

A large, intricate public art sculpture made of dark metal, featuring a complex, organic structure with many circular and spiral elements, set against a background of trees with yellow autumn leaves and a blue sky.

CHICHESTER

Public Art

Strategy

June 2010

Chichester District Council

Chichester District Public Art Strategy

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1 INTRODUCTION

This strategy for public art in the Chichester District proposes moving from the existing restricted 'Percent for Art' policy to a more robust use of s106 agreements to secure provision of public arts works by developers in new build schemes. It has been drafted following an extensive period of consultation within the Chichester District and research into best practice elsewhere. It puts forward an overarching policy statement, a set of strategic aims and an action plan to support this.

The Chichester District is a very special place – the quality of the local environment and the need to protect it whilst providing for future housing and employment is very important to the local community. Public art can be a very visible and tangible contribution to the environment, especially if it is inspired by a sense of place at both local community and wider District levels.

The strategy is built on a belief that provision of public art can act as a catalyst for enhancing quality of life for residents, community wellbeing, economic prosperity and defining the District as a tourist destination.

The strategy includes proposals to set up new mechanisms to achieve a more coherent approach to the incorporation of public art in new build and refurbishments, in both council and non-council led developments. The main recommendations are:

- to set up a Public Art Fund managed by the Council where pooled contributions from s106 monies and other funding streams can be used to implement the Public Art Strategy in the vicinity of the development
- to set up a Public Art Advisory group to support the provision and delivery of public art in the District
- to set realistic and effective thresholds and tariffs relevant to Chichester District
- to set up a public art maintenance budget as part of a public art tariff for all Council-led developments
- to establish a maintenance and decommissioning policy and a budget line as a requirement for all non-Council led developments

The details for these delivery proposals are set out in Appendix 1.

As the Local Development Framework for the District is developed, the strategy will seek to embed provision for public art in the Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document.

Involvement of artists as part of the design team from the outset of any new development and meaningful consultation with local communities are also integral to the strategy.

The Council's current commitment to securing public art is through a resolution passed on 7th March 1990 "supporting the "Percent for Art" campaign. This applies only to the Council's own developments over £50,000 capital cost, and its implementation over the period to date has been intermittent. All other works have been achieved through voluntary agreements to commission art and craft works within buildings or refurbishment projects. In Spring 2008 Chichester District Council commissioned Frances Lord to research and develop a draft Public Art Strategy for the district of Chichester to be informed by a wide consultation process. This strategy has been framed with reference to the emerging Corporate Plan, where the uniqueness of the District can be enhanced through expression in public art and celebrations of local heritage, meeting the aim of fostering a 'sense of place'. It embraces the Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026 and the West Sussex Design Commission report Design Principles which was adopted by the Executive Board in 2007.

This Strategy will in future be embedded in the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) and for its detail to be represented in the Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document. A secondary objective is for the Public Art Strategy to help raise the standards of street-scape design in the District through the active involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. This Strategy is intended to provide guidance and direction on the opportunities for future investment and commissioning of public art in the district. It does not preclude the Council from procuring public art works by other means.

The Strategy is based on extensive consultation conducted locally by:

- Questionnaire
- Meetings with key Council staff and members
- One-to-one meetings with key stakeholders
- Discussion groups and evening slide presentations with councillors and key community groups

The research also examined local authority practice and planning policy elsewhere in the UK.

DEFINING PUBLIC ART

The term public art refers to artists and craftspeople working within the built, natural, urban or rural environment. It aims to integrate artists' and craftspeople's skills, vision and creative abilities into the whole process of creating new spaces and regenerating old ones. Public art can bring out a sense of uniqueness in the development and enlivens and animates the space by creating a visually stimulating environment.

Perhaps public art is best thought of as a principle rather than a particular artistic discipline. It is a principle of improving the changing environment through the arts by involving artists in the conception, development and transformation of a public space. It is specifically commissioned for a known site, its audience is the public or community, residential, business or visitor, who populate that space.

Successful public art resonates with the site and context, and creates an opportunity for the range of people using the site to engage with it. It can contribute to urban regeneration and can benefit adjacent buildings from both a local character and image perspective. In terms of added value, it can bring benefits both financially and in a more general community and environmental sense.

Public art improves the profile of an area and those who are charged with its stewardship, as well as bringing benefits to local residential communities and businesses far in excess of its cost implications. It affects the way that places are perceived by a wide range of stakeholders, and as such is a factor in achieving social and economic wellbeing. This fact is recognised by the many local authorities which have introduced public art policies, and many private developers that now choose to include public art in their projects. The Achieving Excellence Design Evaluation Toolkit (AEDET) developed by The Centre for Healthcare Design, recommends that design be evaluated under three basic headings: Functionality, Excellence and Impact. The arts have a significant contribution to make in creating impact, but also in new expressions of functionality and pursuit of excellence.

