An aerial photograph of Peterborough, UK, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings, green spaces, and a large swimming pool complex in the foreground. A stylized illustration of a swimmer in a blue suit is positioned above the text, appearing to be in mid-air or swimming. The year '2026' is written in a blue, blocky font to the right of the swimmer.

This is
Peterborough 2026

A Festival for the Mind, Heart, and City

www.thisispeterborough.co.uk



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This is Peterborough 2026

This is Peterborough! exists to celebrate the city's rich cultural identity, connect its diverse communities, and reimagine public spaces as platforms for creativity, wellbeing, and belonging—through a bold, inclusive, and future-facing cultural festival



This is Peterborough at its best – inclusive, energetic, and unafraid to be creative. This event represents a city that believes in its people, celebrates its differences, and understands the power of culture to bring about positive change. As the city's MP, I am proud to support it and the incredible organisers, artists, and residents making it happen. This is more than an event – it's a glimpse into the kind of future we want to build together.



Andrew Pakes MP
Member of Parliament for Peterborough



This is Peterborough! is a brilliant celebration of everything that makes our region special – creative, diverse, and full of pride. What stands out to me most is the real sense of energy of the team driving this festival forward – the way it brings people together and puts our stories and talents centre stage. Projects like this are more than just one-off events. They're about building connection, opportunity, and a stronger cultural identity for Peterborough. They celebrate the city's people, embrace difference, and show how culture can be a force for positive change. I'm really proud to support it and excited to see the future this festival helps us build together - I'm proud to support it.



Sam Carling MP
Member of Parliament for NW Cambs



Introduction



the Lido

100th Anniversary
1926-2026

NENE VALLEY RAILWAY
NVR
PETERBOROUGH, ENGLAND

50th Anniversary
1976-2026

This is Peterborough! is a bold, city-wide celebration of identity, creativity and community — a major new cultural initiative launching in 2026 that transforms the whole city into a canvas. More than a single event, it is a shared platform where cultural organisations, tourist attractions, heritage sites, artists and community groups can present what they do best and connect with new audiences.

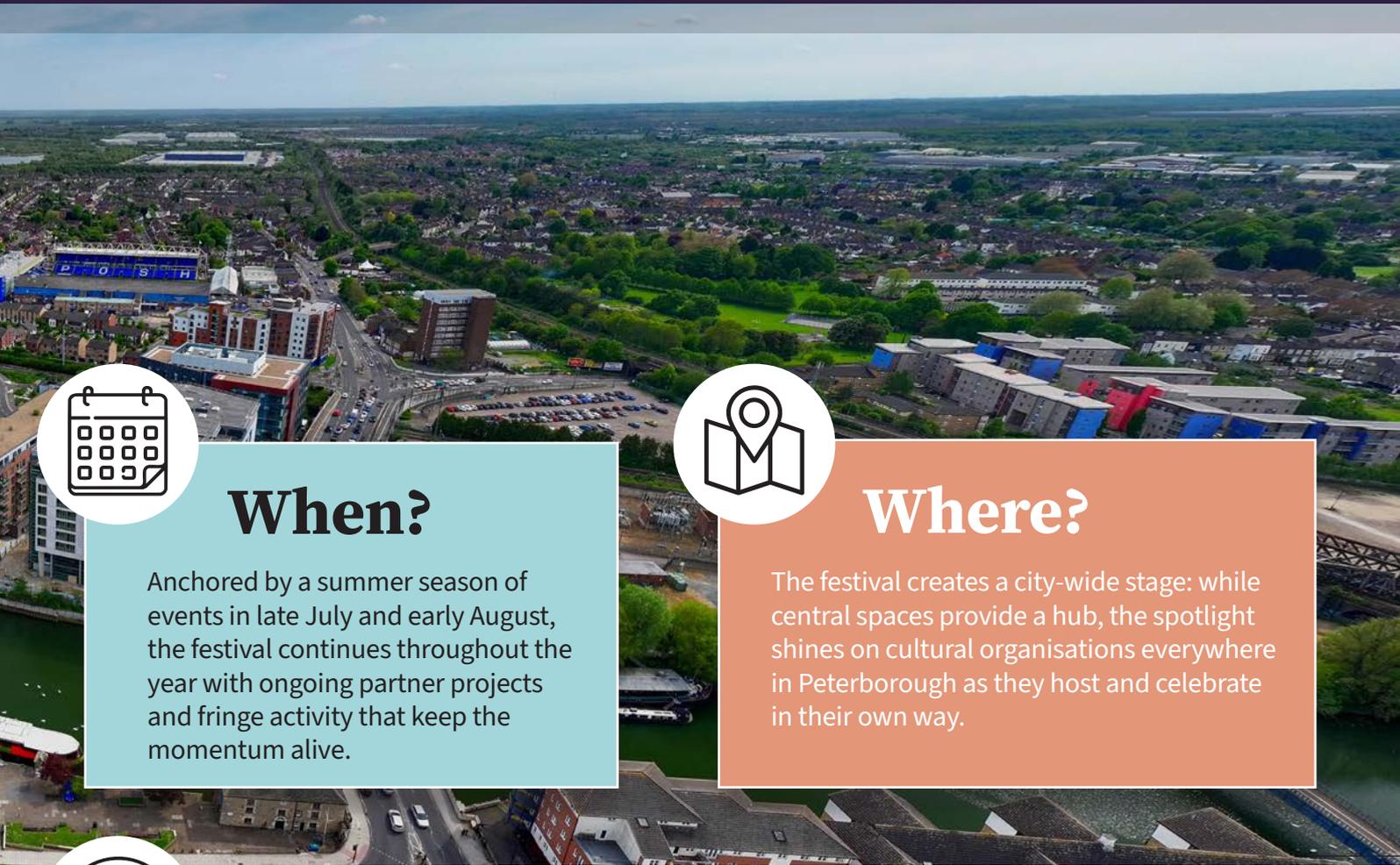
At its heart, the festival tells the evolving story of Peterborough — from the 1960s to today — through exhibitions, performances, film, storytelling, workshops and installations that reflect how we work, learn, play, migrate, make music and share memory.

