The popular arts and cultural venues and hubs contribute to the county's economy by encouraging tourism. They are being recognised for attracting investment, income and creating jobs.

The Essex based recipients are:

* Firstsite
* Colchester Arts Centre
* The Mercury Theatre
* Essex Cultural Diversity Project
* The Paper Birds Theatre Company
* Rhiannon Faith Company
* Signals

The ACE report ‘Why Arts and Culture Matters’, reveals that the creative sector contributes £10.6 billion to the UK economy. The funding will improve the lives of Essex residents and young people working in the county’s creative industries.

The arts and culture sector is known to boost community identity and the local economy. Arts and culture can also enhance people’s quality of life through creativity and expression. The funding comes as part of promises made in the council's "Everyone's Essex" strategy. The strategy sets out the council's priorities to its residents.

The funding follows the recent launch of the ‘Summer of Culture’ magazine. The magazine outlines the arts and cultural activities on offer throughout the county. Activities featured include:

* artist storytelling walks
* dance performances
* theatre plays
* music festivals

 The activities celebrate the vibrant arts and culture scene across the county.

Councillor Mark Durham, Cabinet Member for Arts, Heritage and Culture, said: “NPOs strongly contribute to the Essex economy and employment which is why we are delighted to provide the funding to these fantastic organisations.

 “These organisations provide inclusive programmes, exhibitions, initiatives and workshops for all ages and are vital in ensuring that the county’s arts and culture sector goes from strength-to-strength.”