

# **Woking Borough Council**

## **Public Art Strategy**

Draft March 2007



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## **SECTION ONE**

### **1.0 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 In July 2003 Woking Borough Council published a paper outlining plans to establish a Woking Public Art Foundation; a registered charity which would guide the development of public art for Woking. In 2006 the Council commissioned Artpoint to move these plans forward and develop a detailed Public Art Strategy for the town and borough.
- 1.2 This strategy is intended to provide guidance and direction on the opportunities for future investment and commissioning of public art in the borough. It focuses on the town centre which has been identified by the Council, and through the consultation process, as being the priority for development.
- 1.3 The opportunities to extend the policy to the rest of the borough and neighbourhoods have also been addressed in brief.

### **2.0 Methodology**

- 2.1 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
  - Meetings with the Public Art Steering Group
  - Discussion groups and an evening slide presentation with key community groups
- 2.2 The research also examined local authority practice and planning policy elsewhere in the UK.

### **3.0 National and regional context**

- 3.1 *“Artists working in the public realm make an extraordinary contribution to our experience of public life. Artists are communicators, facilitators, problem solvers, inventors and researchers. They take creative risks, have a willingness to experiment and often redefine questions and problems without recourse to set solutions.”*

Ixia - the think tank for public art practice

*“The quality of the built environment in our towns and cities has a crucial impact on the way they function. Well-designed buildings, streets, neighbourhoods and districts are essential for successful social, economic and environmental regeneration.”*

Towards an Urban Renaissance, Urban Task Force, 1999

### Benefits of public art

- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Public art can also
- enhance the built environment
  - humanise public spaces and create meaningful places where people feel comfortable and relaxed
  - stimulate discussion and debate
  - help create a sense of identity and community and improve the quality of the environment and of people's lives
  - increase the use of open spaces and reduce vandalism by encouraging a sense of pride and ownership
  - provide benefits in terms of tourism
  - boost the local economy through creating local employment
  - add to peoples' appreciation of a particular place as well as aiding orientation
  - add an individual and distinct character to public and private sector developments
  - help build our cultural heritage by introducing permanent public art features
  - by involving local communities in the consultation process build up knowledge, trust and confidence in local environments
  - enhance developers status and image locally and nationally
- 3.4 Many local authorities in the UK include public art and percent for art in their local plan and emerging LDFs and recognise the value of integrating artists within design teams.

### National Planning Policy Guidance

- 3.5 Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) sets out the Government's national policies on different aspects of the planning process. The Working Public Art Strategy promotes an integrated approach to design and architecture whereby the commissioning of public art becomes an integral part of the planning process and is advocated within national policy guidance.
- 3.6 Documents relevant to public art are as follows:

*“Good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and should be encouraged everywhere. Good design can help promote sustainable development; improve the quality of the existing environment; attract business and investment; and reinforce civic pride and a sense of place. It can help to secure continued public acceptance of necessary new development.”*

PPG1 General Policy and Principles: Design

*“In identifying where to locate new areas of open space, sports and recreational facilities, local authorities should locate more intensive recreational uses in sites where they can contribute to town centre vitality; and improve the quality of the public realm through good design.”*

PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

*“New housing and residential environments should be well designed and should make a significant contribution to promoting urban renaissance and improving the quality of life.”*

PPG3 Housing

SEEDA, the Development Agency for the South East, promotes the value of design excellence in the public realm and aims to ensure:

*“... a wider understanding and adoption of quality standards and best practice in construction and encourage developers from both the public and private sector to raise their design aspirations”.*

SEEDA’s Regional Economic Strategy 2006, action 9.8

CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) also promotes improving quality of life through good design:

*‘Green space is a vital part of the public realm. Attractive, safe and accessible parks and green spaces contribute positive social, economic and environmental benefits, improving public health, well-being and quality of life.’*

Green Space Strategies: A Good Practice Guide; Cabe Space May 2004

#### **4.0 Woking Borough Council policy objectives and links with the public art strategy**

- 4.1 Analysis of Woking Borough Council strategies and development plans identify key issues affecting future development and many opportunities for public art, as indicated below.
- 4.2 Surrey Cultural Strategy *‘More to Life’* highlights the need to stimulate participation in lifelong learning, celebrate cultural diversity, to include young people and promote understanding between communities. It also recognises the importance of ensuring that there is access to green spaces for sport and recreation in the delivery of the cultural strategy.
- 4.3 Woking Cultural Strategy, which dovetails with the aims of the Community Strategy, focuses particularly on developing cultural activities that can

contribute to the quality of life experienced by people in one or more of the following ways:

- a) encouraging social inclusion – providing fair and equal access and opportunities for people to enjoy and participate in cultural activities, irrespective of their age, ability, income, ethnic background or level of disadvantage.
- b) Promoting healthy lifestyles – enabling people to enhance their physical, emotional and mental well-being through a wide range of cultural activities that encompass the arts, sport, recreation, and social interaction.
- c) Enabling lifelong learning – providing the opportunity for people to enrich their lives by developing new skills, knowledge or expertise, and new experiences at any stage in their lives.

Again public art can have a role in delivering these objectives.

- 4.4 Arts Development Plan for Woking, 2007 has identified a number of key issues affecting future development at local level, including “few local artists and practitioners living and working in the borough”, “lack of visible, innovative arts activity and stimuli outside of traditional venues” and “unclear arts infrastructures to support marketing and promotion of the arts”

Priorities include

- improving participation by meeting the needs of young people.
- raising the profile of the borough as a venue for cultural activities and arts innovation.

and

- giving all the opportunity to experience good quality arts programmes
- taking arts into the community
- development of public art

- 4.5 Woking Borough boasts a good number of parks and green spaces, as outlined in the Green Spaces Development Plan, which have great potential for public art. The Plan identified the need to provide opportunities for individuals and organisations to take part in activities which develop personal health and well being, encourage community spirit, provide for life-long learning and promote Woking as an attractive place.

- 4.6 One of the key issues and priorities in the Plan is

*“to develop a network of high quality open spaces which enhances quality of life, builds on and respects the best elements of the past, supports sustainability and biodiversity, meets the needs of residents and visitors, engenders local pride, especially among young people and makes the best use of land.”*

- 4.7 Of perhaps most immediate relevance to the Public Art Strategy is The Woking Town Centre Streets and Spaces Strategy, joint funded by the Council and SEEDA, commissioned to prepare strategic guidance aimed at improving access and enhancing the quality of the public realm in Woking Town Centre. The aim is for the Strategy to be adopted as a SPD as part of the Council’s emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).



- 4.8 The guidance is aimed to support the spacial strategy for Woking Town Centre as a location for major development and help to unlock the development potential of many under utilised sites.
- 4.9 An aspiration for the Council is that significant redevelopment of the centre should create the impetus for an urban renaissance for Woking. The Streets and Spaces Strategy and Public Art Strategy have the potential to deliver this blueprint for a dynamic, vibrant town known for quality design.
- 4.10 The LDF Core Strategy and the South East Plan set out a vision for Woking Town Centre is “as a growing hub for the area. A vibrant, high density, high quality environment in which to live, work, access major shops and services and enjoy leisure time”. This will result in major growth and change in Woking Town Centre over the next ten years and beyond.
- 4.11 It is crucial that the public art strategy is seen in tandem with the priorities outlined in the Streets and Spaces Strategy brief. The Strategy brief recommends that when implemented the Streets and Spaces strategy should result in a unified selection of high quality surface material finishes, high quality landscape materials and co-ordinated shrub/tree planting throughout the town centre; a co-ordinated range of street furniture and lighting with clear signs and sites for public art.

## **5.0 Woking Borough: context and demographics**

- 5.1 Woking is well placed to take a committed approach to including public art in the enhancement of the town centre and the neighbourhoods with planned developments for the borough.
- 5.2 As Woking is a relatively modern town, mostly of 20<sup>th</sup> Century origins, it lacks the rich heritage of distinctive buildings and spaces associated with many older established town centres which help to create an attractive environment, such as nearby Guildford, with which it competes for visiting customers. In more recent years the development of two significant retail developments in the centre with internalised environments have diminished the attraction of minor shopping streets as places for customers to visit and have reduced the connectivity between certain areas of the centre.
- 5.3 The Town also has a compact form where development has been largely constrained to the area between the Basingstoke Canal to the north and the mainline railway to the south.
- 5.4 Because of its location and good transport links, Woking town centre has significant potential for continued sustainable economic growth. The Council has identified that many under utilised sites in the town centre have the capacity for increased development and a number of these have already come forward for housing, commercial and mixed use developments.
- 5.5 Woking is a borough with a real contrast between town centre and the country and its neighbourhoods and between modern architecture and heritage.
- 5.6 Woking has more young people under 16 than in any other age range, 20.6% (2001 census) and young people are therefore an important user group for local services.

