

SIDE BY SIDE

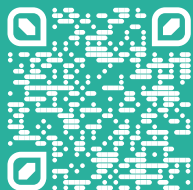
ARTS FESTIVAL

TOUCHSTONES
ROCHDALE

Thursday 13 - Saturday 15 August

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

FREE



Scan the QR code
to find out more

A festival made by the people of
Rochdale borough, for everyone

Rochdale Town
Hall Square,
The Esplanade,
Rochdale. OL16 1AZ

Welcome to **SIDE BY SIDE**

Side by Side Festival returns this August for three days under the theme “It Belongs to You.”

IT BELONGS TO YOU

Join us for a festival made by the people of Rochdale Borough, for everyone. You can take part in free activities like making art, playing games, performances, film screenings food and more - all created by local communities.

Working together with Touchstones and the Creative Voices panel of local people from Rochdale Borough, the festival is rooted in belonging. It champions local voices, care and connection, and supports young people through creativity and collaboration.

Each day has a theme and is inspired by an object from Touchstones' collections, creating space for you to share, reflect and take part.

Come and explore the pop-up space 'Temporary Touchstones' near Touchstones on Rochdale Town Hall Square and discover what happens when we all work **Side-by-Side**. There are plenty of ways to get involved, so let's create something special together!

Thanks to Arts Council England, Rochdale Boroughwide Council, and Rochdale Town Hall for helping make this happen!

Join us over three days for fun-filled creative activities in Rochdale Town Centre!

A special thanks to Rochdale Town Hall for kindly hosting us for Side-by-Side whilst Touchstones is closed for redevelopment.

“

“We are so excited to bring Side-by-Side Festival back this summer. This year's theme ‘It belongs to you’ is an invitation to all to come together, be creative, and share stories. I am honoured to work alongside our brilliant Creative Voices panel who have worked tirelessly to shape and build this three-day event. We've invited communities, schools, young people and arts organisations along the way to create something we can all be part of where we can all belong together. We can't wait to see you there and for it to build year-on-year!”

Bryan Beresford,
Creative Learning & Engagement
Manager at Touchstones Rochdale

”



FUNDERS & PARTNERS

FUNDERS



CULTURAL PARTNERS



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



CREATIVE VOICES

Creative Voices have been working with Touchstones for over two years, and for the past eight months have been helping to plan the second edition of Side-by-Side.

They are a wonderful group of local people who have shared their ideas and helped us make some important decisions. They have given advice on how to make the festival accessible to everyone, helped choose what activities to include and the themes for each day. Each member joined through an open call in early 2024.



Adam Scott – is a Manchester-based creative blending break dance, theatre, and youth leadership. He co-founded Break Dance Manchester and launched Dance Studio Manchester through Elevate Young Minds. His work empowers over 3,000 young people through culture, education, and performance, including his original piece Sunday Dinner, fusing Hip Hop and theatre. “Working alongside members of the Creative Voices Panel has been a great honour, representing the voice of creative practitioners and young people from across Rochdale.” Adam will be contributing to Side-by-Side through Elevate Young Minds who will be sharing a performance as part of **Day 2: Our Space**.

Sabia Ash – “The Side-by-Side festival in Rochdale is a joyful celebration of local pride, creativity, and community. Rooted in our town’s rich heritage, it brings together residents, artists, and leaders to showcase what makes Rochdale unique. At its heart is Touchstones Museum – a hub of art, stories, and history. Let’s come together—side by side—to celebrate our town.” Sabia will be contributing to the Global Café activity as part of **Day 3: Feed Our Minds & Souls**.



Jo Barker-Marsh - has had successful careers in Audio-Visual production and now in the VCFSE sector. She is mum to Harry and a strong advocate for children with SEND and families living in poverty. “The Creative Voices call out was the most exciting thing I had seen in my community, where I knew I could work with others to help make culture and enrichment accessible and relevant”. Jo will be screening her film Power to the Pennines, created with young people in the Pennine area as part of **Day 2: Our Space**.

