New Collaboration in the East Draws Together World Class Arts and Culture Tourism Offering

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Ambitious New Collaboration in the East Draws Together World Class Arts and Culture Tourism Offering

As news comes that the East is outperforming the rest of the country in attracting visitors and visitor spending (*Visit England, June 2015*), an ambitious and highly collaborative project is launched to shine a spotlight on the region's world class arts and culture tourism offering. The project will bring close and innovative collaboration between cultural organisations and tourism bodies, will clarify Norfolk and Suffolk's position as a standard bearer for the UK's regional arts and will tempt cultural tourists, both from within the UK and from further afield, to *Look Sideways – East*.

The East enjoys a high level of prestigious Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations – fourteen in total, with six in Ipswich alone – including Aldeburgh Music at Snape, The Writers' Centre in UNESCO City of Literature, Norwich, DanceEast in Ipswich and The OutThere Festival in Great Yarmouth.

Cultural tourism is perhaps the original form of tourism, but in recent years there has been a growing focus on this market as the major source of worldwide tourism growth. Cultural Tourism currently makes up 37% of the global tourism market and is set to grow by around 17% year on year (*UNTWO 2014*). In 2014, the Cultural Board of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership was quick to act on the recommendations of Arts Council England to harness and develop this growing market. After successfully bidding for Arts Council funding additional investment was brought in to lead an ambitious cross sector collaboration of Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, arts organisations, travel infrastructure, accommodation and food and drink providers.

Look Sideways – East is a three year project that has kicked off with the launch of *Culture 365, a* curated social media campaign that each day highlights a single piece from the broad range of culture across the region, from the opening of a world class festival, such as Latitude, to a particular exhibit, perhaps at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich. Closely following the key focus on collaboration, *Culture 365* is delivered alongside existing cultural organisation and tourism communications channels, in order to build and not compete with what already exists.

Son of the East, Benjamin Britten, said "I believe in roots, in associations, in backgrounds, in personal relationships". It's those roots, those connections, which *Look Sideways – East* celebrates and supports. The East is a place of world-class culture in an awe-inspiring setting. It feeds the mind, ignites the imagination, and it's closer than you think – just a hop and a skip from London. All you need to do is Look Sideways – East.

Find out more at @Look_Sideways, facebook.com/looksidewayseast and www.culture-365.co.uk

Informed spokespeople from all sides of the project are available for comment and interview. Please contact Lucy Henson at Spring for further information on 07990 978609 or at lucy@agencyforchange.co.uk

Notes to Editors on Norfolk and Suffolk's Cultural Headliners:

The East is a place that defies convention. It is always creating and making, and has been the cradle of pioneers for centuries. It has borne intriguing, award-winning literature across the centuries in Norwich and has triggered a multitude of festivals on the Suffolk Coast – from pop to poetry, world music to classical. It's cultivated world-class performance art that's rising from the streets in Ipswich, and brought forth the greatest circus that runs through Great Yarmouth like letters through a stick of rock. *Look Sideways – East* will draw together diverse arts and cultural organisations across the region large and small, but information on the headline organisations follows:

Aldeburgh Music is an international performance centre set in a stunning landscape on the Suffolk coast with artist development and education as its creative engine. Aldeburgh Music's campus is centred around the iconic Snape Maltings Concert Hall and the organisation programmes more than 150 events per year including the Aldeburgh Festival in June, Snape Proms in August and Autumn and Spring seasons.

Writers' Centre Norwich is a literature development agency based in Norwich's historic Dragon Hall. It is interested in both the artistic and social impact of creative writing, and work with writers, readers and diverse communities on a wide range of ongoing and one off projects and events. Writers' Centre Norwich works locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, and has developed productive partnerships with many organisations.

Norfolk & Norwich Festival is a flagship arts organisation for the East of England with a reputation for innovative, inspirational programming and commissioning. In addition to staging one of the most significant arts festivals in the UK each May, Norfolk & Norwich Festival collaborates throughout the year with local, national and international partners to produce work for a huge and diverse range of audiences, participants and communities.

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts is one of the most prominent university art galleries in Britain, and a major national centre for the study and presentation of art. This remarkable Norman Foster building houses the extraordinary art collection of Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, as well as the Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau. It also hosts a range of temporary exhibitions and is the largest climate-controlled exhibition space in Eastern England.

OutThere Festival is one of the country's leading circus and street arts festivals, Out There features some of the world's finest, funniest, most mind-boggling, jaw dropping shows. You're guaranteed to leave having experienced the very weirdest and most wonderful acts from the worlds of street arts and circus.

DanceEast, on the Ipswich Waterfront is where some of the best professional dance companies in the world create new work and perform alongside fantastic local community projects in a diverse programme bringing people together through dance.

SPILL Festival of Performance is an international festival of live art, activism and performance presenting the work of exceptional artists from around the globe. Created in 2007 by performance maker Robert Pacitti, SPILL is recognised worldwide as the UK's premier artist-led festival of radical live work.

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