The team behind This is Peterborough are also working with cultural partners and the local authority to develop an independent destination management organisation, ensuring that the city's tourism, heritage and cultural offer is promoted with

ambition and coherence. The festival is a central strand of this bigger picture — not just an annual highlight, but part of a wider, long-term vision to grow Peterborough's profile, strengthen its visitor economy, and celebrate its unique identity.

This is Peterborough! turns the city into a living exhibition — a place where stories, ideas and experiences come alive, and where residents and visitors alike can see, feel and celebrate what makes Peterborough special.





When?

Anchored by a summer season of events in late July and early August, the festival continues throughout the year with ongoing partner projects and fringe activity that keep the momentum alive.



Where?

The festival creates a city-wide stage: while central spaces provide a hub, the spotlight shines on cultural organisations everywhere in Peterborough as they host and celebrate in their own way.



Why?



Strengthening Local Identity and Civic Pride



Driving Inclusive Growth through Culture and Creativity



Widening Participation in Arts, Heritage, and Community Events



Developing Local Talent, Skills, and Creative Careers



Animating the City Centre and Activating Public Spaces



Empowering Communities through Collaboration



Attracting Visitors and Enhancing the City's Cultural Offer



Celebrating Diversity and Fostering Belonging



Promoting Health, Wellbeing, and Social Connection



Advancing Climate-Conscious Cultural Initiatives



Partners

In alphabetical order



This volunteer-led organisation is dedicated to championing the museum's collections, exhibitions, and role in the city's cultural life. The Friends bring energy, expertise, and a deep sense of care—ensuring our rich heritage remains accessible, inspiring and relevant to all who call the city home.



CPSL Mind supports mental health and wellbeing across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and beyond. Their involvement ensures that the festival is as caring as it is creative—embedding rest, reflection, and emotional connection into the programme, and reminding us all to look after our minds as well as our city.



Peterborough City Council plays a vital role in shaping Peterborough's cultural future. Through strategic support and civic leadership, it helps champion local pride, creative opportunity, and community inclusion—ensuring the festival reflects and celebrates the city's diverse residents, neighbourhoods, and stories.



PECT leads the charge on sustainability and climate action across Peterborough and the region. Their partnership brings green thinking and planet-positive practice into the festival—from reducing waste to inspiring action—helping to ensure that celebration today leaves a legacy for tomorrow.



As the city's Business Improvement District (BID), **Peterborough Positive** brings energy and ambition to the city centre. Supporting events, local enterprise and public life, it works to boost footfall, nurture pride, and help make Peterborough a more vibrant, welcoming place to live, work, and visit.



At the heart of Peterborough's commercial and community life, **Queensgate** is more than a shopping destination—it's a cultural stage. As a host venue and active partner, Queensgate connects everyday life with creativity, helping to reimagine the high street as a place of gathering, discovery, and celebration.



