
THE BARNSELY PUBLIC ART STRATEGY

FOREWORD

Barnsley has a long history of using public art and sculpture to enhance both the borough's cultural offer and civic pride. This Strategy will enable us to develop and explore new avenues and partnerships to bring great art to Barnsley, enhancing the borough's cultural offer for its communities and visitors, which will, in turn, help to grow the visitor economy. Barnsley has built up a positive reputation of punching above its weight in terms of cultural offer. The implementation of this strategy will provide us with the opportunity to strengthen the borough's position and raise its standing even higher.

Cllr Miller Cabinet Member, Place



Roy Miller

Cllr Roy Miller
Cabinet Member, Place



Stephen Houghton

Cllr Sir Stephen Houghton
CBE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was commissioned by Barnsley Council from Beam in 2014 as part of the Council's effort to bring quality, consistency, and updated intelligence to its activities and overall policies regarding the arts in the public realm. Beam is a Yorkshire based creative company and charity with wide experience in the field of public art and creative commissioning.

The qualities that make Barnsley distinctive – its landscape, built environment, history and people – have helped to shape this Strategy and in particular formed the basis of its proposed overall vision and strategic themes.

It is intended that the Council will be able to utilise this Strategy as a practical guide to support the commissioning and/or deployment of public art.

Principle Findings

- There is considerable evidence nationally that the arts in public spaces – sculpture, performance, light, and integrated design elements – can deliver a significant contribution to the qualities of good public realm that make for successful places – design quality, connectivity, positive experiences, public participation, delight.
- The evidence shows that this happens best when the arts are facilitated by a context of positive policy, encouragement, and action by a local authority working in collaboration with local organisations and citizens, and private, public, and voluntary sector stakeholders.
- There is evident potential for Barnsley to become well known for innovative public art commissioning, and for this to support its aims in terms of the visitor economy, culture, skills and graduate retention, and wellbeing. There is some good previous practice and considerable support within existing policies, and the Borough has many character assets for artists to draw on, interpret and imaginatively re-present.
- In order to take this opportunity, the Council will need to be realistic but ambitious in aspiration, deal with impediments and constraints by taking a pro-active stance, and set in train a series of practical and achievable measures.
- Financial resources are scarce, but successfully facilitating public art is not necessarily expensive and can be achieved by introducing it early and opportunistically in the development process; by careful deployment of planning policy and other tools; and by the pooling of resources from various sources.

Strategy Process and Content

Beam's brief for the Strategy was to:

- Consult with interested parties
- Set within a national context and precedents of good practice
- Articulate a vision for public arts across the Barnsley Borough
- Respond to the historic and contemporary context of Barnsley
- Provide practical solutions and commissioning/management/maintenance protocols
- Make recommendations and provide guidance for implementation of the Strategy

Producing the Strategy has involved...

- Commissioning three permanent artworks in the Town Centre.
- Two stakeholder workshops supporting the development of the overall vision and key themes.
- One site visit and workshop focused on Goldthorpe.
- Production of detailed 'Area Briefing Forms' to demonstrate the potential for public art in two key areas – Barnsley town centre and Goldthorpe, as well as to provide a format for use on future projects.
- Proposals for 'borough-wide' ideas for possible development.
- A set of Recommendations for the Council and other stakeholders.
- A Year 1 Action Plan.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE STRATEGY

The Strategy is divided into into four sections, A-D:

A What is Public Art?

Focusing on defining key terms, this section of the report describes and illustrates the ways in which artists and the arts can be deployed, the potential impact of public art, engagement and consultation, and examining means by which the arts in the public realm are financially resourced.

B The Context for Public Art

This section sets the public arts into the context of the main current and recent policies, strategies, and studies that are relevant to the arts in the public realm – nationally, regionally and locally. It analyses Barnsley's position in more detail – its track record in public art, its capacity to develop the arts in the public realm, current borough-wide projects and aspirations, and the borough's current strengths and weaknesses from an urbanism perspective.