- 5.7 Woking is the most ethnically diverse borough in Surrey with relatively large Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Spanish, Italian and Vietnamese communities. Such diversity needs to be reflected in any public art provision for the borough.
- 5.8 Woking is a borough currently experiencing significant development within housing and environment initiatives where affordable housing is an issue. The South East Plan states that 242 new housing units per annum are planned for Woking, as part of the 2006 – 2026 allocation. The LDF core strategy indicates that 70% of development will be within Woking town centre. There is also a retail strategy which indicates the scale of development – 40,000 square metres of retail and leisure development planned.

## **6.0 Public Art: a definition for Woking**

- 6.1 The Woking Public Art Strategy 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 objectives such as environmental enhancement, community development, neighbourhood renewal, education, employment and tourism as well as make a considerable impact on quality of life.
- 6.2 Woking Borough Council has adopted a broad definition of public art as articulated in the *'Is this public art?'* consultation document:

*"Public art is any visual attraction produced by an artist or craftsman, through a collaborative process involving members of the local community. Public art is sited in a location that is freely accessible to the public.*

*It may be new work commissioned specifically for a particular site, or an existing work sited in a public space. It may be a permanent or temporary fixture, internal or external, as part of an existing building or a freestanding piece of work.*

*Public art can take the form of a range of visual attractions, from playground designs to street furniture, lighting schemes to sculptures, through to visual performances such as dance, drama, music and carnivals.*

*Public art can positively contribute to community spirit and pride of place, bringing together people from across a multicultural community."*

- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 Work can be temporary, such as a performance or installation, or permanent, such as sculpture. Seating, bollards, railings, clocks, gates, architectural glass, paving, murals, tiling, brickwork, ceramics are all opportunities for public art.

## **7.0 Development of the Strategy**

- 7.1 The development of the Strategy was informed by detailed consultation with the Public Art Steering Group, key Council staff from the Management Team, community services, planning, business improvement, housing and property services, marketing and communications, councillors and one-to-one meetings with other key stakeholders in the borough.
- 7.2 An evening meeting with key community groups was held where a slide presentation showing examples of national public art initiatives was followed by discussion groups. A full list of consultees is attached at Appendix 1.
- 7.3 Copies of the questionnaire 'Is this public art?' (Appendix 2) were mailed or handed out to invite public responses with over 350 written responses received from individuals and cultural organisations across the borough. Although a relatively low percentage of the questionnaires sent or handed out as part of the consultation exercise were returned, those who did respond did so enthusiastically; offering many valuable suggestions as to the contribution they felt public art can make, as well as what sort of public art they liked and what they did not like, and what they would like to see, and where, in Woking.
- 7.4 Over three quarters of respondents reacted positively to the notion of introducing more public art to the town and many suggestions were made for future work which have been included in detail in Appendix 3.
- 7.5 Those who did not respond positively to the notion of introducing more public art in Woking were generally not in favour of public art per se. Comments were often linked to the perception that public art monies are diverted from essential Council services such as rubbish collection and highways maintenance. The Council and Foundation will need to address this common misperception through advocacy when the Foundation is established and the public art programme begins.

### Extending the public art strategy to the rest of the borough

- 7.6 Although the majority of respondents prioritised the town centre many suggestions were made as to other areas where they would like to see public art. Full details are included in Appendix 3.

## **8.0 Public consultation**

### Overview

- 8.1 The importance of creating relaxing, pleasant, attractive, calm spaces which lift the spirits and give the town soul and colour were mentioned by many people. The role of public art to inspire, enlighten and inform and create a 'wow' factor, whether by introducing subtle beautiful designs or creating iconic works, was also mentioned.
- 8.2 People celebrated the variety of public art in terms of materials and themes and the potential of public art to exercise the imagination and stimulate debate - controversy even - as well as address the town's multiculturalism and rich musical, literary and horticultural history.

- 8.3 The role of sensitively commissioned public art to brighten up unattractive areas, to show 'Woking has a soul', to make people proud of Woking, and to improve the overall appearance of the town for residents and visitors, was also mentioned. Others felt that public art could 'cheer up our environment – especially on a rainy day', draw the eye away from 'the more mundane aspects of life' and remind us of 'our ability to be creative'.
- 8.4 The need to improve the quality of design in the town centre and the legacy of poor architecture was recognised. Improved signage and lighting; more and better designed seating and street furniture, more trees and flower bed planting were mentioned by many. The opportunity to commission artworks for main routes into the station, the town centre – areas where people drive or walk past – to aid orientation and improve rundown areas was identified.
- 8.5 The need to celebrate Woking's culturally diverse community and the recognition that the arts are a perfect arena in which to acknowledge and celebrate this diversity was a common strand.
- 8.6 While many understandably wished to commemorate the town's past there was also a healthy desire to commission work that is of the present and looks to the future.

#### Opportunities for the future

- 8.7 As might be expected there was a mixed response to existing public art within the town. Many loved the Martian and all references to H G Wells and wished to see more commissioning which expands on this theme; others felt that the H G Wells connection had been exhausted and encouraged the introduction of new themes and inspirations.
- 8.8 Consultation revealed that while some people felt that it was the job of the artist to research relevant themes, many had specific ideas and proposals about what they would like to see in Woking. Key ideas that emerged were that public art reinforces the town's cultural identity and history and has meaning and relevance for the area; and themes relating to the heritage, railways, geology, past industry, transport and green issues.
- 8.9 The opportunity for public art as part of new housing and retail developments was also identified by a number of Council officers during the consultation process.

### **9.0 Ideas for future work: locations, types of art and themes**

#### **Locations**

##### **9.1 Gateways:**

The gateways, roundabouts and roads into Woking were identified as key locations where public art could improve the environment. The welcome signs into the town could also be updated.

A striking artwork which captures the public imagination can be helpful in terms of orientation and wayfinding. 'Art on roundabouts' schemes have been successfully adopted in Basingstoke, Crawley, Swindon and other towns.

Recommendations for implementation:

- a changing programme of artist designed planting schemes where roundabouts are planted with a theme relevant to the location.
- temporary structures made from willow or hazel or other 'natural' materials.
- more permanent solutions: sculptural works made from durable materials such as metal or stone.
- An 'Art on roundabouts' scheme could start with Egley Road and Wych Hill Lane, Wych Hill Lane and Triggs Lane, Six Crossroads, and Mayford roundabouts and later extend to roundabouts throughout the borough.
- It would be advisable to adopt a coordinated approach to an '*Art on roundabouts*' scheme so there is coherence in the selection criteria. The policy would need to consider scale, visibility, health and safety issues and consult closely with planning and highways colleagues.

9.2 Trails:

The idea of trails would fit well with Council priorities such as the Green Spaces Development Plan which "encourages healthy lifestyles, for example through walks, ... and trim trails," and "promotes lifelong learning for example through talks and activities which increase understanding of the natural environment, the arts and cultural heritage." (This could also include recommendations about the Canalside/River – as at 9.4).

a) Town centre trail

Many people favoured a walking tour starting from the station or the Lightbox, incorporating the Lightbox, the canal, common and (redeveloped) High Street.

Some commented that there was not enough of interest to sustain a trail at the moment and that this vacuum could be filled by commissioning new work for key locations.

A trail would assist with pedestrian flow through the town centre; as some respondents felt that there was no natural flow at present. A trail could be inspired by HG Wells, which many proposed and in many ways is the most obvious suggestion – or this could be just one starting point for artists in terms of inspiration and theme.

b) Cycle trail

Another suggestion was for a cycle trail which could start at the Martian and run to Ripley with stopping points on the way to include sculptures inspired by H G Wells books.

Recommendations for implementation:

- Appointing an artist-in-residence to research and track pedestrian routes into and around town - 'action research'.

- This could be linked with the Streets and Spaces Strategy objectives: “to achieve the vision for Woking the network of streets must create a series of well connected spaces which are attractive, have distinct identity, offer a variety of landscape experiences, reinforce human scale and be of high quality design and construction.”
- apply for external funding to employ an artist to work alongside the team leading on Streets and Spaces Strategy and to inform the next phase of development in the town centre.

### 9.3 Green Spaces:

Many suggestions were made for introducing public art into the Country Parks, Woking Park and the neighbourhoods. Full details and locations are contained in Appendix 3

Recommendations for implementation:

- Involve artists in the design of recreational and play areas to encourage children and families to explore green spaces.
- introduce interactive art into green spaces, both temporary and permanent.

### 9.4 Canalside/ River:

Many people proposed events and artworks which exploit the potential of the river and canal. Options include both temporary and permanent interventions.

Recommendations for implementation:

- A water festival, or a river journey, along the canal incorporating the visual and performing arts: poetry (working with e.g. Woking Writers Circle), dance, live art.

This approach was successfully adopted in Coventry where muf, in partnership with the City Council, organised an evening cruise on the canal that borders the new Electric Wharf development. Personal invitations were sent to, former workers from the electricity plant and other derelict factories along the canal, existing and prospective residents, local community representatives involved in regeneration and private developers. In groups of 30, 200 people in total, boarded the barge and journeyed down the canal and listened to a narrated story that fabricated an imaginary history, based on research, some through interviews with former factory workers, of the buildings and views along the canal. The edges of the canal were further animated by performances and installations. A community event was simultaneously held with street theatre performers, professional aerialists and local specialist food suppliers and fireworks. (Public Art Online website)

- Create an art route/trail along the Basingstoke Canal, with sculptural works and seating.
- Support the work of the Wey Valley project to seek funding for a series of improvements including the celebration of heritage and cultural interest in the river corridor.

