****

**Date:**

**Press release: 047**

**Release date: Immediate**

**Harlow and Epping Forest residents**

**to enjoy a free Summer of Culture**

*Essex Arts and Cultural Fund and cultural funding initiatives to support free Summer of Culture events and sessions for Harlow and Epping Forest residents and young people.*

HARLOW and Epping Forest residents and young people are set to enjoy a community-wide Summer of Culture of free events and activities due to support from Essex County Council’s (ECC) Arts and Culture Fund and other funding initiatives.

The family-friendly activities - featuring community events, music, drama and digital workshops, shows and much more - have all received financial support from ECC cultural initiatives and the Arts and Cultural Fund as part of ECC’s *Everyone’s Essex* and *Levelling Up* strategies.

Running from Monday 25 July to Friday 29 July from 10:00am to 4:00pm, award-winning filmmaker Damilola Lemomu is hosting a free storytelling workshop for young people exploring what it is like to live and study in Harlow today and **gain skills in filmmaking, sound and conducting interviews at** The Gibberd Gallery.

Harlow residents will also be able to enjoy from Tuesday 2 August to Saturday 6 August a range of free shows, music and workshops in Harlow Town Park from 11:00am – 6:00pm with the Rhiannon Faith Care House Project which is celebrating care and community in the town.

The Livewire Theatre Group is running a number of youth music, dance and drama workshops, while on Saturday 24 September an installation of artwork at the Harvey Centre, Harlow, is being exhibited by the Samuel Padfield Harlow Art Trust children’s project.

Councillor Graham Butland, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for the Arts Heritage and Culture, said: “We are delighted that Essex residents will be able to enjoy a huge range of free arts and cultural events and exhibitions this summer due to the Arts and Cultural Fund and other ECC cultural funding initiatives.

“Not only will these events help support the county’s creative sector, but they are also integral to ECC’s *Everyone’s Essex* and *Levelling Up* strategies which aim to help those in both rural and urban areas who feel isolated and vulnerable. By working with and helping support the county’s ethnic minority artists, creative groups and grassroots organisations we can bring Essex’s diverse and vibrant communities together this summer.”

For more information about the ECC Arts and Cultural Fund and the events and exhibitions taking place visit: [www.explore-essex.com/culture/essex-acf-2022](http://www.explore-essex.com/culture/essex-acf-2022).

**-Ends-**

**Notes for editors:**

**For more information contact:** Emma Williams, Marketing and Communications Lead, Emma.Williams@essex.gov.uk or Christopher Davies, Marketing and Communications Officer, Christopher.Davies@Essex.gov.uk or telephone 07738 885659.

**Explore Essex:** Explore Essex brings together a unique group of Country Parks and heritage venues which are owned by Essex County Council. Its mission is to deliver a broad range of exciting facilities and activities for the people of Essex with an emphasis on culture, heritage and environment. [www.explore-essex.com](http://www.explore-essex.com) @exploressex @exploreessex.