

## MEDIA INFORMATION

14 September 2020



### **Shanaz Gulzar announced as Chair of Bradford 2025 – a major step forward as the city prepares to bid for UK City of Culture title**

Bradford's bid for UK City of Culture has taken a major step forward with the appointment of Keighley-based artist and producer Shanaz Gulzar as its new Chair, succeeding Interim Chair Mary Dowson.

Born, raised and living in Keighley, Shanaz Gulzar's career spans film, visual arts, theatre, public art and media. Established nationally as an artist, Shanaz is also a producer at Manchester International Festival and in 2019 brought a contemporary artist's perspective to the Yorkshire landscape for BBC television programme 'Yorkshire Walks'. Also for BBC television, Shanaz presented the documentary film 'Hidden Histories: The Lost Portraits of Bradford'.

Shanaz has worked extensively for many years across Yorkshire, including for Bite the Mango Film Festival, Illuminate, Bradford City Parks, Impressions Gallery, Moti Roti, Yorkshire Film Archive, in a co-practice as Adept and an ambassador for the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust. Nationally acclaimed, her work further afield includes projects for Enchanted Parks Gateshead, site-specific work, 'Talk All About It', for Belgrade Theatre, Coventry and as associate artist for National Theatre Wales.

Shanaz Gulzar, Chair of Bradford 2025, said:

"I am thrilled to be taking on the role of Chair of Bradford 2025, following the fantastic groundwork laid by Mary Dowson.

I've seen the cultural sector in the district evolve and mature to the creative city and district with attitude that it is today. I know that the only difference between successful artists and everyone else is opportunity and I'm proud that Bradford has

put culture at the heart of its regeneration. As well as winning the title, I want the competition to fulfil the ambition of all local people. I'm looking forward to helping the whole district to make the most of this opportunity and to open doors to the fantastic young talent in the city. In fact, I have a duty to remove the doors completely."

At a recent Bradford 2025 Board meeting, Kersten England, Chief Executive of Bradford Council paid a heartfelt tribute to the work, leadership and commitment of Interim Chair Mary Dowson, in establishing the infrastructure behind Bradford 2025. Mary Dowson said:

"I'm delighted to be handing over the reins to Shanaz as the campaign begins to ramp up. A huge amount of work has been done in the year since Bradford committed to the City of Culture competition and I'm excited to see what her unique perspective as an artist will bring to the role. The vital part that artists play in society underpins our ambition for Bradford2025 and with Shanaz leading the way, the next chapter promises to be one of the most exciting yet".

As Chair Shanaz will lead the Board and the organisation throughout the bidding process, as well as helping to develop the Board's strategic vision, mission, objectives and values. Shanaz will be a key ambassador for the city, championing Bradford at cultural events, press briefings and business events across the country in the run up to the announcement of the winning city.

Four further appointments to the Bradford 2025 Board also have been made. These are:

**Adeeba Malik CBE**, deputy chief executive of the QED Foundation who was awarded the MBE for her work with ethnic minorities and businesses and the CBE for services to community cohesion.

**Sabbiyah Pervez**, Communities Reporter, BBC Look North and a passionate feminist and advocate for young people. She won the Rising Star in Media award at the British Muslim Awards in January 2018.

**Brendan Brown**, Chief Executive - Airedale NHS Foundation Trust. He is the Senior Responsible Officer for work-force across the Bradford and Airedale place, and for the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership Board.

**Richard Emmott**, Yorkshire Water, Director of Corporate Affairs.

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes to Editors**

Twitter: @Bradford2025

Facebook: [/bradford2025](https://www.facebook.com/bradford2025)

Website: [www.bradford2025.co.uk](http://www.bradford2025.co.uk)

**Bradford 2025** is the city's bid to be UK City of Culture 2025, the bid will be submitted in 2021. Awarded every four years by Government the UK City of Culture title has had a transformational impact on previous host cities, securing millions of pounds of investment and acting as a catalyst for creative place-making and culture-led regeneration. Bradford joins a number of cities and areas competing for the title, with Lancashire, Medway, Gloucester and Southampton also having announced their intentions to bid. <https://bradford2025.co.uk/>

**The Bradford 2025 Board** also includes:

Mary Dowson, Director of pioneering community radio station Bradford Community Broadcasting

Kamran Rashid, Chief Executive of Impact Hub Bradford and board member of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

Steve Hartley, Bradford Council's Strategic Director for Place

Stuart McKinnon-Evans, Chief Finance Officer at the University of Bradford.