#### 9.5 Neighbourhoods:

In terms of extending the public art strategy to the rest of the borough there was a desire to commission more artworks which signify the centre/ focal point of villages and in the parks and villages; extend a walking or cycling tour from the town centre into the rest of the borough.

The main areas identified are detailed in Appendix 2 and include Old Woking, Knaphill, Hermitage and Knaphill South, Horsell, Mayford, Pyrford and West Byfleet.

#### **Types of Art**

#### 9.6 Statues/commemorative sculptures:

A number of respondents requested more bronze sculptures celebrating Woking's famous literary and musical figures.

Prominent individuals including:

Molly Brett

Petula Clark, singer

Russ Conway, pianist

The Fortunes

Rick Parfitt (Status Quo)

Alice Smythe, composer of the suffragettes marching song

Dame Ethel Smyth, composer

Delia Smith

Paul Weller (Jam)

H.G. Wells

Recommendations for implementation:

- While there will always be a place for commemorative sculptures it would also be interesting to incorporate allusions and references to the town's rich history in more subtle and symbolic ways through text and imagery imbedded into paving and the fabric of buildings.

#### 9.7 Landmark features:

The consultation revealed a need to replace the Martian as a symbol of Woking when marketing the town. The Lightbox building and the Peter Freeman lighting commission should plug this gap and signify the town's desire to embrace the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Equally any new public art commission could full fill this role in the future.

#### 9.8 Performing Arts (including dance, drama, entertainment and music)

Performance and dance practice are already big in Woking with Lightbox and Woking Dance resident in the town. There is great potential to build on these strengths and encourage collaboration between visual artists and choreographers to animate town centre spaces.

The success of *Radiance* illustrates the potential to draw in new audiences of all ages and sections of the community and promote issues concerning for instance health and well being.

Woking Dance wish to programme and present more outdoor work – one offs, temporary programmes and short seasons of special events. This presents an opportunity to address key council objectives by creating safe, attractive and accessible spaces which function well at all times of day, evenings and the weekend.

Recommendations for implementation:

- stage more night time public art events based on performance including dance and music to help keep people in the town centre so they do not disappear at end of the working day. The Arts Development Plan refers to WBC's aim to hold performances and events in venues and spaces not currently used as performance venues such as green spaces, parks and coffee shops in the town centre and beyond.
- commission sound pieces installed into street furniture such as bollards or specially commissioning listening posts, which could be based on an oral history project with local residents and history and creative writing societies.

9.9 Light installations

There is great potential to animate town centre buildings such as Toys R Us, the Theatre, and frequently visited areas such as Peacocks Walk, Wolsey Place, by introducing a programme of temporary light interventions. Also video potential to explore the history of the town.

Recommendations for implementation:

- Introduce a series of temporary light projections and installations to draw attention to existing buildings as well as new developments in the town.
- Introduce photography and text on hoardings of new developments as part of the public consultation process and to raise awareness and interest in any planned permanent pieces of work within the development.

9.10 Signage

The design of signage in the town centre would benefit from a more modern touch. The present system of finger posts are felt to be confusing and overloaded with information. More signposts at more regular intervals throughout the town together with local maps would assist visual coherence and aid orientation.

Recommendation for implementation:

- An artist could be employed as part of the urban design team, as in the highly successful Bristol Legible City initiative, where clear, legible signposting has reinforced the natural flow throughout the city centre and is now being extended to other areas of Bristol.

9.11 Street furniture and lighting

Many people wished to see existing street furniture and lighting upgraded, and the introduction of more and better designed seating and lighting in the town centre. Some mentioned providing seating where people can sit and look at artwork. There are many unexploited areas including Peacock Centre, Wolsey Place, Commercial Way, The High Street and the bandstand area which would all benefit from these improvements.



Recommendation for implementation:

- Address one of the key Streets and Spaces Strategy brief aims – to create a co-ordinated range of street furniture and lighting and clear signs” - by involving an artist in the design team to provide Woking with unique seating and lighting. This strategy has successfully been employed by many other local authorities for instance Hastings and Portsmouth.

#### 9.12 Planting

Many wished to see more trees and flower bed planting in the town centre.

Recommendations for implementation:

- include introducing artist designed planting and artworks which make links with the history of nurseries and horticultural history in the area.
- offering a community competition or competition to locally based artists, which could link to Woking in Bloom, to promote green issues.
- willow sculptures, that could perhaps include seating; or creative use of topiary, or sculptural hedges and trees.
- consider a collaborative project, possibly placing an artist in residence, in Wisley, to design planting schemes which could be located throughout the town centre and neighbourhoods.

### **Themes**

#### 9.13 Heritage

Detailed mentions of heritage have been included in previous ‘Ideas for Future Work’ sections.

#### 9.14 Literature

The Woking Writers Circle is already compiling series of words and pictures about the town through an open competition whereby entrants send in a photograph of the town or a scene of a landmark or story and add a few words or haiku.

Recommendations for implementation:

- This research could be used as a starting point for text based work by artists either temporarily or permanently sited, for example text projected onto buildings or engraved into paving.

#### 9.15 Recycled materials/green issues

Many respondents wished to encourage the commissioning of public art made from recycled materials and which highlight recycling and green issues.

Recommendation for implementation:

- A number of artists who specialise in this approach to public art could be commissioned to make artworks made from locally collected plastics, glass, CDs and other recycled materials. Sculptures from recycled materials, glass walkways

and paths, green art, lighting using recycled materials are all possibilities.

- Encourage the use of renewable energy sources such as wind turbines and solar power, and the creative application of materials, wherever possible in the commissioning of public art to reinforce Woking's commitment towards climate change and green issues.
- Plan innovative and experimental projects which encourage people to notice their own environment and to think responsibly about energy consumption.
- Incorporate, where possible, locally sourced materials, in the construction of public art features.

This would fit in with Council objectives and Agenda 21 issues.

#### 9.16 Transport

There are many opportunities to work with the theme of transport, for example the McLaren connection and the railways.

Bridges could also be a location for artwork, for instance artist designed decorative painting finishes.

## **SECTION TWO**

### **10.0 How to take the Strategy forward in policy and practice**

10.1 The Local Plan's current reference to public art is:

*"The Council will in appropriate cases encourage the provision of works of art as part of a site development and in determining an application for planning permission will have regards to the contribution made by any such works to the amenity of the area."*

10.2 The LDF which replaces the Local Plan in early 2008 should also encourage the provision of new works of art as part of the developmental process.

10.3 The Percent for Art mechanism exists nationally to support funding for public art work.

10.4 A coordinated approach is required to gather 106 monies and maximise opportunities arising from local planning applications and developments, and to suggest a range of options so developers are assured of delivery and are required developers to contribute to the fund.

10.5 It is recommended that the Council and Foundation encourages developers, through negotiation, to involve artists in new developments and to seek between 1% and 5% of a total development budget for an art contribution.

10.6 Precise budgets and plans should be agreed in consultation with Council officers prior to planning approval.

10.7 The proposal, as identified and detailed in the Public Art Foundation and Fund section which follows, is to ringfence a percentage to be collected as a tariff to be put aside for developments in the borough.

- 10.8 Initially the 'Guidance for Developers' section of this strategy can be used to aid developers' voluntary participation in the public art scheme and can later be used as the beginnings of a draft SPG.

## **11.0 Public Art Foundation**

- 11.1 The aspirations for the Woking Public Art Foundation as articulated in the Council report of July 2003 were to:

- *develop a broad range of high quality, imaginative and integrated public art projects in Woking which enhance the physical environment and promote social well-being for all members of the community. In recognising Woking's multicultural and diverse population, the foundation would endeavour to enlist regional, national and international artists. While acknowledging what Woking stands for culturally and environmentally, the foundation would also look to promote the Borough's future through forward thinking and innovative commissions.*
- *be wide-ranging in its outlook, encompassing all forms of public art. It would look to achieve this in partnership with public, private and voluntary sector bodies.*

### The constitution of the Foundation

- 11.2 The 2003 Council paper proposing the Foundation suggests that "a charity be established using a Charity Commission recommended constitution based on educational objectives with a requirement for a minimum of three and a maximum of seven trustees".
- 11.3 This will enable the Foundation to apply for charitable funding and be constituted with audited accounts. The structure will be made up of a Board and Public Art Advisory Group.

### Proposed roles and structure

- 11.4 Their proposed roles are described below, which have emerged from detailed discussions with Council colleagues:

*Board with responsibility to*

- a) *Oversee the management and distribution of a Public Art Fund*
- b) *Develop projects*
- c) *Maximise public art monies*
- d) *Manage maintenance and decommissioning*

- 11.5 The Board will provide a mechanism through which the Woking Public Art Policy is developed and a Public Art Fund managed; to provide support and encourage a coordinated approach to public art; advise on forward planning, identify major schemes and developments and ensure wherever possible that public art is included in these schemes and developments.

