

PUBLIC ART TOOLKIT

*Art in the heart of our communities:
A guide to planning and delivering
public art locally.*

2025

CONTENTS

3	Foreword
4	Executive Summary
5	Introduction
6	What is Public Art?
7	Why Public Art Matters: Social, Cultural & Economic Benefits
9	Public Art in Warwick District: A Rich Starting Point
12	The Council's Role: Enabler, Advocate & Partner
14	Key Considerations When Delivering Public Art
17	Embedding Public Art In Placemaking
19	Tips for Creatives and Community Groups
23	Funding
25	Useful Contacts & Links
26	Frequently Asked Questions
28	Public Art Project Checklist
31	Public Art Project Flowchart
32	Appendices
33	Thanks

FOREWORD



Public art plays an important role in shaping vibrant, inclusive, and creative places across Warwick District. From murals and sculptures to digital installations and temporary interventions, it enhances public spaces, celebrates local identity, and brings communities together.

This toolkit provides practical guidance for artists, community groups, and partners interested in developing public art projects in Warwick District. It outlines key processes, legal requirements, and considerations for delivering work in the public realm, while recognising the realities of funding, permissions, and long-term maintenance.

The Council's role is to support and enable, not control, art in the public realm. We do this by offering advice, brokering conversations, and helping to ensure public art is delivered safely, legally, and in ways that benefit our communities. While the Council cannot guarantee involvement in every project, we are committed to championing the value of public art and supporting creative ambition wherever possible.

Councillor Ella Billiald
Warwick District Councillor - Leamington Willes
Portfolio Holder - Arts, Culture & Economy

'The Nanite Garden' (2024), Spencer Yard, Leamington Spa. By Lucy Tomlins. Credit: Pangaea Sculptors' Centre

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

- Artists and creative practitioners
- Community and voluntary groups
- Local authorities who operate in Warwick District
- Developers and planners
- Anyone with an idea for improving public spaces through art

WHAT DOES IT COVER?

- Definitions and examples of public art
- Planning, permissions, and legal considerations
- Practical advice on funding, maintenance, insurance, and risk
- Tips for working with communities and stakeholders
- Information about Council processes and expectations

KEY THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Start with a clear vision and purpose
- Identify the right location and get the correct permissions
- Engage with stakeholders and the community early
- Think long-term: consider maintenance, ownership, and sustainability
- Be realistic about funding and Council capacity

Public art projects work best when they are planned collaboratively, embedded in the place they serve, and delivered with care. We hope this toolkit helps to inspire and guide the next generation of creative contributions to our public spaces.

NEXT STEPS:

Opportunities may arise through Warwick District Council's programmes, partners, or festivals. Sign-up to the [Arts Section's Newsletter](#) for updates. For initial conversations or guidance, contact the Arts Section via the details provided on page 25.

INTRODUCTION

Warwick District is home to a growing and vibrant culture of public art, from murals and sculptures to temporary installations and creative interventions. This document sets out a practical and strategic framework for continuing this momentum, providing support and clarity to those wanting to contribute to the district's public realm.

