




**A PUBLIC ART
STRATEGY
FOR
GLOUCESTER**

A PUBLIC ART STRATEGY FOR GLOUCESTER

TICKERTAPE PARADE CIC
JANUARY 2026



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INTRODUCTION

Gloucester's growth and evolution, from Roman times onwards, was borne out of its strategic significance as the lowest bridging point of the River Severn. Everything flows from there, and everything came through Gloucester; ships, workers, trade, and new cultures arrived with the tide. When the docks opened, the town opened too – to Europeans, to people from every corner of Britain, to anyone seeking opportunity. It became a place of exchange, a place to rest and invest, to travel through and to explore. Gloucester is defined by its lapping waves of new culture arriving, from Saxons to dockworkers to post-war migrants. Gloucester has always been a place where people came to make their home.

Gloucester can feel like the British Pompeii, hoarding an entire city beneath its feet. What we see of the last thousand years amounts to fragments: holes in the ground outside Boots and the Cathedral, the mosaics on Westgate Street, with little explanation and even less fanfare. Reflecting the beauty of our own city back at us is a big challenge in Gloucester, when we are profoundly unaware of what lies beneath. There are so many powerful,

stories here, under the surface.

Open a hidden hatch in the floor of St Mary de Lode and you'll see, beneath the surface, the rush of water running through a Roman mausoleum; shine a light, and under the dark water you'll glimpse Roman tiles. Stand at The Cross, the meeting point of Eastgate, Westgate, Northgate and Southgate streets – the historic heart of the city – and imagine the 36-foot cross that once rose there, and the ornate water fountain that would flow with wine when Gloucester celebrated. Walk down wide Westgate Street, tracing the blue bricks along the centre with your feet, and you'll be marking where its central row of shops and houses once stood.

We start from the maxim that we should be proud of being from Gloucester and our civic pride should be celebrated on our streets. We need more in our neighbourhoods, in our city centre and in our daily lives that reinforces pride in who we are and where we're from. So, in a time when identity and belonging are so hotly contested, where indeed are we from?

Two thousand years ago, *Glevum* was famous as a place for Roman military retirees, drawn from every part of Eurasia and Northern Africa. Successive waves of migration – Roman, Saxon, Viking and Huguenot – each layered new cultural traditions on the city, as *Glevum* became *Glevensium* became the Anglo-Saxon *Gloucestre*. Our civic collections show artefacts in the city from Tunisia, Gaza, Rhodes and Hungary, not as spoils but as reminders of home. When you see those blue brick indications in the floor of Westgate Street indicating additional streets of buildings down the centre, know that you are just yards from where Gloucester's Jewish quarter once thrived before its residents were forcibly expelled and the quarter scrubbed from the city; when you eat dinner in Baker's Quay or take almost any regional railways,

you are enjoying the entrepreneurial endeavours of Samuel Baker, an investor in slavery so vociferous that he was called to parliament as the leading voice to make the case for its continuation. From the moment Gloucester was chosen as the place to build the canal and docks, it has had a consciously polyphonous heritage. Some may tell you that a multivoiced, multicultural, global city is a modern invention; in Gloucester it is its founding document.

This is a Public Art Strategy that aims to grow our pride in Gloucester, built on consultation, consent, and collaboration. We have such a rich story to tell, one to resonate far beyond the city, when we embrace what was otherwise hidden. In this strategy we will embrace innovative ways to change people's perceptions through creativity and to reveal what's beneath our surface through artistic





interventions, drawing out our lost heritage and our living subcultures. Public art can do this. Public Art can transform public space, encapsulate a notional identity and shifting perceptions, all at once.

Modern Gloucester – from the Quays to Smiles Cafe, the Uni to the Picturedrome, from The Music Works to Kingsholm – is a place where art meets community, technology meets craft, and heritage meets experimentation. As individuals and collectively, culture is everything we do and everything we are, and this strategy aims to demand that our great culture and our great art is visible and present as an essential part of our daily lives.

Within the city centre, this takes the form of making Gloucester more visibly creative, more welcoming, walkable and connected, and linking up what's seen with what's hidden. Currently there are just individual pinpricks of creative and heritage interventions across the city, waiting to be united and complemented, with the aim of making a visit to Gloucester a continuous journey that draws you further and further into appreciating where Gloucester comes from, and where it is going.

Yet experience has imbued a lack of belief in our own culture, and a sense that nothing good lasts. In our consultation we encountered a wealth of unique subcultures

behind closed doors and artists creating in back rooms; yet who would know it from the way the city presents itself? If we are risk-averse, if we lack faith in our own cultural vision, if we perpetuate a cycle of outsider consultants delivering new strategies with a lack of resourcing to take them forward, then all we achieve is to contribute to exhaustion and cynicism, to lower cultural expectations and keep our best stories and our best creativity hidden until they are lost for good.

We will design a sustainable, long-term programme to guide new public art commissioning in the city – harnessing new structures and collaborations and utilising the power of temporary and semi-permanent interventions to instil dynamic, continuous, positive disruption. Civic public art can be elitist, monolithic, institutional and, worst of all, bland; instead, our city's public art will be proudly inclusive, responsive and community-centred. We intend to shape an approach to Gloucester's public art as something that endures not by standing still, but by keeping the city in motion.

Tickertape Parade CIC

Tim Hodgson
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RATIONALE

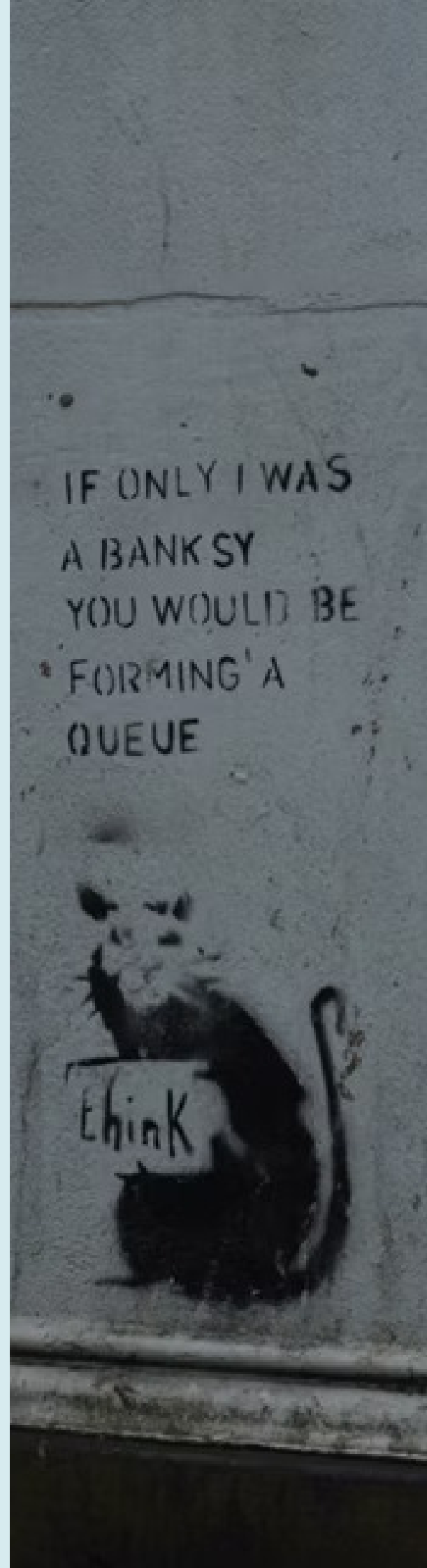
DO WE NEED A NEW PUBLIC ART STRATEGY?

Great cities need great cultural leadership — leadership that invites communities, young people, creatives, residents and newcomers alike to consider and respond to their shared environment. A public art strategy provides the movement and the ideal around which people can coalesce, strategise and fundraise.

It sets out clear principles to ensure equity and best practice in commissioning, facilitating, assessing and managing the city's public art. It establishes processes, criteria and frameworks that enable commissioners to confidently facilitate new artworks, reduce barriers and prevent blockages or indecision. Above all, it encourages a coherent narrative about the city — one that celebrates its past, embraces its present and imagines its future through creativity in public space.

Even in periods of financial constraint, a city requires a coherent public art strategy precisely because scarce resources demand clarity of purpose. A clear strategy allows limited funding to be targeted, leveraged and aligned with wider objectives such as economic development, place-making, tourism and community cohesion.

A defined vision for public art enables a city to make intelligent choices about where intervention will have the greatest impact, rather than relying on sporadic, reactive or ad hoc projects. The current approach of muddling through— aspiring to improvements in the public realm without allocating a clear vision, budget or dedicated personnel—is not sustainable. Without ownership and accountability, public art becomes a piecemeal landscape shaped by chance rather than intention, and by external interests rather than civic priorities.





A modest but explicit commitment, articulated through a public art strategy, is therefore not an extravagance but a necessity: it provides structure, discipline and legitimacy, ensuring that even in the most constrained circumstances, the city's public spaces are shaped deliberately, equitably and with long-term value in mind.

DO WE NEED PUBLIC ART?

Public art creates a sense of place and local distinctiveness, shaping the city's character in the imaginations of residents and visitors alike. It can capture a moment or evoke a place, stimulating debate and engaging people in the ongoing building of the city.¹

Public art can help to express diverse identities and play a vital role in integrating existing and new communities. It enables people to participate together, to learn about one another's lives, and to see their own stories reflected in the



public realm. It makes a city more legible, allowing people to orient themselves and to engage more deeply with their surroundings. It encourages citizens to rediscover and interact with their environment in new ways.

Public art is the most visible and accessible means by which a city can express its character. There is abundant evidence demonstrating why it matters — for people, for places, for health and wellbeing, and for the economy.² As Ming Cheung, Gilbert Guaring, Natasha Smith and Owen Craven write in *The Impacts of Public Art on Cities, Places and People's Lives*, 2021:

'Public art's accessibility to a broad audience and its potential to bring together individuals from diverse backgrounds have granted it a unique power to make strong, enduring impacts on cities, places and people's lives.'³

Public art brings a wide range of additional benefits that reach deeply into the life of the city. It has clear health and wellbeing impacts,⁴ offering opportunities for reflection, connection and joy in shared public spaces. It can empower local artists, craftspeople and fabricators, giving them a visible role in shaping their environment and sustaining creative employment within the city.

Public art encourages inward investment, enhancing our appeal to businesses, investors and visitors alike.⁵ It can attract new visitors to the city and create a richer, more engaged experience for those who come. By creating a strong sense of belonging and sense of place, public art reinforces civic pride and identity.⁶ It can stimulate and articulate new and challenging cultural ideas, helping to position cities as diverse and inclusive spaces where ideas can be openly discussed and debated. It enables us to interpret the social, heritage and political significance of 'place', revealing hidden stories and multiple voices.

Public art can also improve community safety by making public spaces more active, welcoming and cared for. It can encourage public transport use and other modal changes, supporting a more sustainable and people-centred city. Crucially, it provides an opportunity to empower and involve communities in decision-making, ensuring that the city's shared spaces reflect the people who live, work and create within them.

CONSULTATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In September 2025 Tickertape Parade CIC were commissioned by Gloucester City Council to develop a Public Art Strategy and Commissioning Framework for the city. As the most visible and accessible form of art, public art is an essential and palpable indicator of a thriving and dynamic city. The public art approach will inform and contextualise several key strategic plans in development including Gloucester's new cultural strategy and its drive to increase meaningful cultural engagement in the city after being identified as a 'Priority Place' until 2027 by Arts Council England.⁷

This report forms one of a suite of inputs that evidence and inform the work undertaken and should be read in context of the wider research, strategy, and framework contained later within this document. Another of these inputs, a new SWOT Report for public art in Gloucester, forms Appendix 1 of this document.

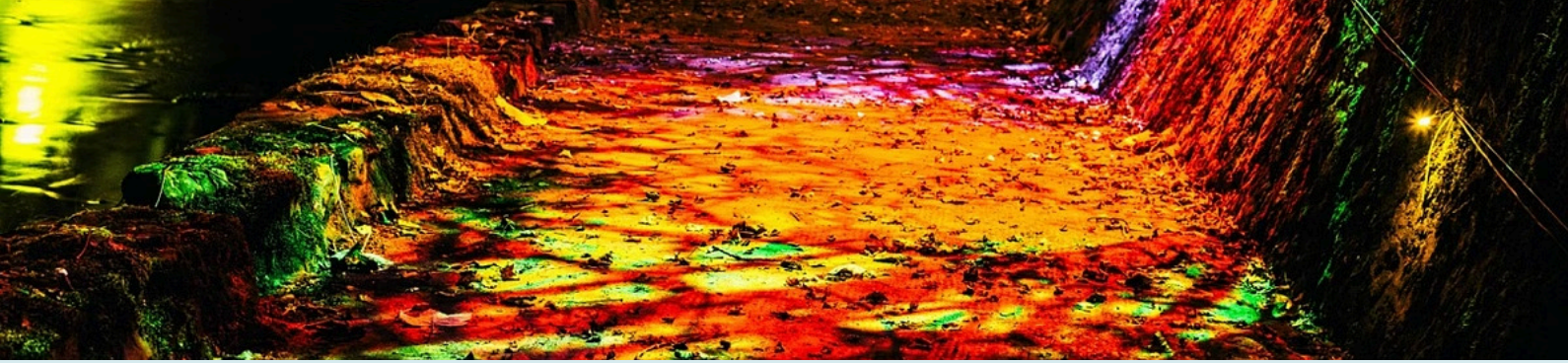
OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Over 40 individuals were engaged in these initial conversations, including:

- City Council staff working in Culture & Leisure, Youth Engagement, Planning & Development, Asset Management, Marketing, Heritage & Conservation, Regeneration, Policy, City Growth and Delivery, Cabinet Members
- Cultural and Higher Education sector organisations
- Community-led and community development organisations
- Cultural specialists, creatives and leaders

The consultation was undertaken in semi-structured meetings delivered both online and in person. Research areas explored: interviewees' experience of using the public realm; their characterisation of Gloucester's current public art offer; their experiences of commissioning, planning, or delivering public art in Gloucester; the priority sites, strands, or sites of major opportunity or need; the key outcomes that they want to see a public art strategy achieving for Gloucester; and the unique qualities of Gloucester that should be informing a public art strategy.

Beyond this, conversations focused on consultants' individual areas of expertise including interactivity with the Strategic Local Plan, City Masterplan and Asset Management, and sharing learning from direct delivery, planning processes, arts and cultural engagement and heritage management.



CONTEXT

The definition of Public Art utilised for this work is outlined within Gloucester City Council's Cabinet Meeting report in December 2024, which stated:

'Public art refers to permanent, semi-permanent, temporary and event-based works of art in any media created for and presented in the public realm. For the avoidance of doubt the scope of this report does not include historic statues and monuments. Public art should have a function and/or purpose and not be merely decorative. This can include helping to convey a place's identity or narrative, interpreting a place's history and heritage, contributing to civic pride, assisting with welcome and wayfinding or creating places for people to sit. Public art can play a central role in placemaking. Art and culture play an increasingly important role in attracting people to spend time in city centres as the role of retail continues to diminish. Whilst the involvement of artists in the creation of public art is essential, the most successful public art often also involves communities in commissioning and co-design processes.'

The cabinet report goes on to note the regular practice of utilising Section 106 funds to support public art, which is not currently in place in Gloucester. There is no consistent or sustainable mechanism for funding public art within Gloucester City Council, nor indeed within the city's wider cultural sector. However, there is a stated intention within the cabinet report to support the creation of a minimum 0.6FTE role for the implementation of this newly commissioned Public Art Strategy.

Within Gloucester's existing policy documents there are several references to

public art. The JCS Policy SD4 notes that Public Art is a contributor of quality to the public realm; the Gloucester Public Realm Strategy (2017) in Section 5.9 describes the benefits, forms and principles of public art and references the 2006 Public Art Strategy.

In 2020, a new statement of intent entitled '5 Principles of Public Art' was published by council culture officers, complemented by a newly commissioned 'Placemaking and Place Marketing Approach' for the city in 2021. The subsequent utilisation of the Placemaking report within council placemaking activities since appears to be minor.⁸

KEY FINDINGS

01

CLEAR PROCESSES AND SUPPORT TO ENABLE PUBLIC ART ARE URGENT AND REQUIRED

02

STRONG APPETITE AMONGST STAKEHOLDERS FOR CHANGE AND COLLABORATION

03

THERE ARE INSUFFICIENT VISUAL CUES⁹ TO NAVIGATE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

04

PRIORITISATION OF USER EXPERIENCE NEEDED IN THE PUBLIC REALM, INCLUDING EMPOWERING CONTESTED USES

05

WALKING, CYCLING, AND TRAVEL NEEDS TO BE AN ENGAGING, INTEGRATED PART OF GLOUCESTER'S EXPERIENCE

06

THERE SHOULD BE MORE OPPORTUNITY TO DWELL OR CONTEMPLATE IN STIMULATING OR SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

07

MORE COHERENT, LEGIBLE NARRATIVES FOR LOCALS AND VISITORS TO UNDERSTAND OUR CULTURE AND HERITAGE

08

EMOTION, MEMORY, IDENTITY, AND TRAUMA OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES IS LEGITIMATE PLACE DATA TO INFORM PUBLIC ART¹⁰

09

INCLUDE THE WHOLE OF GLOUCESTER, AND ARTICULATE ITS ROLE IN THE WIDER REGION

10

IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVE PRACTITIONERS AT EVERY LEVEL OF THEIR CAREER

11

INTEGRATE WITH WIDER CULTURAL PROGRAMMING THROUGHOUT GLOUCESTER

12

SLIDING SCALE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NEEDED ENCOMPASSING PARTICIPATION, CO-DESIGN AND CO-CREATION

13

COMMISSIONING ORGANISATIONS MUST REMAIN ACCOUNTABLE TO COMMUNITIES, RESIDENTS, AND CITIZENS, THESE ARE NOT 'HELICOPTER' INTERVENTIONS

CONSULTATION CONCLUSIONS

1. CURRENT PUBLIC ART OFFER

There is broad consensus that the current public art offer within Gloucester is indistinct, overly focused on sculptural work and lacks coherence. There is a litany of sculpture that spans decades and longer in the city, but a lack of dynamic, engaging contemporary work and fleeting temporary events means Gloucester does little to signal creativity within its public realm. The public art that is enjoyed is **often described as 'hidden' or unloved** due to insufficient maintenance, interpretation or communication. This is illustrated in the lack of a centralised register of public art or holistic responsibility for maintenance, and compounded by a lack of resources to manage civic assets.