Isha Hafeez - “I’m a recent musical theatre graduate and joined the Creative Voices panel to explore my creativity and grow my confidence. I love diving into new ideas at each meeting. I hope this festival brings people together giving them a chance to connect, collaborate, and enjoy a new experience.” Isha will be hosting the Open Mic event for Side-by-Side as part of **Day 2: Our Space**.



ACCESS INFORMATION

Side-by-Side Festival is open
and welcoming to all

ACCESS GUIDE

A full Access Guide is available via the QR code at all festival locations. Please check the accessibility of all venues before planning your visit.



Side-By-Side
Festival



Rochdale
Town Hall

We will updating the festival access guide page in mid-July

HELP & SUPPORT

Staff and volunteers are on hand to help.
For access queries ahead of your visit, contact:
creativecommunities@yourtrustrochdale.co.uk

LOST CHILDREN & FIRST AID POINTS

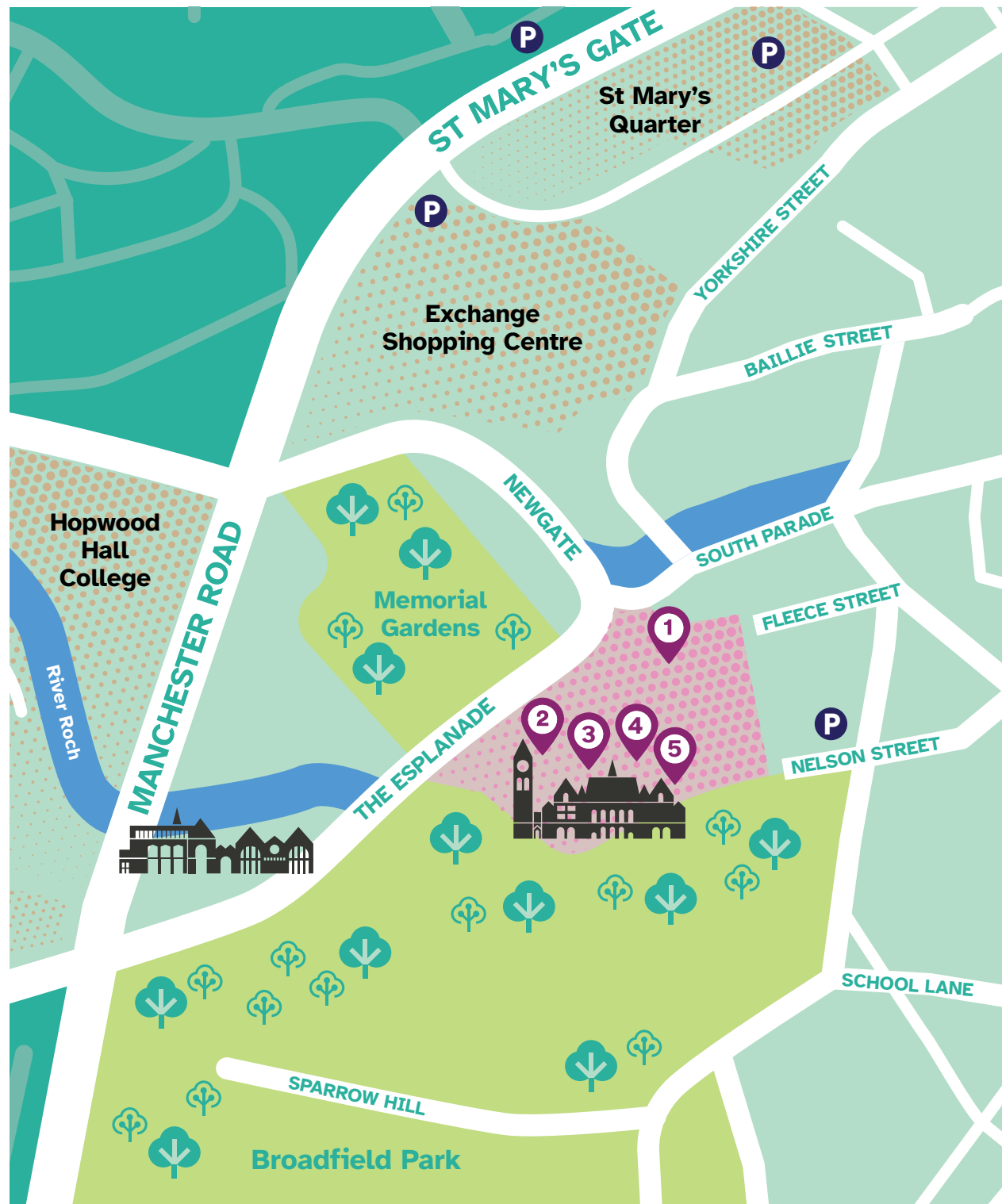
Look for signposted points at Temporary
Touchstones (Rochdale Town Hall Square)