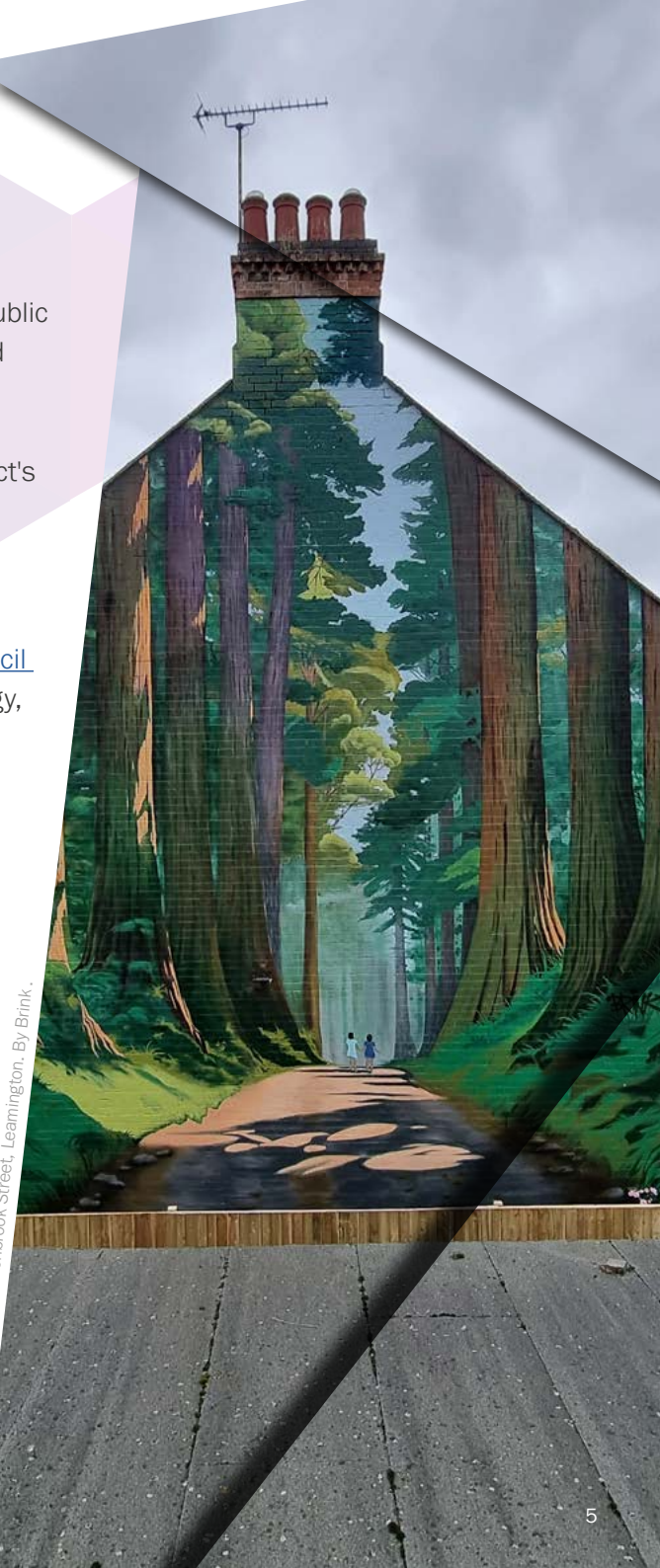
This toolkit has two main aims:

- 1. To reinforce the Council's strategic commitment** to creative placemaking as outlined in [Warwick District Council Corporate Strategy](#), Warwick District Council's Arts Strategy, and [Warwick District Creative Framework](#).
- 2. To provide clear and helpful guidance** for individuals, groups, artists, and council teams involved in the commissioning, creation, and delivery of public art in Warwick District.

Public art in Warwick District should be bold, inclusive, responsive, and accessible. This toolkit recognises the importance of encouraging creativity and experimentation, while also ensuring that projects are sustainable, sensitive to their context, and supported with the right permissions and planning.

While the Council is not the gatekeeper of creativity in the public realm, we do have a responsibility to guide and support work that takes place on council-owned land or in publicly sensitive or protected areas. We also want to champion the benefits of public art and help communities and artists bring their ideas to life through practical advice and shared learning.

'Hitchman's Arboretum' (2024), Tachbrook Street, Leamington. By Brink.



WHAT IS PUBLIC ART?

Public art refers to artistic works that are in public spaces and accessible to all. It includes, but is not restricted to:

- Murals
- Sculptures
- Digital installations
- Interactive and participatory works
- Temporary interventions
- Functional artistic elements (benches, signage, etc.)

It can be permanent or temporary, artist-led or community-driven, and can appear on council or private land.

WHY PUBLIC ART MATTERS: SOCIAL, CULTURAL & ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Public art is more than just decoration. It plays a valuable role in how people experience, understand, and take pride in the places they live, work, and visit. Whether it's a mural on a high street wall, a sculpture in a park, or a temporary installation in a town square, public art can spark conversations, strengthen community ties, and contribute to a thriving local economy.

- **Enhances Civic Pride and Local Identity**

Public art can reflect what makes a place unique, its people, stories, history, and values. By rooting artwork in the identity of a community, it fosters a sense of ownership and belonging. When residents see their experiences or environment reflected in public spaces, it builds pride and strengthens place-based connection.

- **Encourages Footfall and Boosts the Local Economy**

Creative interventions in public spaces can draw people into town centres, high streets, and parks, increasing footfall for local businesses and supporting the daytime and evening economy. Events such as mural festivals, art trails, and unveilings create moments of increased activity and offer opportunities for spending within the local area.

- **Offers Opportunities for Storytelling and Heritage Interpretation**

Public art can be a tool for interpreting local history, heritage, and cultural identity in creative and accessible ways. It can amplify underrepresented stories, celebrate notable figures or events, and create space for reflection, education, and dialogue. Through thoughtful design, it becomes a permanent or temporary part of how communities understand their past and present.