Alongside this, there was a concern that focus and economic investment was too often on the newly developed city centre. This led to the perception that **historic Gloucester and residential areas were largely underserved** or engaged solely due to funding focuses rather than because they inherently deserve the right to author, participate in, and access art and culture.

A significant issue regularly identified was a **lack of physical connectivity** - the most common example was the journey from the docks to the historic centre.¹¹ It is vital to acknowledge the wealth of impactful public realm interventions which have been and are being delivered within Gloucester - artistically-led, place-based and community-led, encompassing organisations from **Gloucestershire Gateway Trust, Strike A Light and CHISPA to the Music Works, GL4 and Gloucester Cathedral**. References to the work of these and many other organisations were regularly mentioned as positive interventions to repeat, replicate, and grow. Their work in the public realm demonstrates the positive social and creative potential of locally rooted, **community-focused organisations acting as catalysts** for participation, connection and creative expression, illustrating what can be achieved when creativity and community investment align.

Work in the public realm and across sectors was often described as too siloed and not as frequent as desired. The work was often reliant on individuals, not consistently sustained or developed, leading to stagnation and smaller, unsustainable impacts.



CHARLES II
This statue was carved in 1662 by Stephen Baldwin and was set up in the Wheat Market in Southgate Street. It was removed in the middle of the eighteenth century and its whereabouts remained obscure until 1945 when it was re-discovered in pieces in a garden at Chax Hill. Re-erected in this position, 1960.

2. COMMISSIONING AND DELIVERY PROCESSES

FUNDING

Those with experience of centralised commissioning and delivery of public art in Gloucester cited a number of systemic and structural challenges. The **absence of clear frameworks and dedicated guidance** can result in confusion about responsibilities, long term aims, land ownership and maintenance.

A range of major limitations persist for utilising planning funding mechanisms such as Section 106 funding, Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL) and 'Percent for Art' models to support public art commissioning long-term, as directed in the initial briefing document.

Financial constraints are not faced solely by the local authority; current cultural funding models, typically operating on a project to project basis or over two- to

three-year cycles, are **not sufficient to sustain** a long-term cultural vision. Short-term investment does not allow for development of embedded cultural practices or the growth of a resilient creative ecosystem.

Long-term maintenance and strategic alignment challenges further limit effective commissioning and delivery; there are only a few organisations and models within Gloucester that are sufficiently resilient and dynamically funded to be able to contribute to such a model.

For Gloucester to nurture an imaginative and inclusive approach to public art, **partnership working must be central**. Collaboration between public bodies, cultural organisations, businesses, and communities is essential to build ambition, share risk, and ensure that public art reflects the city's diverse voices and evolving identity.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY

A wealth of desk research illustrated that the most successful and productive public art approaches are those where political leaders **empower the cultural sector to take ownership over a depoliticised creative strategy**.¹² Countless consulted organisations and individuals similarly recommended a new body, new processes and new impetus, complementary of the city council, to drive public realm culture. They cited challenges in council cross-departmental integration, resource and capacity strains and opaque land ownership in the city as key limitations in the current framework, but also the **energy and agency** that comes with a **motivated political leadership bringing a revolutionary impetus**, instituting it and then standing back to make space for it to happen.



In a stretched financial environment with targets in key areas (such as housing), cultural and environmental considerations can be seen as **discretionary** and lose out in new development allocations.

The cultural sector in Gloucester is often described as fragmented, with limited capacity and weak partnership structures. Yet the city is home to a rich tapestry of communities and cultural expressions - **Polish, Filipino, and Jamaican Independence Days** all contribute vibrancy and diversity to Gloucester's identity. These efforts, often resident-led, are not always fully recognised, resourced, or integrated into the city's wider cultural narrative.¹³

Public spaces like **Kings Square** encapsulate both the challenges and potential of Gloucester's public realm. While critiqued for weight loading, permissions and wayfinding challenges, it nonetheless offers **significant opportunities for collective and mutual acts**, mass participation, and community connection. It has been powerfully used as a site of contemporary cultural celebration, remembrance and protest.

3. STRATEGY AMBITION

An ambitious strategy requires an **enabling culture** to succeed. Embracing this approach requires the city to demonstrate that ideas can be followed through and that visible change is achievable. This means supporting creative practitioners, **removing procedural barriers** and showing that innovative approaches can result in tangible, lasting impact. Enabling ambition is a process that will take time, requiring consistency, leadership and visible success stories, well communicated.



The strategy should adopt a global outlook, learning from cities that have successfully reimaged their public spaces for inclusive, creative use. Consultants regularly referenced **international exemplars** such as Oslo's waterfront, with its integration of leisure, design, and civic activity, from Red Bull installations to saunas, diving areas, and communal seating. Other key locations cited include the South Bank in London and cities like Stockholm, Copenhagen, Utrecht, and São Paulo.

These references collectively highlight a flexible approach to urban life, one that sees the public realm as **playful, open and participatory and vehemently public**. Gloucester can draw on these inspirations to reframe its own approach to the design and activation of public spaces.



This ambition must be matched by institutional clarity and follow-through. The recently produced City Centre Vision is dynamic and compelling but needs the underpinning of funding, advocacy and institutional buy-in to be successfully implemented. In an era where residents can already feel disempowered in the face of developer-led change, we must **capitalise on compelling citywide strategies** borne out of consultation, or otherwise risk reinforcing public fatigue.

Finally, the strategy must address the shifting roles of temporary and permanent public art. Temporary projects have a vital role to play in testing ideas, animating underused spaces and developing meaningful community engagement. The city must **better articulate the benefits of temporary art** and identify barriers to transitioning successful temporary projects into permanent or long-term installations.

By adopting a structured approach to temporary interventions, seeing them as **catalysts rather than stopgaps**, Gloucester can create a dynamic, evolving public realm that reflects its ambitions, values and creativity.



4. PRIORITIES

WELCOME

The experience of moving through the city should evoke **openness, excitement and civic pride** in all of us. Journeys into Gloucester – from gateways and transport hubs to walking and cycling routes – should signal a sense of invitation and belonging. Public art can play an important role in defining these first impressions, helping to make the city's thresholds **memorable, inclusive and expressive** of its identity and drawing people onward to continue their exploration of the city's cultural identity. This ambition should align closely with active travel and public transport strategies, ensuring that public art enhances the aesthetic and experiential quality of sustainable travel routes across all parts of the city.



POSITIVE DISRUPTION AND ENGAGEMENT

Public art in Gloucester should **embrace positive disruption**, should contest and **challenge perceptions**, stimulate dialogue and encourage active participation in everyday life. Rather than being decorative or static, artworks should engage residents and visitors in questioning, imagining and reimagining their surroundings. This approach is inherently connected to engagement and ownership; public art should be something that **communities feel part of**, not something imposed upon them. By involving those who have historically been marginalised or misrepresented in the commissioning process and in the life of the artworks themselves, Gloucester can build a culture of shared responsibility, pride and curiosity about its public realm and fellow residents.

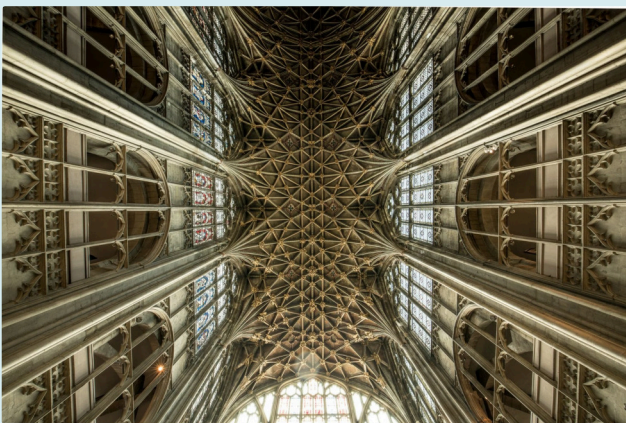


JOY AND PLAYFULNESS

The strategy should prioritise playful and surprising interventions that make **creativity part of everyday life**. Public art has the potential to upend routine, spark curiosity and invite interaction in unexpected ways. In any city, many residents feel disconnected from the civic cultural offer because they lack time, opportunity or proximity to artistic interventions. By embedding moments of **play and discovery** into the public realm, Gloucester can foster a more inclusive, joyful relationship between people and place.

5. THEMATIC PROMPTS

HERITAGE AND HISTORY



Gloucester's depth and richness spanning two thousand years of social history, archaeology and built environment was an oft-cited source of inspiration from those we consulted. This is an area that has been consistently successful in generating visitors nationally and including local residents - from school programmes run by Gloucester Cathedral and the recent work of The Folk, Voices Gloucester and initiatives such as Gloucester History Festival.

There is a committed core base of heritage workers and enthusiastic volunteers across the city; despite this, the **presentation, curation and quality of heritage-led interpretive interventions** within the public realm was also noted as a key opportunity for improvement.



There was a wider perceived apathy towards in-depth engagement beyond the 'headlines' and often-cited histories of Gloucester. Those classic themes did not often stir the emotions of those who had seen projects relating to it, or indeed those discussing it - stories from *Jemmy Wood* being a possible inspiration for Dickens's *Scrooge*; *Aethelfled*, whose likeness is painted on the walls of a franchised coffee chain and appears briefly in a procession (the only named woman widely cited as part of Gloucester's historic narrative); the role of the city in the production of aircraft, partially commemorated in the *Spirit of Aviation* (1999) statue.



Into these traditional narratives we found few who thrilled in the characters or sought to make space for conversation to confront, process, reconcile or contextualise these tales.

We also note that the Gloucester City Monuments Review (2021) provided a suite of recommendations to **recontextualise the cultural legacies** of Gloucester's built environment. These recommendations have not been fully implemented nor has there been significant steps to enable resident-led and justice-led grappling with Gloucester's "contested" histories, such as the legacy of Samuel Baker, virulent pro-slavery campaigner who gave his name to Baker's Quay, Baker's Street and is responsible for a wealth of capital and transport projects that make up Gloucester's public realm.



PEOPLE

The first impression of any city is shaped by its physical environment - by the streets, squares, and spaces that frame daily life. Yet in Gloucester, the full impression of the city is incomplete without acknowledging its traits of **unity and collective action**, qualities that were repeatedly emphasised throughout consultation. Time and again, the city's strength has been its ability to come together in moments of crisis or need. During the floods over a decade ago, the city (led in part by the city's Muslim community) mobilised rapidly, distributing water and support to those affected. More recently, following earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, vigils in Kings Square brought over a thousand people together, alongside collection of 24 tonnes of donations in one day. The city's deep reservoir of **empathy, resilience** and **care** is an inspirational basis for a curatorial vision.

Consultees urged us to celebrate Gloucester's **grit and determination**, its culture lived and created anew daily by its residents. Our public realm thus invites us not to import "off the rack" culture or dropped-in interventions, but to **reveal and amplify the culture that already exists** in the city through art, events, and design of the

built environment that interprets and reflects its people's stories. Central to this is visibility and space for citizens - the need for all communities to see themselves reflected in the city throughout the year. **Visible queerness, visible young energy and visible diversity** should not be limited to specific events or commemorations but sustained, celebrated presences in Gloucester's public spaces year-round.

This vision must engage honestly with the social realities that shape daily life in Gloucester. "Who does this city want to attract?" cannot be answered only through tourism or economic growth - it must consider the needs and aspirations of existing residents, many of whom experience systemic inequities. Behaviours labelled as "antisocial" may in fact reflect deep-rooted social challenges such as the reduction of real terms funding in public services, economic precarity and a loss of support networks. Public art has a role here not as a superficial fix, but as a means of processing and expressing realities and emotions. The role of public art is not to ameliorate gaps left in vital and core public services, but instead support in articulating, commemorating and standing in solidarity.

BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

There's both permanence and pride in Gloucester's physical environment – the docks with their maritime character, Robinswood Hill rising above the city, the tucked-away historic inns, the network of waterways threading through neighbourhoods. These aren't just backdrops for creative work but active participants in it, places that can spark ideas, shape experiences and give context to artistic interventions. Permanence and pride can be a provocation, and Gloucester's built and natural environments should be active collaborators and sites of creativity.

While these sites offer obvious visual inspiration for commissions positioned nearby, their real power lies in their interwoven historic, physical and social weight. A building isn't just architecture – it's the **workers** who built it, the **businesses** that occupied it and the **communities** that gathered around it. Similarly, a waterway isn't just water and stone – it is trade routes and industry, expansion and colony, leisure and connection, rich ecological systems. Steeped in history and rich in heritage, the buildings, waterways and green spaces of Gloucester form a living archive of the city's history and its potential future. The coexistence of old and new architecture along the same streets tells stories of change, iteration and contradiction.



Ultimately, this is about people's stories. The physical landscape of Gloucester holds countless narratives of labour and craft, migration and settlement, celebration and struggle, daily routines and pivotal moments. Creative work that engages with Gloucester's environment is, at its heart, engaging with the lived experience of the people who have shaped and continue to shape this place.

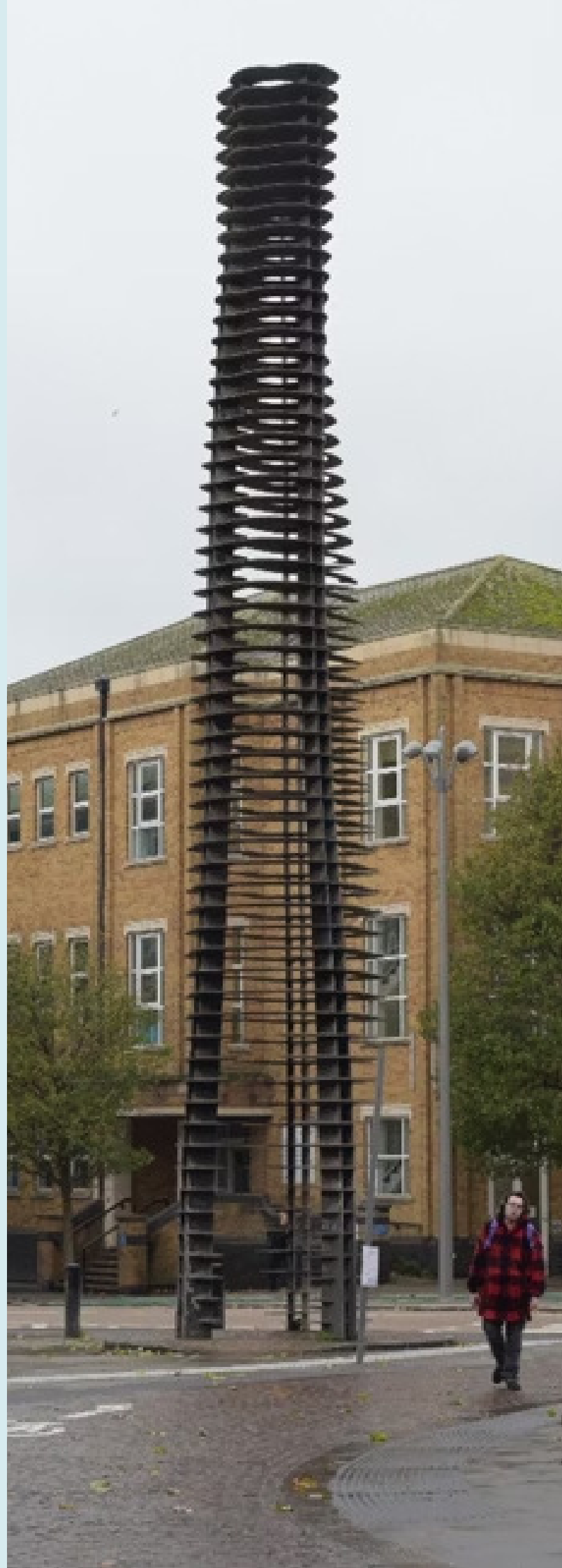
ONGOING CONSIDERATIONS

ZONES AND QUARTERS

A range of past and current strategies for Gloucester have parcelled the city into zones or 'quarters'; this can be beneficial when thinking about functions, development and demographics but runs the risk of creating siloes or exacerbating unequal access to resources. It is rarely representative of how people interact with the city.

CREATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

A wealth of consultation responses noted a lack of creative career opportunities and cultural infrastructure, including art gallery or theatre spaces, poor street-level visibility for the Guildhall and other cultural infrastructures, technological capabilities of creation spaces and lack of artist studios (especially held alongside the prevalence of unused spaces / potential meanwhile spaces in the city). While not the primary aim of a Public Art Strategy, the quality, vibrancy and 'stickiness' of Gloucester for creatives cannot be realised without consistent joined-up career pathways and will ultimately inhibit the long-term ability to enable ambitious, world class artistic talent to develop within Gloucester.