- 11.6 It will be important to ensure a balance between different interest groups, draw on local expertise and encourage a wide range of business and community sectors to be represented including Lightbox and Woking Dance.

- 11.7 The Board could meet approximately four times a year.
- 11.8 *Public Art Advisory group* to lead on
- a) Artist selection
  - b) Fundraising
  - c) Maintenance + decommissioning
- 11.9 It is recommended that membership comprises three to four Board members; Council officers (see below); two locally or regionally based professional artists, one representing the visual and the other the performing arts sector.
- 11.10 The Advisory Group could meet as advised by the Board and as and when projects and issues arise.

#### Public Art Fund

- 11.11 A Public Art Fund would need to be established which pools contributions from S106 monies, Council contributions and external funding.
- 11.12 The Fund would support the development of Public Art in Woking and fund initiatives including:
- Schemes which reflect priorities identified in the Woking Public Art Strategy in terms of types of work, locations, themes.
  - capital and community schemes.
  - regeneration and development schemes led by multi-partners and agencies, and could include Woking Borough Council.
  - Schemes which reflect Woking's Community and Cultural priorities.
- 11.13 Decisions on how Public Art Fund monies are spent to be taken by the Board.

#### Council officer input into Advisory Group

- 11.14 The Council have established that it is important that the Foundation should not be politically driven but run on the 'arms length' principle.
- 11.15 Council staff would not take decisions about merits of public art, however it would be necessary for key Council personnel to take on the role of observers, and advisors where relevant, on a project by project basis and be represented on the advisory group.
- 11.16 This dedicated officer input would ensure that there a link between the Fund and WBC planning and arts and other relevant Council departments e.g. parks, leisure, sport, environment. Their role would be to inform the Foundation of forthcoming opportunities, provide information on which major developments are coming up and when, which have major public art potential, as well as advise as to how to maximise funding opportunities from within other Council budgets.

#### Council officer input into administration

- 11.17 There will be a need for an infrastructure to support the public art programme. While an arms length principle is admirable the fund will need some sort of administrative back up which would be most logically delivered through the

Arts department. This role would include setting up Board and Public Art Advisory Group meetings, organise selection meetings, writing up notes of meetings, etc.

- 11.18 There would also need to be a treasurer; someone to prepare the accounts. This individual could be seconded as part of their role within the finance department at WBC.

#### Project management and consultancy

- 11.19 It is recommended that a percentage of the overall contribution is built into the public art tariff to cover consultancy and project management fees.

- 11.20 It is recommended that the Foundation consider appointing a freelance public art advisor, or commissioning agency, that can be called in on an ongoing basis to advise on new developments, implement the programme and offer project management where necessary. This has worked successfully in other local authorities.

- 11.21 The consultant or agency could deliver a range of roles as appropriate to the scale and importance of the development, for example:

- establishing a project/programme brief and commissioning plan
- advising on the artist's role
- establishing a budget for the artist's research and fabrication costs
- managing a fair and open selection process
- applying for external funding
- developing a public consultation and education programme
- writing the commission contract/s
- project management

- 11.22 For consistency of approach it is recommended that the same individual or agency be retained to advise on the majority of developments and initiatives. However, for when there may be a number of public art projects running concurrently, a pool of project managers could also be established and called on as projects arise. These roles could be advertised and selected through an application process.

## **12.0 Maintenance and Decommissioning Policy**

- 12.1 It is recommended that 5% percentage of the overall contribution is built in to the public art tariff to put towards a special fund for maintenance and decommissioning.

#### Existing policy

- 12.2 At present maintenance costs for public art works are met through the Council's Facilities Management Budget. Maintenance for town centre public art works are estimated at between £10K - £15K annually with the money primarily spent on the Martian, plane on the stand and the gates. There is little graffiti. The Head of Housing and Property Services at WBC estimates that 5% of the original artwork costs would be a reasonable percentage to allocate towards maintenance on an annual basis.

#### Policy for newly commissioned works

- 12.3 A clear written policy will be required to define the principles of

decommissioning and include an agreed process of assessment and a suitable review period of the artwork.

- 12.4 The Foundation will need to deal with maintenance and decommissioning issues in a transparent way and ensure good communication and consultation between the commissioner, owner, artist and the body responsible for upkeep.
- 12.5 Proposed criteria for decommissioning works might be whether the work still has meaning or relevance for the site and, if not, a recommendation that it should either be moved or decommissioned.
- 12.6 For newly commissioned works issues of decommissioning should be addressed by the commission contract at the outset. All commission contracts should stipulate that the artist provides a maintenance manual which details how often an artwork should be cleaned, the use of any specialist cleaning materials, and advice as to whether this work should be carried out by a specialist firm or by the artist.
- 12.7 A commission contract should include clauses that address
- anticipated life expectancy
  - ownership: who owns the work?
  - maintenance: who is responsible for checking the condition of the artwork and how often?
  - decommissioning: what happens in the event that the work deteriorates or becomes damaged beyond reasonable repair
  - relocating: who needs to be consulted if it is proposed that the artwork is moved to another site?
- 12.8 A permanent record of the identity of the artist, other key contacts, all their contact details, and the commission contract should be kept on file.
- 12.9 The artist should always be notified and consulted on any proposed alteration of the site and relocation of the work which would affect its intended character and appearance.

#### Works requiring refurbishment or decommissioning

- 12.10 The public consultation revealed that:
- The ceramic tiles under Victoria Arch were liked by many but felt to be in need of refurbishment.
  - War Memorial – move back to Commercial Way or elsewhere?
  - Of all the existing artworks the plane on the stand was subject to a number of adverse comments, many questioning the role and value of the work and its relevance to Woking.
  - Sparrow Park at the end of Commercial Way, fountain that doesn't work.
  - Refurbishment of the former home of H.G. Wells.
  - The covered market – Cawsey Way.

- The brickwork areas around the Martian need refurbishment.

It should be noted that many of these observations were echoed in a recent consultation with young people held by the Council.

## SECTION THREE

### 13.0 **Guidance for developers Working with artists: Best Practice Step by step guide** (For proposed inclusion in SPD Guidance)

#### Introduction

- 13.1 *“To achieve excellence in working with artists requires adequate research time, specialist skills and financial investment, so a clear framework is essential for the success for the project, and a vision for the scheme should be clearly articulated from the outset.”*

‘Public Art in the South East’, Arts Council/SEEDA

#### How to involve artists

- 13.2 Most successful schemes bring in artists at the earliest possible stage, ensuring that their contributions are integral to the concept and design of the overall scheme. Artists can be invited to work alongside architects, landscape designers, engineers, masterplanners and other professionals contributing their own creative and practical skills as part of a design team.
- 13.3 A number of artists nowadays define themselves as ‘public artists’ and their entire professional life is spent making work within the public realm.

#### An artist’s role

- 13.4 There are all sorts of ways to involve artists in the public realm. It is essential to appoint an experienced artist to lead on large-scale complex projects. Be clear about the role of the artist: are they to be an active member of the design team, are they to be appointed as ‘lead artist’ or ‘consultant artist’, or are they to be commissioned for a one-off work for a specific site or are they to be appointed as artist-in-residence documenting a large scale redevelopment.
- 13.5 An artist’s role within the design team can also be advise on a particular colour scheme, paint finish, lighting design, or landscaping and planting scheme.
- 13.6 A mixture of being clear about the requirements of the brief, while at the same time being flexible enough to respond to any changes that might occur, is recommended as a route to achieving a successful project.

#### Mentoring/shadowing

- 13.7 Some schemes provide mentoring and shadowing opportunities for early career artists and/or locally based artists. This is a way of bringing on the skills of less experienced artists in an increasingly competitive field.

### How to select artists

- 13.8 There are several ways to select the right artist for the job. It is sensible to do some initial research into what sort of work has been commissioned by other organisations by looking at specialist publications and websites. Many artists have their own websites.