Supported by

In alphabetical order



Fighting for Better Lives

cambnews
co.uk



FENLANDIA
Discover the Soul of the Fens

FILM PETERBOROUGH



hampton gazette



the moment
MAGAZINE



ODEON

park inn
by Radisson



Telegraph
Peterborough



STREET ARTS
HIRE



Yaxley gazette





Festival Outputs



Economic

Stimulate city centre footfall and boost local trade through vibrant events and exhibitions. Activate vacant retail spaces as cultural venues and pop-ups. Showcase a model for a cultural quarter that blends creativity with commercial viability



Social

Embed wellbeing activities and quiet spaces across festival sites, guided by the 5 Ways to Wellbeing. Foster belonging and connection through shared cultural experiences and intergenerational projects. Promote mental health awareness through creativity, storytelling, and public art.



Environmental

Promote sustainable event practices, low-impact installations, and green transport links. Celebrate migration, resilience and shared environmental futures through art and storytelling.



Cultural

Highlight Peterborough's post-1960s cultural and industrial heritage. Provide platforms for local artists, musicians, performers and makers. Encourage co-creation and storytelling across communities and generations.



Educational

Engage young people in the city's living history through the Junior Historians project. Support curriculum-linked learning across history, geography, literacy, and the arts. Celebrate children's voices through exhibitions, time capsules and creative showcases.



This Is Peterborough! is a unique celebration of our rich cultural identity combined with a historical and modern backdrop of a city centre that's constantly evolving. As the representative voice of city centre businesses, Peterborough Positive is excited to be supporting this creative placemaking initiative, which will undoubtedly increase footfall across the city centre and amplify a true sense of pride and belonging. Inclusivity breeds connected communities, and this event will showcase the strength we have as cohesive city, which has always embraced culture and championed heritage. I'm a proud, born and bred Peterborian and feel like I've been waiting for a cultural extravaganza like this all my adult life. I can't wait to be part of the celebrations!

**PETERBOROUGH
POSITIVE**

Pep Cipriano
Chief Operating Officer



Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and South Lincolnshire (CPSL) Mind is proud to be involved in This Is Peterborough – which promises to be a culturally vibrant celebration of all that Peterborough has to offer. At CPSL Mind, we know that being part of a community can make life feel more meaningful and enjoyable, help us feel happier and safer, and improve our mental health. By making the most of the communities around us, we can strengthen our connections, find new opportunities, and support one another. We are really looking forward to connecting with people at the This Is Peterborough event, and we encourage anyone who needs mental health support to reach out to the CPSL Mind team.

 **mind CPSL**

Ashley Bunn
Chief Executive Officer

Strategy Alignment



VisitEngland

This festival directly supports the strategic aims of Peterborough City Council, Peterborough Positive, and the LVEP programme by using culture to drive inclusive growth, revitalise the city centre, and celebrate the city's diverse identity. It fosters local pride, supports creative careers, and helps position Peterborough as a vibrant, welcoming destination.

Alongside the festival, the This is Peterborough! team is also helping to form the city's new independent destination management organisation and tourism

website, working with partners across culture, heritage and business to promote Peterborough and its assets with a unified voice. This joined-up approach ensures that the festival is not a stand-alone event, but part of a wider strategy to grow tourism, strengthen the visitor economy and put the city firmly on the map.

This is Peterborough! is a strategic cultural intervention that supports the Draft Peterborough Local Plan (2024–2044) by activating underused city centre spaces, boosting local business footfall, and showcasing the city's industrial heritage and creative talent.



Queensgate



Situated in the heart of the city, **Queensgate** offers an outstanding retail and social experience, home to over 100 shops, restaurants, and cafés catering to a wide range of tastes and styles. With excellent transport links—including an integrated bus station and immediate access to the railway station—Queensgate is easily reachable by foot, bike, car, or public transport, and features extensive on-site parking for added convenience.

But Queensgate is more than just a shopping destination. It is evolving into a vibrant cultural and community space that plays a central role in the city’s creative renaissance. As a key anchor site for the This is Peterborough! festival and wider cultural programming, the centre’s main atriums and squares will be activated year-round with performances, installations, and participatory arts activities—bringing live music, theatre, and creative engagement directly into the public realm.

Vacant retail units will be transformed into temporary galleries and memory spaces, hosting exhibitions of local art, historic displays, and personal stories curated in partnership with schools, museums, and community groups. These pop-up spaces—including a “People’s Gallery” and Junior Historians archive—will celebrate Peterborough’s living history, diversity, and creative talent, offering free cultural encounters to all who pass through.

By combining its strong retail offer with an expanding cultural footprint, Queensgate serves as a dynamic hub for residents and visitors alike—a place to meet, eat, shop, discover, and be inspired.



A Sustainable Venue

Less Environmental Impact



Outdoor festivals generate up to 25,800 tonnes of waste per year in the UK—much of it from single-use event infrastructure. Hosting events and activities inside Queensgate eliminates the need for marquees, fencing, stages, and other infrastructure.

