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FARNHAM CRAFT MONTH 2019 PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Makers and craft organisations across Farnham - which was designated as England's Craft Town in 2013 - are celebrating a funding boost from Arts Council England.

The initiative has been awarded funding to develop the town's annual Craft Month which has taken place every October for the past six years. The month celebrates the town's deep craft roots – from its earliest involvement with the pottery industry in the 16th century, through the Victorian era and the establishment of the Farnham Pottery and the founding of Farnham Art School in 1880. This remarkable legacy has been continued by a partnership of makers and organisations in the town which sustain craft as one of the great defining features of Farnham and ensure that it showcases the finest in contemporary art and crafts as well as protecting its heritage and providing unrivalled opportunities for emerging makers.

This year will see the most ambitious programme of events to date and will include something for all makers, would-be makers or those curious to find out more about what it means to live and work in a craft town. The full schedule will be available at www.crafttownengland.org and will include the following events.

A Clay Feast at Farnham Pottery organised by the West Street Potters will honour the 19th Century tradition when the clay diggers were paid by the potters and shared a festive meal. The local community will explore the relationship between clay and food through hands-on workshops making clay 'food', cooking in clay and preparing a feast based on 19th Century menus.

Farnham Maltings will take an international perspective, working with the Crafts Council and the University for the Creative Arts to develop links with Bornholm Craft City and Craft Town Scotland and explore joint working.

The Surrey Hills AONB will present Unearthing Landscapes, a symposium which will focus on how to connect people to the landscape through craft and the arts.



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Surrey Artist Open Studios will partner with venues, cafes, shops throughout the town to display local makers and craft organisations work in shop windows.

The ten artists in residence at UCA will curate an exhibition of their work to show how they have developed during their year in England's craft town. There will be demonstrations of craft skills ranging from weaving and making cordage to looping and printing as well as opportunities to meet the makers.

Rebecca Skeels - local maker, senior lecturer and member of the Craft Town Steering Group - who led the bid to the Arts Council is particularly excited about this year's programme:

'Farnham has such a diverse and exciting cultural heritage, which together with the support of Arts Council England, Farnham Town Council and the rest of the Craft Town Team, means we can be really ambitious with this year's month long celebration of craft. This year promises to be the best yet and brings a range of new events, collaborations and ideas. We invite everyone to become part of our town's creative community and celebrate Farnham's place as England's Craft Town.'

This October will also mark the launch of a commission for a public work of art to celebrate craft in and around Farnham by the New Ashgate Gallery and the Craft Town Steering Group. This new artwork will become a permanent part of the craft scene in Farnham and will be located in the historic centre of Farnham.

For more information about Farnham Craft Town and this year's programme of events you can visit: www.crafttownengland.org or follow Craft Town on social media.