



CHESTERFIELD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



## A SENSE OF CHESTERFIELD:

### SPOKEN WORD AND POETRY COMMISSION ARTIST BRIEF

# KEY DETAILS

**Total Fee:** £1140+ VAT if applicable

**Timeframe:** January - October 2026

**Application Deadline:** **Midnight - Monday 15 December 2025**

## 1. SUMMARY

The project titled 'A Sense of Chesterfield' has received £77,421 of funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund with additional funding from Chesterfield Borough Council's Animate Chesterfield programme to create a tactile heritage trail with new heritage information boards, digital content and public artworks.

We are seeking to commission 4 poets/ spoken word artists with a connection to the area to devise bespoke poems interpreting Chesterfield's heritage to augment the trail. Each poet/ spoken word artist will respond to a number of researched heritage themes and will read their final piece for a digital recording to be listened to online. There will also be the opportunity to perform live at the launch of trail in autumn 2026.

## 2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

**About 'A Sense of Chesterfield':** The project will focus on celebrating the heritage of Chesterfield in unique and engaging ways in public spaces as part of the regeneration of the town centre. People will learn more about heritage through researching their place, collecting stories and then sharing these with a wider audience. It will be led by Chesterfield Borough Council, guided by a Project Steering Group and project managed by Beam.

The project will develop a fun multisensory, accessible heritage trail across Chesterfield town centre incorporating display panels augmented by digital interpretation enabling visitors to explore well known and lesser known heritage stories. The arts trail will be enhanced by a range of public art interventions that express a contemporary interpretation of the heritage stories.

The overall aim is to help raise the profile of heritage in the town by providing physical permanent interventions, which form a distinct trail, to enable people to interact with heritage as part of their everyday lives. Locating these physical interventions (e.g interpretation panels and public artworks) in public places, the heritage of the town will not only exist online or behind closed doors, but will be highly visible and will act as a catalyst for people to discover more about the heritage of their place.

**About Animate Public Art Programme:** The vision for Animate is one of dynamism, playfulness and exploration. Communities will be at the heart of the programme and will shape, influence and participate throughout all commissions, ensuring that they are an authentic celebration of the place. All commissions will be developed to act as creative catalysts to enhance a sense of place.

With a strong history of public art in the borough, this programme will look forward and explore what brave public art should look like now and how it can support the vibrant future of the town, connecting with the forthcoming public realm improvements.

### **Animate Aims:**

- Engage communities at the heart of all commissions in impactful and meaningful ways.
- Build a creative buzz through creative animation in the town centre, increasing footfall and dwell time.
- Employ the skills of artists to support the process of change happening in the town, for the benefit of communities and businesses.

- Reimagine the town centres visually demonstrating the borough’s growing reputation as a place which supports innovative cultural and creative activity.

### 2.3 Heritage Themes

A Community Engagement and Interpretation consultant has been appointed to undertake research and engage target groups and the public in exploring Chesterfield’s heritage to develop a series of core themes and key heritage stories. These emerging themes include: Innovation; Women of Chesterfield; Sports and Leisure; Parades and Gatherings; Music and Dancing. The final themes will be confirmed when this commission commences and each artist will be allocated a theme with a range of heritage stories to draw inspiration from.

### 3. SERVICES AND OUTPUTS

- Each commissioned poet/ spoken word artist will respond to 1 of 5 themes developed by the Community Engagement and Interpretation Consultant
- Each commissioned poet/ spoken word artist will conduct research leading to a final poem or piece for both digital and physical interpretation content.

### 4. REQUIREMENTS

- Attend an initial site briefing with Beam and the Community Engagement and Interpretation Consultant
- Conduct own research into the heritage themes
- Writing development time
- Attend an interim meeting to share an update on progress
- Read and record a poem/ spoken word for listening to online
- Participate in a live performance as part of the launch event for the trail
- Participation in an evaluation meeting

### 5. INDICATIVE TIMELINE

Activity	Date
Recruitment opens	20 November 2025
Deadline for Applications	<b>Midnight - Monday 15 December 2025</b>
Appointment and contracting	w/c 5 January 2026
Briefing and site visit	w/c 19 January 2026
Research and writing	February - March 2026
Interim meeting	April 2026
Reading and recording	May 2026
Live performance	September 2026

## 6. FEES

**Total: £1,140 + VAT if applicable** (inclusive of all fees and expenses)

## 7. APPLICATIONS

**Midnight - Monday 15 December 2025**

Please send a cover letter (Up to x 4 sides of A4 saved as a PDF) OR audio/video link (max of 5 minutes) to [helen@beam.uk.net](mailto:helen@beam.uk.net) addressing the following:

- Contact details
- Outline how your experience, skills and knowledge will enable you to meet the brief
- Outline your methodology and approach to meeting the brief
- Describe your connection to the area
- Please provide an indicative fee breakdown
- Examples of 2 relevant projects and poems / written extracts for spoken word including weblinks
- Two Referee contact details (References will only be sought for the applicant before contracting)
- Please attach a copy of your CV

**Completion of anonymous Equality and Diversity Monitoring form** (this is optional) via this [link](#).

*Applications will be appraised on the following:*

- *Relevant skills and experience;*
- *Understanding of the brief;*
- *Quality of method statement and approach;*
- *All applicants must have a connection to the area*

## 8. CONTACT DETAILS

For all enquiries please contact:

Helen Moore, Creative Producer, Beam

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