Cleaner Grid Power



Outdoor festivals often rely on diesel generators, which emit over twice as much CO₂ per kWh as grid electricity. Queensgate uses energy-efficient lighting and ventilation, with natural airflow design and Building Management System controls.

Minimised Weather Risk



Weather-related cancellations waste both money and materials. One UK festival reported £180,000 in damages from storm destruction in 2022 alone. Hosting indoors makes our festival weatherproof—and future-proof.

Reduced Carbon Footprint



By co-locating with a major retail centre, the festival benefits from existing infrastructure and visitor flow. In 2023, Queensgate welcomed over 11 million annual visitors—no additional parking, power, or access routes needed.

Access For Everyone



70% of disabled people have non-visible impairments. Queensgate's fully accessible layout, Shopmobility services, and inclusive signage provide barrierfree cultural access to all, without the need to build temporary adaptations.

Reuse Over Rebuild



Reusing underutilised retail space could save £200–£400/m² per year in energy and occupancy costs compared to building new venues. The festival activates long-vacant units and helps rejuvenate the city centre sustainably.

Minimised Travel Emissions



Travel accounts for up to 80% of an event's carbon footprint. Queensgate's citycentre location reduces car use—integrated with a bus station and 5-min walk from the train station, it's a low-emission venue by design.

Aligned with Green Policy



The Arts Council's 10-year strategy and the UK Government's Culture White Paper both prioritise green growth, inclusivity, and community wellbeing through culture. Our festival model delivers on all three.



2026 Festival Programme



Where We Learnt

Nostalgic classroom environments will celebrate educational institutions and learning spaces of each era. Bringing together students and teachers from across the decades, the festival will host city-wide school reunions, inviting alumni to relive playful, historic lessons and share their personal stories, highlighting significant societal shifts in education and community life.



Where We Worked

Interactive exhibits will showcase the iconic workplaces of Peterborough's commercial and industrial heritage. From bustling factories and thriving retail outlets to the influential business centres and markets, these exhibits will allow visitors to engage with the skills and trades that shaped the local economy.



Where We Played

Vibrant displays and live performances will reflect the rich cultural landscape, recreation, and entertainment venues that defined each decade. This includes the celebration of local music legends, sports triumphs, beloved nightspots, festivals, and leisure activities that have united communities across generations.



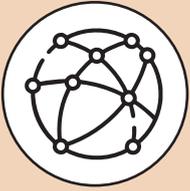
Arts Showcase

A vibrant celebration of Peterborough's creative spirit, this dynamic programme will fill empty shops and public spaces with exhibitions, performances, and workshops by local artists. Highlighting decades of artistic expression, the showcase will connect generations through visual art, music, dance, and spoken word—bringing colour, conversation, and community to the city centre.



Film Festival

From the glamour of the silver screen to local cinematic gems, the festival's curated programme at Odeon IMAX journeys through the decades of film history. Blending iconic classics with Peterborough-made shorts, and supported by Film Peterborough, each screening invites audiences to reflect on how film has mirrored—and influenced—our changing city and culture.



Planet Peterborough

This international arts celebration brings together dance troupes, musicians, and performers from around the world. Filling the streets with colour and rhythm, the event promotes peace, friendship and heritage, while shining a light on Peterborough's own rich cultural diversity.



Junior Historians

From family memories to forgotten landmarks, the Junior Historians project invites children across the city to uncover Peterborough's living history. Developed with Soke Academy Trust and Inspire Education Group, this flagship festival programme equips Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils with creative tools to explore their roots, map their neighbourhoods, and share intergenerational stories.



Peterborough tells the Story

We're inviting schools, colleges, teachers, youth groups, businesses, retailers, unions, musicians, sports clubs, arts collectives, and everyday residents to help us build a vibrant portrait of Peterborough's shared story — from how we learnt and worked, to how we played, partied, and performed. Whether it's classroom memories, workplace traditions, or favourite gigs and games, your stories, tools, uniforms and playlists are all part of the city's living history.



TIMOTHY WHITES



SHELTONS



Dixons

ARDY'S RECORDS



RUMPOLES

Tandy

ABC



ODEON



RUMBELOWS

MOLINS

RATNERS



Dolcis



Where We Learnt



Classrooms, Corridors and Coming of Age

Where We Learnt explores Peterborough's rich educational journey—from the 1960s to today's dynamic learning communities. It's more than books and blackboards; it's where futures took shape, friendships blossomed, and lessons went far beyond the classroom.

From the structure of grammar schools to the spirit of 1970s comprehensives, Peterborough's schools have mirrored the changing times. Remember school dinners at Deacon's, debates in sixth form at Hereward, or rehearsals at Ken Stimpson? These were shared moments in a city growing through learning.