TOILETS & BABY CHANGING

- **Rochdale Town Hall:** Accessible toilets on all floors.
Baby changing on ground & second floors.
- **Accessible Toilets** are marked on the festival map.

PARKING

Rochdale Town Hall: Nearby parking available please scan the QR code



- 1. Temporary Touchstones**
(Rochdale Town Hall Square)
what3words: opera.voting.radio
- 2. The Old Council Chamber**
what3words: left.become.relax
- 3. The Exchange**
what3words: pack.rides.shout
- 4. The Bright Hall**
(Lift access available)
what3words: junior.many.trap
- 5. The Historic Council Chamber**
what3words: Friday.effort.shade

EACH
DAY



 **EVERYTHING
EVERY DAY IS FREE**

THROUGHOUT THE FESTIVAL

SCHOOLS LINKING EXHIBITION

10AM-4PM EACH DAY

Rochdale Town Hall

From March to June 2025, over 1,000 pupils from primary schools across Rochdale Borough took part in fun, creative workshops with artists and Touchstones staff as part of Schools Linking – a project that brings children from different schools together to meet, learn, and celebrate what makes us both unique and connected.

This year's workshops were led by artist **Zara Saghir** and musician **James Lyons**.

With Zara, pupils explored **belonging** inspired by the book *The One & Only You*. They worked in pairs to create visual designs which were transferred onto ceramic tiles using Indian inks and paints. The work produced is on display as a trail across Rochdale Town Hall throughout the festival.

With James, pupils explored L.S. Lowry's painting *Our Town*, which was brought into each school. They discussed **identity** then created characters and words inspired by the figures in the painting. These were recorded as raps and will be on display especially for Day Two: Our Space on Friday 14 August.



Supported through public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



SCAN
FOR
MORE
INFO

Programme

EACH
DAY

SPECIAL COLLECTION DISPLAY

12-4PM EACH DAY

Rochdale Town Hall,
Rochdale Town Hall Square

Each day, Touchstones will bring a surprise special object which provides the theme for each day.

OUTDOOR EXHIBITION

ALL DAY

Square Gallery

An outdoor exhibition of work created by local groups including PINC College Students, Greenbank Primary School pupils, and the Aloe Veras Art Group.

Using a famous Pop artist and their techniques as inspiration, this display looks ahead to Touchstones' re-opening with a major exhibition developed in collaboration with ARTIST ROOMS and co-curated with the Aloe Veras Art Group. ARTIST ROOMS is Tate and the National Galleries of Scotland's world-class touring collection of modern and contemporary art, presenting the work of international artists in exhibitions that reach audiences around the UK.



Supported by:

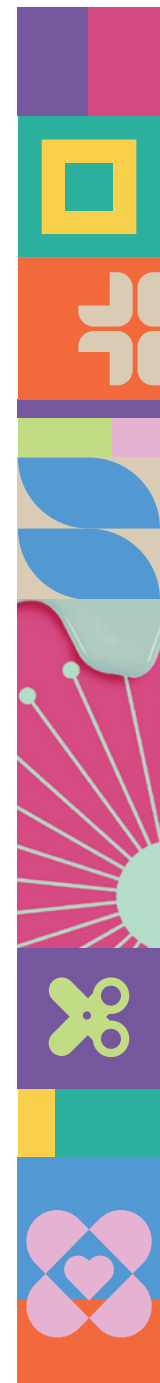
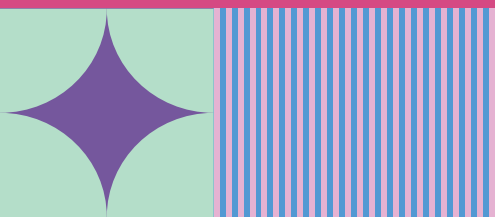