### Selection methods

- 13.9 Artists are normally selected either through:  
open competition – by placing an advert in specialist publications and websites. The advantage of this method is the wide choice of artists (up to 100 submissions is not unusual); the disadvantage is that it can be administratively heavy and costly.
- 13.10 Artists are asked to apply for sending in images, supporting material and a CV, from which a short list is drawn up and invited to a site meeting.
- 13.11 Following the site meeting short listed artists are asked to carry out research and consultation and come up with design proposals. A design fee should be offered to all of the short listed artists for them to carry out the research, consultation and design work.
- 13.12 Design proposals should include a written proposal, technical information, accurate costings and presentation of the design in a format such as drawings, sketches, computer images, scale model.
- 13.13 Limited competition – through a long list compiled by a public art specialist or advisors. Artists are then invited to a site visit and to develop proposals for the site.
- 13.14 direct invitation – where an artist who is felt to have the appropriate skills and experience is invited to be part of the design team and propose work for a particular site, or act as 'lead artist' or 'consultant artist' to develop an overall vision for a scheme.
- 13.15 The principal publication where commissions are advertised is a-n magazine published monthly with a wide circulation among practicing artists.  
[www.a-n.co.uk](http://www.a-n.co.uk)

### How to establish a Budget for Public Art

- 13.16 Budgets are set for commissions in various different ways. It is most usual however for the commissioner to identify a total sum within which the artist must work.
- 13.17 This budget checklist lists the main areas to be considered when establishing a budget:
- Advertising and selection costs
  - Artists fees – it is usual practice to identify a total sum within which an artist must work and for the artist to advise the client on what proportion is to be spent on materials, fabrication and so on and to calculate their fees on a percentage basis which can be between 10% - 30% of the total value of the commission depending on their experience.
  - Materials



- Fabrication costs
- Insurance/public liability
- Installation, where applicable traffic management
- Site preparation e.g. services, landscaping, extra labour etc
- Transport
- Professional fees e.g. arts consultant, arts project manager
- Publicity, documentation
- Maintenance + decommissioning
- Education and community allowance e.g. workshops, talks, presentations
- Evaluation
- Last and certainly not least a contingency, anywhere between 10% - 20%.

### Public Consultation

- 13.18 Some form of consultation with the public and current or potential users of the site will be necessary to gain both formal and informal feedback. This could take the form of public meetings, workshops, presentations or an exhibition of proposals. There are many different ways to go about the consultation depending on the type of commission and the site and location. Consultation should be considered as an investment in terms of making people feel involved and encouraging community participation and ownership.

### Artists contracts

- 13.19 Although specimen contracts for public art commissions do exist it must be stressed that as each commission is individual caution should be exercised when referring to contracts written by other parties. Contract clauses should reflect the requirements of each individual commission and therefore contracts written for another commission should only be used as reference. Depending on the scale and importance of the project the Commissioner may benefit from checking the contract with a lawyer.
- 13.20 This Checklist lists the main headings that should be referred to when writing an artist's contract:
- Names and addresses of artist and commissioner
  - Scope of work
  - Copyright issues, reproduction rights, credits and moral rights.
  - Role of artist
  - Role and responsibilities of commissioner e.g. site preparation, installation costs.
  - Fees and payment schedules to include
    - 1) Design development stage and 2) fabrication stage of work
  - Insurance requirements including public liability
  - Defects and warranty terms
  - Timetable and key dates
  - Maintenance obligations
  - Ownership of work
  - Decommissioning policy including transfer of Ownership and removal of work
  - Arbitration

## Insurance

- 13.21 Most commissioners require artists to provide their own public liability insurance – the most usual amount is £5 million although more coverage can be requested for big budget commissions.

## Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

- 13.22 If the artist is to work with children they will be subject to a CRB check in accordance with the Council's safeguarding policy and an 'Enhanced Disclosure' will need to be provided.

## **14.0 Funding for public art**

- 14.1 There are a number of funding options for public art including public sector arts funding and 'non-arts' funding streams. The suggestions below are intended as an introduction to funding options.
- 14.2 Private sponsorship can also be explored with local businesses (e.g. McLaren's) partnership forged between the arts and business may be eligible for Arts and Business funding.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
[www.culture.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/Arts/funding\\_for\\_the\\_arts/](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/Arts/funding_for_the_arts/)

Arts Council England  
Grants for the Arts  
0845 033 6200  
[www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding)

Art Plus: Award scheme for Art in Public Places  
0845 300 6200  
[pase@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:pase@artscouncil.org.uk)  
[www.artscouncil.org.uk/artplusawards](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/artplusawards)

A & B Arts & Business  
01273 738333 [www.aandb.org.uk/](http://www.aandb.org.uk/)

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation  
[www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk](http://www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk)

Awards for All  
[www.awardsforall.org.uk](http://www.awardsforall.org.uk)

The Big Lottery Fund  
[www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)

## 15.0 PUBLIC ART STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN

### 15.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND POLICY

Action	Responsible Person / Organisation	Due Date	Measures / Resources	
1	Establish a Public Art Foundation and appoint members to the Board.	Sue Barham	May 2007 July 2007	Agreement from key individuals within the (business) community to become Board members. Completion of legal work required to formally establish the foundation as a charity.
2	Set up a Public Art Fund managed by the Public Art Foundation where pooled contributions from s.106 monies and other funding streams can be used to implement the Public Art Strategy.	Sue Barham	August 2007	Seed funding – dependant on the Council's Investment Programme Strategy
3	Through the emerging LDF process, agree the tariff from s.106 contributions for Public Art – to include allowances for on-going maintenance and decommissioning as/when appropriate.	Chris Fairlamb	January 2008	Tariff rates agreed
4.	Establish a Public Art Advisory Group, ensuring there is clear definition of roles and responsibilities between the Group and the Public Art Foundation Board. Appoint members to the Advisory Group.	Sue Barham Sue Barham	July 2007 August 2007	Lines of accountability established and documented. Agreement from key individuals to become Advisory Group members.

Action		Responsible Person / Organisation	Due Date	Measures / Resources
5.	<p>Establish a clear set of guidelines / best practice steps for developers / Public Art Foundation working with artists.</p> <p>(Ensure policy includes: early involvement of artists at development stage; there are opportunities for integrated education programmes and interpretation; that innovative ideas of the commissioning artist are supported; commissioned work considers and reflects the environment, demographic, cultural and social character of the borough; the policy promotes access, social inclusion, equal opportunities and cultural diversity; that key to any development is meaningful public consultation; and best practice is demonstrated when selecting, contracting and working with artists and in respect of maintenance and decommissioning).</p>	Public Art Advisory Group	October 2007	<p>Standardised commissioning contract</p> <p>Future inclusion of best practise in SPG guidance.</p>
6.	<p>Establish and put in place the necessary processes and mechanisms required (including identified support services) for the effective operation and management of the Public Art Foundation Board and Advisory Group.</p>	Sue Barham	July 2007	<p>The 'mechanics' of operating the Public Art Foundation and Advisory Group at arms length are in place understood.</p>

## 15.2 PARTICIPATION

Action	Responsible Person / Organisation	Due Date	Measures / Resources
<p>7. <u>Networking / Professional Development for Artists:</u></p> <p>a) Create a networking forum for individuals, organisations, locally based artists 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 town and borough.</p> <p>b) Ensure professional development opportunities for locally and regionally based artists exist, especially early career, through mentoring and shadowing schemes.</p> <p>c) Create a mechanism whereby locally based artists are advised of public art opportunities in the borough.</p>	<p>Sue Barham / Public Art Foundation</p> <p>Public Art Advisory Group</p> <p>Public Art Advisory Group</p>	<p>December 2007</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>December 2007</p>	<p>This work could be dovetailed into development of the neighbourhood agenda – with ‘communities of interest’ and/or the forum to be established for delivery and monitoring of the Cultural Strategy.</p> <p>Work should dovetail into any development work being undertaken by key cultural stakeholders.</p> <p>Dependant on a) above.</p>
<p>8. <u>Networking / Professional Development for Board and Advisory Group</u></p> <p>a) Introduce ‘go and see’ days and research trips for the Foundation Board and Advisory Group to see nationally recognised exemplary public art schemes.</p> <p>b) Join mailing lists for organisations such as Ixia and Public Art Online to keep abreast with current thinking, best practice and training opportunities.</p>	<p>Public Art Advisory Group</p> <p>Public Art Advisory Group</p>	<p>On-going (post Mar’08)</p> <p>August 2007</p>	<p>Board and Advisory Group members to play key role in advocacy.</p> <p>Support services to the Board/Advisory Group to facilitate this function.</p>

### 15.3 QUALITY

Action	Responsible Person / Organisation	Due Date	Measures / Resources
9. Ensure that all improvements achieved through individual developments are strategically co-ordinated, so they add up to a coherent, well planned and attractive whole.	Public Art Board / Advisory Group	On-going Guidelines – October 2007	Best Practice guidelines issued, which focus on the identified locations, types of art and themes identified in the Public Art Strategy. (summary available at the end of this Action Plan).
10. Work with colleagues in Planning to ensure that public art becomes an integral part of the vision for Woking as a vibrant modern town with its own unique identity and sense of place.	Public Art Board / Advisory Group	On-going	Public Art visible and co-ordinated.
11. Ensure that the importance of an integrated approach to the procurement of architecture and urban design and public art is adopted with all new developments.	Public Art Board / Advisory Group	On-going	Best Practice guidance in place which also reflects emerging work on the Town centre Streets and Spaces Strategy.
12. Ensure that practices and processes are continually refreshed to reflect any change in national and regional agendas on public art.	Public Art Board / Advisory Group	On-going	Close liaison with Planning Officers.