Interactive exhibits will bring the decades to life with recreated classrooms, vintage uniforms, classic lunch menus, and retro playground games. Visitors can share memories via storytelling booths, digital "blackboards," and archive contributions.

We'll also chart the rise of further education—

from early technical colleges to Peterborough College and ARU Peterborough—showcasing how vocational training and university access opened doors for generations of local talent.

City-wide reunions in Queensgate will unite classmates from across the years with music, film, workshops, and performances. A tribute wall will honour unforgettable educators who made lasting impacts.

The exhibition also celebrates youth groups, Scouts, Guides, cadets, and after-school clubs—spaces where young people found confidence, friendship, and purpose.

The festival finale turns to today's learners—from children to adult students and apprentices—showing that Peterborough's story is one of lifelong learning, with its brightest chapter still to come.



Where We Worked

Where We Worked is a heartfelt celebration of Peterborough's working life—from factory floors to office desks, building sites to shop counters. It's about the places that shaped our days, the colleagues who became friends, and the pride we took in a job well done.

Journey through the city's industrial past—from the roar of Perkins and Baker Perkins to the pulse of the railways, the bustle of the Evening Telegraph, and the quiet dedication of NHS staff. These were more than workplaces—they were places to grow, laugh, protest, and share life's big moments.

Peterborough's workforce has always been shaped by migration. Post-war Italian brickmakers, followed by South Asian, Portuguese, and Eastern European communities, brought skills, culture, and heart to local industries—from care homes to classrooms.

Festival reunions will reconnect old colleagues from factories, shops, and offices. Expect stories, familiar faces, and maybe the odd badge or uniform pulled

from the back of a drawer. Visitors can add their own stories to a growing archive.

We'll honour lost retailers like Woolworths, the Co-op and C&A through immersive displays, shop roleplay for kids, and tales from behind the counter. Social clubs—darts nights, seaside trips, and dance halls—will also be remembered, where workmates became lifelong mates.

The exhibition also salutes local shopkeepers, tailors, florists, and entrepreneurs whose businesses stitched the community together—often across generations or started by newcomers seeking a fresh start.

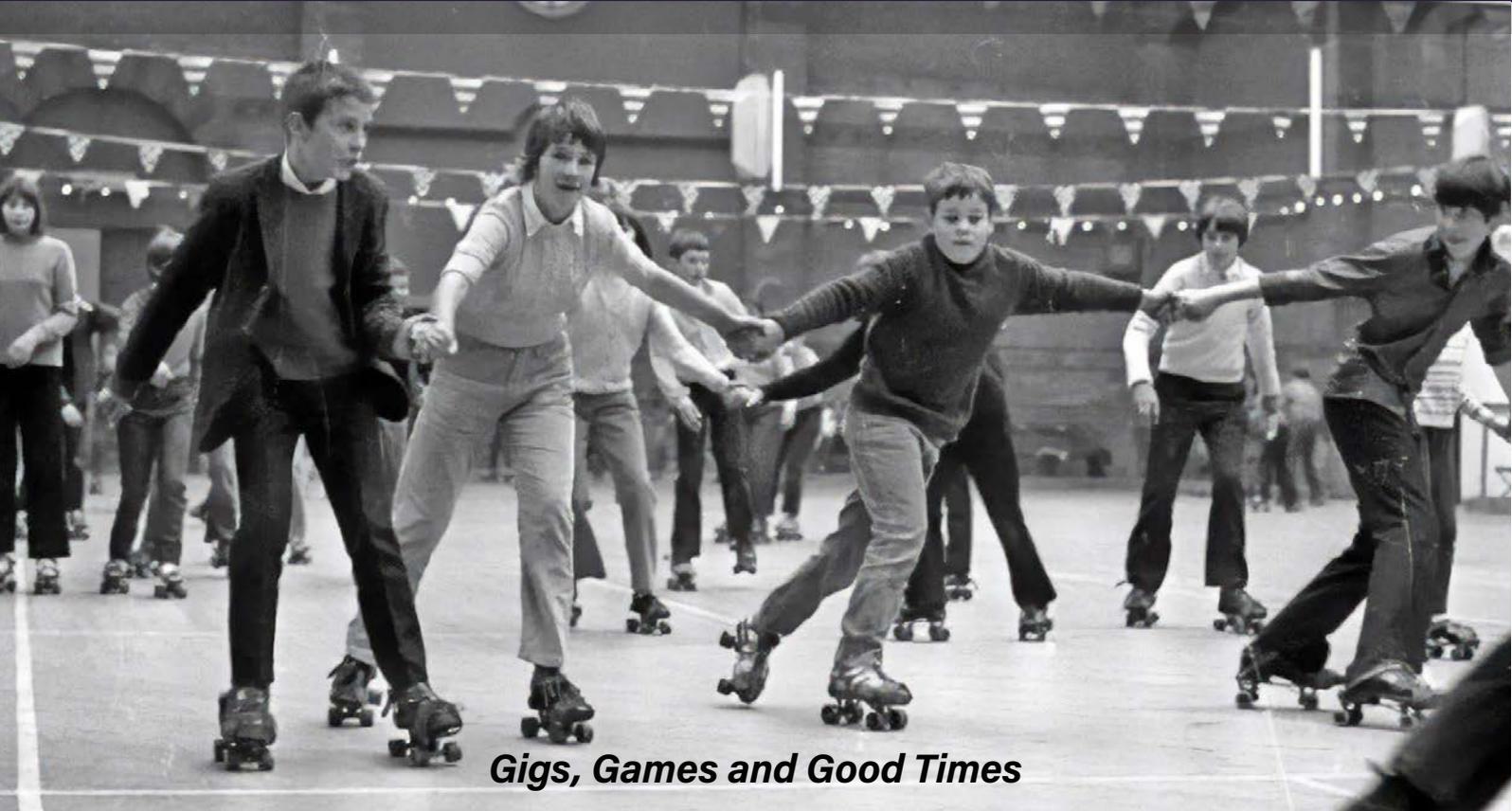
More than nostalgia, Where We Worked is a tribute to the graft, resilience, and community spirit of the people who helped build Peterborough's identity—one shift, one sale, one tea break at a time.



