

Free Market Radicals – Rochford District Council for use with FMR Survey

Note

Below is some narrative to use when pushing out the basic information on the Free Market Radicals project that we hope will benefit Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley (and the wider District). It is relevant to the District Council and the local partner organisations. Feel free to adapt for your purposes, or please ask for more information/narrative.

We are hoping you can share through your groups, contacts including

- Local Facebook pages – really important for people responding positively to the survey and general awareness
- Newsletters
- Twitter
- Posting links on websites
- Emails to individuals or groups who you think would or could be interested

The main aim at this stage is to direct people in the Rochford District to the FMR Survey Page. This starts the process of community engagement, gathering thoughts and insights from local people on some of the town centre, heritage and cultural priorities etc. The more people that complete the survey, the stronger our insight and evidence base will be in relation to Rayleigh and other towns, and this can then be used to identify some initial projects and support the case for investment. All areas of Rochford District have seen relatively low levels of investment in arts, heritage, culture and regeneration compared to some other areas of Essex and the wider region.

It is not all about the survey – we expect to hold some digital workshops over the next couple of months, as well as holding debates and feedback sessions (hopefully in actual places) in the Spring (Covid allowing of course). Some of these will be for District Councillors, and we are happy to feed into existing working groups and networks as well.

And if anyone wants to share thoughts and ideas with us directly, just contact Giles Tofield on 07765 242241. We are also interested in the history of markets in Rochford and Rayleigh in particular.

The project is also operating in Braintree, Witham, Halstead. This will help us share insights between the different towns, and perhaps convene some joint discussions and workshops later on in the project.

For Shorter Pieces (for Facebook etc.) – Could also be used for email introductions

Free Market Radicals - A project has started that is aiming to help local people and groups to develop new cultural and heritage activities, supporting the local economies in Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. Towns have been hit by Covid-19 and changing shopping and leisure trends. Local people and businesses are encouraged to complete a short survey that will help to identify develop new or existing projects and events, secure funding and contribute to the future vibrancy of the towns.

Find the survey here - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/freemarketradicals1>

For more information go to www.freemarketradicals.com or contact Giles Tofield – giles@culturalengine.org.uk or 07765 242241

Narrative to use for Newsletters or email etc. (longer version if needed)

'A project has starting in the District that is aiming to help local people and groups to develop new cultural and heritage activities, supporting local economies in the town centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley.

Town Centres have been badly hit by Covid-19 and there is a genuine need to continue reinventing them as shopping and leisure habits change. The project is called Free Market Radicals and takes inspiration from times when markets and fairs were major cultural, economic and social events in 'market' towns like Rochford and Rayleigh. Covid-19 is not going anywhere fast, but all towns needs to be ready with ideas and new initiatives for a stronger cultural and economic revival when things do improve.

The team behind the project, which has been funded by the National Lottery Emerging Futures Fund, want to gather feedback from local people and businesses on what they see as the creative opportunities for their town. It is very important that young people also get the chance to have their say. Other research on each town is also taking place and will be and used to help local people develop new projects and events, secure funding and contribute to the future vibrancy of town centres. Existing events and projects could be supported to be more sustainable or build new audiences.

The first stage in the project is a simple online survey which will help gather information on opportunities for each town. This will be followed up with workshops and other local events that bring people together.

If you live or run a business in any one of Rayleigh, Rochford or Hockley, or if you visit regularly, then please go the survey site - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/freemarketradicals1>

*You can contact the team directly - giles@culturalengine.org.uk
07765 242241*

For more information go to www.freemarketradicals.com or contact Giles Tofield on giles@culturalengine.org.uk or 07765 242241

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