Public art is a powerful demonstration that those who commission and those who incorporate it care about the quality of the environment and by extension, the quality of life of those who live and work there. It provides an upfront marketing tool, making a very public statement demonstrating a commitment to quality and positive attitudes to the present and future. Provision of public art is often the defining factor that lifts a quality development above the crowd and makes it distinctive. By introducing public art into a scheme there is also an opportunity to foster community involvement, and this in turn leads to a 'buy-in', a sense of ownership and pride in the local space from the local community. This can have positive cultural, educational and economic benefits and, where appropriate, it can act as a catalyst for the regeneration of an area.

PUBLIC ART CAN TAKE THE FOLLOWING FORMS:

- It may be incorporated within a building's structure or result in the creation of new architectural spaces, new public spaces, landscaping (hard and soft), fencing, brickwork, glasswork, gates, grilles, windows, lighting treatments, seating, play areas/structures, carved lettering and plaques
- It may take the form of tapestries, carpets, weaving, textiles, hangings, banners, use of colour, mobiles, ceramics, tiling, interior lighting, signage, and flooring
- It could be sculpture, landmarks, environmental land works, photography, prints, paintings, projection, moving images, computer generated images, performance, events, music commissions etc.
- It can introduce narrative or text, be issued based, decorative, humorous, challenging, beautiful, subtle or contentious
- It may refer to our heritage or celebrate the future, highlight specific areas and issues or be conceptual. Work can be permanent or temporary, internal or external, integral or free standing, monumental or domestic, large or small scale, design or ornament
- It does not have to be publicly funded to be public art. The majority of public art commissions arise from private sector development and investment, or are supported by charitable institutions. Relatively few are commissioned entirely from the public purse

Whatever the outcome, it has one consistent quality; it is specific to the site and relates to the context of that site.

Good public art celebrates the particular story of a place, engages with the community in its making, provides enjoyment after installation and embodies a sense of place.

PUBLIC ART ADDS VALUE BY:

- Creating local distinctiveness, and acting as part of the environmental fabric which helps build healthy communities
- Supporting and improving wayfinding, creating landmarks at entrances and other key points in public spaces for all members of the community
- Doing this in ways tailored for members of the community with and without specific disabilities
- Raising the standard of landscaping and interior design through creative use of materials and finishes
- Enhancing the prestige and reputation of the organisations behind the development during the build process

THE BENEFITS OF SECURING A PUBLIC ART STRATEGY ARE:

- attracting investment from public and private sectors
- making the District a more appealing place for businesses to locate
- stimulating the local economy through creating employment and seeding and developing skills
- encouraging tourism by giving an area a competitive edge in relation to competing visitor destinations
- contributing to local distinctiveness by giving a voice to artists and craftspeople and enabling them to utilise their creative skills and vision
- increasing the use of open spaces, reclaiming areas and helping reduce levels of crime and vandalism by creating a sense of ownership
- humanising environments, involving the community and creating a cultural legacy for the future
- introducing innovation and experimentation into the process of how we develop spaces and places and create environments which meet the needs of the inhabitants and visitors

The role and value of public art is recognised as a key component in cultural, economic, social and community regeneration by government and other agencies. Nationally the benefits of public art can be seen in business and retail developments, housing, healthcare, education and countryside developments.

“Public art is about good design. And good design makes good sense. Quality environments send out positive messages. Good quality, attractive buildings and public spaces play a key role in urban and rural regeneration and, in particular, attracting residential and commercial occupiers.” - *Public Art Resource 2009*

2 POLICY STATEMENT

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL'S POLICY FOR PUBLIC ART IS:

“To identify and develop all possible funding support for art in public places to foster a local sense of place and to celebrate the unique features of the District. To enhance the quality of the environment which supports community health and wellbeing as well as attracting businesses and visitors to the District. To achieve this by working with developers, artists and local communities.”

3 STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC AIMS

Chichester District Council aims to encourage the commissioning of high quality artworks made specifically for the public realm by artists, makers and designers. It recognises that public art can have a key role in delivering corporate objectives such as environmental enhancement, community development, neighbourhood renewal, education, employment and tourism as well as make a considerable impact on quality of life. National and local planning guidance advocates an integrated approach to the procurement of architecture, landscape architecture and urban design. Commissioning public art must be an integral part of that approach.

3.1 The Council's strategic aims for public art are:

- 3.1.1 To ensure whatever the nature of the work, public art should always be site-specific: that is be created specifically for the particular site or location and relate to the context of that site
- 3.1.2 To encourage a collaborative process, involving members of the local community in the planning and appreciation of public works in their neighbourhood
- 3.1.3 Ensure the public art strategy extends across the entire District, from the City and main town centres to the rural villages, by commissioning appropriate artworks with local significance
- 3.1.4 To ensure artists are engaged at the earliest possible stage in the planning of key public and private developments across the district by inclusion in design teams, working closely alongside architects, landscape architects, planners and urban designers

