



TWENTY

Medway's Black Heritage 2026

Project & Participant Guide



What to expect • Your choices • Permissions • How we work

About Twenty

Twenty is a community-led oral history and cultural heritage project documenting Black life, memory, work, creativity, family histories, businesses and community contribution connected with Medway. Through recorded oral histories, professional archival portraits and, where authorised, associated photographs or heritage material, the project aims to preserve individual voices and lived experience as part of Medway's cultural memory.

We hope the project will strengthen the visibility of Black heritage in Medway, create a responsible archive resource, support future learning and recognise the contribution of residents, families, workers, businesses, creatives, faith communities and community organisations.

What taking part looks like

Your oral history: a guided recorded conversation of up to approximately one hour. You remain in control of what you choose to discuss.

Your portrait: approximately 30 minutes for professional archival portrait photography.

Optional heritage material: you may bring photographs, documents or other material. Sharing these is optional and separate permission/rights checks may be needed before anything is copied, archived, displayed or published.

Your choices and what you can expect from us

- You can ask questions before, during or after your session.
- You can decline a question, pause the recording or ask to move on.
- You decide the level of personal detail you wish to share.
- Tell us about access, communication, sensory or other adjustments that would help you participate. We will ask what works for you rather than assume.
- Where sensitive subjects arise, the interview should remain supportive and non-judgmental; you should not be pressured to continue.
- We will explain intended uses and permissions clearly rather than treating silence or non-response as consent.
- Agreed restrictions, embargoes and access conditions will be recorded and respected.
- You should be given an opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns after participation.

Accuracy, memory and people's stories

Oral history records lived experience and memory. Memory and independently verified historical fact are not always the same thing, and that is okay. Where something is uncertain, tell us so it can be described as a recollection, estimate or family account rather than as a verified fact.

- Please check names, preferred forms of address, spellings, dates, places, relationships and important biographical details.
- This is especially important when speaking about a family member, friend or community member who has died.
- Do not knowingly present uncertain information as confirmed fact.
- The project will distinguish what is documented, what is personal testimony, and what remains uncertain where this matters.

Family, friends and third-party material

You may talk about family, friends and people who are no longer with us. However, where you are sharing another person's photograph, document, artwork, recording or other protected material, you must tell us who created or owns it and confirm that you have the appropriate permission or authority for the use you are asking the project to make.

- Possessing an old photograph does not automatically mean that you own its copyright.
- Material found online is not automatically free to reproduce.
- Where a living person is identifiable, privacy and data-protection considerations may also apply.
- If you are unsure about your authority to share something, tell us before it is copied or published.

How the project works ethically

Twenty uses a human-led approach. Cultural representation, interpretation and decisions about heritage should remain accountable to people rather than being handed over to technology. Where AI-assisted or AI-hybrid tools are used in future creative or interpretive work, human agency, community authority, consent, rights, transparency, provenance, accessibility, bias awareness and stewardship remain central.

- We check names, dates, roles, quotations, permissions and archival claims before approving public material.
- We do not invent participant identities, occupations, achievements or quotations to make a story more dramatic.
- We do not impose stereotyped language, aesthetics or cultural assumptions because somebody is Black or belongs to another identity group.
- Where representation could be culturally harmful or ambiguous, we pause, check context and, where appropriate, consult the represented person or people with relevant knowledge.
- Participants and authorised community voices retain meaningful authority over representation covered by their permissions.
- We aim to make digital material accessible through clear layouts and, where appropriate, captions, transcripts, alt text and other accessible formats.

Privacy, records and responsible handling

- We collect only information needed for the project and its agreed heritage purposes.
- Recordings, photographs, permissions and administrative records should be stored securely with access limited appropriately.
- Where appropriate, identifying administrative information can be separated, anonymised or pseudonymised.
- Project data should be backed up and handled with appropriate security and retention arrangements.

- Permission and rights information should remain connected to the heritage material so future users know what is and is not authorised.

Withdrawal and changing your mind

Participation is voluntary. If you wish to withdraw or request a significant change during the active Twenty project, contact Michi as soon as possible. The project uses an operational cut-off of **28 days before the scheduled project end date** for ordinary withdrawal requests so that transcription, editing, cataloguing and publication planning can be completed without unnecessary disruption to other participants.

That project-management cut-off does not remove any rights that may apply under data-protection law, copyright law or the specific agreement attached to your contribution. What can be changed after material has been archived, published or lawfully distributed may depend on those permissions, restrictions and circumstances.

What you do not have to do

- You do not have to answer every question.
- You do not have to share photographs, documents or family material.
- You do not have to disclose information simply because it may make the interview more interesting.
- You do not have to agree to every possible future use of your contribution.
- You should not sign anything you do not understand; ask us to explain it first.
- You should not be required to repeatedly retell distressing information unnecessarily.

What the project will not do

- We will not pressure somebody to participate or treat a lack of reply as consent.
- We will not knowingly publish material outside the permissions or restrictions attached to it.
- We will not change a participant's meaning merely to produce a stronger or more marketable story.
- We will not assume that possession of a photograph or document gives us permission to reproduce it.
- We will not promise that every contribution will be exhibited, published or transformed into a creative work.

Looking ahead: 2027 and accessible creative heritage

If we secure further funding, we hope to extend the learning and public-engagement life of Twenty during 2027. Selected material could be explored through accessible and creative formats such as **digital art, poetry, spoken word, sound and sonic work, accessible digital learning resources** and other forms of creative heritage interpretation.

This future development would depend on funding, resources, rights and participant permissions. Taking part in Twenty does not automatically authorise every future creative adaptation. If a proposed new use goes beyond the permission already given, the necessary further authorisation will be sought.

Before your session - quick check

- I understand what Twenty is and what taking part involves.
- I know I can decline questions and ask for a pause.
- I have checked important names, dates and details as far as reasonably possible.
- I will say when information is uncertain or based on family memory.

- I will tell the project who owns/created any third-party photographs or material I want to share.
- I will raise any privacy, access, restriction or embargo concerns.
- I understand that possible 2027 creative outputs depend on further funding and appropriate permission.

Contacting the Project Lead

Michi Masumi

Michi Masumi: Anthropology | Art | AI

Email: msmichimasumi@gmail.com

Project page: www.michimasumi.co.uk/twenty-medway-black-heritage

Preferred contact: Because of the Project Lead's neurodivergencies, email or text message is preferred. Please send a message and Michi will reply and arrange a phone call if necessary.

Access: If, because of a disability or access requirement, telephone contact is the only or most accessible way for you to communicate, you are very welcome to call. Please use the project contact number already provided to you, or ask for it by email/message.

With thanks to our funders and supporters

We acknowledge the support of the **Medway Heritage Place Project**, **Medway Council** and **The National Lottery Heritage Fund**, and thank National Lottery players for making this heritage work possible.

Prepared August 2026. Review if project dates, funders, archive destinations, permissions or future-use arrangements change.