#### 15.4 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

Action	Responsible Person / Organisation	Due Date	Measures / Resources
13. Commission a leaflet, series of postcards or brochure promoting existing public art in Woking to include new Lightbox commissions.	Public Art Advisory Group	December 2007	Brochure produced subject to resources available.
14. Consider printing the Public Art Strategy with colour illustrations of nationally sourced public art to act as an advocacy document in the establishment and future work of the Foundation and the Advisory Group.  (Ensure that such document effectively communicates the work of the Foundation and counters the misconception that public art monies are diverted from other essential Council services (and thus paid for from council tax).	Sue Barham	May 2007	Advocacy document / summary of Strategy available.

It is recommended that the following list of locations, types of art, and themes are used to inform the direction and decision making of the Public Art Board and the Public Art Advisory Group in their commissioning decisions of public art.

While the listing is not absolutely specific, it is important that there is sufficient guidance to reflect the public consultation view and ensure a coordinated approach to public art across the borough, whilst giving any commissioning artist the flexibility to explore with the local neighbourhood (where any installation, performance or activity may take place) specific and relevant issues to the locality.

## 15.5 LOCATIONS - Recommendations for implementation

### Gateways, roundabouts and roads

- A changing programme of artist designed planting schemes where roundabouts are planted with a theme relevant to the location.
- Temporary structures made from willow or hazel or other 'natural' materials.
- More permanent solutions: sculptural works made from durable materials such as metal or stone.
- An 'Art on roundabouts' scheme could start with Egley Road and Wych Hill Lane, Wych Hill Lane and Triggs Lane, Six Crossroads, and Mayford roundabouts and I        after extend to roundabouts throughout the borough.
- The welcome signs into the town could also be updated.

### Trails

- Introduce a town centre trail and consider a cycle trail which extends into the borough.
- Appoint an artist-in-residence to research and track pedestrian routes into and around town - 'action research'.
- Link this research with the Streets and Spaces Strategy objectives: "to achieve the vision for Woking the network of streets must create a series of well connected spaces which are attractive, have distinct identity, offer a variety of landscape experiences, reinforce human scale and be of high quality design and construction."
- Apply for external funding to employ an artist to work alongside the team leading on Streets and Spaces Strategy and to inform the next phase of development in the town centre.

### Green Spaces

- Involve artists in the design of recreational and play areas to encourage children and families to explore green spaces.
- Introduce interactive art into green spaces, both temporary and permanent.

### Neighbourhoods

- Extend the public art strategy to the rest of the borough and commission artworks which signify the centre/ focal point of villages and in the parks and villages
- Extend a walking or cycling tour from the town centre into the rest of the borough.

### Canalside/ River

- Introduce a water festival, or a river journey, along the canal incorporating the



visual and performing arts: poetry (working with e.g. Woking Writers Circle), dance, live art.

- Create an art route/trail along the Basingstoke Canal, with sculptural works and seating.
- Support the work of the Wey Valley project to seek funding for a series of improvements including the celebration of heritage and cultural interest in the river corridor.

## 15.6 TYPES OF ART - Recommendations for implementation

### Statues/commemorative sculptures

- As well as commissioning commemorative sculptures also consider incorporating allusions and references to the town's rich history in subtle and symbolic ways through text and imagery imbedded into paving and the fabric of buildings.

### Performance including dance, entertainment, drama and music

- Stage more night time public art events based on performance including dance and music to help keep people in the town centre so they do not disappear at end of the working day.
- Commission sound pieces which can be installed into street furniture such as bollards or specially commissioning listening posts, based for instance on an oral history project with local residents, and history and creative writing societies.

### Light installations

- Introduce a series of temporary light projections and installations to draw attention to existing buildings as well as new developments in the town.
- Introduce photography and text on hoardings of new developments as part of the public consultation process and to raise awareness and interest in any planned permanent pieces of work within the development.

### Signage

- An artist could be employed as part of the urban design team, as in the highly successful Bristol Legible City initiative, where clear, legible signposting has reinforced the natural flow throughout the city centre and is now being extended to other areas of Bristol.

### Street furniture and lighting

- Address one of the key Streets and Spaces Strategy brief aims – to create a co-ordinated range of street furniture and lighting and clear signs” - by involving an artist in the design team to provide Woking with unique seating and lighting.

### Planting

- Introduce artist designed planting and artworks which make links with the history of nurseries and horticultural history in the area.
- Organise a community competition or competition for locally based artists, which could link to 'Woking in Bloom', to promote green issues.
- Commission willow sculptures, that could perhaps include seating; or creative use of topiary, or sculptural hedges and trees.
- Consider a collaborative project, possibly placing an artist in residence, in Wisley, to design planting schemes which could be located throughout the town centre and neighbourhoods.

## 15.7 THEMES - Recommendations for implementation

### Heritage and Literature

- Collaborate with The Woking Writers Circle regarding their research on the history of the town and use this as a starting point for text based work by artists either temporarily or permanently sited, for example text projected onto buildings or engraved into paving.

### Recycled materials/green issues

- Commission artists who specialise in this approach to public art to make artworks made from locally collected plastics, glass, CDs and other recycled materials. Sculptures from recycled materials, glass walkways and paths, green art, lighting using recycled materials are all possibilities.
- Encourage the use of renewable energy sources such as wind turbines and solar power, and the creative application of materials, wherever possible in the commissioning of public art to reinforce Woking's commitment towards climate change and green issues.
- Plan innovative and experimental projects which encourage people to notice their own environment and to think responsibly about energy consumption.
- Incorporate, where possible, locally sourced materials, in the construction of public art features.

### Transport

- Work with the theme of transport, for example the McLaren connection and the railways.
- Consider bridges as a location for artwork, for instance artist designed decorative painting finishes.

## APPENDIX 1

### CONSULTEES – WOKING PUBLIC ART STRATEGY

Sue Barham	WBC, Head of Community Services, Public Art Steering Group member
Cllr Simon Bellord	Shadow Portfolio Holder, Promoting the Local Economy
Alison Clarke	Surrey County Arts, Visual Arts Officer
Paul Clarke	Youth Arts Worker, Woking Youth Arts Centre
Cllr Bryan Cross	Member of the Planning Committee
Geoff Cumbers	Wey Valley Landscape Partnership Officer
Andy Denner	WBC, Marketing and Communications Officer
Ian Draper	WBC, Head of Properties Services
Gillian Freeman	Woking Amateur Operatic Society
Cllr Mehala Gosling	Shadow Portfolio Holder, Housing
Nick Griffin	WBC, Principal Planning Officer
Peter Hall	Research Assistant, The Lightbox
Laura Holman	WBC, Visitor Information Centre Manager
Cllr Ken Howard	Portfolio Holder, Environmental Management related issues
Cllr Ian Johnson	Chair of Planning Committee
Cllr Rob Leach	Portfolio Holder for Cultural & Community Development
Ray Lee	WBC, Head of Local Services
Anna Molesworth	Arts Council for Woking & Woking Community Play Association
Ray Morgan	WBC, Chief Executive
Theo Norman-Walker	Woking Chorale Society
Karen Porter	WBC, Marketing Communications Manager
Marilyn Scott	Director of The Lightbox, Public Art Steering Group member
Jim Shea	SheaDebnam Associates
Hannah Smith	WBC, Arts Development Officer, Public Art Steering Group member
Cllr Sue Smith	Leader of the Executive
Douglas Spinks	WBC, Deputy Chief Executive
Eckhard Thiemann	Director, Woking Dance Festival
Riette Thomas	WBC, Marketing and Research Officer, Public Art Steering Group member
Geoff Ward	WBC, Cultural & Community Development Manager, Public Art Steering Group member
Barry Williams	WBC, Urban Design Officer

**APPENDIX 2**

Insert copy of the 'Is This Public Art' – Public Consultation Document

Attached to report in Shikari as separate Appendix.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Public responses to questionnaires**

#### **What do you like about public art?**

“takes our eyes off the concrete”

“its accessible and hopefully will inspire youngsters to try at art”

“it’s on show for everyone to see – not just the enlightened...”

“improves the environment, pleasurable and relaxing space...”

“it gives a town soul”

“anything can be public art. It can be functional too e.g. street furniture. What is not art is amateurish stuff: we want good, strong art”

“its available to all and adds to the ambience of an area – sculpture, water features etc”

“painting, colour, a feeling of calm, pleasure ..., it brightens life, and lifts your spirit”

“creates and enhances the reputation and perception of the area; builds civic pride and community; attracts people who want to contribute i.e. artists as residents, investors in businesses, discerning consumers (not the Primark Tribe!)”

“it displays the identity of the local population and makes location attractively unique.

