



## **Chard Town Council**

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**Mayor: Cllr Jason Baker Town Clerk: Paul Russell**

# **CHARD TOWN COUNCIL**

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022

## **PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate release

### **THE CHARD SPRING FESTIVAL**

Chard Town Council is delighted to announce a new Spring Festival for Chard which will be held from Thursday 28th April to Saturday 30th April 2022. Community groups, organisations, schools, businesses and individuals will be invited to contribute ideas for the new festival.

The Spring Festival is part of the Culturally Chard programme which will bring new activity to the town centre and encourage people to connect to the unique heritage of Chard's high street in creative ways. The programme is part of Chard's High Street Heritage Action Zone, which aims to make the high street a more attractive, engaging and vibrant place for people to live, work and spend time.

The Culturally Chard consortium, led by Somerset Art Works and Chard Town Council, secured £80,000 for a High Street Heritage Action Zone cultural programme in Chard, as part of the national £7.4 million HSHAZ Cultural Programme which is currently working across over 60 English high streets.

This new annual event will kick start the festival season in Chard. It will be a showcase to promote the Culturally Chard programme and of the many organisations in Chard.

It will be a totally inclusive event with a range of activities to suit all interests as we celebrate our High Street.

The three-day programme, which will involve various organisations integral to the community of Chard is set to include; music, comedy, film, arts, language skills, historic walks and more.

The Town Mayor, Cllr Jason Baker, said: "We are looking forward to the weekend with great anticipation and it will be exciting to see the festival grow over the following two years. We want everyone to be as involved as possible in the scheme, and in the future of Chard's town centre."

If you would like to become involved or have any ideas please get in touch with the Event organiser, Tim Bickham, on 01460 239567 or email [tim.bickham@chard.gov.uk](mailto:tim.bickham@chard.gov.uk)

For details of all the events taking place during this year's Spring Festival please visit <https://www.chard.gov.uk/your-council/culturally-chard/> and follow the Culturally Chard website link.

**\*ENDS\***

**For more information contact:**

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**Notes to Editors**

**About High Streets Heritage Action Zones**

The High Streets Heritage Action Zones is a £95 million government-funded programme led by Historic England, designed to secure lasting improvements and help breathe new life into our historic high streets for the communities and businesses that use them. Historic England is working with local people and partners to unlock the rich heritage on these high streets, through repair and improvement works as well as arts and cultural programmes, making them more attractive to residents, businesses, tourists and investors. <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/regenerating-historic-high-streets/>

**Chard High Street Heritage Action Zone**

Because of its special historic character, Chard has been designated a High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) and secured £2m funding to revitalise its town centre. Over £1m of government high streets funding from Historic England has been matched by more than £1m by South Somerset District Council. These funds are being invested in making lasting physical improvements that enhance the historic high street.

The HSHAZ programme for Chard has three strands – public realm improvements (that is, the pedestrian areas of the street), grants for the repair and renovation of historic buildings and shopfronts, and community engagement activity. Additional funding has been secured by a consortium of local cultural and community organisations, to deliver a cultural programme (see note below).

**High Streets Heritage Action Zones' Cultural Programme**

The £7.4 million Cultural Programme is part of the £95 million High Streets Heritage Action Zone initiative, which is currently working across over 60 English high streets. It is funded with £40 million from the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport's Heritage High Street Fund, £52 million from the Department for Levelling Up,

Housing and Communities' Future High Streets Fund, and a further £3 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Cultural activity funded by the local grants scheme will take place over the next three years, in tandem with the national commissions organised by Historic England. For the national commissions, artists will work with communities and co-produce artworks inspired by England's changing high streets. Together, the local grants scheme and the national commissions make up the Cultural Programme.

### **About Historic England**

We are Historic England the public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic environment, from beaches and battlefields to parks and pie shops. We protect, champion and save the places that define who we are and where we've come from as a nation.

We care passionately about the stories they tell, the ideas they represent and the people who live, work and play among them. Working with communities and specialists we share our passion, knowledge and skills to inspire interest, care and conservation, so everyone can keep enjoying and looking after the history that surrounds us all.

To find out what is happening in your area and get involved, please follow @HistoricEngland #HistoricHighStreets and visit:  
[www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/HighStreetCulture](http://www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/HighStreetCulture)