



Arts Programme Update

Review & Reset

Jo Breckon & James Gough

Who we are and what we do

Studio Response

- We curate and commission art in the public realm, managing projects of varying scale from inception and project planning to final installation and / or presentation in the public realm
- We work with artists and communities to respond creatively to people, place, culture, heritage and aspirations
- We believe that artists can enrich the quality of our public spaces

GJG Consultancy

- Believe in the right of everyone to freely participate in the cultural life of the community
- Provide services in community engagement, building authentic connections, and ensuring community voices are at the center of decision-making
- Excel in facilitating meaningful dialogue and inclusive spaces for diverse stakeholders, leading to informed decision-making and community-driven outcomes
- Experienced in producing both large-scale and small-scale arts projects, fostering genuine engagement and ensuring successful outcomes



What is Public Art?

‘Public art’ covers a broad range of art practices: permanent sculptures, temporary artwork, socially-engaged practice with its focus on the process itself, community-based projects, monuments, earthwork and land art, street furniture, functional work such as play structures, integrated architectural design...

All artforms: visual art and design, craft, written and spoken word, illustration, music, photography, drama, digital, film etc

Art that belongs to and grows out of place: site-responsive, rather than being located within a place as an add-on

Art that is shaped with communities: rather than ‘done to’



Arts Programme Review

The overwhelming focus of the Arts Programme for West of Waterloo was intended to be its relationship with and impact upon the community



Community Development:

Building a new community/ies at WoW; placemaking; creating identity / sense of place / pride / feeling of belonging

Community Connections:

Connecting WoW's new communities to existing communities; connecting WoW physically to its environs; connecting WoW to the local cultural landscape / creative economy; wayfinding

Community Engagement:

Engaging and listening to the WoW communities about the public art; creating a space for dialogue with WoW communities; building on local knowledge

Community wellbeing:

Individuals' connection with nature; emotional connection to place; individual wellbeing – helping people make sense of the world around them and their experiences



Arts Programme Review

Phase 1

- Strategy developed when only around 200 residents at Wellington Park
- Sense that issues around community were a priority, but poorly executed commissions resulted in little sustained impact

Phase 2

- Significant expectations around community engagement; expectations not met
- Focused on themes only
- No input into what the commissions would be and little input into the design development process: arms length / 'done to'
- Missed opportunity

Arts Programme Review

No sustained programme of engagement that has focused on embedding the views, values, needs and aspirations of the community into the Arts Programme

Community has changed:

- Greater number of residents
- Residents are coming together more and developing a greater sense of community & cohesion – Newlands Parish Council / Newlands Community Group

“Right” approach in 2011 and 2013 unlikely to be what works for bringing public art into the development in 2024

Consultation & Engagement

- Workshop with Councillors
- Stakeholder discussions
- Newlands Community Group
- Local cultural providers
- Workshops in the community
- Community questionnaire



public
art
in
New
lands

SHAPING
THE
FUTURE
PUBLIC ARTS
PROGRAMME

TAKE
PART
SHARE
YOUR
VIEWS

Initial Findings

- Very little knowledge amongst current residents of previous public art strategies / proposals
- We're focused on defining the contribution public art can make; responses are wider than this scope
- Not to be constrained by the past – define their own heritage / shape a 'new' history
- Residents are coming together more and developing a greater sense of community & cohesion

Emerging Themes

Place / Space

- Wayfinding / history & heritage / focal points / civic hub / nature / green space / connecting outward

Community / Identity

- Voice / stories / coming together / intergenerational / listening / sense of ownership / creating our own history

Emerging Questions

- What is the story of this place?
- What makes this place special?
- How does it connect?
- Who are we?
- What's our identity?
- What are the stories of our community?
- What defines us? Socially? Geographically? Our name?
- What's our shared legacy? What sort of heritage do we want to create for the future?

The approach to community engagement in previous iterations of the Arts Programme is a major contributing factor to issues that developed around its delivery, but it also holds the key to turning it around.



Reset: Arts Strategy

Objective:

Devise and implement an Arts Strategy that uses the arts to achieve positive outcomes for the West of Waterlooville community that responds to their expressed views, values, needs and wants.

Year 1:

Continued creative engagement and consultation

Provides strong foundation for future phases

Avoids pit-falls of previous iterations – risk mitigation



Reset: Arts Strategy

Year 1 Approach:

- Focus on a sustained period of artist-led engagement and research to reach out to a greater swathe of residents
- More sustained exploration around what's important for residents allowing us to then consider how public art in its broadest sense can address these findings and bring added value to the area
- Artist(s) would devise approaches to researching, exploring, questioning and testing ideas and sharing their findings in a creative way
- Establish a community commissioning panel that empowers local residents to take decisions about public art



Reset: Arts Strategy

Year 1 Outcomes & Legacy:

- Appointed artist will create and share artwork. This artwork becomes inspiration and foundation for future phases of the arts programme
- Community Commissioning Panel
- Updated Arts Strategy for future phases which responds to artist's work completed in year 1 and which presents costed proposals for the next stage of delivery



Thank You