Shifts, Shops and Shared Breaks



Where We Played



Gigs, Games and Good Times

Where We Played is a love letter to how Peterborough came together to let loose—from 1960s dance halls to today’s global mix of music and culture. Across decades, the city built a scene that was loud, proud, and all its own.

We’ll chart the musical journey that helped shape the city—from ballroom beats at the Embassy and Palais to the packed punk, ska and reggae nights at Wirrina Stadium. These weren’t just nights out—they were defining moments. From Bowie at the ABC to The Kinks, Iron Maiden, The Clash and Motörhead, Peterborough consistently punched above its weight.

As the decades rolled on, venues like Fifth Avenue, The Park and The Attic gave space to hip hop, indie and electronic scenes. Local bands rose, DIY cultures thrived, and youth found a voice through music.

Queensgate’s atriums will come alive with performances and exhibits moving through the decades—from Northern Soul spins and punk sets

to jungle, rap and more. Listening corners and storytelling booths will capture the gigs we still talk about.

We will also shine a spotlight on Peterborough’s professional sports teams and their fans—from the speedway roar of the Panthers to the passion of Posh supporters. These shared highs and heartbreaks brought communities together.

But it wasn’t all about stages and stadiums. Where We Played also honours the places where the city relaxed and connected—the Lido, the Showground, ABC matinees, pedal boats at Ferry Meadows, school discos and picnics in the park.

From mosh pits to match days, roller rinks to skipping ropes, Where We Played is a joyful celebration of the ways Peterborough partied, played, and came together.



Junior Historians

Junior Historians is a bold invitation for children to become the storytellers of Peterborough's past, present and future—capturing the lived experience of a changing city through young eyes and curious minds.

This flagship festival project, developed with Soke Academy Trust and Inspire Education Group, equips Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils with creative tools to explore their family and local history. From playground tales and fashion fads to first homes and favourite shops, the everyday becomes extraordinary when seen through the lens of childhood memory.

Rooted in the theme *Where We Learnt*, the project celebrates learning beyond the classroom—through grandparents' stories, community traditions, music collections, and street games passed down through generations.

Children across the city will take part in interviews, draw memory maps, create zines, and record oral histories. With their families' help, they'll uncover migration journeys, local heroes, and snapshots of

life in the 1960s, '80s, 2000s and today.

Their work will be showcased through exhibitions, pop-ups, and digital displays across festival venues—with a ceremonial time capsule burial at Peterborough Cathedral ensuring these voices become part of our civic story.

This isn't just a school project. It's a living archive in the making. Junior Historians places children at the heart of how we remember, connect and create meaning together.

Whether they're mapping corner shops from memory or drawing the house their dad grew up in, Peterborough's youngest citizens will help write the city's unofficial history—one sketch, sentence and conversation at a time.

Junior Historians is a joyful act of discovery—linking generations, celebrating diversity, and reminding us that the story of Peterborough belongs to us all.





Arts Showcase



Celebrating Creativity in the Heart of Peterborough

As part of This is Peterborough! — a celebration of our city's culture, heritage, and identity over the past six decades — Queensgate Shopping Centre will become a vibrant canvas for creativity, hosting a series of pop-up galleries where local artists can showcase and sell their work.

