

# CHAIRING A WHAT NEXT? CHAPTER

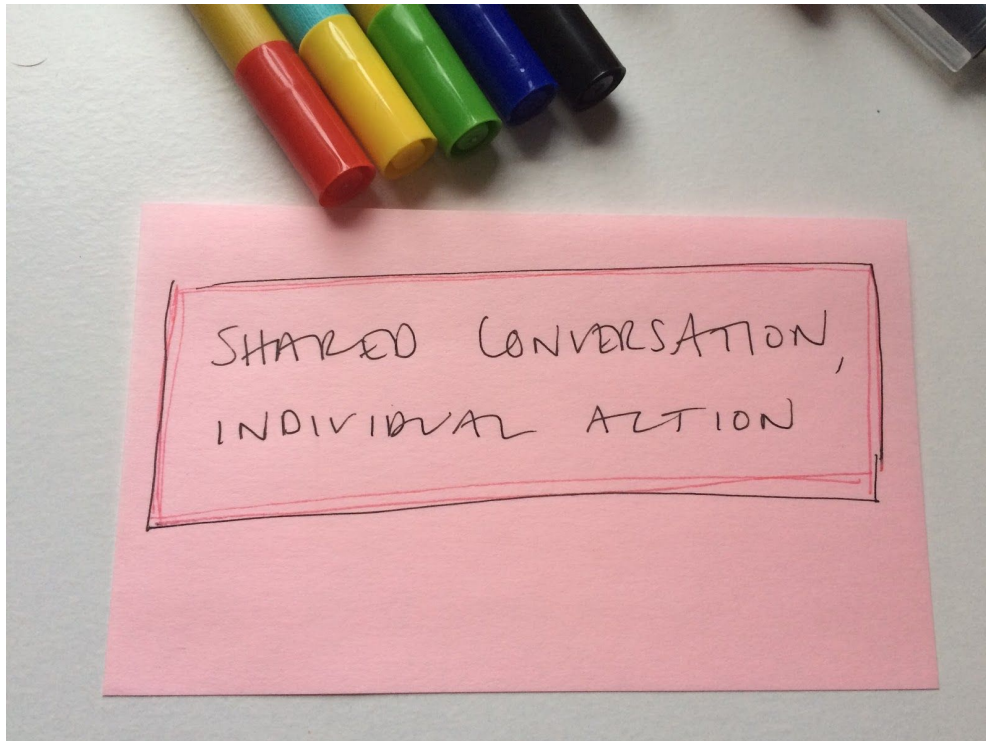
THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED TO BE A USEFUL GUIDE TO THOSE WHO ALREADY CHAIR AND THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO START CHAIRING A WHAT NEXT? CHAPTER.

IT CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

- INTRODUCTIONS
- KEY PRINCIPLES OF A WHAT NEXT? CHAPTER
- INFO ON THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR
- FAQ ABOUT WHAT NEXT?
- A SAMPLE AGENDA FOR YOUR FIRST WHAT NEXT? MEETING
- WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
- KEY CONTACTS AND COMMS INFORMATION

HANNAH BIRD AND CLARE THURMAN SHARE THE ROLE OF NATIONAL MOVEMENT LEAD FOR WHAT NEXT? THEIR ROLE IS TO SUPPORT THE CHAPTERS AND ENABLE CONNECTIVITY ACROSS THE MOVEMENT. THEY TRY TO VISIT CHAPTERS AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR AND ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE BY PHONE OR EMAIL TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE.