MAKE YOUR MARK

12-4PM EACH DAY

Rochdale Town Hall Square

Draw and create your mark on the flagstones of Rochdale Town Hall Square helping to guide visitors from Temporary Touchstones to Rochdale Town Hall.



13
AUG



**EVERYTHING
EVERY DAY IS FREE**

PLAYFUL ANYWHERE

12-4PM
Rochdale Town Hall Lawns

Playful Anywhere will be creating a vibrant pop-up play area for children and people of all ages to enjoy. Expect chalks, games, giant marble runs and more!

**Playful
Anywhere**



Supported through public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



DAY 1: CREATIVITY FOR ALL

Thursday

13
AUG

A day of play and creativity inspired by art that build confidence, connection and a sense of belonging inspired by the artists we all know. Great for families, whatever that might mean to you.

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

MOVERS, SHAKERS, & STORYMAKERS

10.45-11.30AM
Temporary Touchstones

In collaboration with Touchstones and Wild Things Performing Arts, Movers, Shakers and Storymakers is a movement and storytelling session for 0-4-year-olds and their adults.



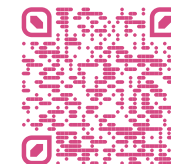
Supported through public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



ARTIST INSPIRED WORKSHOPS

12-4PM
Temporary Touchstones

Drop-in workshops throughout the day inspired by the work of well-known artists. Explore different artistic styles through playful art activities and create artwork to take home!



**SCAN
FOR
MORE
INFO**

TOUCHSTONES x ARTIST ROOMS

11AM-4PM
Rochdale Town Hall Square

A partnership between Touchstones and ARTIST ROOMS, Tate and the National Galleries of Scotland's touring collection of modern and contemporary art, will bring you a unique, one-day-only art experience in the heart of Rochdale! Visitors who come along will be able to take part in something extraordinary.



Supported by:

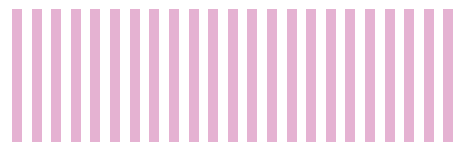
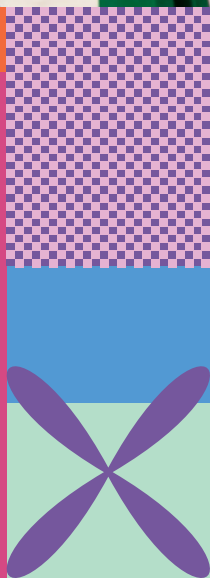
Art Fund



FREE ICE CREAM GIVEAWAY

12-12.30PM
Rochdale Town Hall Square

Kaddys Super Whip will be serving 100 free ice creams for the first hour, come down and have one on us!



14
AUG



**EVERYTHING
EVERY DAY IS FREE**

CREATIVE SHARINGS

12-2.15PM

Temporary Touchstones

Performances and activities by and for young people from Rochdale Borough, including a performance and workshop from Skylight Circus Arts, a Side-by-Side exclusive performance from M6 Youth Theatre, and a short production from Elevate Young Minds.



MUSIC MASH UP

2.30-4PM

Temporary Touchstones

Have a go workshops and activities making music for you to enjoy, with James Lyons' Make Mouth Music Beatboxing workshop and an open mic session hosted by Creative Voices' Isha Hafeez.

If you would like to take part in the Open Mic Session register at the link using the QR code.

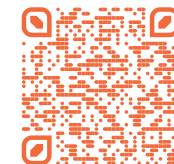


DAY 2: OUR SPACE

Friday

14
AUG

A day where young voices, stories, and ideas come together to spark change. This day has been created by and for young people and young adults.