- 3.1.5 To encourage a broad range of ways in which public art can be realised, for example lighting schemes, street furniture, fencing, paving, signs, sculptures, murals, architectural glass, mosaics, banners, sound and text
- 3.1.6 To encourage innovative approaches to public art by utilising temporary art commissions, for example a special screening of a commissioned film or a projection on the façade of a building, as well as permanent installations
- 3.1.7 To promote a culture of integrated and flexible approaches to working with artists

4 ACTION PLAN

4.1 The development of this Strategy has identified a range of potential actions for the District Council. Identified actions are:

- 4.1.1 Embed provision for public art in the LDF Core Strategy through an Infrastructure SPD which aims to apply public art provision to residential developments of more than 10 new houses as a starting point and to other developments of or in excess of 1000sq metres [ref. Appendix 1]
- 4.1.2 Encourage developers of smaller developments than the above to include public art within their schemes as a means of enhancing the quality of the development [ref Appendix 1]
- 4.1.3 Set up a Public Art Fund managed by the council where pooled contributions from S106 monies and other funding streams can be used to implement the Public Art Strategy at identified sites within the vicinity [ref. Appendix 1]
- 4.1.4 Set up a Public Art Advisory group to support the provision and delivery of public art in the District [ref. Appendix 1]
- 4.1.5 Consider, agree and set realistic and effective thresholds, tariffs and standard charges relevant to Chichester District [ref. Appendix 1]
- 4.1.6 Set up a public art maintenance budget as part of a public art tariff for all Council-led developments and make a maintenance and decommissioning policy and a budget line a requirement for all non-Council led developments [ref. Appendix 1]
- 4.1.7 Work with experienced public art consultants and agencies to advise on and deliver public art projects over £25,000

- 4.1.8 Plan innovative and experimental projects which encourage people to notice their own environment and to think responsibly about energy consumption

4.2 THE COUNCIL WILL ADOPT THE FOLLOWING DELIVERY PROCESSES:

- 4.2.1 Hold discussions with developers regarding public art inclusion at the pre-planning stage of negotiations as part of an SPD
- 4.2.2 Encourage the involvement of artists at the earliest possible stage in the planning process, and ideally in the pre-planning process
- 4.2.3 Integrate education programmes and interpretation – from policy setting to implementation of individual commissions
- 4.2.4 Develop formal and informal learning opportunities when commissioning new work
- 4.2.5 Support innovative and emerging ideas when commissioning artists
- 4.2.6 Demonstrate best practice when selecting, contracting and working with artists, and in maintenance and decommissioning policies
- 4.2.7 Use research and consultation on locations, types of art and themes as basis for artists' briefs when new developments come on stream
- 4.2.8 Incorporate, where possible, locally sourced materials, in the construction of public art features
- 4.2.9 Build in proper evaluation

4.3 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT BY:

- 4.3.1 Taking account of relevant Chichester District policies and strategies, with particular focus on cohesion, wellbeing, community development and sports and leisure activities
- 4.3.2 Promoting access and social inclusion, equal opportunities and cultural diversity in all aspects of the provision of public art
- 4.3.3 Building in meaningful public consultation on public art

4.3.4 Fully involving members of the community in the provision of public art

4.4 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN QUALITY BY:

4.4.1 Ensuring that all improvements achieved through individual developments are strategically coordinated, so they add up to coherent, well planned and attractive wholes

4.4.2 Creating a network of coherent public spaces throughout the District which have quality and create identity and a sense of place

4.4.3 Ensuring that public art becomes an integral part of the vision for Chichester District as a vibrant modern area, inspired by the past and inspiring the future with its own unique identity and sense of place

4.4.4 Ensure that the importance of an integrated approach to the procurement of architecture, urban design and public art is adopted with all new developments

4.4.5 Support and influence the national and regional policies which recognise the importance of good design in the commissioning of new public spaces and places.

4.5 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE NETWORKING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ARTISTS BY:

4.5.1 Consulting widely with existing local networks of artists, other individuals, organisations, and all those with an interest in public art to meet up on an occasional basis for an update on public art activity and plans in the District

4.5.2 Ensuring that locally based artists are advised of public art opportunities in the District

4.5.3 Creating professional development opportunities for locally and regionally based artists, especially early career, through liaising with local creative industries and the FE/HE sector

4.6 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE NETWORKING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS BY:

- 4.6.1 Introducing 'go and see' days and research trips for Councillors and relevant Council staff (e.g. planning, development management, leisure and well being, community services, parks and planning teams) to see nationally recognised exemplary public art schemes
- 4.6.2 Joining mailing lists for organisations such as Ixia and Public Art Online to keep abreast with current thinking, best practice and training opportunities
- 4.6.3 Promoting through advocacy and effective communication the work of the council to explain the role of public art in shaping the District and how it is funded
- 4.6.4 Considering publishing the Public Art Strategy and any subsequent SPD/LDF documents, with colour illustrations of nationally sourced public art to act as an advocacy document to publicise the development of future initiatives and opportunities for commissioning public artworks
- 4.6.5 Adopting a coordinated approach to an '*Art on roundabouts*' scheme so there is coherence in the selection criteria by consulting closely with planning and highways colleagues