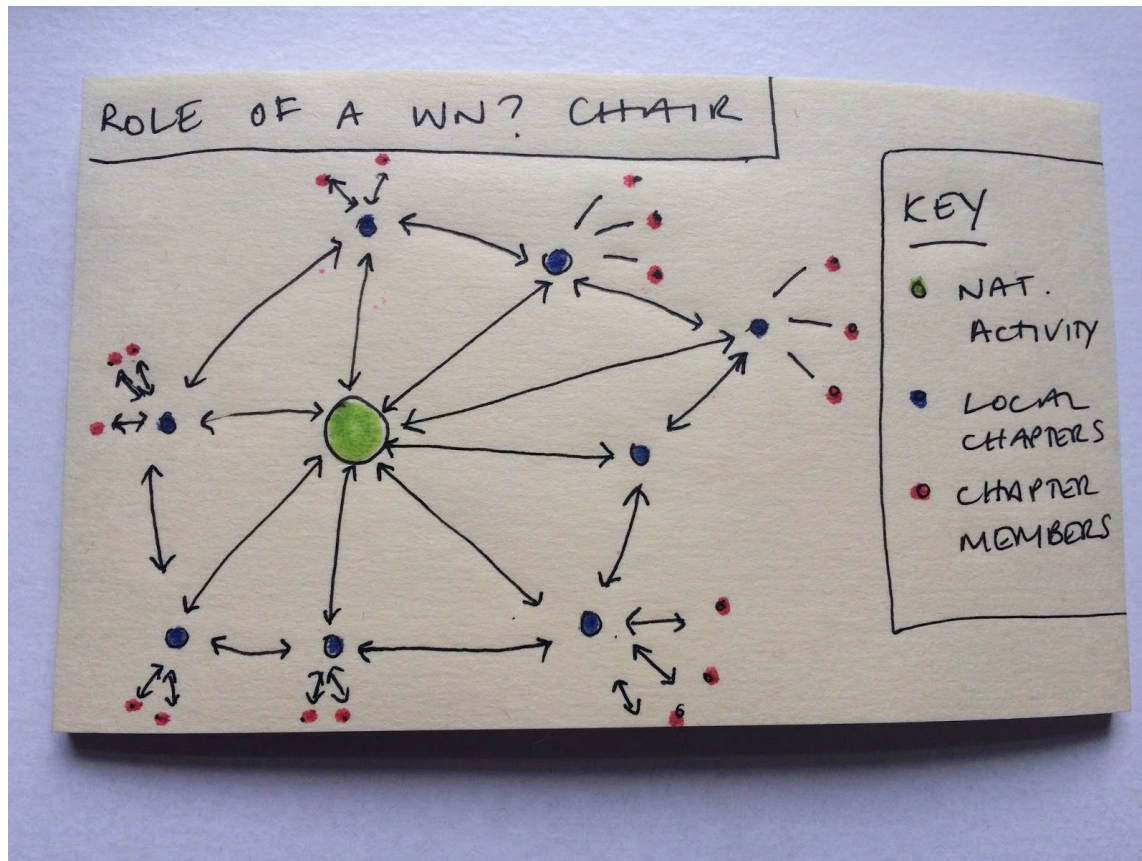
# KEY PRINCIPLES OF A WHAT NEXT? MEETING



We hope that 'What Next?' chapters will:

- Meet regularly
- Remain open to anyone interested in joining the conversation
- Pool capacity and share knowledge
- Encourage collaboration, positivity and action
- Invite experts to meetings to advise and provoke and to explain particular issues
- Create productive alliances
- Initiate and maintain positive, forward looking discussion with policy makers
- Include people from small and large, emerging and established organizations including individuals and freelancers
- Include people from the private sector, the public sector and across all arts, cultural, heritage and creative industries, including education
- Not become a PR or press presence in themselves but identify individuals or organisations best able to respond to enquiries or issues
- Be inclusive to anyone who wishes to attend
- Provide a safe space for open, honest discussion whilst acknowledging Chatham House rules
- Encourage constructiveness, generosity, and positivity
- Enable everyone the opportunity to speak out
- Reach consensus by discourse rather than by vote
- Be big enough to ensure that colleagues from different sectors can come together; be small enough for every voice to be heard

# THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR



## CONNECTING WITH THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

The diagram above depicts the hub and spoke nature of the What Next? Movement. Part of the role of the chapter chair is to be the connector between the national activity, local activity and chapter members, sharing information and feeding into the national agendas.

Other ways of staying connected include:

- Attending quarterly chapter chairs meetings or finding a chapter representative to attend
- Sharing national movement information with your chapter and feeding into national discussions
- Contributing to the national Digest (bi-monthly email newsletter)
- Attending other chapter meetings if travelling on other business
- Visiting the website and contributing to blogs and resources
- Using the Facebook group and Twitter to share conversations #wnculture
- Contacting other chapter chairs to share information, ideas and agendas (you can find email addresses on the chapter pages of the website)

## LOGISTICS

The chapter chair may work with a colleague who can take on the admin for running the chapter or this may be a job they do themselves. This includes:

- Drawing up an initial list of invitees for the first meeting
- Finding a venue to hold the meetings
- Drawing up the agenda and inviting speakers
- Sending meeting invites and reminders to the mailing list
- Maintaining the mailing list and ensuring Hannah and Clare are included

## CHAIRING THE CHAPTER MEETINGS

It is your role as Chair to define the agenda and then to create a suitable atmosphere to hold an open, positive discussion in which all voices can be heard. You can read more about the principles of a What Next? Meeting above and here are some useful links to resources about how to Chair a meeting effectively.

- <http://www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/working-in-higher-education/2306/tips-and-techniques-to-chair-meetings-effectively>
- <http://www.youthworkconference.co.uk/how-to-chair-a-meeting/>
- <https://meetingtomorrow.com/content-library/how-to-chair-a-successful-meeting>

Keeping to time is crucial and it is recommended that meetings last no longer than one hour and that there is a focus on generating action.

What Next? runs on a primarily voluntary basis and anyone who attends chapter meetings is encouraged to share the responsibility for taking action. As Chair you should play a role in asking for volunteers to take actions forward. In some cases it works well to also split the role of the Chair between two or more people.