**SCAN
FOR
MORE
INFO**

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

TEENAGE MARKET

11.30AM-3.30PM

Rochdale Town Hall, The Bright Hall

Experience the lively market with the whole family and browse the stalls filled with home-made goods from our fantastic local young people.



FILM SCREENINGS

12-3PM

Historic Council Chamber

Watch work on screen created by and with young people from Rochdale Borough.



12pm:

Manners Cost Nothing

Created by Rochdale's BFI Academy cohort



2pm:

Power to the Pennines

By Creative Voices' Jo Barker-Marsh and young people from Pennines.



PLAYFUL ANYWHERE

12-4PM

Rochdale Town Hall Lawns

Playful Anywhere will be creating a vibrant pop-up play area for children and people of all ages to enjoy. Expect chalks, games, giant marble runs and more!



WELLBEING ZONE

12-4PM

Rochdale Town Hall Lawns

A soft, welcoming wellbeing installation, designed as a calm retreat space within the festival. You'll find cushions, mats, and tactile colourful elements. There will also be gentle, drop-in wellbeing art activities.

15
AUG



**EVERYTHING
EVERY DAY IS FREE**

NO SUCH THING

10.30AM-12.30PM

Temporary Touchstones

No Such Thing hosts conversations between two people who might not otherwise meet: shaped, experienced and remembered by those two people alone.

Hosted by Touchstones' Community Curators, who will be hosting conversations in exchange for a free breakfast.



**Booking
Required**



QUARANTINE

WELLBEING ZONE

11.30AM-3.30PM

Rochdale Town Hall Lawns

A soft, welcoming wellbeing installation, designed as a calm retreat space within the festival. You'll find cushions, mats, and tactile colourful elements. There will also be gentle, drop-in wellbeing art activities.

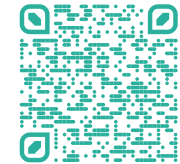


DAY 3: FEED OUR MINDS & SOULS

Saturday

15
AUG

A day of community power and connection, food and belonging. We'll use conversation as tools for care, reflection and shared understanding and are calling on all communities to unite with us - bring the family along too!



**SCAN
FOR
MORE
INFO**

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

ARCHIVE COLLAGING

12-3PM

Rochdale Town Hall Exchange

Create collages inspired by history from Touchstones' rich Local Studies archive.

STORY SATURDAYS

1-2PM

Rochdale Town Hall

Fancy escaping into tales of fantasy, adventure and mystery? Come along to storytelling Saturday, listen to your favourite stories, brought to life by the Town Hall's best tall tale teller. Stick around for hands on activities which delve deeper into the pages.



**Booking
Required**



GLOBAL CAFÉ

1.30-4PM

Temporary Touchstones

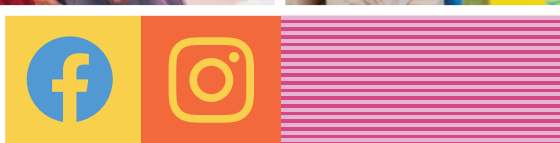
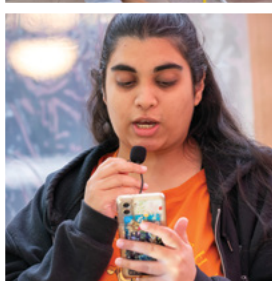
Global Cafe's connect a 'living network' of small group conversations that help to bring together communities. There are over 1200 community groups in Rochdale. Join united community groups who will be hosting a menu of activities and conversations with free refreshments available for all. There will be live community performances throughout the day.

WELCOME: CAKE NOT HATE

1-1.30PM

Temporary Touchstones

Join us for the opening of the final day and the ceremonial cake cutting for cake not hate! Come along and enjoy some cake and hear from the festival creators the Creative Voices Panel with some sounds provided by local choir Local Vocals.



Share your pictures and thoughts with us through our social media channels. Don't forget to tag us and use the hashtag #SBSRochdale

 @TouchstonesRochdale

 @Touchstones_Rochdale

 This booklet is widely recyclable in the UK