CONSULTATION SCOPE

It is worth noting the scope limitations of this consultation, specifically in conversations with underrepresented groups. Throughout the consultation process, a majority of respondents cited the diverse nature of Gloucester's population as a major benefit and drew pride from it; this was mentioned not only in reference to today's population but also an historic reality of successive migrations, adding distinct geographic differences across the fabric of the city. This diversity was not fully reflected in the individuals and organisations who were provided for consultation, certainly not to the extent we would anticipate. As such, it is integral that a) consultation, which should continue and evolve through delivery of the strategy, draws in a wider spectrum of lived experiences; and b) active inclusion is brought to the fore within commissioning and delivery frameworks.

PLACEMAKING PROCESSES

It would be prudent to develop a set of agreed processes and intentions across all those who utilise 'placemaking' as a part of their delivery in Gloucester. This should include commercial developers, businesses rooted in Gloucester (such as Gloucester Quays and the Food Dock), the local authority and cultural, educational and voluntary sector organisations. This would help facilitate best practice sharing and joined-up conversations and partnerships. Placemaking has democratic and justice-led origins - to ensure that these are not lost, community-led demands are essential starting points for commissioning. Vocabulary is also vital - 'high street revival' or 'levelling up' language that is aligned within national and local policy can create further tensions between local people and their experience of their locale.



STRUCTURAL CONTEXT

Structural inequalities such as the cost of living were regularly raised in conjunction with concepts of 'value for money' and the need to address core "issues" in the context of limited council budgets and growing socio-economic deprivation. Public art can not provide lasting solutions to structural inequality. This is not a uniquely Gloucester problem, it is a national picture that requires a national response - however it must remain at the forefront of commissioning to ensure sensitivity and holistic approaches.

AIMS

The following constitute the key aims of Gloucester's Public Art Strategy; each contains sub-elements that together contribute to the headline aim. Our evaluative framework, found within this report, will assess success against two key strands: the impact of the programme as delivered, and the programme's achievements against these aims. Our commissioning programme should:

1. MAKE ART AN EXPECTED PART OF EVERYDAY LIVES



1. Help us to **see** and **feel** art on the streets of Gloucester
2. Build a **compelling collection** that advocates for creativity in the city
3. Present Gloucester as a city **showing its creativity** through its public realm
4. Commission artwork that is **bold, relevant** and **accessible**
5. Seek to find ways to draw people to **look under their feet**, behind walls and dive deeper into the texture of the city
6. Commission art that **inspires young people** and make visitors to want to stay and explore



GLOUCESTER

2. REPRESENT OUR CITY

1. **Reflect the communities in the city** – historic and modern, transient and permanent, established voices and new arrivals
2. **Embrace specificity**, confident to tell our own unique stories
3. Help make people **feel more welcome** in the city
4. Make the city more **culturally and socially robust** and coherent
5. Help the **suburbs become more visible** in the city's culture
6. Give voice to **unheard stories** and perspectives
7. Provide the clues that tease out the **historical importance** of the city
8. Embrace **pride, healthy discourse** and **challenge**

3. MAKE IT EASIER TO LEAVE YOUR MARK ON THE CITY

1. Make it easier for people to **create in their own backyard** and to **advocate for their communities**
2. Help to join up culture in the city – encouraging **collaboration** and facilitating surprising partnerships that uniquely showcase Gloucester
3. **Demystify** and facilitate **greater public engagement** in council planning, permissions and commissioning processes
4. Instil **inclusion** and best practice as core to approaches rather than as concessions to individual needs
5. Be led **independently of civic structures**, geared towards **delivery** and acting with the **consent** of Gloucester's citizens
6. Provide a draw to **retain creative talent** in the city and fulfil a sector gap in creative careers

PRINCIPLES

These principles directly guide the internal and external commissioning of new public art. This includes guidance for briefs contained within new council-led developments, new open calls, direct commissions and partnership and alignment programmes.

The principles are not intended to be exhaustive nor exclusive, but provide an underpinning for commissioning, rationales and strategic rigour. As with all aspects of this strategy, they are intended to continually evolve through the leadership of the Public Art Director and the guidance and challenge of the Public Art Advisory Group, whose roles will be detailed in full in the Proposed Structures section.

1. IMPACT AND RELEVANCE

All new public art is intended to change something. This could be the perception of a place, it could be making a space safer or more navigable, it could be about bringing hidden identities or heritage to the fore in a new way. It is never there to be passive. The rationale for every new commission should be able to be underpinned by metrics that show improvements for people in Gloucester. This is a provocation that inverts the traditional processes of people impact assessments by civic bodies, where an action is assessed and mitigated to prevent negative impacts on residents; instead, we will essentially require an asset strength assessment that outlines the positive impact that the intervention will have on the public.

We want to improve outcomes for our citizens. As a result, we prioritise high impacts relative to associated commissioning costs, and are conscious that overly passive or staid public art can easily fade into the background of a city and fail to contribute to the day-to-day lives of its citizens. 'Relevance' in today's culture

often means that people are using, referencing, re-using or re-purposing something, and in doing so, co-owning it, and this is to be encouraged. We want to avoid work that quickly fades into the background or becomes irrelevant street furniture.

There is a clear cost, impact and relevance benefit in approaches which incorporate repurposed and restored items, temporary or semi-permanent art and dispersed microcommissions. Traditional monuments can run the risk of becoming invisible parts of the urban landscape without flexibility, call-to-action or playability. A wealth of consultation responses urged us towards temporary, deliverable commissioning, as well as highlighting minor temporary interventions in the city that have had transformative effects on the use of the public realm.¹⁴ Temporary and semi-permanent interventions are attractive in terms of immediate impact on perceptions, incorporating high public engagement and high responsiveness to their environment, as well as lower cost and maintenance.¹⁵

2. CONNECT AND BIND THE CITY

This will be Gloucester's first Public Art Strategy that explicitly works for the entirety of the city.

Commissioning will give equal importance to projects outside the city centre, celebrating neighbourhoods and the underrepresented cultures and communities of the city. In this way, the city's public art portfolio intends to play an active role in civic repair, challenging a politics of division on doorsteps and considering methods of encouraging unity, compassion and empathy.



Public art commissions can better connect people, connecting cultures and physically connecting up Gloucester. Disconnectedness between locations, people and communities is often cited as a major issue in Gloucester – exacerbated by layout and developments, transport, cultural siloing and modern habits. Consultation responses noted issues with perceptions of city navigability and associated safety and tourism impacts. We can seek to address these concerns though reducing isolated pockets, identifying arrival points, pinch points and points of welcome, encouraging new and underutilised routes, aiming to make the city experience more legible and accessible; similarly, we should consider the range of viewpoints within our city – opportunities to get up high, see the city differently and change perceptions.¹⁶

Partnerships will aim to create new collaborations across the city, manifest new opportunities for shared outcomes, align cultural programming and draw together funding to grow ambitions and resilience. We will facilitate new unexpected partnership juxtapositions that emphasise the city's unique specialisms – from the city's Guild of Craftsmen and industrial agricultural manufacturing to the University of Gloucestershire's dual expertise in arts and architecture and their burgeoning Arts & Health campus within the city centre.

3. CREATIVITY AND PLAY

Artists are an essential part of a commissioned piece of public art. This is worth stating. This is not a role which should be subcontracted, delivered in-house by developers or incorporated as an afterthought. We will prioritise high standards of excellence and innovation, with creative commissioners taking active authorship of the programme and artists and artworks of high quality and rigour.



We must aim to build a thrilling, active portfolio of public art; Gloucester's public art collection should be a living, breathing collection that draws you into the city. This might incorporate artworks or art sites that evolve and change over time, artworks that grow or respond to our changing city or the interactions of our citizens, artworks that prioritise connection over consumption, or artworks which invite participants into casual play.¹⁷

We should give primary focus to types of engagement that change people's perception of a place – this could include thematic emphases on play, joy, inspiration and participation, as well as responding to key data points such as mapping of city centre safety hotspots. All new public artwork should be an invitation of sorts – inspiring curiosity, welcoming new visitors, providing images, propositions, journeys or trails that take you further into the layers of our culture.



4. SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE

We will develop a range of commissioning partnerships alongside providing sector leadership, recognising the likely diminishing role of the council in direct delivery of cultural programmes but also reinforcing models that protect and utilise cultural assets in a stretched economic climate. Gloucester's creative community is teeming with potential, but fragile – the 2023 Arts Council England funding round welcomed an unprecedented wealth of new Gloucester-based organisations into the National Portfolio, while the University of Gloucestershire recently permanently relocated 2,000 students into the centre of Gloucester for the first time, alongside opening a new city centre Arts & Health campus and public realm galleries; yet the creative economy in the city is under extreme strain, with funding ever-more competitive, few opportunities for early or mid-career artists to develop their practice and little to invite or enable professional artists to make their mark on their city.

The programme must create curatorial, commissioning, facilitative and production opportunities for local creatives through a targeted framework, responsive to the needs, opportunities and skills in the local sector and cognisant of the loss of early career and graduate creatives to lack of opportunities in Gloucester. We will incorporate roles for emerging artists, opportunities that bridge the leap from learning to doing, and partnerships of early career artists with established professionals. Sector development in our public art programme is not an altruistic act – it exists in synergy with the drive to deliver a creative programme that reflects the unique hybrid skillsets, industries and interests that make up creativity in Gloucester.

5. SOCIAL VALUE, INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Commissioning processes will embed local economic benefit and sustainability in supply chains through prioritising local suppliers and skills wherever possible. Every project should be able to articulate its impact on local opportunities and strengthening the region's talent network. All commissions should incorporate an accessibility and inclusion plan covering physical, social, financial, communications and sensory access to experiencing the work; we must also ensure a depth and breadth of paid disabled and cultural representation on the advisory group to provide lived experience rigour to audits.



All commissions must consider the environmental and sustainability impact of their location, their design and materials choice, with an encouragement towards reclaimed, recycled and low-impact materials. This includes full-life carbon assessments for permanent works, while noting the sustainability benefits of interventions that leave no physical trace. Projects should supply maintenance plans and decommissioning strategies as standard.¹⁸

We also note the sustainability and deliverability benefits of restoring or repurposing existing archive pieces currently in storage out into the public realm and into new contexts. University of Gloucestershire have illustrated through the Park Campus sculpture park project the potential to quickly amass a high-quality portfolio of artists and artworks through hosting and re-siting existing work in new contexts. Gloucester has a rich well of acclaimed artwork designed for the public realm that is not on current display; we recommend initial feasibility work directly assessing those (such as the former BHS Reliefs, Henry Collins & Joyce Pallot, c. 1970) that tell a direct story about the use and purpose of Gloucester's built environment.



CURATORIAL THEMES

The curatorial themes outline the subject matter that we are particularly interested in our programme addressing. They necessarily overlap and interact; they should not be considered exhaustive nor set in stone, and commissions are not expected to directly align with multiple themes for consideration; instead, like the principles, they inform and shape the Public Art Director's briefs and programme approaches.

1. OUR HIDDEN STORIES

The Heritage sector in Gloucester is an established, primary part of the culture and creativity of the city. Our commissioning will empower and broaden the visible heritage in the city and widen an understanding of 'heritage' from **institutional narratives to personal ones**. In this way, we expand our remit of heritage to include many new urgent and relevant experiences. Gloucester has a fascinating story to tell, that could apply to far more citizens. Furthermore, cognisant of how the past informs how we interpret the present, our heritage narratives must counter false versions of the past that don't illustrate the full breadth of our society.

Each new commission will contribute to a holistic portfolio that together constitutes Gloucester's public art collection. Commissions should aim to **tell a story of Gloucester** or invite people to **remake a new story** in Gloucester. This does not necessarily equate to an heritage or narrative focus – simply that new public art should contribute to the conception or character of our city. Gloucester's public art should celebrate our culture, while illustrating that our culture is more complex than many may assume. To do this, we must embrace and explore what's **under our feet and behind brick facades**: this can stretch from our rich Roman history to the many cultures and subcultures hidden in our back rooms right now, and should be as much about celebrating our various neighbourhoods as the historic city centre.

Consultation responses highlighted many underappreciated historic threads in the city, ranging from Roman *Glevum* to travelling canal boat families who worked and lived on the waterways, a community still extant today. Meanwhile community advocates in Tuffley, Podsmead, Matson and Quedgeley each made compelling cases for a disproportionate lack of visibility and focus for their communities and an associated lack of cultural confidence as a result. While public art commissioning cannot fully counter this alone, we can play a significant role in finally platforming these stories.

2. OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

At its heart, Gloucester is a city defined by its people. Cities are made meaningful not by their public realm or history alone but by the human interactions that take place within them – the moments of connection, exchange, and solidarity that give urban life its warmth and dynamics. For Gloucester, this is an underappreciated source of inspiration. The city's **charm**, **friendliness**, and **sense of welcome** are not abstract ideals; they are made real when people are given space and time to interact, socialise, and express themselves openly in the public realm.

Where a project brief is targeted towards a specific location, we encourage commissioners to **centre people in the provocation** – a location alone should not form a brief without its relationship to today's Gloucester and how people in Gloucester use that location being considered. Every commission should be able to articulate why it is relevant and contextually responsive to the city of Gloucester and to its location. Together, as a body of work, our public art should **tell a holistic story of us** – we are not interested in art being "plonked" in Gloucester that says nothing new about our city.

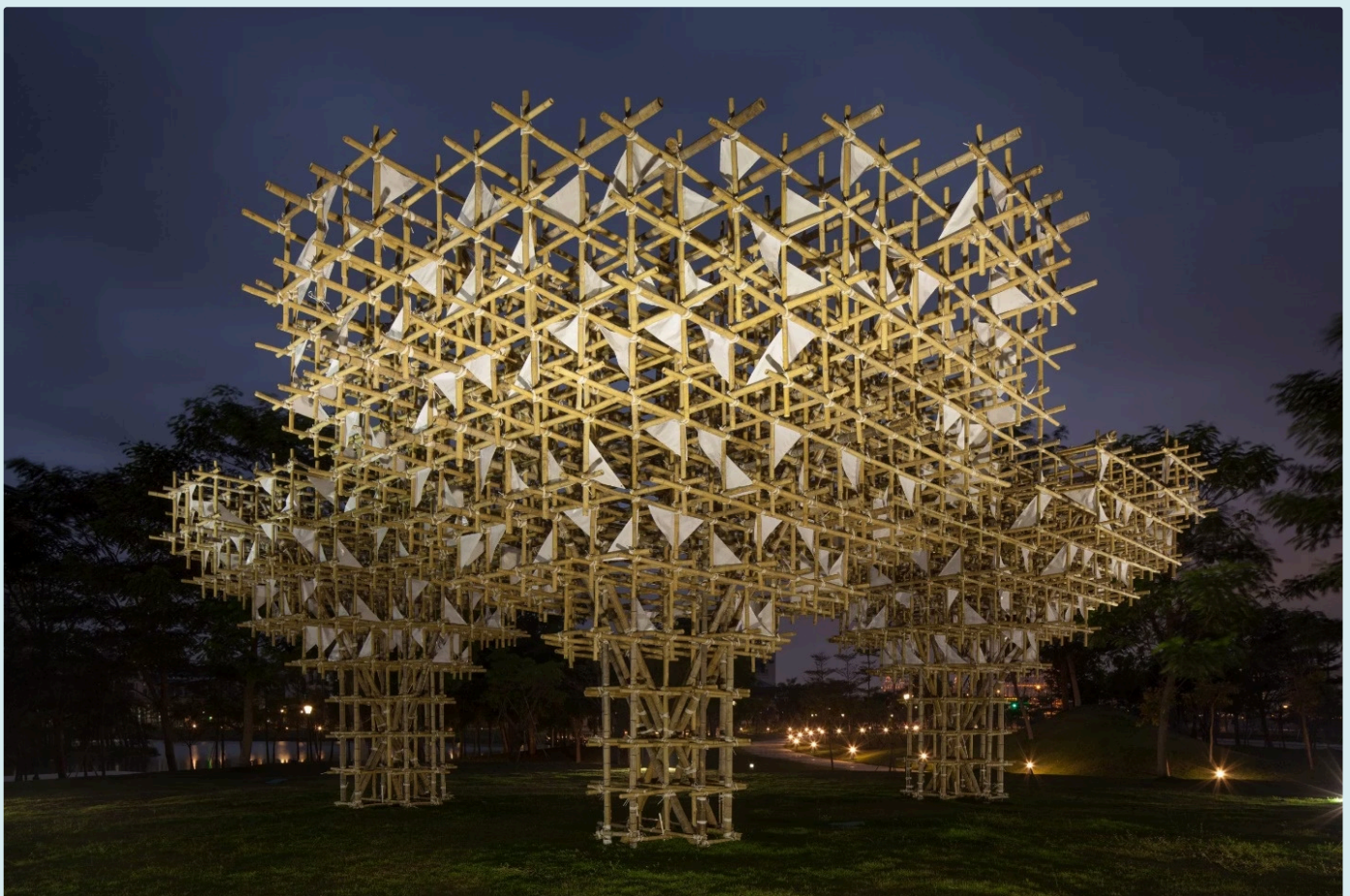


Gloucester has always been somewhere that people came to make their home. Its diverse populations and rich history of trading and exchange mean that its populations and cultural make-up have changed frequently and rapidly since Roman times. This complexity has informed our identity for centuries, and gives Gloucester a denseness and richness of culture that many cities twice our size have lacked.