## WHAT TIME COMMITMENT IS INVOLVED IN CHAIRING A WN? MEETING

Starting up the chapter takes the most amount of work; pulling together an initial list of invitees, finding a space to host the meeting and defining what the first meeting should be. On average a chair spends approximately 0.5 days on each meeting. Chapters are often supported by organisations who have a space where the meeting can take place and can offer administrative support for some of the logistical details.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## (WITH RESPONSES FROM EXISTING CHAPTER CHAIRS)

### HOW MANY WN? CHAPTERS ARE THERE?

There started with one - What Next? Young Vic - which has been meeting weekly since early 2013. There are now approximately 35 chapters - based across the UK. Including chapters in Basingstoke, Dundee, Nottingham and Newcastle and Gateshead. Our website hosts information on all the different chapters <http://www.whatnextculture.co.uk/chapters/> - some chapters also have their own twitter and facebook accounts.



### *Locations of What Next? Chapters, December 2016*

It's a big experiment; sometimes chapters decide to merge with each other, sometimes one chapter splits into two, occasionally a chapter has felt that there are other networks in the area with similar agendas that are already set up and working brilliantly.

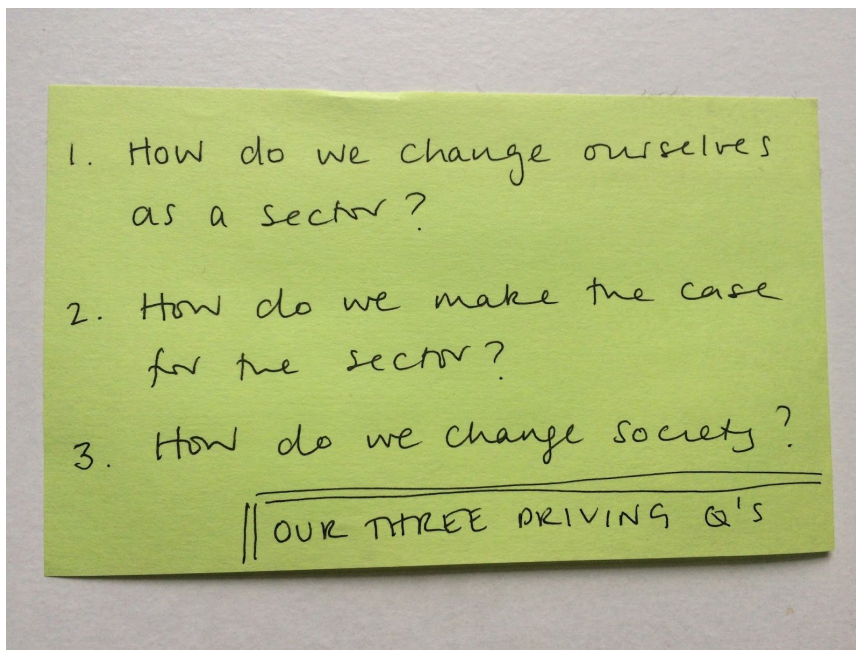
## HOW OFTEN DO THEY MEET?

Most chapters meet monthly, some fortnightly and some weekly. The meeting date and time should be regular (eg first Tuesday of the month, or every Wednesday morning). Timing of the meeting often depends on local transport availability. Some chapters change their meeting location every time.

## HOW MANY ATTENDEES DO YOU HAVE AND HOW DO YOU INVITE THEM?

Average attendees for each chapter is around 15. Some have over 30 regularly attending, others around 10. Everyone should feel welcome to attend a WN? meeting, but the feedback we've had is that people often need to feel asked. It is helpful for the responsibility for inviting new people to be shared amongst the group. Each chapter is responsible for maintaining their own distribution list. Some chapters use twitter and other online tools to invite new people.

## HOW DO YOU DECIDE ON THE AGENDA AND SPEAKERS?



These are three driving questions, that often form the basis of how What Next? Chapters address topics or provocations we ask our speakers to think about.

Some chapters use the WN? Young Vic agenda which is circulated every week as a basis for their agendas, others have regular items such as planning for the next WN? meeting, updates from the other WN? Chapters and updates on actions since the last meeting. Chapters have found that programming speakers - either at every meeting or every other meeting has helped to maintain regular attendance.

## WHAT HAS BEEN HELPFUL?

Attending other chapters before chairing your own has helped some chairs to start groups, acknowledgement that each group will be different, London can not be replicated outside of London and the key is localizing WN? to what works for you, attending the quarterly meetings, linking up with different WN? groups outside the regular meetings, encouraging colleagues to start their own WN? groups, individuals going to more than one chapter and sharing information

## WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME OF THE CHALLENGES?

Diversifying the members of the group to include not just representatives from the performing arts, focusing on actions as well as conversations, balancing national WN? priorities with each chapter feeling empowered to have their own voice, maintaining motivated attendance are all common challenges. Overcoming these challenges usually occurs when the chapters find a priority to focus action on and to help maintain momentum for future meetings.