“something that inspires and provokes new thinking, creates a ‘wow’ factor”

“breaking social and personal barriers; widening sensitivity and consciousness of individuals not usually involved in art”

“I love it being there! I love the alien and the polar bears. Children love public art. I love art that can be touched. Public art says something about the town to its visitors”

“the variety you get with public art – as well as its free and easy access. Is sometimes surprising in its location or form”

“it can be shared by the community, enjoyed and appreciated by all”

“gives you something different to look at and talk about”

“adds an extra dimension, enlarges the imagination, improves the environment”

“it can be thought provoking and lift the spirits”

“it is inspiring and can also brighten up unattractive areas”

“could show Woking has a soul”

“In Woking, which is rather soulless, it gives you something to look”

“not only does it improve the overall appearance of a town for visitors, but it makes locals look and take stock of their surroundings’

“pleasant surroundings lift the mood and raise the spirits, making you proud of your town”

“ Pleasant. Something to talk about. Make a ‘space’ attractive as a focal point e.g. gardens or roundabout”

“it can brighten up a dull spot and encourage discussion and interpretation”

“the aesthetic value improves the image of Woking and makes your proud to live in your town”

“I like looking at different and new things when walking around Woking”

“beauty”

“it draws the eye away from the more mundane aspects of life and provides a pleasant surprise”

“colourful and innovative (like the flags at the Eden project, local – like Martian, natural e.g. willow weaving”

“I like the sort of public art that can be changed for a new display when people become tired of it (say every 5 years). We are all sick of the bears and the Martian. Put them somewhere else”

“it cheers up our environment – especially on a rainy day. It reminds us of our ability to be creative”

### **What don't you consider to be public art?**

“unmade beds”

“bricks”

“graffiti”

“cheap and cheerful evens that make us look like amateurs”

“art that does not relate/‘talk’ to the community, and only appeals to the minority”

“lumps of shapeless concrete purporting to be art”

“ ‘the plane’. Unfortunately it will negate anything you might do for Woking. When we take visitors into Woking we are ashamed of it’.

“any body parts”

“items that are hard to interpret or see the point of. Items such as posters or demonstrations and an unmade bed”

“the plane. Worst eyesore in any town I have ever seen. Martian okay. “Lightbox” has replaced a pleasant ‘soft’ landscape with....a box”

“I don’t like looking at older statues or paintings. I love new interesting things like graffiti or beautiful gardens”

“the plane outside the Big Apple/BHS....I still don’t know what that’s all about”

### **Do you have any themes of public art you would like to see in Woking?**

“just try to enlighten us or shock us”

“rather than themes I would like to see art that people can interact with, statues that children can climb or sculpture to walk through”

“incorporate art into sitting areas around the town – providing a place to sit and enjoy sculptures, plant art etc”

“realistic statues of famous people”

“historical/local links – reinforce the town’s identity...promote the town’s cultural identity – it’s the best thing Woking has”

“pieces that have meaning for the area – history, relevance”

“Woking is a town with history, how about honouring its history and having a sympathetic theme”

“recycled sculptures (i.e. made from recycled materials). A sculpture trail would be great – perhaps starting from the Lightbox site?”

“global warming, to try and make people think about it”

“more art incorporating (and celebrating) recycled materials; more “green” art – sculptural trees/hedges/watery things”

“recycling theme, abstract art, video art, modern sculpture”

“transport. Historic Woking....there is some (not much) good public art in Woking BUT it does need looking after, repairing, retouching, protecting from the elements, vandals and aging. We need less signs. Bridges could be made more pleasing to the eye e.g. the

Victorian arch.....lampposts could be more aesthetically pleasing – spend the money on Xmas lights on something permanent and worthwhile”

“roundabouts planted with a theme relevant to the area in the borough, incorporating sculpture and water features”

“dancing around the world”

“lots of colour, to brighten the borough”

“H G Wells gives us a unique opportunity to base art around the themes of the past (the railways, geology, past residents, past industry” and the future (recycling, transport, community)”

“extending outwards on a walking tour from the Lightbox/station to attract new visitors to the Lightbox into the town and surrounding area. Could have an art/sculpture walk that makes use of canal, common and redeveloped High Street as café society.....  
Interactive art in parks and recreational areas to encourage kids/families to explore the outside”

“children, sport, creativity, culture displays (South African, Polish etc)”

“themes which are topical to Woking e.g. the Alien, the large mural and the displays (now deteriorating) under Victoria Arch”

“more War of the Worlds! Light installations could improve atmosphere”

“...a statue or memorial to writers associated with this area – H G Wells for example. I like the Martian in the town centre. That is really good. What about Delia Smith? Harry Hill may not last”

“ themes are doomed to fail. Art needs to be a free expression of a competent artist’s ideas”

“Well, I suppose the occasional cultural festival is welcome, as long as it is temporary”

“why do we need a theme? What’s wrong with a piece that just looks good?”

“beautiful trees in the precinct, sculpture (as illustrated in the questionnaire”

“we do not have any entertainment in Maybury. Please can you come to Maybury”

“Woking town centre needs to appeal visually: mature London plane trees etc. Wisley garden have Henry Moore statues amongst greenery. Try to incorporate elements of that”

“water features or those using plants/nature e.g. Sheffield wall of water and glasshouse/public art galleries”

“...space is in short supply in Woking so I think colour could be used as a focal point”



“could we have a festival? e.g. poetry – dance – the canals and rivers and boats”

“life size steam engine (railway junction) – maclaren race car”

“the composer Dame Ethel Smyth is arguably Woking’s most notable citizen having lived here for 34 years. It would be good to have public recognition of her achievements”

“I love the Martian, so anything that has meaning for Woking. Something to commemorate Paul Weller and Status Quo – 2 rock icons with roots in Woking”

“more seating to look at artwork”

“the canal, the railway, Brookwood Cemetery, the old plant nurseries that used to flourish here. H G Wells - all subjects that have some relationship with Woking”

“a statue (bronze) of Alice Smythe, composer of the suffragettes’ marching song, she helped women get the vote...”

“very disappointing that Woking itself has NO entries in Public Art Fund Surrey – need to commission an ‘Art Group’”

“human scale sculptures in the style of Antony Gormley’s ‘Another Place’...”

“please no more H G Wells! Would like to see celebration of 1. Woking’s importance as home of nurseries and nurserymen 2. Dame Ethel Smyth 3. Heathland 4. Molly Brett”

“more attractive street lighting in the town centre”

“a small sculpture in the centre of the flower beds that would bring ‘contrast’ to the hideous brick and concreteness that is Woking”

“We are proud of the Peacock Centre and it would be a good idea to portray this image by displaying Peacock logos/sculptures on the main roads entering and exiting Woking boundaries”

“temporary exhibitions of the work of local sculptors and students of Working/College etc”

“something connected with nature and the environment”

“celebration of all the famous music artists from Woking – Petula Clark, Jam, The Fortunes, Russ Conway, Rick Parfitt (Status Quo) etc”

“H G Wells theme is good, may be more space themed objects ‘hidden to find’ around Woking to provide humour”

“The H G Wells Cycle Trail (could start at the Martian and run to Ripley?), stopping points along the trail could include sculptures inspired by the author’s books”

“a garden design on a large scale would bring nature and colour to an area where there is none”

“something for youth! Creative work like photography”

“Poster art, murals, words and pictures... I suggest an open competition whereby entrants send in a photograph of a town scene or landmark, and add a few words, poem or haiku. Woking Writers Circle is already working along these lines, compiling a series of words and pictures about the town”

### **Where would you like to see more public art in the Borough?**

“town centre. Horsell High Street area. Around church and schools”

“Mayford green. Woking Town Centre – would like to see market restored to old pitch”

“sculpture trail around the borough”

“everywhere”

“all over”

“focal centres of villages”

Goldsworth West, Goldsworth East, Pyrford, West Byfleet

Hermitage & Knaphill South, town centre, Maybury & Sheerwater

“recreation ground in Old Woking Road, Pyrford, town centre, Wheatsheaf Green, Byfleet village green”

“where people drive or walk past e.g. roundabouts, canalside, parks or town centre”

“town centre”

“anywhere in the town centre”

“near the library”

“anywhere shoppers can see it or in the park”

“station, town centre, main routes to them”

“old market space between toys R us and library square”

“commercial way – it is a mess! Fully pedestrianised with cycles permitted, rip out the existing street furniture and refit, smarten up and add some sculptures”

“town centre and south of the railway station”

“...something done about the awful area from the town square to the Cawsey Way (once the covered market) now depressing and unpleasant”

“train station on grass between platforms”

“Old Woking”

“Around Woking Park. It is wonderful, popular area that cries out for more ART!”

“Wheatsheaf. Knaphill. G.W Park”

“Hermitage and Knaphill South”

“Horsell West”

“town centre, Woking Park, Goldsworth Lake, Pyrford Green”

“Horsell Common – something War of the Worlds! E.g. Martian in the sandpit!”

“Mayford village green to welcome the new school of Mayford”

Kingfield and Westfield

“Mount Hermon Road – associated with Conservative Club”

“Woking Community Hospital. Woking Hospice”

“Gorsewood Road – two green spaces adjacent to shops containing the Spar Grocers etc; grassed play area of the Hermitage School fronting Gorsewood”

“the triangle at Kingsway/Goldsworth Rd – overlooked by houses less chance of vandalism – with seats could be a great place to rest when walking home”

“Goldsworth Park Lake; Greens on Estates”

“Mount Hermon East”

“Brooklands Embankment”

“the beds on Egley Road where there was a rockery...”