These galleries will reflect Peterborough's dynamic artistic voice, featuring both fine and traditional artworks as well as bold, contemporary street art. By placing these works in the heart of the city's retail centre, we're putting creativity on display where thousands live, work, and shop — removing the barriers between artist and audience, and sparking everyday encounters with culture.

Each gallery space will spotlight emerging and established artists from across the region, offering a platform to engage new audiences and create economic opportunities through art sales. It's

more than an exhibition — it's an invitation to see Peterborough differently.

Art is a cornerstone of the festival because it captures the energy and stories of each era we're celebrating — from the industrial boom of the 1960s through to today's diverse and digitally connected communities. The visual arts will help tell those stories, capturing everything from working-class pride to punk rebellion, multicultural pride to green futures.

By empowering local creators and bringing art into the everyday, this project invites everyone to be part of Peterborough's evolving cultural story.



Art and creativity are fundamental to our enjoyment and wellbeing. We may not always notice how central they are to living a fulfilling and meaningful life. The opportunity for good surprises and wonder in our journeys through spaces—especially man-made environments—is key. Art also reveals so many layers of story, while giving us the chance to think differently. That’s why it’s so important to support festivals like this.

Jeni Cairns

Peterborough Artist & Sculptor



Art changed my life, and I know it can change this city too. Peterborough has got so much untapped creative energy—it just needs the space, the support, and the belief to bring it out. This festival is about more than just showing work—it’s about showing heart. It’s about colour in grey places, stories on walls, and turning everyday spaces into something that makes people stop, think, smile. I’m proud to be part of a movement that’s making Peterborough brighter, bolder, and more alive with art.”

Nathan Murdoch

Street Arts Hire





Film Festival



Cinema has always been more than just entertainment. It's a mirror to our times, a collective memory bank, and one of the most powerful cultural forces of the last century. As part of the This is Peterborough! Festival, we're proud to present a curated film programme in partnership with Odeon and Film Peterborough, celebrating the role of cinema in shaping and reflecting the city's evolving identity—decade by decade.

The newly launched Odeon IMAX, housed within Queensgate, stands as a state-of-the-art symbol of Peterborough's future-facing ambition. But it also carries the torch of a rich cinematic legacy. Just a short walk away, the building now known as the New Theatre once housed Peterborough's original Odeon cinema, opened in 1937 and operating for over 60 years. That original Odeon was a cultural landmark—grand, bustling, and beloved—etched into the memories of generations who queued for blockbusters, romances, war epics and matinees. It was where film met community, and where stories on screen sparked stories in life.

This year's festival honours that legacy while ushering it into the present.

A Chronological Reel of a City's Story

The Film Festival will run throughout the wider festival's duration, tracing the cinematic eras from the 1960s to the present day. Throughout the festival, the Odeon IMAX invites audiences to explore different decades—not only through iconic feature films, but also via local shorts, archive footage, and filmed oral histories that place Peterborough's own story into frame.

From the swinging 60s and the age of optimism to the gritty realism of the 70s, the high-gloss escapism of the 80s, the indie surge of the 90s, and the globalised, digital-first storytelling of the 21st century, cinema has been both a time capsule and a touchstone. As the city transformed—from post-war industrial growth to a modern, multicultural, and tech-savvy hub—film has provided a backdrop, a soundtrack, and a voice.

Partners in Production and Place

The festival is delivered in collaboration with:

- Odeon, whose new IMAX cinema brings cutting-edge projection and immersive sound to the

heart of the city, positioning Peterborough as a destination for premium film experiences.

- Film Peterborough, the newly launched film commission run by Peterborough City Council, which champions the city as a place to create, showcase, and celebrate film.

Through this collaboration, the festival becomes not just a celebration of cinema, but a call to action for filmmakers, artists, and audiences across Peterborough to embrace film as part of their cultural expression and economic future.

The inclusion of Peterborough's former Odeon—the original cathedral of celluloid dreams—as a reference point reinforces the festival's deeper

purpose: connecting past and future. It reminds us that cinema is not a luxury or a footnote in culture—it is culture. It is where we remember who we were, dream about who we might become, and sit side-by-side with neighbours and strangers alike to laugh, cry, think, and escape.

In the heart of the city, in a brand new screen palace just minutes from the site of the original, This is Peterborough! invites you to journey through time, one frame at a time.

ODEON

FILM PETERBOROUGH





Planet Peterborough



Music and dance are among the most powerful cultural expressions we share—joyful, rhythmic, and deeply rooted in tradition. As part of the This is Peterborough! Festival, we're excited to launch a new partnership with the International Council of Organisations of Traditional Arts Festivals (CIOFF), welcoming world-class music and dance ensembles from across the globe to perform right here in the city.

