

Report Purpose:

Town of Culture

Author

Town Clerk

Update

Macclesfield Culture Collective entered the running for the Cheshire Town of Culture programme in March this year, following a highly successful launch in January 2026. Around 100 people attended the inspiring launch event, demonstrating the enthusiasm and commitment to developing Macclesfield's cultural offer.

The Collective submitted a bid built around the inspiring theme of "The Art of the Possible", celebrating creativity, collaboration and the ambition to unlock new opportunities for the town through arts and culture. The team that wrote the bid were all local people who volunteered their time.

Macclesfield was one of four Cheshire East towns to submit a bid, alongside Crewe, Congleton and Knutsford. The strong representation from Cheshire East reflected the area's shared ambition to use culture as a catalyst for community pride, economic growth and positive change.

398 bids were submitted and unfortunately, Macclesfield was not selected for the shortlist, and none of the Cheshire East towns were successful in progressing to the next stage of the competition.

The successful towns were as follows:

- Small towns: Ilfracombe, Isle of Bute, Lerwick, Sandown, Strabane, and Stockton Town Centre Ward
- Medium towns: Corby, Great Yarmouth, Leith, Pontypridd, and Port Talbot
- Large towns: Basildon, Birkenhead, Grimsby and Rotherham

While this was disappointing, the process has created the Macclesfield Culture who aim to harness the momentum created through the bid. This summer, Macclesfield Culture Collective will be delivering an exciting new project, supported by funding from Macclesfield Town Council. The Council remains committed to the Collective's vision and is continuing to invest in cultural activity that celebrates the town's creativity, strengthens community connections and lays the foundations for future opportunities.