In an era where divisive protests and demonstrations are rife, it is essential that our public realm commissioning is **just as dynamic and fleet-footed as guerilla interventions** and reaches doorsteps just as effectively. Our local identity is something to build endless pride and celebration from, and we welcome every such approach when founded in truth and in empathy. We aim to actively **counter narratives of identity that empower divisiveness** – first, as being evidently immoral – but also as detrimental to the character, perception and resilience of our city.

3. OUR FUTURE

It is not appropriate or productive for us to exclusively define the themes, subjects and perspectives of Gloucester's creatives and communities across the next decade and beyond. We should then note that we are interested in any content approach that considers the future of our city, its immediate, **urgent conversations**, and the ways that creativity can seek to live in, and shape, the present moment. This can encompass social and political discourse, but might just as easily be expressed through **interactive artworks**, participatory or durational projects that amass or transform over time, or **playable interventions** illustrative of how the people of Gloucester are "playing" it. Just as works that re-present the past can tell us much about the grounding of the present, works that illustrate the **current moment** can play a significant role in understanding and shaping our future.



We aim to grow creativity's role in our citizens' everyday lives and young people are the frontline of this goal, with the greatest sensory openness, strongest emotional resonance, most neural plasticity and fewer habitual expectations. Our thematic focuses and narratives aim to grow these traits in young and old alike: **what projects can use creativity to move every one of us to sensory openness?** What artistic interventions can stimulate my emotional side as I walk along Northgate Street? What new commission in Matson Park changes what I expect from my city and for my neighbourhood? In this way we will centre universal commissioning with a youthful, open-minded perspective, speaking to the young minds in all of us and working to positively shape our future as a city and a society.

PROPOSED STRUCTURES

We recommend a series of structures to collectively enable delivery of this new commissioning framework. Central to this is a new **Public Art Director** role alongside a community-focused **Public Art Advisory Group** and a Gloucester City Council interdepartmental **Public Art Working Group**.

These structures are designed to drive delivery of the Public Art Strategy and to guide its evolution. The use and attraction of cities and their public realm has shifted rapidly over the past two decades and will continue to do so, just as demographics and use-class distribution in Gloucester have shifted; the ideal strategic response to the city's circumstances right now will not be the ideal response in a decade's time. As a result, we should treat the strategy as a living document that the Public Art Director and the Public Art Advisory Group can recommend and implement changes to as needs and circumstances evolve.

The strategy should be consciously owned and led by citizens of Gloucester. As part of this rationale we have also delivered a **Public Art Toolkit** for artists, communities, organisations, developers and commissioners, aiming to demystify and enable public art processes in the city and provide a one stop shop to inform how to go about putting on an intervention in Gloucester's public realm.

PUBLIC ART DIRECTOR

CONTEXT

The Public Art Director¹⁹'s role is to drive the aims, commissioning principles and delivery structures of this strategy. The scale and seniority of the role is flexible based on fundraising and the host body for the role, but we anticipate a 0.6 position and that the role would not be directly hosted within Gloucester City Council.

The vast majority of consulted parties recommended locating the position outside of the council. Doing so will improve our ability to site the strategy as held by the city's organisations and individuals, both in perception and reality, with separation from the council; it will leave the role less vulnerable to restructuring or downgrading in Local Government Reorganisation and political leadership changes; it will provide more range and scope for third sector partnerships and fundraising; and it will provide sufficient independence to empower forthright cultural leadership and objective comment on sector challenges and weaknesses.

It is vital then that the strategy is clearly and comprehensively adopted by Gloucester City Council to avoid this independence reducing the role's ability to impact council processes. The Public Art Working Group aims to provide a functional route to embed the authority and agency of the Public Art Director across council services.

Though the role will sit outside of the council, there are a range of dependent council services that will require mission alignment to ensure successful delivery – a key example of this is cultural communications and city marketing, which must be engaged with the aims of these programmes in order to ensure sufficient reach and impact.



PURPOSE

The Public Art Director's role exists to drive delivery against the aims and principles of the Public Art Strategy. They will provide leadership across the city and the cultural and community sectors, conceiving and inspiring new Public Art programmes and approaches. They will work to empower and facilitate individuals and organisations across the city to host quality arts and culture interventions on their doorsteps, while also encouraging collaboration between and across the cultural sector, academia and local community organisations.

More structurally, their role will develop and deliver new processes to improve the management of the city's existing public art and to smooth and demystify the process of delivering new work in the public realm. They will work to publicly and privately advocate for resident-driven hosting of art interventions in the public realm, and to align existing city policies and programmes with the Public Art Strategy. They will also drive work to improve education and engagement in public art, developing a digital front door to public art in the city, where it is, how it is commissioned and how to get more involved.²⁰

HOST ORGANISATIONS

The following organisations have indicated a willingness to host the Public Art Director role:

1. University of Gloucestershire

The region's leading University have demonstrated a significant commitment to visual art, health through art and the city's public realm with two new galleries and a brand new sculpture campus hosting a wealth of major international artists. The University have shown interest in hosting a role which combined a pioneering research remit centred around arts, health and wellbeing alongside serving the city as a Public Art Director, in an arrangement where research and civic delivery mutually inform and benefit each other. They already have a burgeoning relationship with NHS social prescribing commissioning bodies, as well as a range of current specialists and research fellow roles which could potentially expand and evolve to encompass this position.

The civic side of the work would encompass designing and leading new programmes and new commissioning alongside curation, communication, education and engagement, while developing key case studies on embedding creativity in regeneration, the role of social prescribing and of everyday creativity impacting citizens' lives. Their recent opening of a major city centre campus will significantly increase the University's visibility in the city and ensure a necessarily increased role in Gloucester's civic regeneration; this is a powerful opportunity to shape that work as centring culture and creativity.

The role could have connectivity across the Creative Arts faculty, utilising specialist expertise and student cohorts across architecture, illustration and a range of connected artforms and skills, as well as creating opportunities for students within the city to develop their practice, to shadow professional artists, to be commissioned and to contribute to their public realm. In doing so, the role would help to combat a graduate skills drain, showing young creatives the range of engaged opportunities to build a practice in Gloucester.

2. Gloucester Culture Trust

Gloucester Culture Trust are the most prominent cultural convenors in the region and the city council's cultural lodestar, evolving and driving cultural development across the city's creative economy. While they do not currently have the required specialisms or dedicated capacity 'in-house' to accommodate this role, their interconnectedness, well-regarded track record and range of programmes make them an ideal candidate for hosting a new position.

They are also lead delivery partner for Bright Nights, the annual Gloucester light festival most often cited to us as an exemplar for how to design and commission temporary and semi-permanent interventions in the city's public realm. Bright Nights have led the way in the city in community co-design, delivering outside the city centre and responding to social research (such as public safety). Siting the Public Art Director within GCT would enable the city to build on a wealth of relevant commissioning and established curatorial practice from the outset.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

CONVENING AND ADVOCACY

Convening the Public Art Advisory Group and the Gloucester City Council Public Art Working Group, advocating for resident-led public art, identifying opportunities for public art in City projects and plans, and driving collaboration and synergy across workstreams

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Designing and developing impact-focused public art programmes, and identifying and facilitating opportunities for artist capacity building

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Designing and leading online and in-person programmes to communicate, educate and engage the public in city art

CO-DESIGN FACILITATION

Facilitating co-design processes with the Public Art Advisory Group to centre citizen decision-making in the approach and delivery of public art programmes

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Developing new partnership relationships with cultural, social and community organisations across the city to establish new public art opportunities around shared aims

PLANNING INTEGRATION

Working with developers and council teams to identify opportunities to incorporate Public Art into new capital works and regeneration schemes

PLANNING CONDITIONS

Liaising closely with case officers to ensure public art conditions are placed on approved schemes

CROSS-SERVICE COLLABORATION

Work across key council services and workstreams including Planning, Estates and Asset Management, Utilities, Parks and Transport to advocate for public-driven hosting of art interventions in the public realm



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Engage with council departments, landowners, developers and businesses for discussions on temporary activities and interventions, including meanwhile uses

EARLY STAGE IDENTIFICATION

Identify projects and sites at an early stage where public art opportunities can be discussed with developers (pre-planning)

PUBLIC ART REGISTER

Develop and maintain a Public Art Register, consisting of an audit of Gloucester's public artworks, including condition & maintenance considerations

GUIDANCE DEVELOPMENT

Develop additional guidance for hoardings, small scale temporary interventions and street art

POLICY ALIGNMENT

Identify emerging trends and issues in public art to inform and align city policies, plans, procedures, and programmes in the area of public art

FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Explore finance opportunities and partnerships to access diverse and alternative longer-term funding for public art projects and programmes

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- Curatorial, project management and community engagement skills, alongside a thorough understanding of health and safety legislation implications, planning permissions, site preparation, surveying and engineering, development of maintenance schedules, insurance and ownership
- Fundraising and partnership experience



PUBLIC ART ADVISORY GROUP (PAAG)

CONTEXT

The Public Art Advisory Group will ensure that citizen decision-making sits at the heart of Gloucester's public art programmes and commissioning. The group will build on the success of Together Gloucester's Citizens Panel, which has already influenced a diverse range of cultural decisions across the city. The PAAG could share learning, approaches and - where beneficial - membership pathways with the Citizens Panel, as well as with community co-design groups, citizens juries and hyperlocal neighbourhood forums currently active or in development across the city.

TERMS OF REFERENCE: STRUCTURE

- **BI-MONTHLY COMMUNITY PANEL**

The PAAG will meet every two months, with additional task-and-finish sessions convened as required for time-sensitive commissions or planning-related proposals. Meetings may be a mix of in-person and virtual formats to maximise accessibility.

- **CONVENED BY PUBLIC ART DIRECTOR**

The Public Art Director will chair meetings, prepare agendas, bring forward proposals and ensure that advice from the PAAG is incorporated into programmes and decision-making processes. The Public Art Director will also act as the link between PAAG, City Council officers, developers, artists and other stakeholders.

- **CLEAR ROLES AND CLARITY ON INFLUENCE**

All participants will receive a clear written description of the group's remit, its influence on commissioning decisions, the limits of its authority, and how recommendations are implemented.

- **MINIMISING CONSULTATION FATIGUE**

Participation will be designed to be efficient and mindful of people's time: predictable meeting schedules, short pre-reading summaries, and regular feedback loops showing how input has shaped decisions. Where possible, consultations will be combined with other civic processes to reduce siloing, maintain momentum and avoid duplication.

- **PARTICIPANT STIPEND**

We should ensure equitable remuneration models for participants to recognise their contribution and ensure accessibility for all.

- **REPRESENTATION**

We should actively curate the make-up of the group to ensure a range of perspectives, approaching representation intersectionally and paying particular attention to easily overlooked gaps in lived experience that can cause barriers to engagement such as low incomes, mental health support, caring responsibilities or language barriers.

- **DEFINED SEAT FOR AN ELECTED MEMBER**

One City Councillor²¹ will hold a non-voting seat to maintain democratic oversight and ensure alignment with wider city objectives, while keeping community voices at the centre of decision-making.

TERMS OF REFERENCE: PURPOSE

DIRECT COMMUNITY INFLUENCE OVER PUBLIC ART

To ensure that motivated, knowledgeable and representative local people have a direct and meaningful role in shaping public art commissioning, from approach through to selection.

TRANSPARENT AND CITIZEN-CENTRED PROCESSES

To create open, legible commissioning and selection processes - including publishing criteria, timelines, and decisions - so residents understand how and why projects progress.

EMBED CO-DESIGN IN PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

To champion and implement co-design methodologies (workshops, charrettes, artist-community labs) in the early stages of new programmes, ensuring artworks respond directly to community need, local identity and lived experience.

SUPPORT DIVERSE INPUT

To broaden the range of voices influencing public art, including underrepresented groups, young people, disabled people, new communities and those living in areas with historically low cultural investment.

TERMS OF REFERENCE: ROLES

EARLY-STAGE ADVISORY INPUT

To provide structured, constructive advice on proposals - concepts, briefs, potential artists or approaches - before plans become fixed.

POLICY AND GUIDANCE FEEDBACK

To advise on the revision of public art strategy and policy, design guidance, developer requirements and city-wide principles for commissioning.

CO-DESIGN OR CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMISSIONING PROCESS

Members will participate in brief development, artist shortlisting, interview panels, community workshops and prototype testing where relevant and appropriate.

FORMAL COMMENTS ON PLANNING PROPOSALS

Where public art forms part of a planning application or S106 requirement, PAAG will supply formal comments to accompany the application, strengthening transparency and community legitimacy.

TERMS OF REFERENCE: HYPERLOCAL REPRESENTATION

LOCATION-SPECIFIC PARTICIPATION

For each PAAG meeting, additional temporary seats will be opened to residents from the neighbourhood directly affected by the proposals under review, ensuring that decision-making reflects lived realities and local priorities.

MECHANISMS FOR HYPERLOCAL RECRUITMENT

Hyperlocal representatives may be drawn from ward-level networks, community organisations, neighbourhood associations, youth boards or open calls. Selection will focus on lived experience and collaborative approach rather than professional expertise.

STRENGTHENING NEIGHBOURHOOD OWNERSHIP

This model ensures that communities can actively shape projects that impact their streets, parks and public spaces, strengthening public trust, local pride and long-term stewardship of artworks.

PUBLIC ART WORKING GROUP

CONTEXT

The Gloucester City Council Public Art Working Group is an interdepartmental forum designed to strengthen internal coordination, improve the efficiency of public art processes and ensure all relevant council directorates are aligned with the city's evolving ambitions for public art and public realm enhancement. The group will act as an early-warning and problem-solving mechanism, helping to socialise proposals, remove barriers and maintain clear communication across departments.

TERMS OF REFERENCE: STRUCTURE

MONTHLY INTERDEPARTMENTAL PANEL

The PAWG will meet monthly, bringing together representatives from all council directorates with a stake in public art, planning, public realm, regeneration, community engagement and maintenance.

CONVENED AND CHAIRED BY THE PUBLIC ART DIRECTOR

The Public Art Director will set agendas, coordinate information flow, escalate issues where required, ensure follow-up actions are completed, and act as the bridge between council teams, developers, artists and external partners.



TERMS OF REFERENCE: PURPOSE

SOCIALISE PROPOSALS AND SECURE CROSS-DIRECTORATE ALIGNMENT

The group will provide a structured forum for sharing new ideas, proposals and strategies at an early stage, ensuring that all internal stakeholders are aware of upcoming projects before decisions are made.

UNBLOCK BARRIERS AND ADDRESS LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES

PAWG will identify potential issues - planning conditions, highway constraints, health and safety, procurement routes, asset ownership, long-term maintenance - and work collaboratively to resolve them.

DEVELOP CONSISTENT APPROACHES TO PUBLIC ART ACROSS THE COUNCIL

The group will support the creation of shared standards, processes and communication pathways so the council presents a coherent, predictable approach to public art commissioning internally and externally.

TERMS OF REFERENCE: MEMBERSHIP

Core directorates to be involved include but are not limited to:

- **PROPERTY & ASSET MANAGEMENT**
- **PLANNING, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- **CULTURE & LEISURE**
- **HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT (COUNTY LIAISON WHERE RELEVANT)**
- **PARKS, OPEN SPACES & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**
- **HEALTH, COMMUNITY WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT**
- **COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING**
- **WASTE & UTILITIES**
- **HEALTH & SAFETY**

TERMS OF REFERENCE: SCOPE

The working group will engage with all public art proposals involving:

- Council-owned land
- Developments requiring planning approval
- Public realm improvements
- S106-funded, PFA or CIL-funded projects
- Artworks impacting highways, parks or neighbourhood spaces
- Temporary or semi-permanent installations in public spaces
- Cultural regeneration schemes

TERMS OF REFERENCE: KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

INFORMATION SHARING & EARLY SOCIALISATION

- Review upcoming public art proposals before planning or procurement stages.
- Flag relevant constraints, opportunities or interdependencies.
- Coordinate timing with existing council programmes (public realm upgrades, festivals, construction windows, etc.).

ALIGNMENT & CONSISTENCY

- Ensure projects align with city-wide strategy, planning policy and procedural requirements.
- Share updates across directorates to maintain consistent messaging with external stakeholders.

PROBLEM-SOLVING & BARRIER REMOVAL

- Identify blockers (procurement, ownership issues, highway approvals, materials, maintenance liabilities, etc.).
- Establish clear pathways to resolve these issues efficiently.

MAINTENANCE, MANAGEMENT & STEWARDSHIP

- Confirm long-term custodianship and care responsibilities.
- Review risk assessments, installation plans and decommissioning pathways.

TERMS OF REFERENCE: OPERATING PRINCIPLES

- **Collaboration:** Work constructively across directorates to avoid siloed decision-making.
- **Clarity:** Provide clear guidance and predictable processes to reduce confusion for external partners.
- **Proportionality:** Apply flexible, risk-based approaches appropriate to the scale of each artwork.
- **Transparency:** Maintain auditable records of discussions, advice and decisions.
- **Responsiveness:** Prioritise timely feedback to prevent delays to commissioning or planning cycles.

PUBLIC ART TOOLKIT

PURPOSE

The Public Art Toolkit is a practical, accessible resource designed to demystify the public art commissioning and delivery process for anyone who wants to contribute to public art in Gloucester. It will sit alongside the Public Art Strategy as a user-friendly guide for artists, producers, community groups, voluntary organisations, developers and commissioners – helping them understand how public art happens, what steps are involved, and who to speak to.

Its ambition is to make public art feel possible rather than specialist, reducing the barriers that often prevent local people and emerging practitioners from initiating or participating in projects.

We will deliver a prototype first edition of the toolkit as part of this strategy, to be refined and further populated by the Public Art Director and the PAAG as the programme progresses.

FORMAT

- Straightforward guide available as a standalone downloadable resource.
- Clear step-by-step sections with diagrams or flowcharts showing permission routes, typical project timelines and who is responsible for what.
- Practical checklists for artists, commissioners and community groups.
- In time, the Public Art Director will evolve the document to include new FAQs and short case studies showing local or comparable examples of successful projects, highlighting how they navigated processes.
- Contact sheet and resource index, including council departments, utilities, landowners, and cultural partners.

ROLE

EXPLAINS THE END-TO-END PROCESS

Provides a simple walkthrough of how public art projects move from an idea to installation, including concept development, permissions, fabrication and installation.

CLARIFIES COUNCIL PROCESSES AND REQUIREMENTS

Breaks down council permissions, planning requirements, highways considerations, environmental checks, health and safety requirements and documentation expectations.

IDENTIFIES WHO DOES WHAT

Lists key contacts for site ownership, utilities, weight loading, waste management, heritage constraints, public liability, and access.

SUPPORTS HYPERLOCAL AND COMMUNITY-DRIVEN INITIATIVES

Helps neighbourhood groups, young people, schools and community organisations understand how they can bring forward ideas or collaborate with artists.

ENCOURAGES GOOD PRACTICE AND QUALITY

Offers guidance on writing briefs, budgeting, ethical working, co-design principles, material choices, long-term maintenance planning, and sustainability considerations.

OPENS UP THE COMMISSIONING LANDSCAPE

Makes the ecosystem of opportunities more transparent by explaining how open calls work, how to join the Citizens Panel and how to find out about upcoming schemes.

BUILDS CONFIDENCE

Removes jargon, explains processes in plain language, and provides case studies or examples that make commissioning feel achievable for non-specialists.

POSITIONS THE PUBLIC ART STRATEGY AS CIVIC, NOT BUREAUCRATIC

Reinforces that public art is something the whole city can shape—not just professionals—making the process more collaborative, empowering, and less intimidating.

FUNDING & PARTNERSHIPS

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

PUBLIC ART DIRECTOR

The Public Art Director role would be best resourced through a long-term commitment from Gloucester City Council, a multi-year research position, or a combination of the two.

We recommend detailed scoping for an Arts & Humanities Research Council²² multi-year grant award based around a research proposal that incorporates an innovative civic role for resident co-designed creative arts commissioning with an aim of impacting public health and happiness, local pride and the perceived character and reputation of the city.

The exact research provocation would be defined by the lead individual as well as the prospective host organisation and the chosen fund, and could be decided through an open or targeted call targeting local research fellows and graduates. Current potential time-limited funds through AHRC include Early Career Fellowships in Cultural & Heritage Institutions, while there are a range of potential year-round funds to explore including the Curiosity Award, the Catalyst Awards and the Standard Research Grant.²³

We also recommend exploring support through NHS commissioning funds in the fields of social prescribing. We note the strong relationships that the University have already forged with NHS commissioners and the opportunity to build on those within a research proposition that aims to show the civic-wide impact of embedding creativity and cultural visibility into residents' everyday lives.



Resource pressures along with uncertainty around Local Government Reorganisation makes direct financial support for the core role from Gloucester City Council unlikely as a long term commitment; however senior officer support to fill a capacity gap during definition, fundraising and mobilisation of the Public Art Director position will be essential. We advise utilising a triumvirate of representatives from Gloucester City Council, Gloucester Culture Trust and the University of Gloucestershire to drive forward this workstream.²⁴

COMMISSIONING RESOURCES

An important commitment alongside this strategy would be for Gloucester City Council to sustain or enhance its current commitment to commission in temporary and event-based forms, and adopt the Public Art Strategy as a key part of that decision-making framework for existing culture and public realm commissioning funds.

We recommend engaging and exploring potential partnerships with the city's key employers, from the NHS and Walls to Fasthost and the range of growing start-up businesses in the city; many are significantly invested in the city, are invested in their staff and service users engaging more in the city and enjoying living here. Many also have major commitments to social value and to the local communities that form the centre of the strategy.

One key benefit of organisational distance from Gloucester City Council is eligibility for lottery-funded opportunities through prospective host organisations or through committed cultural or community partners. We would recommend focused project-based applications to Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery Communities Fund in support of targeted but long-view (up to two-year) programmes in the city's public realm.

PLANNING PROCESSES

It is possible for a public art requirement to be included within a section 106 agreement, subject to meeting the rules contained within the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. The current approach as outlined within the JCS, Gloucester Public Realm Strategy 2017 and Public Art Principles Gloucester 2020 are consistent with those rules.²⁵ However, consultation with planning officers has determined that we are unable at this time to recommend legislation to mandate a level of Section 106 payments to be dedicated to public art, and that low land values and competition for funds make the levels of funding that can be routed through planning insufficient to fund ambitious commissioning independently.

We would note, however, that a lack of significant funds need not be a barrier to allocating funds altogether, and that targeted support can still provide a transformative impact. For instance, a Per Cent for Art commitment on council-led developments, council land disposed of, or a small amount of S106 or CIL funding regularly allocated into a pot strictly dedicated to supplying match funding for proposed new public art projects would offer an enabling route to leverage further funds, to increase ambition in commissioning and transform the council's role from gatekeeper to facilitator of new, citizen-led public realm creativity.

While policy changes to mandate public art provision in all new developments over a certain threshold are not currently feasible, a policy change is not required to obtain a commitment across directorates that for new council-led developments we will plan to integrate cultural outputs; and that when residents, organisations or developers approach the council to establish a new cultural output in the city, that the council representatives will aim to help facilitate this activity where possible.

These recommendations are being delivered at a key moment in the city and the region's forward planning, with a new Cultural Strategy, Wayfinding Strategy, Open Spaces Strategy and a Strategic Local Plan all in current development. We have made initial scoping connections with all four workstream leads and recommend further close alignment to integrate public art and cultural public realm interventions into the city's planning and funding approaches. We are pleased to see that a commitment to public art in the city will be made in the forthcoming Open Spaces Strategy, and we note that this commitment enables the apportionment of greater planning funds to the city's public art aims, if there is the will to do so.

FACILITATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The Public Art Director will work with cultural partner organisations, funders, developers, council workstreams and independently to develop new commissioning opportunities, working in a co-design collaboration with the Public Art Advisory Group. We will seek new funding pots, as well as partnership alignments where the Public Art Director can support organisations to reshape their cultural commitments into public art delivery, working to add value and impact, as well as removing barriers to working in the public realm.

Gloucestershire County Council are responsible for all interventions on or directly adjacent to highways; it will be important to socialise the aims of the strategy with the county council and for the Public Art Director to establish close links into them to ensure aligned processes.

Gloucester Culture Trust are highly experienced in convening community representatives, drawing together a broad coalition of engaged partners and individuals and combining citywide resource, energy, expertise and experience; regardless of their potential role hosting the Public Art Director, they will be key partners in bringing disparate city representatives together.

JOINT COMMISSIONS, ALIGNMENT & ADOPTION

The following key private and public commissioners should be engaged with by the Public Art Director as primary candidates for mutually beneficial pooled resources and collaborative commissioning programmes, as well as invited to adopt the commissioning principles and the input of the Public Art Advisory Group, guiding their own future interventions and contributing to a holistic approach to Gloucester's public realm.

Primary candidates include:

- **University of Gloucestershire**
- **Gloucester Quays**
- **Food Dock**
- **Gloucester Culture Trust**



COMMISSIONING STANDARDS

Commissioning opportunities will include open calls, direct commissions and local competitions. The approach will balance strategic goals and responsive action, cognisant of current trends in sentiment, opportunity and need within our communities.

To ensure calls are equitable, inclusive, and accessible, we will:

USE CLEAR, INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Provide information in multiple languages or offer translation/language support where appropriate.

INCLUDE A CLEAR ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

In call documents, with defined levels of accessibility and sustainability in all proposals.

OFFER OFFICE HOURS OR INFORMATION SESSIONS

With answers made publicly available, and two-stage commissioning processes with simple first-stage requirements and financial support at the second stage.

CLEARLY ARTICULATE OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

In the callout and throughout the selection process, with remunerated mentorship opportunities in commissioning processes to support historically marginalised artists.

VALUE DIVERSE FORMS OF EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE

Evaluating artists by letters of intent or examples of work rather than CVs. Accept applications in multiple formats (written, audio, video, interviews, face-to-face, or hard copy) to accommodate diverse communication styles and accessibility needs.

REPRESENTATIVE ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION PANELS

Representative of the local population, incorporating different ages, lived experiences, abilities and expertise. Always ensure that when assessing locally specific interventions, we equitably include representatives from the appropriate neighbourhoods; for culturally specific artworks, we ensure there are panellists with relevant lived experience in decision-making positions.

KEY SITES ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

We have outlined within this strategy the need for sensitive, responsive interventions within the civic environment. This includes thoughtful site selection for commissioning, such that artistic interventions - whether large scale landmarks or intimate, community-driven works - are embedded meaningfully within the fabric of the city, enhancing its visual character, cultural identity and sense of place. This section outlines a small selection of case study locations, borne out of consultation and research, that could host a diverse range of public art interventions.

Prominent and high visibility sites offer opportunities for ambitious, large-scale works that can act as civic beacons, defining gateways, transitions or focal points within the public realm, reshaping the city's cultural landscape, drawing visitors, sparking dialogue, and reinforcing the identity of key public spaces. Equally important are smaller, locally grounded opportunities where community-led artistic proposals can flourish, fostering a sense of ownership, participation and pride, providing a platform for emerging and local artists to develop their practice and engage directly with their local environment. We aim to encourage a balance of high impact and process driven initiatives, helping to create a layered, inclusive and resilient public art ecosystem.

CITY CENTRE OVERVIEW

Cities are for people and city centres are for pedestrians. The following diagram (A) highlights nodes and routes which would assist cohesion of the city centre to have a more consistent, pedestrianised public realm, framed by public art and cognisant of core routes, opportunities and amenities.

The resulting city centre shortlist comprises:

KINGS SQUARE, EAST ENTRANCE	BARBICAN ROAD ROUTE
BARBICAN ROAD DOCKS JUNCTION	THE CROSS

Diagram (B) maps the extraordinarily dense concentration of listed historic assets onto the city centre footprint, illustrating the intrinsic heritage and cultural value of new interventions that better platform these sites.

DIAGRAM (A)



DIAGRAM (B)



1. KINGS SQUARE, EAST ENTRANCE



SITE OVERVIEW

Kings Square, GL1 1RY East entrance from Market Parade

The East entrance to Kings Square from Market Parade offers a high footfall and high prominence opportunity to improve the sense of arrival for visitors to Kings Square and Gloucester City Centre, targeting the natural ingress route for pedestrians arriving via rail or bus and heading towards the historic centre.

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

Kings Square has a rich history of transformation dating back to its first incarnation in the late 1920s. The square is currently surrounded by a mix of uses from the new University of Gloucestershire campus to a range of shops and cafes. The retail and leisure offer is low-key but highly responsive and relevant, with a recent swell of socially-conscious enterprises and dynamic meanwhile use.

The square itself is one of the largest integrated public art pieces in Gloucester and takes inspiration from the Severn Bore, with large sculptural stone waves referencing the tidal surge which can be viewed along the River Severn.

The regeneration of the square was completed in 2022 and affords level access, with tactile surfaces and width of paths and routes delivered to a good standard. The site is managed by Colliers, who are receptive to facilitating new proposals for activity on the square. A number of consultees cited issues with paving materials causing limitations on weight loading, which will need to be considered for any proposal.

As well as the University via the arts campus and Kings Walk shopping centre, there are numerous other possible partners and/or consultees in the local area, including the Music Works, local retail and hospitality businesses and the community cafés Smiles and the Proud Cafe. The square is a regular site of public gathering, with protests and vigils being held as well formal events, so consultations and presentations on any work being commissioned could be particularly effective when held on site.

SITE HISTORY

The Eastern entrance to Kings Square is on the corner of the historic Roman fortification perimeter wall where the Postern Gate, the hidden entrance, was located. Kings Square itself was created between 1927 and 1929 and involved demolishing an entire block of housing and shops. Market Parade, which intersects this section of Kings Square, was previously situated around the former cattle market. This area has since been redeveloped into the bus station alongside various mixed-use developments. As part of a wider development of central Gloucester in the 1960s and early 1970s the square underwent a major redevelopment, breaking the size of the square down into areas with planting and water features. Kings Square now has a restored large open space at its centre to facilitate events of all sizes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As Kings Square provides a backdrop for large scale events, the site at the East entrance provides the opportunity for an iconic entrance feature as a gateway to the square. There is an opportunity to make the Postern Gate more visible to the public, to highlight that this highly trafficked visitor entrance to Kings Square was once the secret, hidden entrance to the Roman fortifications which initially established Gloucester. Exploring the use of Postern gates could provide the basis for a subtle threshold intervention; this could include light within the surface or at specific points on the buildings or differences in material texture, announcing a change and an arrival not just to the square, but to the historic centre of Gloucester.

A new intervention could be suspended between the surrounding buildings to mark the transition physically as a gateway, potentially including light to animate the entrance to the square during the evening and adapt to events within the square.

A more significant intervention could include a physical representation along the fortification, forming a colonnade of sorts; this echoes the previous iteration of Kings Square as well as the Infirmary Arches behind the Cathedral. A physical intervention provides greater opportunity for engagement and would need careful consideration to ensure it is relevant and refined.

2. BARBICAN ROAD



SITE OVERVIEW

College Street – Berkley Street – Barbican Road

Gloucester Cathedral and Gloucester Docks are arguably the two most significant heritage and tourism assets for the city. While the route from the Cathedral to The Cross is well-trodden, this proposed route from the Cathedral directly to the Docks along College Street, Berkley Street and Barbican Road provides a significant new opportunity to join these historic elements together and better orientate visitors' experience of the city centre.

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

The route offers a rich variety of spaces, with variations in character, scale and atmosphere as you travel along it. The varying road widths, changing building heights and diverse architectural styles, from remnants of Roman and medieval structures to Georgian and modern facades, create a dynamic backdrop that invites creative interpretation and draws the visitor into Gloucester's complex built heritage. These contrasting settings provide opportunities for a range of public art installations that respond to their surroundings in both subtle and expressive ways.

SITE HISTORY

The route weaves in and out of the line of the old Roman wall, starting at the Cathedral and heading along College Street to the location of the Western Gate. Berkeley Street is named after the village where the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal was first planned to meet the River Severn. The route then follows Barbican Road past the site of the former prison, which has since been transformed into an entertainment venue, occupying the ground where Gloucester Castle once stood centuries ago. The current operators of the prison would be mutually beneficial partners in any drive to restore and communicate this underutilised route. The journey concludes at the docks, an area with significant untapped potential for utilising public art to enhance navigability, sense of place and ability to dwell.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed route could become a linear trail featuring pieces of various sizes, scales, and media. Subject to approvals this could involve installing works on nearby buildings, integrating them into landscaping, or siting permanent pieces at route transitions.

Sculptural pieces on this trail could draw inspiration from historic materials or local craftsmanship, while tactile paving, textured seating, and interactive surfaces might invite touch and engagement. Light-based artworks could highlight architectural details after dark, and temporary installations or community art projects could animate wider open areas. Together, these elements would form a layered and sensory experience, reflecting the city's heritage while encouraging people to pause and connect with their environment in new ways.

In a non-physical context there are multiple opportunities to develop an augmented reality walk following the historic Roman fortification wall, through which digital artworks could be incorporated, presented and adapted and updated over time with new commissioning.

The imposing wall of Gloucester Prison provides an expansive canvas for murals and street art and could be the focus of an annual street art festival to provide a constantly changing, colourful and dramatic piece. Creative use of lighting along this section of the route would make it feel safer during the hours of darkness and increase footfall as a result.

Compared to the rest of the centre, this route does not offer as much public seating as it could. Sculptural seating proposals fulfil this function while providing the opportunity to guide the view of the user, facilitate moments of reflection and incorporate public art of a different scale and nature to those offered for people on the move.

3. BARBICAN ROAD | DOCKS JUNCTION



SITE OVERVIEW

The site is located at the Eastern entrance to the Main Dock, between the North Warehouse and the historic Dock Company Office. As a transition point between the historic centre and at the end of the newly established Cathedral to Docks route, the Eastern entrance to the Main Dock provides an opportunity to draw people further into the heritage docks environment and, in turn, draw the docks closer into the visitor or resident's holistic experience of Gloucester.

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

The Barbican route from the Cathedral terminates at the east end of the docks, at a crossover location in the historic docks railway. The surroundings are dominated by the large red brick Victorian warehouses, many of which are listed, originally designed for the storage of goods. There are long-reaching views across the Main Dock towards the Dry Docks as well as towards the Victoria Dock and 'The Candle' which sits beside it. An historic remnant of the dock railway gestures to the turn up towards Commercial Road, though the turn on to the road itself is inauspicious and unsighted, and a playful but weathered rainbow crossing is painted at the crossing of Commercial Road on to Barbican Road.

SITE HISTORY

The Romans settled in Gloucester due to the split in the River Severn offering the most southerly crossing point into Wales. Although the position of the river has changed over time, the connection and small boat access between the docks and the River Severn is still pertinent.

The rail network at Gloucester Docks evolved in several distinct phases, closely tied to the port's growth and changing transport technologies. Initially, a horse-drawn tramway, the Gloucester & Cheltenham Tramroad, opened in 1811 to link the docks with Cheltenham and nearby quarries; the Midland Railway completed a real railway branch in 1848 to the east side of the docks, while the Great Western Railway stretched a branch to the west side around 1853.

Many of the dock railway lines were subsequently dismantled in broken stages, leaving scattered remnants of the extensive "railway dockside" that once existed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The site could support an iconic entrance feature to solidify its importance as a node and act as a counterpart to 'The Candle' to solidify it within its context. Proposals could include large scale dramatic hard landscaping interventions, incorporating metal and subtle lighting to create reference to the complex docks railway tracks. This could also assist with wayfinding for visitors to the docks.

The proximity and connection to the River Severn could be highlighted and celebrated with visitors being encouraged to explore the docks and shipping canal further.

Water has defined Gloucester from the initial settling to the present day, and the docks have taken many forms in between. There are multilayered historical and social references to draw on, explore and respond to, feed the senses and take the users out of their day to day. The soundscape of the docks would have changed dramatically over time and could be represented through installations or performance pieces.

4. THE CROSS



SITE OVERVIEW

The Cross, where Northgate, Eastgate, Southgate and Westgate Streets meet has been a central focal point of the city for many centuries. Originally the centre of the Roman settlement, a prominent medieval stone high cross stood there from at least the 13th century, possibly replacing an earlier Saxon marker.

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

The surrounding urban fabric is a rich blend of architectural styles and periods, from medieval timber-framed buildings and Georgian frontages to later Victorian commercial façades. The scale of the streets and buildings creates a sense of enclosure, yet their alignment opens up views along the city's main routes. St Michael's Tower, the surviving remnant of a 15th-century

church, anchors the space visually and historically. The Cross functions as a pedestrian focal point and a key node in Gloucester's retail and civic life, where the city's heritage and contemporary activity converge within a compact, walkable setting.

SITE HISTORY

The Cross has always been the very heart of the city's historic street plan. It marks the intersection of the four principal streets which radiate outward dating back to the Roman period. This enduring street layout has shaped the city's growth for almost two millennia, making The Cross both a geographic and symbolic centre point.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This is one of the most culturally significant locations in Gloucester and it is called The Cross for a reason – the intersections of different routes, cultures, history and heritage is vast. Narratively, its interventions have the potential to reference the wider city centre and further beyond into Gloucestershire more widely. The site could host a range of statement temporary projects to showcase Gloucester's creativity and commitment to the arts.

Due to The Cross's location and historic significance, potential permanent works may conflict with the conservation or access needs of the site. However, it offers a unique space for temporary work, performances, digital and light installations, and opportunities to showcase work from Gloucester-based artists to locate themselves and their stories within the narrative of Gloucester. The site could act as a host for the city's community-centred commissioning, wherein pop-up interventions are first sited in their own community and then travel to The Cross where the work can then speak to a wider audience.

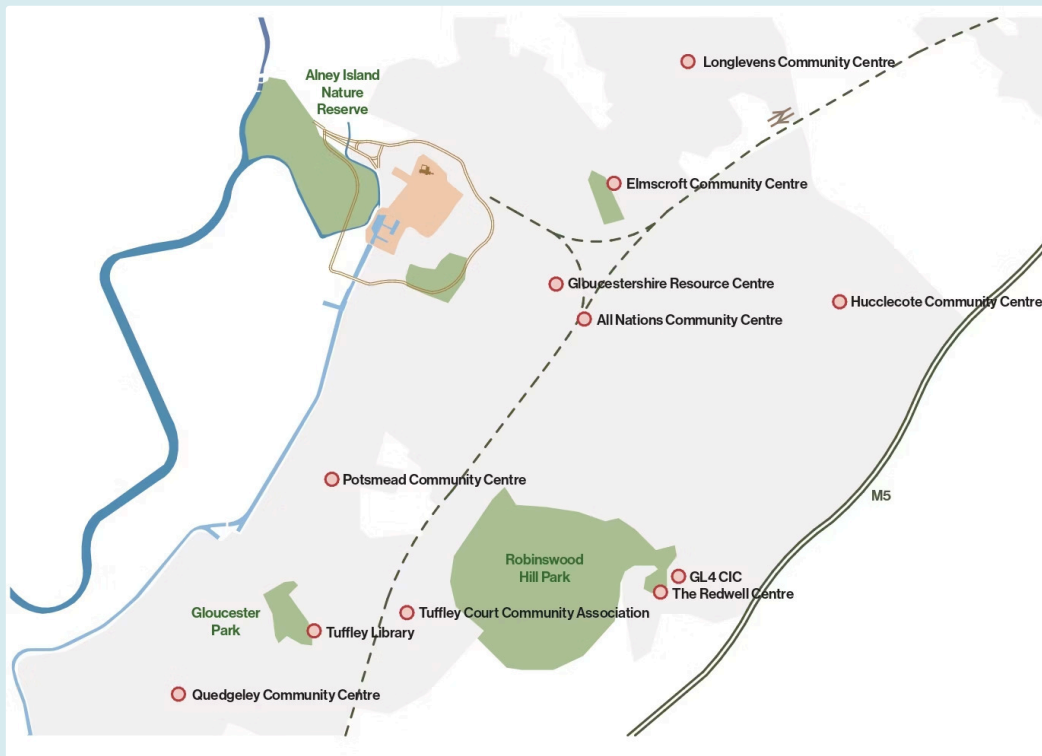
COMMUNITY FACILITATION & LOCAL SITES

OVERVIEW

Alongside city-centre interventions, we are eager to encourage and develop local creatives, communities and locally-responsive commissioning to ensure public art in Gloucester is a part of all our daily lives. The more macro view that we take on local sites is not to suggest that local interventions should be less ambitious nor less specific, simply that they will necessarily be more tailored to local communities' inputs and are less appropriate to define in detail at the strategic stage.

Local community settings provide fertile ground for collaboration between artists, residents, and local organisations, allowing creative ideas to emerge organically from the people who live and work in the area. Public art in this context can be commissioned through open calls, artist residencies, community workshops, or partnerships with schools and local groups, ensuring that projects are shaped by shared stories and local heritage. Such approaches not

DIAGRAM (C)



only nurture emerging and established artists alike but also strengthen civic pride, participation and cultural identity. By combining high-impact commissions with smaller, process-led projects with the potential for cross-fertilisation, the strategy seeks to build a sustainable public art ecosystem that reflects our diversity, encourages creative dialogue and embeds art in everyday life. The above Diagram (C) illustrates the wealth of community hubs throughout Gloucester around which new centres for local creating partnerships could build:

- Longlevens Community Centre, Church Rd, Longlevens, Gloucester GL2 0AJ
- Elmscroft Community Centre, Coronation Grove, Gloucester GL2 OSS
- All Nations Community Centre, Chase La/Eastern Av, Gloucester GL4 6PH
- Hucclecote community Centre, Hucclecote Rd, Gloucester GL3 3RT
- Gloucestershire Resource Centre, City Works, Alfred St, Gloucester GL1 4DF
- Podsmead Community Centre, 62 Milton Ave, Podsmead, Gloucester GL2 5AS
- Tuffley Court Community Association, 12 Robert Raikes Ave, Gloucester GL4 0QG
- Tuffley Library, Windsor Dr, Tuffley, Gloucester GL4 0RT
- Quedgeley Community Centre, School Ln, Quedgeley, Gloucester GL2 4PJ
- The Redwell Centre, Red Well Rd, Matson, Gloucester GL4 6JG
- GL4 CIC, 79a Matson Ave, Matson, Gloucester GL4 6LL
- Folk of Gloucester, 103 Westgate St, Gloucester GL1 2PG
- Gloucester Park Community Cafe, Trier Way, Gloucester GL1 1LF
- Smiles Community Coffee Shop, 18 The Oxebode, Gloucester GL1 1RZ



RECOMMENDATIONS

As sites where multiple organisations and ranges of individuals already meet and engage, these locations present ideal opportunities for Gloucester-based artists to develop and deliver temporary artworks on our doorsteps. Documenting these thoroughly is important to understand the artistic landscape of Gloucester. Selected artworks could be put forward for presenting at The Cross as a rotating 'fourth plinth', drawing a direct connection between the creativity and culture of the city's communities and the historic heart of the city.

Gloucester's parks and community gardens house an abundance of accessible, inclusive and treasured community spaces. The city's plentiful parks provide some rare free civic spaces and are rich in character and social good - from the wealth of innovative family-focused play parks to Gloucester Park's idiosyncratic aviary and St James' Park's attached city farm. It is also in the city's parks that we find a significant proportion of the statues and bronzes that form a very traditional slice of our institutional heritage; these statues usually commemorate men who played a part in Gloucester's development, many of them laudably so, but as creative interventions they achieve little of impact and relevance to today's citizens. What they do provide are powerful symbols of Gloucester's cultural establishment and its canonical heritage, dotted amongst some of its most egalitarian, multicultural shared spaces. Together these juxtapositions provide a compelling creative, social and cultural context for new commissioning, with locations that are typically efficient to manage but easily encountered, and locally-focused but reaching widely across communities, ages and backgrounds.

The prominent point of Robinswood Hill Country Park provides a major potential site for a large-scale work which could speak to the communities of neighbouring Matson or Tuffley and, visible from the M6 motorway, become a visual draw to Gloucester for those travelling by.

We have identified local community centres as a key point of gravity around which communities, high streets, sports clubs, family services, parks and transport hubs all tend to interconnect; we would propose utilising these centres as ideal routes to disseminate the knowledge and infrastructure to allow local residents to engage in issues within their area and create innovative responsive work in turn.

Take as an example, GL4 in Matson, sited right at the heart of the community, among a small run of shops, near to schools and in proximity to generous green space. Commissioning for this area would typically expect GL4 at its centre, the local schools and businesses engaged, the varied local communities consulted and the green spaces scoped as potential sites to help effectively reach the doorsteps and lives of the area's residents.

Where local high streets meet parks or community centres, public art can serve as a welcoming threshold, a symbolic gateway that signals arrival and invites people to explore, supporting social interaction, wellbeing and community cohesion. Social gateways at the transition points between community spaces could include sculptural markers, integrated seating or meeting points, artist-designed wayfinding using ground-level artworks (paving inlays, patterns, murals) and visual trails, local street art, lighting installations enhancing safety and inviting evening use, and auditory or interactive pieces that direct participants along a curated journey.



EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

Gloucester's Public Art Strategy and Framework encourages visionary thinking and locally grounded action. A successful approach to Public Art must be relational, built on collaborative processes that bring artists, communities and decision-makers together.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a core element of ensuring accountability and telling the picture (both big and small) of the change made by public art interventions. Numbers alone do not illustrate the whole story, or the one that resonates with everyone involved; as such it is crucial to incorporate everyone into providing feedback and data, informal and formal. This helps us to understand how interventions are implemented, what the impacts are and when we might need to enact change. M&E for each intervention should be proportionate to size and scale and never solely driven by funder requirements.

The contract management, project management and risk management of individual interventions will typically be outside the remit of the Public Art Director, so the responsibility to conduct or commission appropriate monitoring and evaluation will be delegated to those leading the delivery of public art projects to report findings back directly to the Public Art Director. The M&E requirements will be flexible and scalable depending upon how a project is being delivered. The Public Art Director remains accountable for the specified outputs and outcomes.

AIMS

- Outline evidence that needs to be gathered for the monitoring and evaluation of public art projects undertaken in Gloucester
- Support the gathering of strategic data to support and demonstrate the value of public art interventions and support further investment
- Identify suitable outcome measures for standardised data collection for public art
- Support the communication and dissemination of Monitoring & Evaluation

CHALLENGES

PERSPECTIVES

Wholly agreeing shared perspectives on the intervention or the desired outcomes and the language used when working cross-sector, cross-funder, and citizen-led may be unfamiliar. This is more challenging when more partnerships are involved.

PROCESSES

Rigorous processes are integral to citizen-led and socially-led co-design models. The initial intention or design may evolve over time, and this process and the changes involved are just as important as delivering an 'end product'.

INTANGIBLE OUTCOMES

Many of the intended outcomes for a project may concern changing emotions, relationships or perceptions; these are not easily transferable data points across projects, places, or indeed people. 'Attitudinal' change requires baseline data.

METHODOLOGY

A range of qualitative and quantitative methods used across projects, noting different organisations will have varying familiarity levels with monitoring and evaluation.

DEVOLVED DELIVERY

Every public art intervention should be monitored and evaluated, so an aggregated dataset can be produced and individual interventions can be analysed alongside feedback from audiences, participants, volunteers, freelancers and staff. This framework will not necessarily provide the metric required for individual organisational learning. The Public Art Director should encourage project leads to define outcomes specified by the citizens who are co-commissioning. The incorporation and emphasis on citizens co-authoring and commissioning specifying outcomes is especially important as footfall and wellbeing indicators may demonstrate response but rarely capture or interrogate the complex structural inequalities that are bound up in land use, ownership or participation that are often the concerns of citizens involved in local commissioning.

We recommend that accessible survey tools required for this framework are made available to all projects as well as undertaking the collection of sample case studies. This will support a wider collection of centralised usable quantitative and qualitative data.

OUTCOME AREAS

The three aims of the Public Art Strategy are outlined in detail earlier in the 'Aims' section. In evaluation, these three aims effectively produce five main outcome areas:

01

CO-AUTHORSHIP

An increase in citizen-led commissioning and inclusion skills in the city's cultural workforce

02

CREATIVE WORKFORCE

An increase in opportunities and the diversity and capacity of the city's cultural workforce in the field of public art

03

NEW AUDIENCES

Public art approaches grow and diversify audiences and visitors across Gloucester

04

NETWORK

New strategic, cross-sector relationships and partnerships are built in Gloucester and Gloucestershire

05

VISIBILITY & PROFILE

The profile and reputation of the city's public art offer is enhanced locally, regionally, and nationally

FRAMEWORK

The framework is a way of checking the evidence that needs to be collected, the frequency, and the people involved. This can and should be adapted to specific programme context, funding requirements and stakeholder needs of project leads managers. Evaluations will be conducted either through self-evaluation or externally. Evaluation will either be undertaken:

- By the Public Art Director (self-evaluation)
- By specialists within the organisation that hosts the role of Public Art Director
- By commissioning independent external providers

It is important to draw as far as practical on data available from national sources - labour market, business statistics and other publications/data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) or the Local Authority. For the monitoring and evaluation to be useful and functional, baseline data will need to be established. The beginning years of the programme will also act as baseline data capturing from which to measure progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the Public Art Strategy.

INDICATOR DIMENSION SELECTIONS

We recommend making use of statements and indicator dimensions featured within the Culture Counts Evaluation Platform as used by the Arts Council England Impact and Insight Toolkit. Research has gone into the development of these statements, and they have been tested in collaboration with industry practitioners and academic partners.

REPORTING & LEARNING

Disseminating and communicating findings from monitoring and evaluation is fundamental to the sustainability of the Public Art Strategy. Effective reporting ensures accountability to communities and stakeholders while building trust through transparency. By documenting outcomes and impacts, we strengthen the evidence base for public art interventions, demonstrating their social, cultural, and economic value to decision-makers and the public.

The ongoing sharing of M&E can support compelling narratives that can influence policy, secure future investment and inspire broader adoption of public art initiatives. When findings are shared openly and accessibly, they create opportunities for collaborative learning, increase capacity, and share best practice.

FURTHER PROGRAMME OUTPUTS

These potential additional outputs are designed to communicate impact and value to external audiences including local communities, funders, policymakers, and the general public.

ANNUAL PUBLIC ART M&E REPORT

Purpose: Provide a comprehensive yearly overview of progress, achievements and challenges across all public art initiatives.

FIVE-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose: Provide a strategic-level assessment of the Public Art Strategy's overall impact and evolution, updated strategic context and policy landscape review and recommendations for future direction.

CASE STUDIES

Purpose: Tell compelling, human-centred stories that bring the M&E to life and demonstrate the tangible impact of specific public art projects.

FURTHER SECTOR OUTPUTS

These potential outputs facilitate professional learning, collaborative development and continuous improvement within the practitioner community and among delivery partners.

ANNUAL LESSONS LEARNED WORKSHOPS

Purpose: Create structured opportunities for honest reflection, knowledge sharing, and collaborative problem-solving among those directly involved in delivering the Public Art Strategy.

BEST PRACTICE SHARING SANDPIT EVENTS

Purpose: Foster innovation and cross-pollination of ideas through informal, creative exchange sessions that bring diverse perspectives together.

CROSS-SECTOR GLOUCESTERSHIRE 'PLACEMAKING' SUMMIT

Purpose: Establish an annual event that supports the development of Gloucester becoming a leader in citizen-led public art commissioning and integrated placemaking, bringing together a range of placemaking practitioners.

CONCLUSION

This Monitoring and Evaluation Framework is designed to be a living tool that evolves alongside Gloucester's Public Art Strategy. It recognizes that the true value of public art cannot be captured through numbers alone, but emerges through the stories, relationships, and transformations that occur when artists, communities, and decision-makers collaborate in meaningful ways.

Crucially, this framework acknowledges the complexity and context-specific nature of public art interventions. It is intentionally flexible, allowing project leads to adapt monitoring approaches to their specific circumstances while contributing to an aggregated dataset that demonstrates collective impact. This balance between standardisation and responsiveness is essential for capturing the diverse ways public art manifests across different communities, sites, and scales.

By embedding continuous learning, transparency, and shared accountability, this approach strengthens Gloucester's capacity to steward a bold, citizen-led Public Art ecosystem. The recommended reporting structures and sector-facing learning activities further ensure that insights are not simply collected, but actively used—informing policy, inspiring new partnerships, supporting creative careers, and enhancing the city's visibility and cultural reputation. As new knowledge emerges and conditions change, so too should the methods we use to understand and improve Public Art.



APPENDIX 1: SWOT REPORT

A SWOT report is a structured analysis of an body's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, used to understand its current position and inform clear, evidence-based strategic decisions. The following SWOT report has been written following comprehensive onsite, desk-based research and consultation with over 40 selected stakeholders. The report is split into three subsections to contextualise three expanding concentric factors:

1. **Those related directly to public art in Gloucester;**
2. **The operational and institutional landscape that shapes and influences public art in Gloucester; and**
3. **Place-specific analysis of Gloucester's context and the broader landscape with which its public art is located.**

By structuring across these three subsections, the report aims to move from understanding the fundamental factors contributing to public art, through the operational systems that enable its delivery, to the wider systemic and contextual conditions that will determine its success in Gloucester. Each layer of analysis builds up from the previous one, connecting universal principles, practical implementation factors and local context to inform strategic decision-making about public art investment and development in the city.

PUBLIC ART

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON

- Over 2,000 years of history extant within social, archaeological and built environment
- Successful and high-profile visitor attractions, particularly Cathedral and Docks
- Multifaceted offers for residents and visitors - food, architecture, heritage, history, cultural scene, communities and creativity
- Quality and extent of Historic Environment, inc 484 listed assets²⁶
- Ability to obtain grant funding and several exemplar projects to build upon
- Appetite amongst city stakeholders to host challenging public art

WEAKNESSES TO IMPROVE ON

- Uneven geographic distribution of art
- Insufficient public art interpretation/education
- Insufficient legibility in heritage interventions
- Self-perceived indistinct cultural identity; often defined in relation to nearby cities / a lack of confidence
- Budget constraints, which contributes to fragile council enforcement
- Lack of policy underpinning 'Percent for Art' / S106 contributions, and public art competing with many other causes
- Lack of Visual Arts venues/leaders
- Unclear land ownership / permissions

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON

- University of Gloucestershire investment in public art (sculpture campus etc)

WEAKNESSES TO IMPROVE ON

- Weak connectivity between the docks and the historic centre
- Key sites eg. Kings Square costly to animate
- Perception that some recent public art projects have not met expectations
- No individual responsibility for driving new public art
- Previous feasibility and consultation work not built upon
- Benefits that artists bring to public domain remain to be proved to commissioners
- Insufficient public art maintenance
- Weak artist ecology within Gloucester. Few artists practice year-round at a professional level and skills base is narrow
- Minimal formal evaluation and monitoring of recent projects

OPPORTUNITIES TO INVEST IN

- Strong walkability and step-free access throughout city centre
- Large public realm
- Proximity to rural landscape and areas of natural beauty
- Developing partnerships with a variety of stakeholders invested in placemaking
- Eagerness for co-ordinated marketing through Gloucester
- Potential for heritage-related funding for future projects
- Rich, characterful public realm opportunities (snickets, underutilised heritage buildings, historic routes)
- High quality craft skills (eg. Cathedral stonemasons)

THREATS TO MONITOR AND MANAGE

- Limited local authority capacity and resources to proactively manage new planning and regeneration approaches

INFLUENCING PUBLIC ART APPROACH

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON

- Committed community and voluntary organisations, with a wealth of ideas and enthusiasm to improve life in Gloucester
- Young population, breadth of culture
- Coherent cultural identity within built heritage, a succession of communities layering interpretation over millennia

WEAKNESSES TO IMPROVE ON

- Lack of overnight tourist visitors
- Safety / Perceptions of safety – especially for marginalised groups
- Indistinct city borders / boundaries
- Quality and diversity of daytime and evening offer in the historic core
- Disconnection between different quarters of city centre
- Lack of dwell opportunities; general perceptions of unwanted (teenage, unhoused) dwell as bothersome
- Variable quality in new developments
- Art and culture in 'competition' with other council budgets
- Siloed working across sectors (public, commercial, cultural, community)

OPPORTUNITIES TO INVEST IN

- Impending local government reorganisation and Strategic Local Plan
- Diverse population – strong history of being home to a diverse population
- Growing repopulation of City Centre
- Investor interest in Gloucester
- New cycle spine in development
- Several concurrent complementary citywide strategies due in 2026
- Collaborative decision-making exemplars eg. Together Gloucester Citizens' Panel
- Diverse residential communities with strong hyperlocal identities
- New citywide marketing approaches in development
- University of Gloucestershire investment in Arts & Health, focused on new Gloucester city centre campus

THREATS TO MONITOR AND MANAGE

- Unknown outcome of impending local government reorganisation
- Risk retail shift leaves high streets empty and uniform – consumer competition between Quays and City Centre needs proactive management

WIDER CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON

- Specialised and innovative economy in advanced manufacturing, agri-tech and cyber
- Strong precedent for investment within research and development
- Good connection point between South-West and the rest of the UK
- Heavy focus on 'green' business adaptations including Net Zero and decarbonisation
- Collaborative regional Local Authorities
- Strong sporting investment and cultural identity

OPPORTUNITIES TO INVEST IN

- Proximity to countryside and coherence to Gloucestershire as a whole offer for visitors, residents and investment
- Population-dense developments within city boundaries
- Large existing private landowner involvement in placemaking

WEAKNESSES TO IMPROVE ON

- High levels of unemployment
- Disparate and unconnected public transport infrastructure
- Relative high cost ratio of public transport to wages
- Issues around substance misuse, addiction, and homelessness increasing within the city centre
- Pockets of acute deprivation
- Growth of divisive and exclusionary political and social rhetoric
- Low graduate retention
- Low cost of land (and land valuation)
- High median cost of housing

THREATS TO MONITOR AND MANAGE

- Ongoing rising costs for independent businesses

APPENDIX 2: STRATEGIC APPROACH

The strategic approach outlines three macro pillars that shape the framework's relationship to the city, our relationship to each other and the emotional drivers that influence our strategy:

AMBITION

Our approach must be ambitious, encouraging both visionary thinking and locally grounded action. We will draw on international best practice and creative inspiration while never losing sight of our city's own distinct character, communities, and neighbourhoods. Ambition in this context is not only about scale or visibility but about thinking imaginatively and working granularly – embedding creativity within everyday life, local spaces, and the lived experience of Gloucester's residents.

We must hold this ambition alongside centring feasibility and deliverability – in our research we encountered a host of programmes, strategies and vision documents produced for Gloucester over the past two decades with well-intentioned, potentially impactful initiatives that could not be sustained or actively driven in the long term. In this way, ambition also means considering sustainable working practices and a long-term view that values consistency and the additional labour required for our city and our sector in mobilising new approaches.

COLLABORATION

A successful approach to public art must be relational, built on dialogue, collaboration and collective processes that bring artists, communities, and decision-makers together. Gloucester's public art ambitions should give people permission to be imaginative, creating a civic culture that welcomes experimentation and creative risk-taking. Public art should act as a unifying, progressive force – bringing different groups, generations, and communities into conversation and shared experience. Working collectively across organisations, sectors, and communities can shift power, ensuring that no single body dominates decision-making and diverse voices shape the city's cultural future.²⁷

In implementation, this structural approach should manifest through local artist development routes alongside engaging residents in the planning, design and animation of their environments and social spaces. We should seek direct participation from local people in shaping the future of their communities, incorporating citizen-led²⁸ approaches and encouraging collaboration with and between local artists, striving to address and include the communities who are most often excluded.

INDEPENDENCE

The strategy and its framework should provide cultural leadership, embracing active authorship and curation with confidence and ambition. Many consultees emphasised the need for any proposed body to have the right people leading it, stressing that it can't be too removed from art and culture and communities, and that while the framework must secure the role of the artist within the civic planning and design process, the strategy should not be owned by the council.

Consequently we will recommend that a body capable of independently speaking for the culture of the city should hold the strategy, convening groups representative of the city and implementing a commissioning framework that is sufficiently compelling and aligned with the aspirations of the city – so much so that the public want to use it and council officers support its approach through their processes.

APPENDIX 3: PUBLIC ART TOOLKIT

STEP 1

If an artist wishes to install or create work within a particular space in Gloucester, what are the primary considerations regarding their selected site, how can they be assured in their approach? The following questions are designed to assist artists in navigating the complexities of working in the public realm.



HOW WILL THE ARTWORK BE INSTALLED, MAINTAINED AND EVENTUALLY REMOVED?

If it will be in situ for 28 days or less and it will not materially alter the appearance of the area or impact the safety and accessibility of the surroundings then it may not require Planning Permission. Consider temporary methods of installation rather than permanent.



DO YOU HAVE PERMISSION FROM THE LAND OWNER?

If you don't know who the owner is you can enquire with Gloucester Asset Management by email

[**property.team@gloucester.gov.uk**](mailto:property.team@gloucester.gov.uk) or find out from Land Registry:

[**https://www.gov.uk/government/organizations/land-registry**](https://www.gov.uk/government/organizations/land-registry)



IS THE SITE ON A PUBLIC HIGHWAY? WILL THE PROPOSAL AFFECT PUBLIC FLOW?

If so, contact Gloucester Highways:

[**https://forms.gloucestershire.gov.uk/HighwaysContactForm**](https://forms.gloucestershire.gov.uk/HighwaysContactForm)



ARE THERE ANY HERITAGE OR CONSERVATION CONSIDERATIONS SUCH AS LISTED BUILDINGS NEARBY OR A CONSERVATION AREA?

A project may require planning permission if it is within a conservation area or within the context of a listed building. Check here:

[**https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search**](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search) and

[**https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/planning-development/conservation-regeneration/conservation-areas/**](https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/planning-development/conservation-regeneration/conservation-areas/)



ARE YOU LOOKING TO HOLD AN EVENT OR PERFORMANCE?

If alcohol, hot food or entertainment are part of the proposed project, a Temporary Events Notice may be required to be submitted to Gloucester City Council 10 days before the event is due to be held.

<https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/media/sfogfxm/temporary-event-notice.pdf>



DOES THE PROPOSAL INCLUDE ANY HEAVY ELEMENTS OR WORKING AT HEIGHT?

If so, the weight bearing capacity will need to be assessed and permits may be required for temporary disruption to the public which will need to be approved in advance of the installation of the work.



WILL THE ARTWORK POSE OR HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO POSE ANY HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK TO THE PUBLIC?

This will require an understanding of the risks and decisions on how to mitigate them; for guidance on how to do this visit:

https://publicartonline.org.uk/resources/practicaladvice/commissioning/health_safety.php.html

For advice about health and safety matters contact Gloucester City Council Health and Safety Officer on 01452 396 396 or by email community.wellbeing@gloucester.gov.uk

If there is any doubt or clarification is needed, further information can be sought from the following organisations:

- Arts Council England: www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance
- Public Art Online: www.publicartonline.org.uk

If further assistance is required, contact the Public Art Director who will provide support and guidance.

STEP 2

If, from the information discovered in Stage 1, the artist does need to contact the Public Art Director they will use the details provided. In the initial response to a 'request for assistance' from the Public Art Director, they may wish to send the Information Request Form to the artist to capture the full range of information on the proposal and any specific assistance required.

STEP 3

PUBLIC ART SITE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

This checklist is to be used by the Public Art Director to inform the commissioning process for larger and more permanent pieces of public art within the city. The list outlines the key information needed to assess a site for a potential public art installation, so the Public Art Director can prepare a comprehensive commissioning brief. Each item on the list should be assessed in relation to its suitability and relevance to the proposed project, recognising that not all criteria will apply equally to every location. The goal is to fully understand the site's risks and conditions; physical, historical, environmental, social and regulatory, to ensure artwork is properly designed, installed, and maintained for lasting quality and safety.

1. PHYSICAL CONTEXT

Include within a commissioning brief to ensure design and technical decisions are grounded in a precise understanding of spatial relationships, boundaries, and constraints. It allows artists, designers and stakeholders to visualise the scale, massing, and context of a proposal.

LOCATION & SPATIAL CONTEXT

Aerial photos, maps, drawings - accurate mapping of the site and surrounding context;
3D model of the site recommended

TOPOGRAPHY & PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

- Topography - what is the size of the site and are there any significant level changes; steps, slopes, kerbs which could influence access
- Landscape - Is there any hard landscape (paving, tarmac, etc.) or soft landscape (areas of planting, grass etc.) - these will have an impact on the drainage of the site so need to be considered if the proposal will affect rainwater runoff
- Surfaces - what are the surrounding surface/finish types and materials? - Identify fixing points and material specifications where available to help determine what installation methods are possible and help avoid damage or costly remedial work

OWNERSHIP, GOVERNANCE & PERMISSIONS

- Ownership – is the site council-owned or private? – Approvals and stakeholders vary depending on the ownership as well as the future maintenance strategy Sources: GCC Asset Management; Land Registry
- Landowner approval – written approval required in advance of commissioning to reduce risk for all parties, landowners are also often invited to contribute to the brief.
- Planning Permission – begin early discussions with Planning Department or Pre-Application advice to avoid a lengthy planning period, identify required permissions and potential conditions
- Listed Building Consent – An application is required if the proposal site is within curtilage of a listed building or within a Conservation Area. This protects heritage assets and ensures interventions respect legally protected structures and settings.
- Historic England consultation – Consultation may be needed for sites with special historic interest. If the proposal involves any excavations or foundations it may be necessary to contact Gloucester City Archaeologist for advice
- Insurance requirements – set by commissioner; minimum levels to be communicated within the brief

ACCESSIBILITY & USER EXPERIENCE

- Levels, steps, gradients – to ensure safe, inclusive access and compliance with equality legislation.
- Acoustic properties and sound conditions – significantly affect users' experiences of sound-based or interactive works, guiding optimal placement and orientation.
- Visual context and sightlines – affects visibility, legibility, interpretation, and potential conflicts with nearby structures
- Legibility and wayfinding – supporting intuitive navigation and ensuring the work does not disrupt existing wayfinding systems unless intended to.
- Universal access considerations to ensure highest quality accessibility for all users.

ENVIRONMENTAL & CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

- Orientation, sunlight and shading patterns – affects how the work is viewed, shadows, heat gain and glare, as well as how the user experience changes throughout the day
- Wind exposure – an important structural consideration, especially for interventions which may be tall, lightweight or have moving elements
- Flood zone assessment, surface water behaviour, rain and drainage – understanding the existing situation informs the drainage solution for the proposal
- Are there any specific seasonal effects – for example autumn leaves,

ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) - Are there protected trees on or near the site? – legally protected trees need to be protected to prevent fines and project delays.

<https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/environment-waste-recycling/nature-and-conservation/trees-hedges/tree-preservation-orders-tpo/>

UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

There may be easements in place around utilities, pipes, sewers and other services which restrict where a proposal can be sited. These can be either visible above ground or below ground

- Overhead services - Power lines, telecoms cables – impact on siting, safe working, lifting equipment and tall structures
- Underground services – understanding what is below the ground can prevent dangerous excavation incidents, service disruption, and ensures foundations or fixings can be safely installed. If the project involves any excavation it may be necessary to contact Gloucester City Archaeologist
- Electric cables, gas pipes, water pipes, sewers - Initial information:
<https://www.digdat.co.uk/> - A full utilities search may be required

2. HISTORICAL, CULTURAL & ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

WIDER CONTEXT

Historical, cultural, architectural, and social relevance - understanding the site's broader narrative helps ensure the project is contextually sensitive and resonates with local identity.

CONSERVATION AREA CHECK

Is the site within a conservation area? – Conservation areas have legal protections to ensure the historic significance is maintained, proposals will need to consider the historical setting and additional approvals may be required. Gloucester Conservation areas can be seen here: <https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/planning-development/conservation-regeneration/conservation-areas/>

LISTED BUILDINGS

Are listed buildings nearby, on-site, or affected by views/setting? – Listed Buildings have statutory protection; projects must avoid harming the building fabric or negatively influencing the setting and additional approvals may be required. Search the Historic England List: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/> and <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search>

HISTORIC MAP SEARCH

Understand historic uses - previous land uses may impact ground conditions, reveal heritage assets, or indicate risks such as buried structures, contamination, or archaeological constraints.

LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCES

Valuable local insights can provide context documentation & guidance to inform design narratives, community engagement and interpretation. Gloucester Local History Society - <https://www.gloucesterlocalhistory.co.uk/>

ARCHIVE RESEARCH

Gloucester Archives / Heritage Hub for deeper historical understanding
<https://www.heritagehub.org.uk/>

3. ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

PREVIOUS CONSULTATIONS

- Has any consultation already taken place?
- Gather existing documentation and outcomes

CONSULTATION STRATEGY

- Develop a project specific consultation strategy to include relevant partners
- Hold consultation events on-site where possible
- Increase local engagement and community buy-in

SITE CONSTRAINTS, MATERIALS & INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS

This section outlines the practical, technical, and material considerations required to assess whether a proposed artwork can be safely, sustainably and effectively delivered at a chosen site. This information is important when a project has been commissioned and the nature of a proposal is being developed with the artist. The list can be used to aid decision-making during the technical design. Each item should be evaluated in relation to its suitability and relevance to the specific project, acknowledging that different art forms and locations will require different levels of detail. The aim is to ensure that the artwork's materials, construction methods, technical requirements and installation processes are fully understood so that the piece can be fabricated, installed, maintained and, if necessary, decommissioned responsibly and successfully.