'The Heron and Fishes' (2000), Market Place, Warwick. By Rachel Higgins.
Image: Elliott Brown via Wikimedia Commons



- **Fosters Community Engagement and Ownership**

The process of developing public art can be as valuable as the outcome. Engaging residents, schools, or community groups in concept development or co-creation builds deeper connections to place and encourages stewardship of public spaces. Participatory processes also help ensure that the final piece is meaningful, relevant, and embraced by those who use the space.

- **Supports Mental Wellbeing and Sense of Belonging**

Access to creativity and visually enriched environments can have a positive effect on mental health. Public art brings colour, joy, and reflection to everyday journeys, creating moments of inspiration and calm. For individuals who may not typically access galleries or theatres, public art offers free, open access to cultural experiences that improve wellbeing and reduce social isolation.

- **Attracts Tourism and Investment**

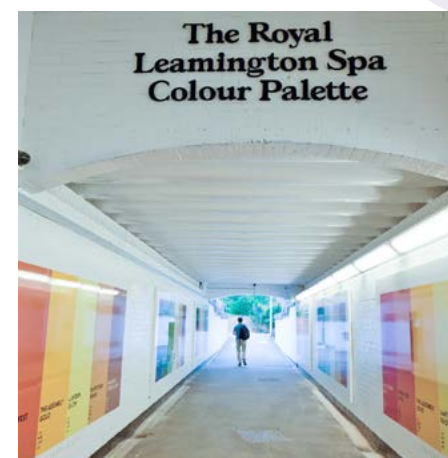
Well-designed public art can become a landmark, drawing visitors and adding value to tourism and cultural strategies. It can also signal ambition, creativity, and vibrancy to investors and developers, contributing to a strong local identity and helping to position towns as places where culture and community thrive.

'Paper Butterflies' (2020), in Jephson Gardens, Leamington,
by StelC Street Art. Image: Johnathan Branson



PUBLIC ART IN WARWICK DISTRICT: A RICH STARTING POINT

Warwick District already has a wealth of public art across Leamington Spa, Warwick, Kenilworth, and surrounding villages. This includes historic monuments, modern murals, sculptures, and installations by local and international artists. This strategy seeks to celebrate and build on this legacy. Below are just some examples of art in the public realm across our four towns, and images of other local examples are included throughout this document:



Royal Leamington Spa Colour Palette (2022)

This installation features large colour swatches, each symbolising aspects of the town such as Arts & Culture, Innovation, Sports & Leisure, Nature, Entertainment, History, and Community. Developed with public input, the palette was designed by Birmingham-based artist Stacey Barnfield to celebrate local heritage and identity and produced as part of Warwick District Council's Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Cultural Programme. Find out more about the Colour Palette work on [Warwick District Council's website](#).

Artist: Stacey Barnfield

Location: Leamington Spa

Funder: Warwickshire District Council

Project duration: 24 months

Cost: £38.2k

Resource: 2 X Warwick District Council Officers time



Down by the River (2022)

Located near the River Leam in Jephson Gardens, this sculpture by Spencer Jenkins consists of tall, reed-like structures made from Corten steel, accompanied by pebble-shaped seating. The design draws inspiration from the river's natural elements and the town's theatrical legacy, serving as both a functional seating area and a piece of art. Commissioned by Warwickshire County Council as part of their 'Our Spaces' project, which offered artists, designers, and creatives the opportunity to get invaluable experience working on a collaborative public realm project.

Find out more on [Warwickshire County Council's website](#).

Artist: Spencer Jenkins

Location: Leamington Spa

Funder: Warwickshire County Council

Project duration: 24 months

Cost: tbc

Resource: Warwickshire County Council and Warwick District Council Officer time



The Lady of Shrubland Street (2024)

Situated on Shrubland Street, this Art Nouveau-style mural portrays a woman's face adorned with a floral headdress featuring autumnal blooms. Designed by Tim Robottom of Brink Contemporary Arts, the mural enhances the area's aesthetic and highlights the town's growing street art scene. The work was produced with funding from Art Friends Warwickshire and forms part of Leamington Mural Festival Street Art Trail. Find out more about this work on the [BBC's website](#).

Artist: Brink

Location: Leamington Spa

Funder: Part Funder: Art Friends Warwickshire

Project duration: 6 months

Cost: £6k - £8k

Resource: Brink + Technician



The White Ash Tree (2022)

Pangaea was commissioned to design, fabricate and install a feature artwork for the Whitnash Civic Centre to celebrate its one-year anniversary. Inspired by the White Ash Tree, the symbol of the town, the six-metre long wall relief was constructed out of layers of furniture-grade ply, bespoke veneered with white ash, oak and walnut. The design creates a sense of being within the tree's canopy. It was inspired by the Japanese concept of Forest Bathing, proven to reduce stress hormone production, produce feelings of happiness and free up creativity. Find out more about this work on [Pangaea's website](#).

Artist: Pangaea Design Studio

Location: Whitnash

Funder: Whitnash Town Council

Project duration: Unknown

Cost: Unknown

Resource: Unknown



Randolph Turpin (2001)

The life-size bronze statue of world middleweight boxing champion Randolph Turpin stands in Warwick Market Place, near his childhood home. Sculpted by Carl Payne and unveiled in 2001 on the 50th anniversary of Turpin's historic victory over Sugar Ray Robinson, the statue was commissioned by the Randolph Turpin Memorial Fund with support from the local community and boxing world. Find out more about this work on [Wikipedia's website](#).

Artist: Carly Payne

Location: Warwick

Funder: Randolph Turpin Memorial Fund

Project duration: Unknown

Cost: Unknown

Resource: Unknown



Millennium Globe (2001)

The Millennium Globe is a large spherical fountain mounted on a pedestal with a pool at its base. Water continuously flows over the smooth granite sphere, creating reflections and sounds as it cascades, symbolising continuity, community, and renewal at the dawn of the 21st century. Find out more about this work on [Art UK's website](#).

Artist: WARCO

Location: Kenilworth

Funder: Warwick District Council and WARCO

Project duration: Unknown

Cost: Unknown

Resource: Unknown

THE COUNCIL'S ROLE: ENABLER, ADVOCATE & PARTNER

Warwick District Council supports public art by:

- Providing guidance and best practice
- Enabling access to council-owned land, when and where available
- Supporting partnerships between artists, organisations, and communities
- Championing the value of public art in strategic planning and placemaking

Warwick District Council does not control or decide what counts as public art. Furthermore, the Council is not a gatekeeper for art in the public realm and has limited resources to support future activity, so this toolkit ensures that creatives have the information needed to navigate requirements and realise their ideas independently or in partnership.

WORKING WITH LOCAL COUNCILLORS: BUILDING SUPPORT AND ENSURING SUCCESS

Engaging with local councillors early in the process of public art installation is crucial for ensuring the success and longevity of a project. Councillors play a key role in representing the interests and concerns of the local community, and their support can help secure buy-in from residents and stakeholders. They are instrumental in identifying suitable locations, facilitating access to council resources, and helping to navigate any political or logistical challenges. By collaborating with councillors, artists and organisations can ensure that public art projects align with local priorities and have the backing needed for smooth delivery. Councillors can also advocate for the project, increasing its visibility and strengthening its relevance to the community, while fostering a sense of ownership and pride in the artwork.

Here are links to Councillors with responsibilities within Warwick District:

- **Warwickshire County Council** (select relevant town via 'division' drop down):
<https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/mgFindMember.aspx>
- **Warwick District Council**
<https://estates8.warwickdc.gov.uk/cmis/CouncillorsAtoZ.aspx>
- **Warwick Town Council**
<https://www.warwicktowncouncil.gov.uk/the-councillors/>
- **Leamington Spa Town Council**
<https://www.leamingtonspatowncouncil.gov.uk/the-council/councillors/>
- **Whitnash Town Council**
<https://www.whitnashtowncouncil.gov.uk/the-council/councillors>
- **Kenilworth Town Council**
<https://kenilworth-tc.gov.uk/your-council/councillors/>

'The Warwick Colour Palette' 2022, Warwick Railway Station. By Stacey Barnfield. Credit: Johnathan Branson



KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DELIVERING PUBLIC ART

1. PERMISSIONS & LANDHOLDER CONSENT

All public art requires permission from the landowner. For council-owned land, [contact the Arts team](#) in the first instance, and they will establish the correct department and team to liaise with (e.g. Assets, Green Spaces). The Arts Team will then work with you to explore viable options. For private land, you must obtain written consent from the landowner.

2. PLANNING & CONSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

Depending on the scale, location, and permanence of the work, planning consent may be required. This is especially important for:

- **Listed buildings**

Listing provides extra control over what changes can be made to a building's interior and exterior. You will need to apply for listed building consent for most types of work that affect the building's special architectural or historic interest. Further information on heritage consents can be found on [English Heritage's website](#).

- **Conservation areas**

Conservation areas exist to protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place, including the features that make it unique and distinctive. There are extra planning controls in conservation areas, covering the external appearance of buildings and works to trees. These controls are intended to protect the architectural and natural features that make the place special. Further information about conservation areas can be found on [Warwick District Council's website](#).



Priority Pools Mural in Warwick by Brink.
Photo: Huw Bowen of Sundog Industries

- **Works above a certain size or with lighting/sound**

Planning permission is generally required if a sculpture, for example, is over four metres high and/or has moving parts - and is installed on private land next to a highway (road, footpath). To help you understand how planning policies may affect your proposals we advise that you get pre-application advice from Warwick District Council's Planning Team. You can find out more about pre application advice and associated costs on [Warwick District Council's website](#).

3. MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT

Public art must be cared for over time. Consider:

- Materials and durability
- Long-term ownership
- Maintenance responsibilities
- Graffiti and damage
- Decommissioning (if temporary)

Never assume the landowner will take on ownership and costs of maintenance, insurance and decommissioning of a newly installed piece of artwork. This should always be established before work commences.

4. INSURANCE & RISK

When creating or installing public art, it's essential to have the right insurance in place to protect the artist, the public, and the artwork itself. Types of Insurance to consider:

- **Public Liability Insurance**

Covers injury to members of the public or damage to property caused by the artwork or during installation. Usually required by local authorities and landowners. Recommended minimum: £5 million cover, though some sites may require £10 million.

- **Employer's Liability Insurance**

Required if the artist or organisation employs others (e.g., assistants or subcontractors).

- **Installation/Contract Works Insurance**

Covers risks during fabrication or installation (e.g., weather, transport, accidents).

- **Artwork Insurance**

Covers the physical artwork against theft, vandalism, or damage once installed. Insurance may be arranged by the commissioner, council, or landowner if they are taking ownership.

- **Professional Indemnity Insurance**

Advisable if the artist is offering consultancy or design services.

Who should hold the insurance?

- Freelance artists should hold their own public liability insurance and risk assessment documentation.
- Community groups or commissioning bodies may be responsible for additional cover.
- Councils may require proof of insurance before allowing installation on public land.

EMBEDDING PUBLIC ART IN PLACEMAKING

[Warwick District Creative Framework](#) identifies 'Placemaking' as a key strategic theme, recognising the role that creativity and culture can play in shaping distinctive, inclusive, and vibrant places. Public art enhances this vision by:

- Improving the look and feel of streetscapes and green spaces
- Supporting inclusive and accessible design
- Reflecting local voices, identities, and heritage
- Bringing life to underused or transitional spaces

Where possible, public art should be considered from the outset of regeneration schemes, new developments, and infrastructure projects. Early integration allows for more meaningful, site-responsive outcomes that contribute to [Warwick District Council's Corporate Strategy](#) priorities, including thriving communities, vibrant places, and health and wellbeing.

This doesn't mean adding unnecessary complexity. It's about working with the right partners at the right time to ensure public art adds value, not burden. The Arts Section can support this by brokering relationships, coordinating artist involvement, and developing clear briefs that align with the wider project vision.

'The Royal Leamington Spa Colour Palette' (2022). Leamington Railway Station. By Stacey Barnfield. Image: Stacey Barnfield



However, involvement in every project isn't guaranteed. Public art depends on practical considerations such as available funding, procurement routes, and the capacity to support artist-led work. Where opportunities do arise, the Arts Section will work proactively to advise and enable meaningful creative contributions, but this must be balanced with the scale and resource of each project.

Examples of how public art can be embedded include:

- Section 106 agreements* securing funding for site-specific commission
- Design codes or planning conditions encouraging artist involvement early in design development
- Temporary or meanwhile projects that test ideas and animate space during longer-term planning or construction
- Integrated infrastructure design, such as artist-led features in parks, transport hubs or wayfinding schemes
- Creative placemaking collaborations, where artists contribute alongside architects, planners, and communities
- Embedding public art requires early conversations and practical planning, but with the right coordination, it adds long-term value to places and communities

*At the time of publication, Warwick District Council does not have a policy to support public art via Section 106. Please visit the '[CIL and Section 106](#)' webpage on Warwick District Council's website for further information.

TIPS FOR CREATIVES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

1. START WITH A CLEAR VISION AND PURPOSE

Be clear about why you want to create a piece of public art. Is it to reflect local heritage, enhance a public space, raise awareness of a cause, or give a platform to underrepresented voices? A strong concept will help shape decisions and attract support. Make sure your vision can be communicated in simple terms to a wide audience, including funders, partners, and residents.

2. IDENTIFY AND ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS EARLY

Public art doesn't happen in isolation. From local councils and landowners to schools, businesses, and residents, stakeholders will play a vital role in shaping the project. Involving them early can help you:

- Build support and reduce objections
- Access funding, venues, or permissions
- Ensure the work is relevant and welcomed by the community

Map out who might be impacted by or interested in the project and open channels for dialogue.



3. CHOOSE APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS AND SEEK PERMISSIONS

Not every space is suitable for public art. Consider:

- Who owns the land or wall? You'll need permission from the property owner
- Visibility and footfall: Will people see and engage with it?
- Site safety and access, for both artists during installation and for public use afterward
- Planning regulations: Some projects may need formal consent, especially if they are permanent, illuminated, or large-scale
- Start conversations with your local authority early, they can advise or broker connections.

4. CONSIDER THE COMMUNITY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Think about the stories, voices, and history that are embedded in the place. Does your idea reflect, challenge, or celebrate this identity? Engaging the community in shaping the concept, through workshops, interviews, or co-design, can add depth and increase ownership. Avoid tokenism and be sensitive to local histories, especially those involving trauma or underrepresented groups.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Key considerations:

- Material Choices: Select sustainable, non-toxic, and locally sourced materials where possible. Avoid single-use plastics or materials with a high carbon footprint.
- Longevity & Lifecycle: Consider the durability of the work and its end-of-life plan. Can it be reused, recycled, or safely decommissioned?
- Energy Use: For installations requiring lighting, sound, or interactive elements, prioritise energy-efficient technologies such as solar power or LED lighting.
- Transport & Installation: Minimise the environmental impact of transporting materials and artwork by working with local suppliers and fabricators.
- Impact on Site Ecology: Ensure the artwork does not negatively affect local wildlife, green spaces, or protected habitats.
- Maintenance: Factor in low-impact cleaning and conservation methods to avoid the use of harmful chemicals or excessive water.
- Community Awareness: Use the opportunity to promote environmental responsibility through the theme, message, or educational outreach of the artwork.

7. COLLABORATE WITH EXPERIENCED ARTISTS WHEN POSSIBLE

Professional artists bring valuable experience in delivering projects in the public realm, including working to briefs, navigating technical constraints, and engaging communities. If you're commissioning a piece, think about how to:

- Write a clear brief with selection criteria
- Promote the opportunity fairly and openly
- Include the community in the selection or co-creation process

If you're an artist yourself, consider teaming up with others who have complementary skills, e.g., fabrication, participatory practice, or project management.



8. ENSURE YOUR APPROACH IS INCLUSIVE

Consider who is represented in your work, who is involved in the process, and who benefits. Public art should reflect the diversity of our communities.

9. DOCUMENT THE PROCESS AND CELEBRATE OUTCOMES!

Public art is as much about the journey as the final piece. Capture key milestones through photography, short videos, or testimonials from participants. This not only builds a legacy and shows impact, but can also be valuable for:

- Reporting to funders
- Publicity and media
- Inspiring future projects

Don't forget to celebrate success—host an unveiling, organise a community event, or share stories online. These moments build pride and connection.

Installation of 'The Unknown Refugee',
in Jephson Gardens, Leamington. By
John Bridgeman. Credit: Andrew Barker



FUNDING

There are a range of funding sources available to artists and creatives to develop and create art for the public realm, but the criteria to access funds often differs by funder and by funding stream. Some funders require you to be established as a business or charity, others require you to have three years of accounts in place, and some are specifically targeted at young and/or emerging artists. Here are some examples of funders:

- **Arts Council England (ACE)**
Funds a wide range of arts in the public realm including artist commissions, public installations, community engagement projects and creative placemaking. <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk>
- **Art Fund / Jerwood Art Fund Commissions**
Supports innovative commissions by artists for museums and galleries, including works displayed in public spaces.
<https://www.artfund.org/professional/get-funding/programmes/jerwood-art-fund-commissions>
- **VIA Art Fund**
US-based but supports international contemporary public realm art projects with a focus on innovation and audience engagement. <https://viaartfund.org/grants>
- **National Lottery Heritage Fund**
Funds heritage-led public art, regeneration projects, sculptures, creative trails and interpretation features that engage communities. <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk>
- **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**
Supports ambitious, often high-risk public art and cultural projects that promote social impact and community engagement. <https://esmeefairbairn.org.uk>
- **The Pilgrim Trust**
Funds public art projects that preserve or interpret heritage, including sculpture and place-based art that links to history and social change. <https://www.thepilgrimtrust.org.uk>
- **Rayne Foundation**
Offers grants for public arts and crafts projects that have a strong social purpose, particularly those with community benefit. <http://www.raynefoundation.org.uk>
- **Marsh Charitable Trust (Marsh Christian Trust)**
Recognises outstanding public art and heritage efforts through awards, particularly in sculpture and volunteer-led cultural work. <https://www.marshcharitabletrust.org>
- **Warwick District Council – Arts Grants**
Offers small grants to support local . <https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/artsgrants>

- **The Pilgrim Trust**

Funds public art projects that preserve or interpret heritage, including sculpture and place-based art that links to history and social change.

<https://www.thepilgrimtrust.org.uk>

- **Rayne Foundation**

Offers grants for public arts and crafts projects that have a strong social purpose, particularly those with community benefit.

<http://www.raynefoundation.org.uk>

- **Marsh Charitable Trust (Marsh Christian Trust)**

Recognises outstanding public art and heritage efforts through awards, particularly in sculpture and volunteer-led cultural work.

<https://www.marshcharitabletrust.org>

- **Warwick District Council – Arts Grants**

Offers small grants to support local.

<https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/artsgrants>

USEFUL CONTACTS AND LINKS

LINKS:

- **Warwick District Council Corporate Strategy**

https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20854/corporate_strategy

- **Warwick District Council's Arts and Cultural Strategy**

To follow

- **Planning & Conservation:**

<https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20004/planning>

- **Warwick District Council Arts Team:**

https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20356/arts_development/1580/about_the_arts_in_warwick_district

- **Warwick District Creative Framework**

https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20833/creative_framework

CONTACTS:

- **Paul Robert**, Arts Manager, Warwick District Council: Paul.Roberts@warwickdc.gov.uk

- **Johnathan Branson**, Projects and Development Manager (Arts), Warwick District Council: Johnathan.Branson@warwickdc.gov.uk

- **Connor Elliman**, Arts Officer, Warwick District Council: Connor.Elliman@warwickdc.gov.uk



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: I'd like to paint a mural in Warwick District. Can the Council provide a space?

Warwick District Council owns and manages a variety of buildings and sites across the district. However, as of August 2025, there are currently no available spaces for new murals on Council-managed property.

Q: Why are there so many murals appearing in Leamington, but I can't seem to find anywhere to paint?

Most of the murals you see in Leamington and the surrounding areas have been developed by individuals or organisations independently of the Council. These artworks are usually located on private property and are funded by the artists or the person / organisation commissioning the work.

Q: Does Warwick District Council have any say over where public art is placed?

The Council's Planning and Conservation Teams assess applications for new public artworks in accordance with planning and conservation policies. However, the Council does not make decisions about artworks installed on private land or those that do not require planning permission.

Q: If I have identified a site to install a mural or piece of art, can you help me secure it?

Possibly. It depends on a few factors. If the site is privately owned, we're unable to get involved directly. If it is land owned by Warwick District Council, we're happy to have a conversation and explore the possibility with you. If the site is suitable and available, we would need to consult with our procurement team to ensure the process for commissioning an artist is fair and transparent. In most cases, this means the opportunity would be opened to all eligible artists, with a selection panel choosing the most appropriate proposal based on a clear set of criteria.

Q. Should public art opportunities in Warwick District be reserved for local artists - and artists from underrepresented groups in the area?

The decision rests with the commissioner of the artwork and will be clearly set out in the artist brief. The approach may depend on how the project is funded and who is providing that funding. Some funding streams require opportunities to be targeted towards local artists or those from underrepresented groups, while others are open to a wider pool. There are several factors to consider, including the aims of the project, location, and community engagement priorities. Selection panels for public art projects normally use criteria that reflects these aims and any funding obligations, with applications scored against that agreed framework. This, however, will not apply to self-funded works and works on private land.

Q: Can the Arts Section help me apply for funds and develop a proposal?

The Arts Section can provide advice and information on best-practice, and signpost artists to funding. The team can act as a critical friend and review your proposals, but it does not provide fundraising services.

Got a question that isn't answered in this document?
Email it to Johnathan.branson@warwickdc.gov.uk.



'The Spring' (2016), The Parade, Leamington. By Oliver Barratt. Image credit: Robert Lavers / Art UK

PUBLIC ART PROJECT CHECKLIST

1. Project Planning

- ☐ Do I have a clear vision and purpose for the artwork?
- ☐ Have I identified the story, message, or community value I want to convey?
- ☐ Can I explain my concept simply to a wide audience (public, funders, stakeholders)?

2. Site & Permissions

- ☐ Have I chosen an appropriate and visible site?
- ☐ Have I confirmed who owns the land or wall (private or council)?
- ☐ Do I have written permission from the landowner?
- ☐ Have I contacted Warwick District Council's Arts Team if considering council-owned land?

3. Planning & Regulations

- ☐ Does the work require planning permission (e.g., over 4m tall, illuminated, near roads)?
- ☐ Is the site within a conservation area or on/near a listed building?
- ☐ Have I sought pre-application planning advice if needed?
- ☐ Have I reviewed relevant planning/conservation policies?

4. Community & Stakeholder Engagement

- ☐ Have I mapped out potential stakeholders (residents, councillors, businesses)?
- ☐ Have I engaged the community in co-design or consultation?
- ☐ Have I involved local councillors to build support?

5. Materials, Maintenance & Longevity

- ☐ Have I selected durable, site-appropriate materials?
- ☐ Who will maintain the artwork long-term?
- ☐ Have maintenance responsibilities and costs been agreed?
- ☐ Is there a plan for decommissioning (if temporary)?

7. Risk & Insurance

- ☐ Do I hold valid public liability insurance (£5m–£10m recommended)?
- ☐ Do I need installation insurance or artwork insurance?
- ☐ Will I be employing others (requiring employer's liability)?
- ☐ Have I completed a risk assessment for installation?

8. Budget & Funding

- ☐ Have I identified funding sources (e.g. Arts Council England, local grants)?

Have I included costs for:

- ☐ Artist fees
- ☐ Materials and fabrication
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Installation
- ☐ Community engagement
- ☐ Maintenance
- ☐ Have I checked eligibility and applied to relevant funders?

9. Collaboration & Partnerships

- ☐ Am I collaborating with experienced artists, fabricators, or designers if needed?
- ☐ If commissioning others, do I have a clear brief and selection process

10.Documentation & Evaluation

- ☐ Am I documenting key stages of the project (photos, testimonials, video)?
- ☐ Is there a plan to celebrate and launch the work (unveiling, event, media)?
- ☐ How will I evaluate and report on the project’s impact?

11. Administration

- ☐ Do I have contracts or agreements in place (e.g., with commissioners or partners)?
- ☐ Have I included acknowledgements for funders and collaborators?
- ☐ Do I have a realistic timeline with key milestones?



PUBLIC ART
PROJECT
FLOWCHART

This flowchart shows a typical journey for developing a public art project. Every project will look slightly different depending on its scale, location, and who is leading it, but this outline may be a useful starting point if you’re beginning from scratch.

Scale Indicators

- Small / Temporary : 6–12 months
- Medium: 12–24 months
- Large / Permanent: 2–5 years

1. Idea & Vision

- Define purpose
- Research place/context
- Draft concept

2. Early Engagement

- Talk to landowners, councillors, residents
- Gather feedback
- Refine idea

3. Permissions & Feasibility

- Confirm land ownership
- Planning/listed building checks
- Technical feasibility
- Maintenance responsibilities

4. Fundraising & Partnerships

- Set budget
- Apply for grants/sponsorship
- Build partnerships

5. Artist Appointment & Design Development

- Write artist brief
- Selection process
- Co-design with community
- Secure planning consents

6. Fabrication & Installation

- Technical drawings
- Fabrication
- Risk/insurance checks
- On-site installation

7. Launch & Celebration

- Unveiling
- Community/press event
- Document impact

8. Maintenance & Legacy

- Ongoing care
- Ownership agreements
- Review points for temporary works

APPENDICES

FURTHER READING

- **Brighton & Hove City Council: Public art commissioning toolkit**

This toolkit is aimed at anyone commissioning public art, including developers and their architects, landscape designers, consultants, and local authority planning officers. It has been produced by Brighton & Hove City Council to provide guidance and best practice advice in commissioning public art well.

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-arts/arts-and-culture/public-art-commissioning-toolkit>

- **Arts and Place Shaping: Evidence Review (2020)**

In January 2020, Arts Council England commissioned Wavehill Ltd. to undertake a review of the importance of arts and culture in the lives of people, communities and places. This review builds on previous research which presented evidence of the ability of arts and culture to promote and drive positive economic and social outcomes at a local level and contribute to place-shaping.

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/placemaking%20wavehill.pdf>

- **Arts and Wellbeing: Review of the Social Value of Place-Based Arts Interventions (2022)**

This report summarises a project aimed at understanding the wellbeing value of place-based arts and culture interventions. It offers findings to help funders and deliverers of arts and culture interventions maximize wellbeing impacts.

<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Arts-Wellbeing.-A-review-of-the-social-value-of-place-based-arts-interventions-updated-30.01.2023.pdf>

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