“St Johns Lye near bus stop or playground”

“Horsell West could have sculpture in Princess Elizabeth gardens”

“Pyrford, cricket green at Church of Good Shepherd, also St Nicholas Hamlet”

“Church of Good Shepherd, West Byfleet – St Johns, Pyrford Common, Horsell Park”  
Town/village centres; riverwalks; parks; roads entering Woking”

St John's & Hook Heath

“early age settlements, Goldsworth East; Horsell Common; War Memorial Town Square, Town Gate; Henry’s Palace Old Woking; Military Cemetery, Brookwood; Mosque, Maybury & Sheerwater; Peacocks Mall; McLaren site; Basingstoke Canal; Islamic Burial Ground, Horsell East and Woodham”

Byfleet railway station

“on the green area at the junction of Wilson Way and Church Hill, Horsell; beside the Old Vicarage and opposite the village school”

Horsell East and Woodham

“canal side”

“along the canal at various points (and the railway track)... transport themes?”

There are some large sculptures outside the Leisure Lagoon on its patio – the public never see it – could it be moved to a more prominent place?”

“Byford. Onslow Way”

“town centre next to St Andrews Church”

“opposite Wheatsheaf pub”

“town centre. Pryford playground”

“Old Woking. On entry to village”

“give Knaphill High Street an identity of its own. A clock, some colour, sculpture”

“roundabouts 1. Egly Rd and Wych Hill Lane 2. Wych Hill Lane and Triggs Lane”

“Rydens Way Green, or outside Kingfield post office i.e. passed by hundreds of people per day”

“1. Goldsworth Park centre – sculpture 2. Outside Sainsburys Brookwood – mural”

“6 ways roundabout”

“Brockwood country park”

“the lightbox. Brewery Road”

“Silversmith Way by Goldsworth Road – green space”

“maybe an art trail throughout the borough to encourage people to explore?”

“Queen Elizabeth Gardens, Horsell”

“...the former home in Woking of H G Wells should be used as a museum/place of interest as a memorial to the author and his work. The H G Wells Society could be involved in a project to restore the house to how it would have been in the time H G Wells lived there, and use it as a centre for their work”

“within the Leisure Centre and the Infant/Junior schools in Kingfield/Westfield”

“willow sculptures along the Basingstoke Canal, to help encourage a cleaner, friendlier environment for walkers. Willow structures could be made that include seating”

## **KEY COMMUNITY GROUPS CONSULTATION**

**Tuesday 23 January, HG Wells Conference & Events Centre, Woking**

### **What sort of public art might be most appropriate and relevant to Woking?**

“A symbol to associate with”

“A local context – Woking”

“Needs to be new & bold”

“Visibility – temporary or permanent”

“Temporary – a spectacle, could be something unexpected”

“Take into account the architecture of the town”

“Does there have to be continuity?”

“The Martian is a marker – a landmark”

“A functional aspect – the public face of a town becomes the landmarks rather than pubs”

“Free”

“Not constrained by ‘history’”

“Don’t over-work HGW theme”

“Integrate into ‘public realm’ – light, street furniture”

“Sensitive to Value for Money / cost – sell as functional use – open up perceived ‘no-go’ areas”

“Create identity”

“Performing – helps enliven”

“Move away from traditional approach to public art, not sculptures, incorporate good design into new spaces”

“Green spaces – ecological approach”

“Get rid of war memorial – more back to Commercial Way or somewhere else”

“War memorial is vital? Debate about where it should be”

“Reflect Muslim community – and perhaps war dead”

“Buddhist community – multi-cultural”

“Perhaps different gardens or spaces to celebrate / represent different communities”

“Perhaps green up the car park”

“Live art”

“Street theatre”

“Activity – vibrant space”

“Lighting installation – use of recycling materials”

“Fountains – use of water and light”

“Multi-use spaces – shelters and skate areas for young people”

“Dance spaces – general performance space”

“Projections”

### **Possible themes for public art**

“The canal and waterways”

“Railway / transport hub”

“The artist should come up with the theme – why be tied down?”

“Bridging the sort of person in town during the day and at night”

“Lighting and signage”

“Architecture – Old Woking, Westfield Copse”

“The mosque – wide variety”

“Toys R Us building – could be transformed with lighting”

“Population – the most culturally diverse town in Surrey”

“Other influences – celebration of diversity, times & events”

“Cultural fabric / diversity”

“Recycling – i.e. glass walkways / CD stands”

“Temporary – link to Dance Festival”

“Nurseries”

“Brookwood Cemetery”

“Woking Palace”

“Rep & figurative – as well as inspired”

“Involve existing organisations / buildings to embrace improvements i.e. Toys R Us”

“Light”

“Interactive i.e. bouncing balls, talking lamp-posts, graffiti walls, mobile phone link”

“Cultures – symbols & motifs”

“Ensure installations are flexible”

“Celebrate multi-cultural nature of Woking”

“Woking’s heritage – steer away from death!”

“St Peter’s Church – oldest Christian Church – site of Mosque”

“M25”

“Should be fun – kitch”

“Interactive displays – with viewer / weather etc”

“Text – creative writing – Islamic art – text interacting with art”

“Chinese script”

“Art of the river – art route – river journey”

“Rural heritage – horse shed”

“Common – Windsor Great Park – hunting lodge – ownership may be a problem”

“Theatre / dance”

“HG Wells – make more of a birthplace of science fiction, more aliens”

“George Bernard Shaw”

“Horticultural heritage”

“Twin Towns – Rastatt, Plessey Robinson, Amstelveen”

**Whereabout in the borough and town centre would public art be appropriate?**

“Large participatory events – slap bang in the middle of town / Woking Park”

“Think about unexpected places – railway station, railway lines, 6 crossroads”

“Involve the community first”

“The canal – make it more of a feature”

“The Lightbox – use of gardens”

“Use of light – to soften some of the buildings – Peacocks Walk, Toys R Us, from the ground up, pavements”

“Bringing the different parts of Woking together”

“Cross over – involving all sides, residential areas”

“To encourage greater understanding of different communities”

“Focal town centre”

“Celebration of gateways – roundabouts”

“Indoor & outdoor (i.e. Peacocks, Wolsey Place, corner outside Boots, town square)”

“Horsell / Brookwood / Knaphill / Byfleet / Pyford / Maybury & Sheerwater / Barnsbury”

“In parks”

“Canal”

“Outside HG Wells”

“The Arch – mural”

“Outside Post Office”



“Bandstand”

“Town centre – good design, currently soulless town centre, community gardens”

“River Wey – corridor”

“County Parks”

#### **APPENDIX 4**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description of Asset</b>	<b>Proposed Maintenance</b>	<b>Previous Service Areas</b>	<b>£ Proposed Budget</b>
1	Gloucester Sq. Fountain by William Pye Bronze fountain on stone & brick base Commissioned by WBC/LET as planning benefit of the Peacocks development	Service, maintenance and water testing	*Environment Inspection and maintenance works undertaken / supervised by Property Services	FM contract
2	'Romping Badgers' by Reece Ingram Figurative stone sculpture Commissioned by WBC/LET as planning benefit of the Peacocks development	None	Not allocated	
3	Town Gates. by Alan Dawson Colour coated metalwork on brick piers Commissioned by WBC as planning benefit of Barclays Bank development	Maintenance, decoration and structural inspection	*Environment Inspection and maintenance works undertaken / supervised by Property Services	FM contract
4	Town Square War Memorial Stone memorial with figurative bronze angel sculpture Commissioned by former Urban District	Annual structural inspection and remedial works as required.	*Secretariat Inspection and maintenance works undertaken / supervised by Property Services	War memorial budget
5	'Martian' Sculpture by Michael Condron Stainless steel sculpture with hard landscape works and art metal inserts Commissioned by WBC	Annual inspection and maintenance bi-annual structural survey.	*Community Services Inspection and maintenance works undertaken / supervised by Property Services	AMP budget
6	Jet aircraft installation Post mounted decommissioned aircraft Commissioned by WBC	Annual structural inspection, cleaning and maintenance.	*Property Services	AMP budget

7	High Street Mural by R.Hoare & A.Potter Board mounted painted mural depicting a scene of Victorian shops in High Street Commissioned by WBC/BR/local traders	None	Not allocated	
8	Station Subway Mural Mosaic tile mural depicting locomotives Commissioned by WBC as a planning benefit of Railtrack development	None	Environment	
9	Victoria Arch Mural by R.Hoare & A.Potter Cold enamel individual mural panels on cut metal depicting historic images of Woking with floodlighting to each panel Commissioned by WBC for Centenary	None	Environment	
10	Victoria Way Subway Mural Mosaic tile mural depicting scenes from H.G.Wells – ‘ War of the Worlds’ Commissioned by WBC for Centenary of the novel set in Woking	None	Environment	
11	Victoria Way Market Fence Mural Photomosaic Perspex panels of traders Commissioned by WBC	?	?	
12	Sparrow Park Bubble Fountain Stone fountain in landscaped area Commissioned by WBC	?	?	
13	Woking Park Fuel Cell Mural by Allan Potter Cold enamel on aluminium panels Commissioned by WBC	?	?	
14	Woking Park Statue of William Groves			

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