1. SITE CONSTRAINTS

SCALE

Ensure the size and dimensions of the proposal are appropriate for the site - prevent overcrowding, maintain visual balance, avoid obstruction of access routes, and ensure the artwork fits safely and harmoniously within its environment.

LOADING

Identify any weight-loading limitations on the ground and/or finishes - to avoid structural failure by ensuring the artwork does not exceed the load-bearing capacity of the existing surfaces or substructure. Determine the materials, construction build-up, and any available specifications - this allows engineers and fabricators to design fixings and support systems that are compatible with site conditions.

2. MATERIALS

ART FORM

Sculpture, mural, installation, digital, light, interactive, permanent, semi-permanent, temporary - the type of artwork determines material suitability, engineering requirements, installation methods as well as the long-term maintenance expectations.

RELEVANT MATERIALS

Ensure material choices are appropriate to the project context and safe for their intended use.

DURABILITY

Assess materials for long-term resilience in relation to site conditions and nearby heritage sensitivities - reduces long-term maintenance costs and avoids degradation that may affect public safety or visual quality

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

Aim for low-maintenance materials or ensure maintenance is budgeted within the commissioning costs. Balance installation budget against projected maintenance needs.

FABRICATION PROCESSES

Consider the relevance and suitability of the fabrication methods to the proposal - to enable accurate translation of artistic intent into a manufacturable and structurally robust form while reducing fabrication risk and cost

SUSTAINABILITY

Prioritise low-embodied-energy and low-carbon materials and processes - this reduces the environmental impact of a project and supports low carbon supply chains. Source materials locally where possible and ensure a transparent supply chain to support ethical procurement of material

3. ADDITIONAL EXPERTISE

FABRICATOR

Specialist input at technical design stage reduces installation risk and uncertainty.

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Required when the proposal includes foundations or structural support, whether temporary or permanent, to assess structural integrity, stability, weight loading, point loading, wind loading and potential unintended live loading. Can advise on the suitability and sizing of materials, bimetallic corrosion resistance, pull out strength of fixings and are a useful part of a design team for various sized projects.

OTHER SPECIALISTS

Further specialists can mitigate potential risks. Appointments may include: Lighting Designer, Electrical Engineer, Mechanical Engineer, Acoustic Consultant, Landscape Architect, Planting Specialist, Ecologist, Materials Engineer, Accessibility Consultant, Health & Safety Consultant, Digital Media Specialist, Interactive Technologist, Heritage/Conservation Specialist, Fluid Dynamics Consultant, etc.

BUILDING CONTROL

Early communication if required, depending on scale and complexity to determine whether the Building Regulations apply and whether further input is required during the installation of the work.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Ensure all processes comply with HSE requirements for project size, scale, and complexity. This protects installers and the public and ensures compliance with legislation to reduce liability for the commissioner and artist. For advice about health and safety matters contact Gloucester City Council Health and Safety Officer on 01452 396 396 or community.wellbeing@gloucester.gov.uk

DIGITAL / INTERACTIVE REQUIREMENTS

Ensure digital or interactive components function over time, remain secure and receive appropriate power, connectivity and maintenance. Could include: screens, projectors, speakers, sensors, software/hardware integration and network connectivity needs

4. INSTALLATION PLAN

- **Transport Logistics:** Consider packing, transportation, lifting gear and required permits prior to delivery to prevent damage to the material and disruption to the public and avoid last minute logistical issues
- **Access:** Identify and communicate clear access routes for installation equipment and deliveries to avoid disruption, delays and conflicts with the neighbouring properties
- **Traffic Management:** If in a public thoroughfare, ensure a traffic marshal and spotter are appointed for public safety.
- **Compound:** Provide safe storage for materials and equipment during installation to avoid damage to materials and potential for theft and vandalism.
- **Contractors:** Identify installation team requirements: riggers, crane operators, contractors, groundworkers to ensure that the team installing the work are suitably competent to carry out the work safely.
- **Programme:** Establish a delivery programme from site preparation to final placement to avoid clashes with any other site activities. Communicate any changes clearly to all relevant parties.
- **Site Making Good:** Agree a restoration plan before installation to avoid any disputes and ensure the public realm is in a safe condition following the installation.
- **Decommissioning:** Plan for safe and sustainable removal at end of life. Consider options for relocation, reuse, or rejuvenation of the artwork.

APPENDIX 4: INFORMATION REQUEST FORM

This form is to be used only if other avenues and requests have not provided you with the information you need in order to progress your project. The purpose of this form is to provide the Public Art Director with enough information for them to understand your proposal and what specific assistance is needed.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

1. Name and preferred contact details
2. Links to previous work, completed or in progress

ABOUT THE SITE

1. Location of the Proposed Site
2. Description of the Site - Describe the site. Where possible, include information on: size, surroundings, levels, steps, slopes, surface and finish types, materials of surrounding areas, and all potentially affected finishes including possible fixing points. Include material specifications where available
3. Services and Utilities - Are there any known utilities on, around, or above the site? (e.g., power lines, telecom cables, electric cables, gas pipes, water pipes, sewers) Yes No
Assistance required If yes, please describe:
4. Ownership and Permissions - Provide written permission from the landowner or request assistance from the Public Art Director to determine ownership. Landowner name/contact (if known): Permission attached Assistance required
5. Historic Context - Confirm that the site is not in a conservation area and there are no listed buildings in view of the site. Confirmed Assistance required. Additional notes:
6. Notes - Please provide any other information you think is necessary for understanding the proposal or the specific request for assistance
7. Photographs - Attach or provide links to photos of the area where the proposal will be situated.

APPENDIX 5: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK TRACKING

The following fields should be captured through project monitoring:

- Project name
- Project postcode(s)
- Activity start date
- End date
- Number of sessions
- Postcodes of sessions
- Type (permanent, semi permanent, temporary)
- Number of PAYE staff employed involved
- Number of freelancers employed
- Number of freelancers new to the delivery organisation
- Number of participants
- Number of audience
- Number of volunteers
- Number of organisations without financial involvement
- Based (postcode)
- Number of orgs with financial involvement
- Based (postcode)
- Number of new partnerships
- Qualitative information about continuation of partnerships

Outcome area 1: Co-Authorship - An increase in citizen-led public art commissioning and inclusion skills of the city's cultural workforce

Indicator	Data Source / Method	Frequency
Number of new artwork commissions with active citizen involvement	Public Art Activity Tracker	Annual
Increased knowledge and skills	Staff and Freelancer Survey	Annual
Perception of meaningful involvement	Participant Survey	Per project
Participants representative of Gloucester	Participant Survey	Annual
Geographic spread of artworks across wards	Postcode mapping; installation records	Annual
Increased applications to PAAG	Administration records	Annual
% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	Audience and Participant Survey	Annual

Qualitative Questions:

How do cultural workers describe the impact of co-authorship practices on their work? Has this impacted the way they work beyond this project?

For organisations involved, have there been any systemic changes made as a direct result of being part of the project?

What barriers prevent workforce members from implementing citizen-led commissioning?

Outcome area 2: Creative Workforce - An increase in opportunities and the diversity and capacity of the city's cultural workforce for public art

Indicator	Data Source / Method	Frequency
Number of public art contracts	Activity tracker	Annual
Number of open calls for public art	Activity tracker	Annual
Number of early-career and under-represented creatives commissioned	Freelancer and staff surveys	Annual
Number of (paid) staff and freelancers hours	Activity tracker	Annual
Increase in number of local creatives accessing paid public art opportunities	Freelancer and staff surveys	Annual
Improved perception of Gloucester as a place that supports creative careers	Interviews with staff and freelancers	5 Years
Diversity of audiences and participants	Audience and participant survey	Per project

Qualitative Questions:

What new opportunities or career pathways have emerged through public art in Gloucester?

What barriers remain for under-represented²⁹ creatives entering the public art workforce?

Which training, support systems, and partnerships have the most impact?

Outcome area 3: New Audiences – Public art grows and diversifies audiences and visitors across Gloucester

Indicator	Data Source / Method	Frequency
Increase in total audiences for public art across Gloucester	Activity tracker	Annual
Increase in diversity of audiences reached	Audience surveys	Annual
Public perceptions of public art as relevant, accessible and appealing	Audience surveys, comments analysis on social media	Annual
Number of visitors from across Gloucester's wards	Audience Surveys	Annual
Number of cultural visitors from outside Gloucester	Audience Surveys	Annual
Number of interactive or participatory public art opportunities	Activity tracker	Annual
% of participants and audiences who are seldom-engaged	Participant & audience surveys	Annual

Qualitative questions:

Has Public Art contributed to changes in cultural habits or participation patterns?

Which commissioning and design processes are most effective at increasing equitable access?

Outcome area 4: Network – New strategic, cross-sector relationships and partnerships are built in Gloucester and Gloucestershire

Indicator	Data Source / Method	Frequency
Number of cross sector partnerships (arts, community, health, education, business, environment)	Activity tracker	Annual
Number of joint projects developed	Activity tracker	Annual
New partnerships with institutions, studios, HE/FE, communities	Activity tracker	Annual
New cross-sector investment (cash or in-kind) into public art interventions	Activity tracker	Annual

Qualitative Questions:

What types of partnerships are proving most valuable for public art and cultural development in Gloucester?

What motivates non-cultural partners to engage with public art?

How have partnership structures improved efficiency, resources, or shared learning?

Outcome area 5: Visibility & Profile – The profile and reputation of the city’s public art offer is enhanced locally, regionally, and nationally

Indicator	Data Source / Method	Frequency
Increase in local, regional, and national media coverage of public art in Gloucester	Media monitoring; press tracking	Annual
Number of invitations to present, showcase or speak at regional/national platforms	Activity tracker	5 years
Increase in social media visibility, reach, and engagement	Analytics dashboards	Annual
Number of press releases, media pitches, or story features produced	Media monitoring; press tracking	Annual
Number of visible public art touchpoints across the city (signage, interpretation, trails etc.)	Activity tracker	Annual

Qualitative Questions:

How effectively is Gloucester’s public art offer being communicated to different audiences?

What narratives about Gloucester are being shaped by public art?

How can public art be framed to better attract visitors and new audiences?

ENDNOTES

[1] The Creative Industries Sector Vision (DCMS, 2023) states that the creative sectors "provide the news that informs our democracy, the designs that shape our cities and the content and performances that enrich our lives and strengthen our global image. The sector has proved that it is an essential positive force for society, bringing joy, inspiration and opportunity to our lives. The creative industries form the national conversation through which we define our shared values." This is true on a macro and micro level for Gloucester itself.

[2] The creative industries contributed an estimated £124.0 bn in 2023, accounting for 5.2% of UK GVA (DCMS economic estimates, 2023)

[3] Similarly, the Town and Country Planning Association's 2021 report on civic art and planning catalogues the multiple corroborated benefits of civic art — from improvements in health and wellbeing to economic success and the strengthening of place identity.

[4] 'They [arts interventions] have a profound effect on people's health and wellbeing [by] building a sense of community and addressing issues such as isolation ... As we seem divorced from any sense of community, we're increasingly isolated, so public art and public engagement is a vehicle for bringing people together.' (Clive Parkinson, Arts for Health, Manchester Metropolitan University)

[5] A recent analysis by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), funded by Arts Council England, found that publicly-funded arts organisations generate a range of significant "spillover effects" that include stimulating private and foreign investment, strengthening city branding, and creating an attractive "creative milieu." (2025)

[6] 72% of local residents say the Angel of the North makes them feel good whenever they see it, and it makes 64% proud of Gateshead. (Durham University study, 2014).

'Particularly when you look at smaller communities or communities within larger cities, [public art] can have a very powerful impact on people's sense of identity and locality. A lot of sculptures are related to the local history in some way, and I think they can give people a connection to their place and a sense of continuity.' (Alex Coulter, [**Arts & Health South West**](#))

[7] At point of delivering this report we remain cognisant of those strategies yet to be completed including the Open Spaces Plan, the new Cultural Strategy, a Strategic Local Plan (with Tewkesbury and Cheltenham) and a new vision and City Masterplan - a multi-decade forward-looking strategy to guide the city's growth in a sustainable and inclusive way. The City Masterplan will help to shape decisions about where to invest and how to plan new developments, covering housing and how the city's land is used, job growth, transport links, green spaces and infrastructure, as well as highlighting priority areas for regeneration and prospective major schemes for the city.

[8] ‘Placemaking’ within the Public Art Strategy Brief is orientated around an institutional placemaking perspective, driven by policy and public sector actors; engagement is framed as ‘consultative’ or ‘representative’, enacted and mediated through formal participation structures, planning frameworks or public mandates without consistent implementation. This is not to state this is the only form of placemaking or public art within Gloucester, nor indeed should it be – but situates the conversations and interactions throughout this consultation within a specific local authority approach. See STRATEGIC AMBIGUITY: MAPPING PLACEMAKING’S LEXICON IN THE ANGLOPHONE GLOBAL NORTH. Courage, C. (2025)

[9] A new Wayfinding Strategy for Gloucester (2025) is in progress and consultation at time of writing this report.

[10] This could look like citizens wanting a site of memorial after a fire, acknowledging the role of specific generations in a diaspora, or even wanting to acknowledge the sheep that pass through their estate on their way to graze new pastures.

[11] The Quays and docks are cited as a destination that people from Gloucestershire and beyond will travel for; mainly awash with modern developments and restaurants, there are some historic clues of the working life of the docks in the floor, in industrial equipment and even a working dry dock. A large sculpture by Wolfgang Butress, *Candle* (2010) is sited without clear context and the lampposts echo, or rather mimic, its aesthetic. The paving in the docks guides you to the steps up to Parliament St; if you choose to walk around, past the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum, a worn and weathered egg from the 2015 Rugby World Cup ‘Scrumpty Trail’ sits, shuffled into a corner as you are shuffled onto the road and across a worn rainbow crossing. If you ascend the steps you arrive at the junction of Southgate St / Parliament St / Kimbrose Way, with Tom Price’s *Kyneburgh Tower and Wall* (2011), affectionately known as ‘the CD Rack’, again presented without context, human scale or positive interaction with its environment. Full of meaning, not often parsed nor indeed known, the sculpture designed to be a place of quiet contemplation sits next to a busy crossing, with no invitation to dwell.

[12] Examples include the Public Art Gateway Group (Coventry) – a multi-stakeholder panel that handles the detailed commissioning, approval, monitoring, maintenance and decommissioning of public artworks across the city; Camden Public Art Trust; Public Art Trust Milton Keynes; Wrexham Community & Culture Trust; and Gateshead’s partnership with the BALTIC Centre of Contemporary Art, who lead on commissioning new artworks, managing sculpture trail, cultural animation of the public realm and community engagement.

[13] Formal engagement is often not representative – we noted that the decision-making steering group for a recent commissioning programme responding to Refugee Week was described to us as having no-one with lived experience of being a refugee on it.

[14] These included interventions as small as deckchairs provided in Kings Square, and the enduring presence of a low-cost fibreglass egg trail from the 2013 Rugby World Cup while many established monuments are effectively invisible.

[15] This is not to preclude traditional permanent sculptural commissioning which offers significant potential benefits in terms of reinforcing long-term place identity and continuity to strengthen civic memory, but simply to reflect back the impact, relevance and sustainability priorities borne from the consultation and the media most suited to this focus.

[16] See our section on *Key Sites* for a more detailed examination of these factors through a small group of case study locations.

[17] In this context, we would recommend further reading into Watershed's groundbreaking principles for *Playable Cities*, Andrew Kelly's work on *Legible Cities* and Dr Troy Innocent's *Playable Cities Now*.

[18] While we have outlined a range of necessary audits which will be expected at all levels of commissioning, we do not consider this to be an onerous requirement or one that creates a barrier to delivery. As with all of our principles, they are not to be applied from a deficit perspective but instead to be used as a creative provocation to inspire and guide visioning. In these circumstances, no "adjustments" are required to a creative vision as inclusive principles are necessarily integrated from the outset.

[19] We have consciously suggested 'Director' nomenclature to convey leadership, avoid bureaucratic associations and make it a more consciously independent / shared ownership role.

[20] Art & The Public Realm Bristol is an excellent example of how this one-stop-shop can manifest: <https://aprb.co.uk>

[21] Under the current structure, this is most likely to be undertaken by the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure.

[22] Also consider the UK Research and Innovation portal <https://www.ukri.org> for latest research funding opportunities.

[23] Note the benefits of a future body such as Gloucester Culture Trust or the University of Gloucestershire to enable the expertise-driven formation of research provocations and to provide an eligible structure to receive the funding.

[24] Representatives Louisa Davies (Head of Culture & Leisure, Gloucester City Council), Phil Hindson (Chief Executive, Gloucester Culture Trust) and Paul Roberts (Teaching & Learning Lead: School of Arts, Culture and Environment, University of Gloucestershire) have all indicated willingness to support bridging of this work.

[25] Summary provided by One Legal on behalf of Gloucester City Council.

[26] Historic England's Listed Buildings and Sites Report, 2025

[27] Consortiums such as Together Gloucester have demonstrated an exemplar for how to ethically build and sustain an ecosystem of shared responsibility where, through partnership and co-ownership, ambition is matched by trust and mutual accountability.

[28] Numerous responses through consultation highlighted the positive impact that a recent shift towards citizen panels has had in city decision-making, and how in-demand such panels were becoming. Research highlighted the value of equity, authenticity and respect in these co-design and consultative relationships.

[29] As determined through sector analysis and funded organisation surveys, held against city census data.

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