

## **PUBLIC ART POLICY STATEMENT DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Introduction**

- One of Dover District Council's key corporate aims is to make the District a place that people are proud to live in.
- Creating a sense of civic pride and identity with one's surroundings can be reached through a number of processes – including physical regeneration and renewal, provision of new facilities, cultural and social development.
- Dover DC recognises that artists in particular can make a valuable contribution to creating humane, distinctive and beautiful environments, places that are enjoyable, sometimes challenging, useable and fit for purpose.
- Dover DC also recognises that artists can also offer new and different ways of working with people through regeneration and renewal processes – e.g. devising creative consultation for both residents and businesses to uncover real needs, desires and aspirations.

### **Benefits of public art**

The benefits of public art commissioning are well documented and wide ranging:

- Create individual and unique environments – to increase a sense of identity and sense of place
- For a commercial commissioner, create a Unique Selling Point and attraction
- Assist with orientation and way-finding, creating landmarks and local images
- Increase knowledge and interest in the natural and built environment – many public art commissions make reference to historical, architectural, ecological or geological features hidden or not apparent in the landscape
- Give people the opportunity to input into their surroundings through developmental public art commissions which come out of local residencies
- Contribute to arts development and increase opportunities for people to encounter the work of artists in everyday settings
- Contribute to employment opportunities for artists, crafts people and creative industries, challenge working practices and career development of artists
- Create publicity and raise the profile of the area – particularly through innovative commissioning which can attract partnership funding and awards.

Given the benefits of commissioning public art, and the strong links this activity has with Dover DC's corporate aims, the council therefore wishes to state their positive intentions to work towards the commissioning of public art in appropriate situations:

## **Dover District Council Public Art Policy Statement**

DDC:

- ♣ recognises the benefits of working with artists in public places
- ♣ is keen to promote the inclusion of artists where appropriate and possible
- ♣ recognises the variety of opportunities for artists within the public realm
- ♣ will scrutinise appropriate development, engineering, highway and landscape projects for the possibility of artist involvement
- ♣ will seek the help and advice from the Arts team and any public art consultant, which may be in place, in advising and training staff, as well as managing artist commissions
- ♣ will promote best practice in working with artists, i.e.;
  - ♣ agreed roles and responsibilities for all personnel, Council and others, involved in each project
  - ♣ creating an agreed brief
  - ♣ working to an agreed budget
  - ♣ a fair and open selection procedure to choose an artist (see appendix)
  - ♣ a mutually agreed contractual relationship with the appointed artist
- ♣ will seek partners and explore partnership funding to assist in developing working with artists

### **Working with Artists**

- Dover District Council recognises that there are many different ways that artists work within the public realm, with different aims and benefits, for example:
  - Temporary work – can transform a derelict site; mask a construction site; market a development site; create a talking point on a topical issue; engender discussion, debate and real consultation about future plans
  - Working as part of a design team – with architects, engineers, landscape architects – can lead to a unique colour scheme; a seasonal planting palette; a sculptural rather than functional piece of street furniture.
- It is also acknowledged that the involvement of artists does not automatically result in a large, stand-alone budget, and can be reached through artists working within a design team, using standard materials in new and inventive ways.
- Through these different ways of working, it can be seen that artist involvement may stretch across disciplines with the Council – planners, architects, urban designers, engineers, landscape architects, education, community and economic development can all look at projects which might involve artists.

## **Appendix One – Approved selection mechanism for East Kent Arts Consortium**

### **SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF ARTISTS**

Overall aim of selection process - high quality work in concept and execution.

Artists should be selected against an agreed brief which will determine the selection criteria:

#### **1. Criteria for Selection**

Criteria for the selection of artists should be agreed prior to commencement of the project or commission. The particular criteria should be specific to the project, but in general they might include:

- Quality and innovation in past work or current proposals
- Appropriate skills and qualifications
- Experience and commitment
- Preference or not for local, national and international artists/other design professionals
- Equal opportunities
- Pairing/sharing of skills – younger/more experienced; international/local
- Education and training potential

#### **2. Selection Panels**

Selection panels need to be assembled and tailored according to the particular project they are dealing with. They should be facilitated by an arts professional – e.g. Arts Development Officer, curator, public art consultant. They might include representatives such as:

- Local Authority Member
- Representative of partner organisations – e.g. commercial sponsors, local schools, University
- Representative of local community – e.g. from tenants or residents association
- Local Authority design professional – e.g. from landscape, planning, conservation as required
- Representative of Regional Arts Board (for larger scale commissions)

#### **3. Selection Process**

The selection of artists is usually carried out through three stages:

- a) generating the long list
- b) choosing the shortlist
- c) final selection

## **a. Generating Long Lists**

There are two main ways of generating long lists:

### ***i) Open competition***

An open competition - local, regional, national and international calls for expressions of interest

<i>Advantages</i>	Good publicity and PR exercise Uncovers new talent
<i>Disadvantages</i>	Time-consuming Expensive admin & PR No guarantees that competition will attract high quality artist submissions.

### ***ii) Research and prior knowledge***

Research into artists already known

Researching artists' databases and slide indexes etc.

<i>Advantages</i>	Quick and efficient
<i>Disadvantages</i>	Requires expert knowledge of the artists working in the relevant discipline

## **b) