

Public Art Policy

**Making Great Places:
Making Places Great**

Our Vision

The Kirklees district is a place where the best public art thinking and practice is at the heart of ideas and designs for new developments and regeneration plans.

In truly making great places and making places great in Kirklees, people have vision to confidently make decisions and drive things forward, through incorporating public art and working with artists.

Artists and creative people make things happen which make our villages, towns and green spaces vibrant, interesting and enjoyable places to be; and our rich heritage, diverse communities and local creative cultures are showcased and celebrated.

To illustrate our vision, this document contains images of permanent or temporary public art in Kirklees plus examples from around the country to highlight the possibilities for Kirklees.



Le Phun Hypervelocity, Tour de France 2014

Front cover: Fritz Steller *Articulation in Movement*, Queensgate Market Huddersfield

Rationale and purpose

Public art has an enormous impact on the creation and shaping of places and is at the heart of creating places that people want to live, visit, work and invest.

“Quality places and successful economies go hand in hand.”
Kirklees Economic Strategy

Cultural vibrancy and lifestyle are significant factors influencing where businesses choose to locate their premises. It is recognised that great places are essential to the health of the people in Kirklees and the success of the district.

Public art helps make great places and make places great.

Through describing what public art is and can do, this Kirklees Council Public Art Policy aims to support those involved with the process of placemaking and shaping from:

- planners
- those working in development, architecture, masterplanning or urban and environmental design
- active local residents
- artists and creative businesses
- decision-makers and influencers



The Blackpool Comedy Carpet is an example of successful public art, that celebrates local heritage, yet is recognised and celebrated beyond its immediate locality and community.
Gordon Young/Why Not Associates *The Comedy Carpet, Blackpool*



Wendy Meadley *Hypervelocity*, Tour de France 2014

Background

This Public Art Policy has come about through collaboration between the Planning Department and the Creative Economy Team identifying a role for public art in supporting the successful delivery of the Local Plan and Area Action Plans as well as supporting masterplan development within the district.

Aims of the Public Art Policy

Planning policy and implementation is a local authority statutory responsibility. Through the planning system the council can positively influence the investment in public art and the quality of that public art.

Having a public art policy backed up with good practice guidance and advice enables the council to encourage developers, investors and all those involved in placemaking, to embed public art in their plans and proposals. This will ultimately create better places and spaces in Kirklees.

The policy will help ensure that the best public art thinking and practice is at the heart of ideas and designs for new developments and regeneration plans: it will ensure that people who have vision, make decisions and drive things forward are truly making great places. The policy also affirms the council's support for artists and creative people to make things happen that make our villages, towns and green spaces vibrant, interesting and enjoyable places to be.

Introduction

Here in Kirklees we know that the quality of the places where we live, work and spend our time is vital to our wellbeing and the success of our district. We know that the quality of the environment affects how we feel and access to nature boosts our mental health. We know that public art has an important role in creating quality places and quality experiences. We know that quality places that attract people, businesses and investment enjoy flourishing economies. We know all this and this is why we have put it down in writing: our public art policy asserts our commitment to public art across the district.

Kirklees Council will welcome the development of beautifully designed places, spaces and buildings and we welcome innovative practice and meaningful public engagement to enliven and create great places.

- We want our towns, villages and green spaces to be places that people love to visit, live and work; and places that people want to invest in.
- We want to see places and spaces come alive with creative and cultural activity.
- We want our rich and diverse local heritage and stories to be visible, shared and celebrated.
- We want artists, creative people, businesses and active residents to come together to make things happen that have meaning for

themselves and the communities of Kirklees.

- We want to see public art integrated into regeneration and development schemes built on best practice and partnerships to achieve the highest quality public art and public realm.
- We want our diverse communities and young people to be integral to the creative engagement and thinking.
- We want to attract new developments that create quality places and make a positive difference to how people experience and enjoy the places in which they live and work.
- We want Kirklees to be a place that celebrates ideas and innovation; a place that not only attracts business but inspires new businesses and entrepreneurs.

This policy came about through joint working between the Planning Team and the Creative Economy Team. It works seamlessly with the council's and wider region's development strategies. It is designed to support the work and interests of developers, masterplanners, urban planners, planning officers, environmental leaders, artists, businesses and active residents: in fact, it is for anybody involved in making quality places and spaces across Kirklees.

"Cultural place-making can shape the fortunes of our regions, cities, towns and villages."

**The Culture White Paper.
Dept for Culture, Media and Sport**

"Quality places and successful economies go hand in hand. Together they create sustainable communities where people of all ages and backgrounds enjoy good quality of life because they feel safe and secure and can easily access employment and high quality housing, green spaces and services. These conditions attract skilled people, tourists, entrepreneurs and investment, creating a virtuous cycle of improvement."

Kirklees Economic Strategy

"The Kirklees district is a place of creativity and experimentation. We create the conditions for the arts, creative industries, events and heritage to thrive and to be the catalyst for change. Cultural organisations are entrepreneurial and innovative. They create happy moments and treasured memories but they also challenge and stimulate our thinking and beliefs."

Culture Kirklees



What can public art do for people and places?

Quality public art, where people are meaningfully involved, can do a lot for people and places in Kirklees. It can:

- foster a sense of civic pride
- build connections within and between neighbours and communities
- enhance people's connection to a place and foster a stronger sense of community
- contribute to people's feelings of belonging, cohesion and safety
- help grow cultural activity and expression in a community
- positively influence perceptions and experiences of places and spaces
- re-define and change the use of places and spaces
- engage, inspire, surprise and delight people
- raise aspirations and confidence in an area amongst residents and businesses
- enable people to have a voice and actively shape the future of a place
- create unique and desirable places and spaces full of story and identity that go beyond purely functional design
- create a destination that people want to come to visit
- attract new residents
- create places that attract and welcome businesses and investment
- contribute to a flourishing economy



Encounters Little Patch of Ground project, Toynbee Hall London

The role of a public artist

Some public artists have skills that combine the ability to think creatively, engage the public and apply their design expertise.

Some public artists have specific technical or artform expertise that they specialise in.

Many public artists are extremely versatile and are able to generate ideas using a limitless palette of materials and artforms; this enables them to respond in an open-ended creative way to different places and situations.

We value artists' ideas and the contribution they make to the development of a rich and meaningful public realm.

Here are just some of the attributes and skills that artists can bring:

Seeking and strengthening relationships

- Building connections between people and places, histories and futures.
- Connecting communities, groups, businesses and residents: this can be vital where new building developments are planned.
- Finding and strengthening the links between the stories and identities of places and people's sense of belonging.
- Using the stories of a place and its people to create designs that have depth and meaning.

Engaging, inspiring and surprising

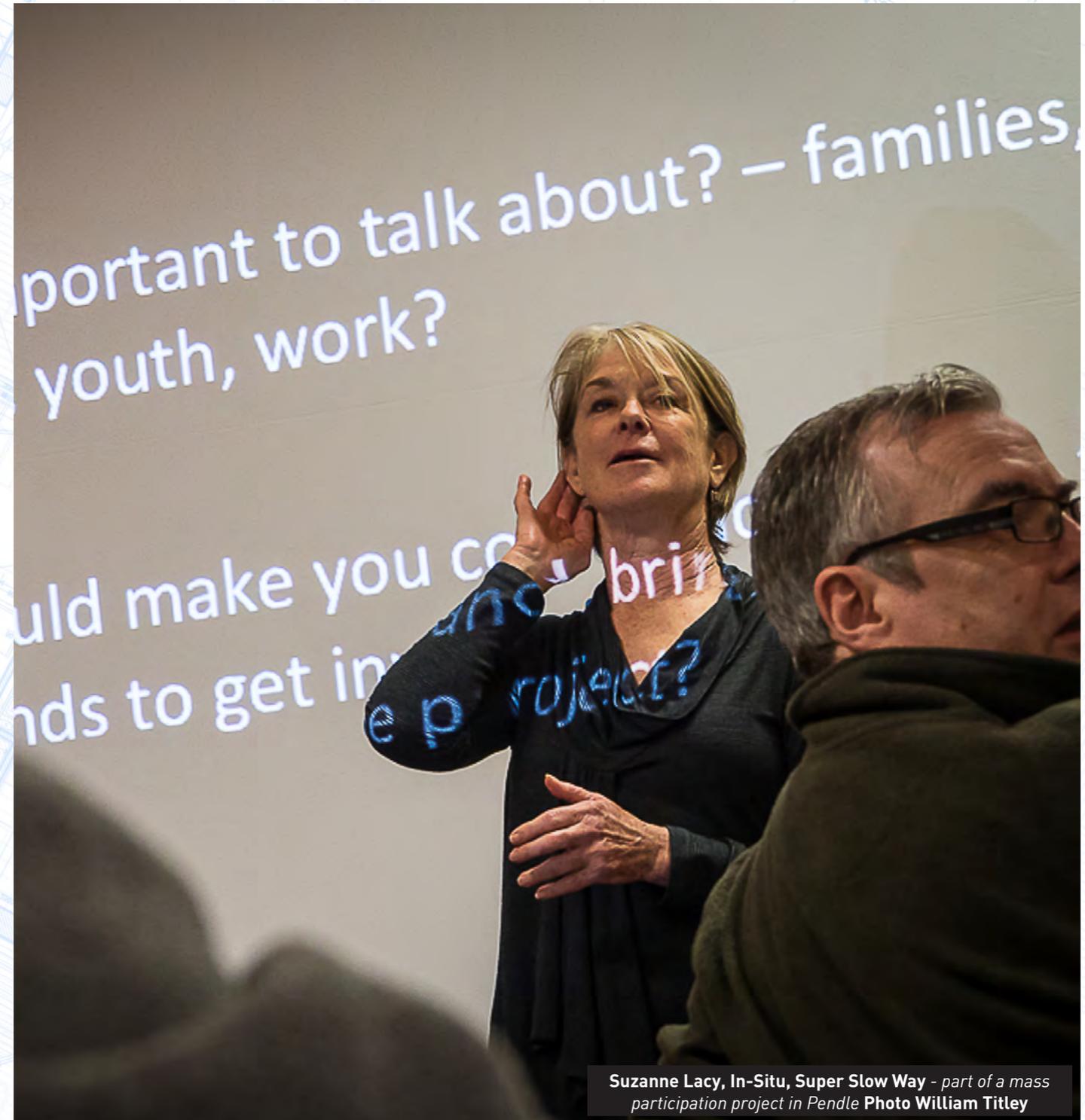
- Using creative tools to spark people's interest, to inspire them to be involved and enjoy being part of a meaningful experience.
- Actively involving people in creating, or being, the artwork: in these cases it is the act of participation that is the artwork.
- Enabling people to see places in new ways.
- Creating design features and artworks that stir a reaction.
- Making impromptu creative things happen in public spaces.

Designing and making

- Providing creative ways of thinking that are valuable in masterplanning, public realm design and place regeneration .
- Combining community engagement with heritage and identity of place to create meaningful design features for development schemes.
- Applying design skills to built and natural environments, public realm and architectural situations.
- Versatility, ability to work with a diverse range of materials and design contexts.



Zarah Hussain Garden Party, William Morris Museum



Suzanne Lacy, In-Situ, Super Slow Way - part of a mass participation project in Pendle Photo William Tittle

Why is a public art policy needed?

Having a public art policy makes it clear what our aspiration for the district is and it enables us to achieve our vision.

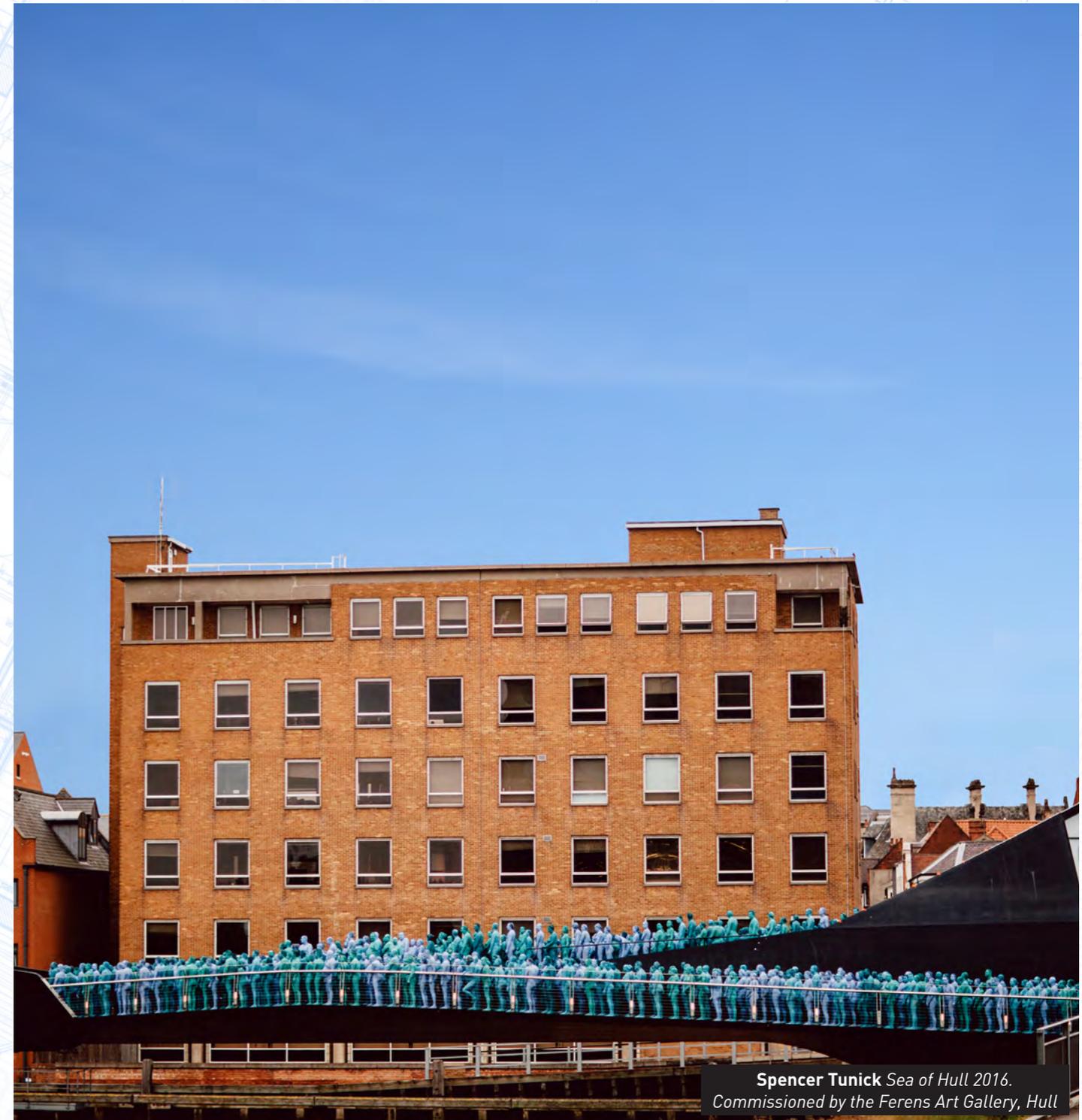
- We want Kirklees to be a great place to live, work and invest.
- We want our rich and diverse local heritage and stories to be visible, shared and celebrated.
- We want the towns, villages and countryside of our district to be places that everyone enjoys and destinations that people want to visit and spend time.
- We know that the most successful places have some of the best public art: quality places and successful economies go together.
- We want the places and spaces that we live and work to be great.

This policy is designed to attract and support innovative and inspiring public art practice in Kirklees. More and better public art, public spaces and buildings will boost people's perceptions of and confidence in Kirklees; this will strengthen the district's identity across the region and the country; which in turn will help attract people, businesses and investment.

This policy can be used to:

- advocate and champion the value of having high quality public art
- attract and support imaginative, experimental and innovative projects and approaches that are of exceptional calibre and quality

We do not just want to promote public art; we want to make things happen. This policy is designed to increase the amount and quality of public art to make the towns, villages, streets, buildings and green spaces truly great places.



Spencer Tunick *Sea of Hull* 2016.
Commissioned by the Ferens Art Gallery, Hull

Who is this policy for and how can it be used?

Do you work in Planning?

You decide what developments are given the go ahead. You are key in making sure the right decisions are made and good things happen.

You can use this policy to:

- guide good public art practice
- ensure new developments and regeneration schemes fit with our vision, priorities and opportunities for public art in the district
- advocate and negotiate for public art to be built into development schemes and planning applications

Are you in the business of building development, architecture, landscape architecture, masterplanning or urban design?

You shape and create the places and spaces that people live and use. Your designs and developments can change people's lives and impact on the fortunes of a district.

You can use this policy to:

- guide your thinking to embed public art into your development proposals and planning applications
- find out more about sources of information and support for embedding public art into your development and design schemes
- prepare for commissioning an artist and integrating public art into your projects

Are you an interested and active local resident?

You know what is special about your neighbourhood and having a great place to live is important to you.

You can use this policy to:

- think about what public art can do for your neighbourhood
- give you ideas for making things happen where you live
- think about how you might make a positive community-led contribution to making new developments and regeneration plans for your area a greater success

Are you an artist or creative business?

You naturally add to the cultural life and vibrancy of the district: you help make a place great.

You can use this policy to:

- think about how the planning system and new developments can invest in public art and shape physical spaces and places for culture
- think about how you might get involved in shaping places
- be encouraged to make things happen and turn your ideas into action

Do you see yourself as a decision-maker and influencer?

You can make a difference by championing public art and using your influence and decisions to ensure more quality public art happens more often.

You can use this policy to:

- support your argument when making the case for public art
- use your influence and inform your decisions to make public art happen

Strategic links:

Kirklees has two complementary strategies that set out future priorities and guide action in the district: The Kirklees Economic Strategy, which has been written in the context of the Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan; and the Joint Health and Well-being Strategy.

The strategies have a shared commitment to ensure that Kirklees is a district combining great quality of life and a strong and sustainable economy leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality and where people enjoy better health throughout their lives.

Our Public Art Policy priorities

The priorities and opportunities for public art in Kirklees fit into four themes:

- **designing and developing quality places**
- **inspired by heritage and identity**
- **enhancing local character and distinctiveness**
- **people making things happen in the places that they live**

These are not exclusive of each other, they are compatible and complementary. Opportunities for public art can span across and encompass all or some of the themes.

These themes and opportunities for public art all stem from and align with the council's strategic vision and plans:

- Good design can contribute to the design principles identified within the Local Plan and good design is fundamental to making places more attractive, sustainable, safe and accessible.
- The character of each part of Kirklees is defined by the distinctive local landscape and townscape (buildings, open spaces and trees) and the presence of historic buildings.
- The local character and distinctiveness of Kirklees and its places will be retained. The natural, built and historic environment will be maintained and enhanced through high quality, inclusive design and safe environments, opportunities for play and sport, the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure, enhancement of distinctive and contrasting landscapes, tree and woodland protection, opportunities for local food growing, the enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity and the protection and enhancement of heritage assets.

The stories of places and people are important ingredients in local distinctiveness and offer a meaningful starting point for public art:

- Kirklees has proud, diverse and distinct communities. The make-up of Kirklees communities is complex and each local area has a distinct character and balance of communities. Some defined by geographical or social identities and some by faith and ethnicity for example. This complexity and diversity is important to Kirklees as it brings a vitality that underpins economic, social and cultural strength.
- Kirklees has a rich social, industrial, natural and diverse cultural heritage. Kirklees' strengths include, but are not limited to, textiles, digital and design, manufacturing and a world class music offer.
- People and heritage have shaped and continue to shape the look and feel of the district's places, spaces and neighbourhoods and the activity that happens there. Each place, neighbourhood and community has its own evolving heritage and identity; public art can play an important role in expressing and making visible these distinct stories.

What do we want to achieve?

Through this policy we want to help make new developments and regeneration plans the best that they can be; and we encourage artists and communities to turn ideas into a reality whether as a commissioned piece of work or as self-initiated action.

We will be working to ensure that high quality public art is built into development schemes so the most is made of the opportunity to create high quality places with distinct identities; and we welcome and encourage artists, businesses and residents to work together to make great things happen in the district's towns, villages and open spaces.



Mecanoo architecten *Birmingham library* Photo Tony Hisgett



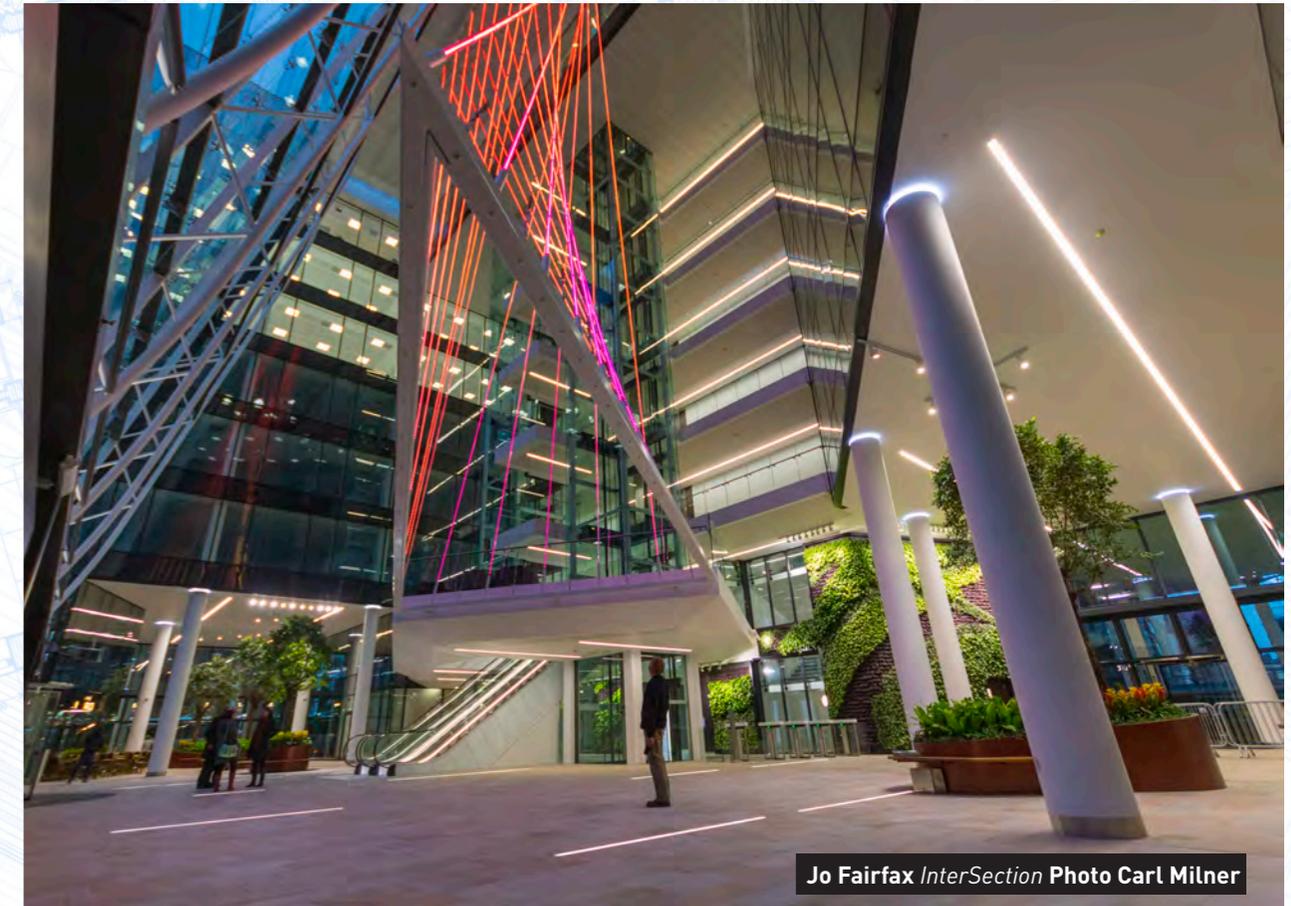
Andy Scott *Heavy Horse* Photo Geograph.org.uk



Anthony Gormley *Another Place* Photo Colin Poellot



Walk the Plank *Spellbound, Batley Festival 2016* Photo Brian Slater



Jo Fairfax *InterSection* Photo Carl Milner

How will we achieve it?

Through planning applications:

- Pre-application planning advice will promote the value of public art, where appropriate, to enable early consideration by applicants.
- We will welcome proposals and applications which have public art firmly embedded within the approach to public engagement and design development.
- We will welcome applications where public art is built on meaningful local context and public engagement.
- We will review public art submissions to ensure that quality of process or engagement and quality of delivery is achieved.
- Public art will be considered when making planning application decisions.
- We will look for environmental sustainability in public art proposals and will use the Public Art Sustainability Assessment to help assess this.
- We will draw on public art expertise to help assess applications and proposals.

Through development and regeneration schemes:

- We will look for the best public art and design practice to be built into all major development and regeneration schemes: this will include a quality creative public engagement process and quality public art incorporated within the design details, architecture and landscaping of the scheme.

- We will encourage developers to commission artists as part of the research, development and planning process. It is important to us that the skills, vision and ideas of public artists are integrated at the earliest possible stage: from the consultation and planning through to the design development and building processes.

Through heritage, identity and imagination:

- we will welcome imaginative use of urban and rural spaces, places and buildings
- we will encourage people to highlight the things that make places, spaces and neighbourhoods distinctive.
- we will encourage cultural activity and design that evokes and echoes local heritage, identity and stories

Through partnerships:

- we will work with partners to increase awareness and promotion of public art; and increase investment for public art
- we will support partnerships that drive and achieve the highest quality practice

Through communities:

- we will encourage communities to identify their own ambitions for locally-led place making
- we will welcome community-led neighbourhood focussed public art activity
- we will encourage public creative and cultural activity that enlivens and uplifts
- we will encourage people to make things happen where they live

Kirklees Council Creative Economy Team support

- We can help people involved in shaping and making places find the advice, guidance, support and artists they need to ensure that best practice in public art is built into their proposals and projects.
- We will support planners in reviewing public art submissions, to ensure the best possible public art project is developed for all parties.
- We will endeavour to keep up to date with best practice in public art so that we give the best information.
- We will provide and signpost the most current public art practice information and advice.



Ian Walters Statue of Harold Wilson

How will we measure success?

We will know if we have delivered quality public art, through:

- an increase in successful planning applications that include quality public art considerations
- new developments including and successfully delivering quality public art
- strategic developments, masterplans and policies referring to the public art policy and recognising the role of quality public art as integral to it and not an afterthought
- closer working and collaboration between council departments, whereby the Creative Economy Team support and enable colleagues to be confident advocates and champions for quality public art

Conclusion

To successfully deliver on the public art policy, we will have significantly contributed to Kirklees being a district whose towns, villages and green spaces are recognised as places that people love to visit, live and work; and places that people want to invest in. We will have demonstrated the active role that public art can play in the development of economically successful and healthy places.



James Bawn Castle Hill illuminated Photo Tim Hoggarth



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