C Delivering Arts in the Public Realm

Offering a Vision, key themes, needs and opportunities, this section shows how a wide 'toolbox' of the arts could be applied with a range of approaches illustrated utilising two locations as examples – Barnsley Town Centre and Goldthorpe. Conclusions are amalgamated, key recommendations made and a first year action plan detailed to kick-start the implementation of the strategy.

D Appendices

A series of Appendices provides further information on matters referred to in the Strategy. This includes access to information, guidelines, and resources available locally, nationally, and internationally, as well as other useful information for turning ideas and opportunities into action.

Strategic Themes

- **Story-telling:** Reveal stories about Barnsley's past, present and future, and create new ones.
- **The Great Outdoors:** Draw inspiration from Barnsley's diverse landscapes, including its network of waterways, rivers and canals.
- **Looking Forward:** Innovate and inspire, encourage the use of the latest technologies, showcasing world-class practice and promoting the potential for interactive works.

Borough-Wide Ideas

- **'Curiosity':** A series of artworks across the Borough linked to and linking visitor attractions.
- **'Barnsley Beacons':** Marking former mineshafts and other key points with artworks utilising new technologies and light.
- **'Reveal!':** Discreet artworks amongst Barnsley's many walking and cycling routes and trails, encouraging exploration.

A VISION FOR THE PUBLIC ARTS STRATEGY

The arts in the public realm will:

Contribute to Barnsley's distinctiveness, enabling residents and visitors to engage with and discover the Boroughs' cultural heritage and future through ambitious, innovative commissioning.

Create lasting memories of positive experiences of Barnsley as a place, exploring landscapes, the built environment, and most importantly the character of Barnsley – its people.



Principle Recommendations

- Adopt a forward-looking and Borough-wide strategy for the commissioning of the public arts that embraces a variety of disciplines, approaches, materials and scales, and is prepared to be experimental.
- Adopt a Strategy that aims for overall connectivity and coherence, while remaining flexible and open to opportunity.
- Adopt a wide definition of the arts in the public realm, to include the temporary, performance, the digital arts, and artists' contribution within design teams, as well as to the more traditional approaches of sculpture and object-based art.
- Combine the commissioning of new work with the carefully-considered borrowing of existing contemporary artworks --- for example, by means of an arrangement with the Yorkshire Sculpture Park.
- Ensure quality and consistency of process and decision-making through the creation of an effective Public Art Steering Group, with appropriate representation and expertise, to guide and advise on individual commissions and the ongoing development of the Strategy.
- Continue to ensure that the arts have a voice in the Borough's planning system and Design Review processes.
- Seek to engage stakeholders and communities in the process of developing public art commissions, while ensuring quality outcomes and the principle of artistic integrity.

Implementing the Strategy

The Council should:

- Formally adopt the Strategy.
- Promote the Strategy internally and across departments to ensure wide awareness among officers and members and its integration with relevant policies and priorities in planning, economic development, health and wellbeing.
- Promote the Strategy to the Council's partners and stakeholders, and the local arts community to raise awareness about the vision and encourage support.
- Sign-post developers and investors to the Strategy to encourage the implementation of public art throughout any development.
- Take advantage of impending developments and seek to pool resources to fund the public arts
- Create a Seed Fund to encourage community action and seek to work with community champions to help promote the Strategy.
- Consolidate and promote existing 'catalogue' of works across the borough, online and by other means.
- Ensure that sufficient expertise is available to implement the Strategy through appointment of a specialist officer or external consultant, and through training and awareness-raising for officers, members, and key partners.



CONTACT US

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رابطہ کریں



'Loom' (detail) by Tim Ward



'Crossing (Vertical)' by Nigel Hall



'Tin'tin Tin' by 154 Collective



'As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust' by Rachael Welford

If you need help understanding this document:

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