn why this failed in the past and include all heritage in Medway Matters etc to share what is on.

Point 2

- We need a shared vision that needs to be communicated and built at networking events.
- Bring back the MTA.

Point 3

- Creative Heritage Hub.

Point 4

- Link heritage with culture and wellbeing.

Point 5

- Celebrate living in Medway to raise awareness of heritage and what groups there are who focus on it.
- One Medway; greater visibility of heritage in action.

Point 6

- Perhaps attended lavatories could be provided - a small charge for this is reasonable. The advantage of a visitor information centre loss was that they were safe and warm and inside another facility. Make these clean and accessible.

Point 7

- Rochester and Medway already have plenty to attract visitors. It is making visits practical and comfortable that is important.

Point 8

- Facilities for coach parking are important. Drivers need somewhere convenient to wait and where their needs are met. It is reasonable if there is a charge for this. Somewhere they can use a lavatory and get something to eat and drink.

Point 9

- A bookable covered area for parties to eat packed lunches would be an asset. This could be somewhere that already exists such as the Guildhall or Corn Exchange or a cover could be provided.

Point 10

- A pier for visits to the river is required. Downriver of the Rochester Bridge would be the best location.

Point 11

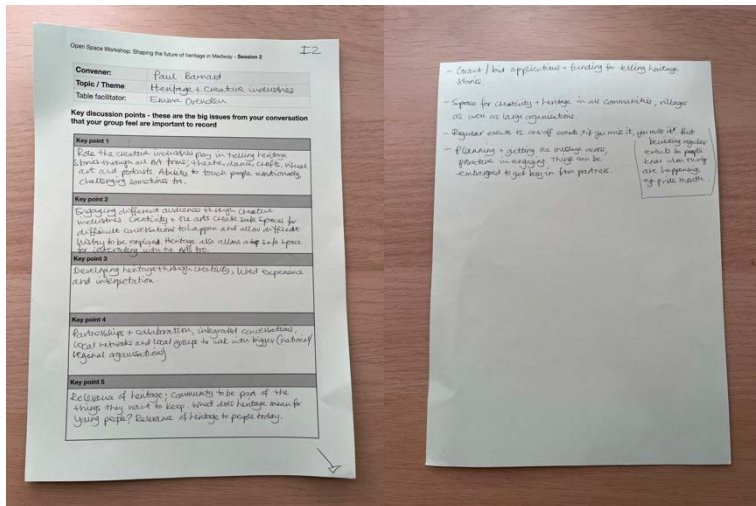
- Summary of the day:
 - Coach parking; extended drop-off times and look after the drivers,
 - Toilets
 - Souvenirs
 - More food places available
 - Doesn't have to be free
 - Put a cover on the bandstand and use so children can have lunch and safe facilities
 - Please provide the glue such as a new Museum or new Visitor Centre with the wonderful Medway Council experts they have (Andrew Freeman).

I2: Heritage and creative industries

Convener: Paul Barnard / Table Facilitator: Emma Ovenden

In the conversation:

1. Camilla Baker, Lost Crafts and Herbert Baker Society
2. Paul Barnard, CHOT
3. Janet Fischer, Live Musik Now ICT, Creative Medway
4. Dahlia Westmoreland, Rochester Cathedral
5. Luke Bacon, St John's Chatham
6. Sam Diplock, Browsing History
7. Pàivi Seppälä
8. Mark Snoswell
9. Emma Ovenden, Medway Archives Centre



Point 1

- Role the creative industries play in telling heritage stories through all artforms; theatre, dance, crafts, visual art and podcasts. Ability to touch people emotionally channelising sometime too.

Point 2

- Engaging different audiences through creative industries. Creative and the arts create safe spaces for difficult conversation to happen and allow different history to be explore. Heritage also allows a safe space for interacting with the arts too!

Point 3

Developing heritage through creativity, lived experience and interpretation.

Point 4

- Partnerships and collaboration, integrated conversations, local networks and local groups to work with bigger (national/regional organisations).

Point 5

- Relevance of Heritage; community to be part of the things they want to keep. What does heritage mean for young people? What is the relevance of heritage to people today?

Point 6

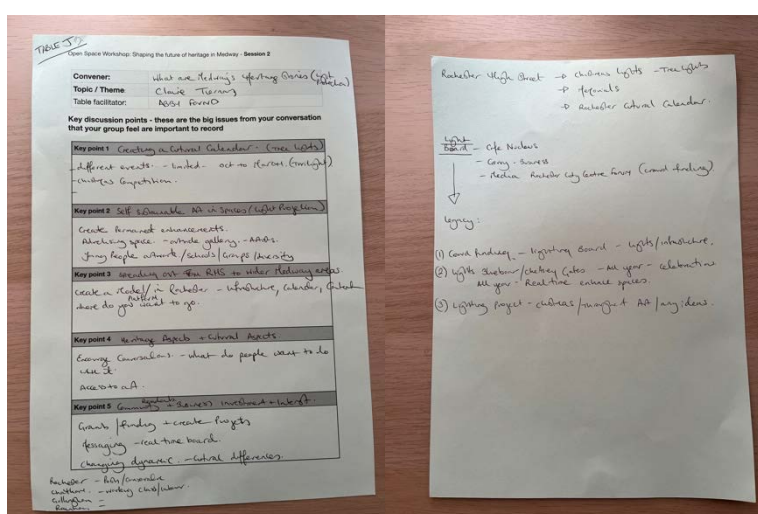
- Grant/bid applications and funding for telling heritage stories.
- Space for creativity and heritage in all communities; villages as well as large organisations.
- Regular events and one off events “if you miss it, you miss it” but building regular events so people now who signs are happening e.g. pride month.
- Planning and getting the message across through proactive engagement. Things can be embargoed to get buy in from partners.

J2: What are Medway's stories? (Light Projection Project/What would you like to see?)

Convener: Clare Tierney / Table Facilitator: Abby Found

In the conversation:

1. Vince Maple
2. Shafique Syed, CHM
3. Billy Dutton, RCCF
4. Gerry Turner, Rochester Lights Board
5. Bilkis Malek, Transculturalvisions
6. Clare Tierney, RCCF & Lighting Board



Point 1

- Creating a cultural calendar (tree lights).
- Different events – limited – Oct-March (twilight).
- Christmas competition.

Point 2

- Self-sustainable art in spaces (light projection).
- Create permanent enhancements.
- Advertising space - outside gallery - Artists.
- Young people artwork/schools/groups/diversity.

Point 3

- Spreading out from RHS to other Medway areas.
- Create a model/platform in Rochester - Infrastructure, calendar, contacts.
- Find out where people want to go?

Point 4

- Heritage aspects and cultural aspects:

- Encourage conversations, what do people want to do with it.
- Access to art.

Point 5

- Residents, community and business investment and interest.
- Grants/funding and create projects.
- Messaging - real time board.
- Changing dynamic- cultural differences.
- Rochester - Public/Conservative, Chatham - Working Class/Labour etc.

Point 6

- Rochester High Street:
 - Christmas lights
 - Tree lights
 - Rochester cultural calendar
 - Memorials.

Point 7

- Light Board
- Cafe nucleus
- Gerry- business
- Media Rochester City Centre Forum (crowdfunding).

Point 8

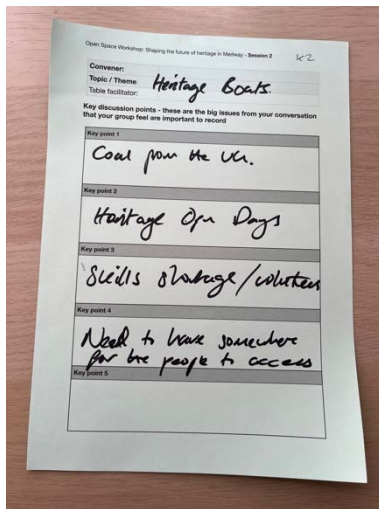
- Legacy:
 - Crowdfunding - lighting board - lights/infrastructure
 - Lights Blue Boar/Chertsey's Gates - all year round celebrations enhancing spaces
 - Lighting project - Christmas/through art/any ideas.

K2: Heritage Boats

Convener: Stephen Moriarty / This group had no facilitator as it was a self-led group which formed spontaneously

In the conversation:

1. John Puplett, South Eastern Tug Society
2. John Portman, Parish of Rochester and Rochester Rotary Club
3. Cozaman Stootle, South Eastern Tug Society
4. Keith Toms, South Eastern Tug Society
5. Stephen Moriarty, Tour Guide



Point 1

- Coal from the UK
- Coach park.
- Heritage open days.
- Skills and volunteer shortage.
- Need to have somewhere for people to access.

Monitoring And Equalities Posters

This is the data collected from the Monitoring And Equalities Posters.

How old are you?

- 85+: 3
- 75-84: 12
- 65- 74: 12
- 55 - 64: 5
- 45 - 54: 17
- 35 - 44: 4
- 25 - 34: 1
- 18 - 24: 2
- 16 - 18: 1
- 15 and under: 0

What best describes your role in Medway heritage?

- Community member: 18
- Volunteer working in heritage: 10
- Professional working in heritage sector: 10
- Representative of a religious or cultural community: 10
- Other: 9

What best describes the area of Medway heritage that you are involved with? You can choose more than one area...

- Buildings, sites or heritage attractions: 22
- Intangible heritage e.g. cultural or community traditions: 16
- Transport and industrial heritage: 2
- Historic vessels or the heritage of the River Medway: 9
- Nature, green apes, gardens and natural heritage: 10
- Community archaeology: 4
- Other: 9 (additional others on lines/centre of wheel: 10)

How do you define your relationship with heritage in Medway?

- I hardly know anything about it: 3
- Between: 7
- Somewhere in the middle: 12

- Between: 15
- I work on it full time: 9

How do you define your ethnicity?

- White British: 37
- Asian British: 4
- Black British: 0
- Chinese: 0
- White Irish: 2
- White Other: 6
- Mixed Heritage: 2

In one word tell us what is unique about Medway's heritage

All suggestions in alphabetical order.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| – Ageless | – Dormant | – More youth clubs |
| – Beautiful/but complex | – Environment | – Music |
| – Bridges | – History | – People |
| – Build heritage | – History | – People |
| – Buildings | – History | – People |
| – Built heritage | – History | – Pollution |
| – Castle views from around the city | – History | – Potential |
| – Changing | – History | – Research |
| – Cultural | – History of heritage | – Rich |
| – Deaf (BSL) and deafened heritage | – History of ingenuity and creativity | – River Medway and piers |
| – Defence of the country | – Interesting | – Stories of the river |
| – Diverse | – International significance | – Under resourced |
| – Diverse | – Judeo/Christian | – Unique blend |
| – Diverse | – LGBTQIA+ hidden heritage | – Valuable |
| – Diverse | – Maritime | – Variety |
| – Diverse culture ant owns | – Maritime and diverse | – Variety |
| – Diversity | – Maritime heritage | – Water quality |
| – Diversity - more than buildings | | – Working class history and heritage |
| | | – World class |

Other notes

I wanted to say...

Rebecca Nash

- How can we prioritise conservation of our heritage assets both tangible and intangible.

- Is there anything to learn/pick up on from the 2010(c) world heritage site bid work?
- Let's not forget that we have been chosen as a HP because heritage hasn't been working in Medway. Let's not repeat past mistakes and do something new and lasting!

Clare Sanders Funding and Programmes Director / www.mva.org.uk

- MVA can provide support in a variety of ways to support some of the ideas/aspirations covered today:
- Supporting smaller community groups to develop ideas/access funding/meet lottery criteria (access)
- Support network/communication after today and collaborative working/bids.
- Volunteering issue and opportunities.
- Recruiting/engaging more communities into conversations
- And lots more!
- We're funded by Medway Council to deliver support to communities and not-for profits... so please use us!

Michi

- Creative Medway has an active role to play in proactively convening themes, collaborations and planning across the cultural and heritage sector including timetables and planning.
- Thanks

John Portman

- Since the closure of the TIC we need a central point for tourists to access information both physical and online.

Stephen Moriarty

- That Curtis Way Coach Park is opened; that the bandstand in the castle is restored as an awning for visitors; that toilets and refreshments for visitors and coach drivers are provided as much as possible. Thank you.

Pauline Holmes

- Greater public access to the river i.e. via piers.
- One of the ways to simply keep heritage alive is through storytelling. It's simple, doesn't cost much, who doesn't like listening to a story?

Rob, Rainham Church

- Is Medway a 'Real' are?
- Are there real links between these towns/villages, or is it an artificial construct?
- What is the identity of Medway?
- Should we celebrate Medway as a whole or should we look to celebrate the identities of the individual towns and villages?

Rosie Beattie

- I do not want projectors in High Streets. It will make the High Streets inaccessible for me and everybody else who has eye problems with screens and LED lights.

- To involve disadvantaged groups to contribute to Medway's rich culture through arts and crafts activities. How they can showcase their own heritage to contribute to the bigger picture. Encouraging entrepreneurship and better use of town centres.
- It is clear that a visitor centre needs to be reinstated albeit with interested and knowledgeable staff who can provide information about what offerings are further afield in towns and villages. I hear the lease runs until the end of 2025. Can not part of the existing centre be leased and the other areas leased to businesses or host pop up shops for creative small businesses? It seems very wasteful to do nothing with this site. Can a steering group be instated to investigate how a centre can be launched either in the existing or in a new smaller location.

I wanted to ask...

Toni Doran

- How will we make heritage accessible for people with disabilities and societal education needs and ensure their ideas and opinions are heard?
- Can organisations/individuals put in more than one application for MHPPF if they separately address different aspects of the funding opportunities?

Dr Ingrid van Dooren / Human Rights Office, Gillingham

- In February 2025 it will be the 800th anniversary of the 1225 Magna Carta and I am doing research on Magna Carta, democracy and human rights and will organise some talks about it. Would the council like to work with me on this project? Talks could be held at different heritage venues, also giving attention to those venues the project will probably also get attention from the Magna Carta first.

End of the day verbal feedback

- Importance of stories and how this is lovely to hear and share.
- Digital version of culture and heritage assets of Medway.
- Create a festival to share assets/stories of Medway.
- If we all work together, big and small and have tea parties.
- Creative Medway's potential to convene themes here and thus bring together culture, heritage and economy.
- Great turnout and event.
- Importance of time to talk and to get people together - conference.
- There's a lot of passion, a lot of hope, but we do need more people engaged in these conversations.
- Importance of communication via word of mouth and 'feet on the ground' not just electronic.
- Start going with inexpensive things.
- Reach out to the schools next time and get young people along.

Pre-written thoughts

Pre-prepared thoughts from a Table Facilitator: Allison Young, Culture Team.

"How do we make sure Medway's heritage thrives in the next decade and beyond?"

- Employ cross art form and contemporary art commissions to engage people in heritage stories and locations.
- Share heritage stories with the public through his quality public art, outdoor displays.
- Focus on key architectural stories and gems - i.e. Bond buildings like Brook Theatre.
- Focus on more than just Dickens, explore 20th century stories and people like Sandra Rhodes and Medway's music and art scene.
- Provide guidance/funding for people keen to renovate/restore historic properties in Medway for residential or business use to ensure heritage assets are not lost or poorly repaired.
- Create a permeant display for the Short Brothers collection and raise profile of the areas key role in the aviation history.
- Build in the fun iconic Whorl cone approach.
- Raise funds by selling replica prints of archive posters etc.
- Promote and showcase archival content more.
- Further explore the stories of underrepresented local communities, locations, trades and events.
- Support teams to considerably increase and encourage awareness of and access to Medway's archives.
- Actively support the creative sector to continue their exiting approach to sharing heritage stories through performance, exhibitions, creative projects and activities.
- Make better uses of green spaces that could explore heritage landscape.
- Develop a policy of encouraging children and young people to explore careers n heritage restoration, craft, management and interpretation and archaeology.
- Develop and fund a policy of active artefact acquisition and display for museum/archive collections.
- Invest in care and conservation of existing collections.
- Support and extend existing durational team.
- Invest in high quality archival spaces/storage for Medway councils museum collection/archives.
- Develop high quality exhibition spaces for temporary and permanent displays of heritage exhibitions (in house and touring) that meet accredited standards to enable loans from major institutions.
- Greater exploration of the less well known historic people/stories in Medway in distance and recent past (i.e. the rescuer 'Cut of her cloth' project).
- Extend blue plaque around Medway famous residents.
- Spotlight through preservation and interpretation key architectural heritage gems and hidden aspects above shops etc. 'look up'.
- Stricter conservation and design standards for historic building notably retail/hospitality premises in Rochester high street, character is being lost Vape Shops. Lighting, neon, signage, temporary structures (city wall etc).
- Greeted joined up long term thinking around key dates to enable cross-location focus on major anniversaries like the castle/cathedral/dockyard landmark dates.
- Restore the Dickens Chalet before it's too late.
- Reinstate a smaller and more friendly and engaging heritage info point in Rochester/Chatham for tourist and the local community.

- Make Guildhall museum and Eastgate entry free or by donation.
- Greater resources for existing heritage team educational and outreach programme to extend and keep this free to schools, families and the public.
- Better utilise and support existing heritage/conservation teams and organisations already working in Medway.

Audience interactions

This data was collected 'live' via the online audience interaction tool, Slido.

Q&A / Comments

- Is this a heritage event or an arts event?
- How do we make those not in this room Proud To Be Medway
- What is important to all generations here?
- What is your definition of heritage?
- Where do we find help to make small scale heritage projects happen?
- How can we make space for each other's stories?
- There's always another story
- How do you find heritage groups in Medway?
- You need to know where you're coming from to work out where you're going...
- How can Rochester Cathedral co-curate cultural programming with all of Medway?

What's your favourite piece of tangible or intangible Medway heritage which others often overlook or don't know about?

- Ghost signs
- The 'lost' pubs of Medway
- Engineering heritage both civilian and military
- The 280000 individual stories and how we amplify those.
- Fort Luton
- Post-war music history and youth culture of the towns
- Intra
- Historic ships!
- The submarine!
- The wider military story of Medway over the past 1000 years.
- It is the birth place of the SPCK workhouses c.1720
- The Quaker Meeting house is a grade 2 listed building opposite the corn exchange which is a place of peace, community activities and charitable action
- I'm a visitor so still discovering but am excited to know more.