Each year, CIOFF artists will bring the pulse of their cultures to our streets and stages—from the high-energy footwork of Eastern Europe to the rich percussion of Africa, the colour and pageantry of South America to the precision of East Asia. These performances go beyond entertainment—they celebrate global diversity, foster connection, and energise the city with vibrant, authentic artistry.

A City that Dances to a Global Beat

Peterborough is uniquely positioned for this kind of exchange. Our own rich mix of cultures means visiting performers will find not only new audiences, but familiar faces and shared roots. These concerts and dance events are more than international—they're personal, local, and reflective of the communities that already shape Peterborough's identity.

Visiting groups will be hosted at the Park Inn Hotel, ideally located near key venues and city attractions. It will serve as a welcoming hub for rehearsals, rest, and cultural connection—turning accommodation into part of the experience.

From Hosts to Headliners: Peterborough Goes Global

But we're not stopping at hosting. A key part of our vision is to develop a Peterborough-based music and dance ensemble that can represent the city—and the UK—on the international CIOFF circuit. This group will draw from our local talent and diverse communities to create something truly distinctive, touring across continents and sharing Peterborough's creativity on a world stage.

It's about cultural exchange—but it's also about ambition, training, opportunity, and pride.

Leadership Through Performance

Peterborough is currently the only UK city involved in the CIOFF network. That brings a unique opportunity: to lead, to collaborate, and to define

what international cultural partnership can look like in a modern British city.

By embedding CIOFF into the annual This is Peterborough! Festival, we're building a new platform for cultural tourism, performance, and exchange—one that strengthens our identity at home and abroad.

This is Peterborough. The rhythm is global. The stage is ours!





The Organisers



Fenlandia Presents: Cara Berridge at Norman Cross near Peterborough (2024)

Fenlandia CIC is a non-profit organisation, dedicated to showcasing and preserving the richly intertwined cultural and environmental heritage of the Fenland basin. This broad mission encompasses oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices, traditional craftsmanship, and the visual arts. These elements, all deeply rooted in the Fenland's distinctive landscape and ecology, are brought to life through the local language, seen as a critical carrier of this profound heritage.

Academic Lead

Middlesex University, as the academic lead, provides intellectual and creative direction for Fenlandia. This comes principally from its faculties of Creative Arts and Industries, and Science and Technology – the latter houses its internationally important Flood Hazard Research Centre.





Stewart Howe is the founder of the Yaxley Festival, a free community event that has attracted 35,000 visitors annually and has supported the growth of numerous third-sector organisations in the UK and overseas. His unorthodox approach to tackling social issues has led to collaborations with figures such as Lord Bird of The Big Issue, including the creation of the Social Echo project. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Stewart established a support hub in an industrial premises just outside Peterborough, delivering voluntary aid to thousands of local residents in partnership with local authorities.



Professor Peter Fribbins is a composer whose instrumental music is performed, broadcast, and recorded internationally. He studied with Hans Werner Henze in London and Italy, at the Royal Academy of Music, and at Royal Holloway and Nottingham universities. He is Professor of Music at Middlesex University and Artistic Director of the Sunday series of London Chamber Music Society concerts at Kings Place. Peter's ancestors farmed the fens around Peterborough for hundreds of years.



Rebecca Jackson is an experienced events strategist and project director with a strong track record of delivering creative, community-focused programmes across the UK. She has helped to deliver major cultural events and festivals, developed Peterborough's first social investment initiative for the non-profit sector, and championed emerging talent through her leadership of the Young Artists Network. Her work combines strategic vision, imaginative programming, and a deep commitment to place-based engagement.



Events Experience



From Autumn 2025, **Peter Fribbins** brings his acclaimed programming to St John's Waterloo, launching a new season of Sunday concerts showcasing national and international ensembles.



Yaxley Festival, one of Cambridgeshire's most successful community-led events, which has attracted over 35,000 visitors each year with its vibrant mix of music, arts, and family activities.



Fenlandia Presents: International Concert Pianist **Martin Cousin** performing a concert programme based on the music Beverley Nichols chose for a BBC Desert Island Discs programme in 1955 (2024)



Fenlandia Presents: Horn player **Ben Goldscheider** and the **Brother Tree Sound** string quartet perform the premiere of Peter Fribbins' 'The Fens', a Quintet for Horn and String Quartet (2024).

This is **Peterborough** 2026



www.thisispeterborough.co.uk

FENLANDIA

Discover the Soul of the Fens

Fenlandia C.I.C.

Company number 15147296

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