## WHAT HAVE SUCCESSFUL MOMENTS BEEN?

'Success' has meant many different things to individuals, chapters and the national movement including; getting to know local colleagues, meaningful engagement with the council, contributing to national conversations with Treasury, having a more unified voice locally, involving teachers, academics and LEPs (Local Enterprise Partnerships)

A snapshot of activity between 2013 - 2016 includes:

- What Next? Basingstoke working with its local authority to develop a cultural strategy.
- A National Roundtable with the Cultural Learning Alliance, where young people were nominated from each Chapter, giving evidence directly to Ed Vaizey to feed into his Cultural White Paper.
- A Northern Powerhouse meeting with the Secretary of State for Culture held at HOME as part of the Conservative Party Conference.
- What Next? Cardiff devised and led a campaign and community response to the proposed 100% cuts to cultural spending by Cardiff City Council in 2016/17 – Cardiff Without Culture. After a petition of 6,000 signatures, 2.5m impressions on #Cardiff Without Culture, engagement with City Council and Welsh government politicians, public meetings and marches, these were reversed
- A major event on the Future of Culture in the North East, run by What Next? Newcastle Gateshead and featuring key politicians and civil servants.

Peter Bazalgette, chair of Arts Council England said *'What Next? has established a dialogue with national and local government, as well as being an effective policy forum, What Next? has got traction with these policies with politicians and in some cases, has had these policies adopted, I think that is a great step forward so I pay tribute to What Next? for that today.'*

For more information on National activity including [Get Creative](#) and the [Calouste Gulbenkian Inquiry into the civic role of arts organisations](#) visit the [website](#).

# SAMPLE AGENDA FOR YOUR FIRST WHAT NEXT?

## MEETING

### 1. Introductions

### 2. National Priorities: What Next? so far

For each new chapter we aim for one of the National Movement Leads or a member of the WN? Core Team to attend and help you with this section  
Allow some time for questions here  
(useful document: What Next? Strategic Review 2016)

### 3. Local priorities: Setting priorities for your group

This should form the bulk of your session (If a large group, consider splitting into smaller groups to brainstorm and come back together)

Useful questions to prompt conversation:

- What is important for your local area?
- What is it that a What Next? Group could do that no other networks currently address?
- If lots of priorities have been suggested, ask the group to prioritise the first 1 or 2 topics

### 4. Future chapter meetings: How it will work

- Logistics that work for your chapter - times, locations and frequency, chairing, organising meetings, setting the agenda, managing the mailing list
- Who else should be in the room?
- □ Suggestions for speakers.

*Consider: How you communicate to the group, how to ensure there is a wide representation of individuals at your meeting etc. Always use the 'bcc' option when sending out emails to.*

### 5. Linking up with the What Next? National Movement

*Information to let your members know how the movement connects.*

Chapter chairs will:

- receive weekly agendas from the WN? Young Vic group with press cuttings
- help to create the WN? digests which round up news from across the chapters
- be encouraged to join any sub-groups which deal with What Next? priorities
- attend quarterly chairs meeting to discuss strategic direction for the movement
- disseminate this information and action to their chapters

Individual members are encouraged to:

- take on the actions associated with WN?
- connect with and attend other WN? chapters
- join the online discussions at twitter #WNculture



## WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

You Will...	We Will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Arrange your first meeting and invite attendees</li><li>- Let us know the date so we can attend</li><li>- Send us info about your chapter to include on the WN? Website (via this simple googleform <a href="https://goo.gl/forms/mBRd2S3VyVuY1GK83">https://goo.gl/forms/mBRd2S3VyVuY1GK83</a>)</li><li>- Add Clare and Hannah to your chapter's email distribution list</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Add you to our central mailing list for chapter chairs</li><li>- Add you to the distribution list for WN? Young Vic (so you can see examples of the chapter agendas and forward any relevant information to your chapters)</li><li>- Arrange a phone-call with you before your first meeting</li><li>- Add your chapter information to the website</li><li>- Arrange a follow-up phone call with you after your first meeting</li><li>- Invite you to a one-off induction meeting for new chapter chairs and the quarterly chapter chair meetings for all chairs</li></ul>

## KEY COMMS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

If you are interested in starting a chapter, please contact National Movement Leads Clare Thurman [clarethurman@gmail.com](mailto:clarethurman@gmail.com) and Hannah Bird [hannah@hannahbird.net](mailto:hannah@hannahbird.net)

To find out more about the different chapters and WN? activity, visit the What Next? Website <http://www.whatnextculture.co.uk/chapters/> or on twitter @wnculture #WNculture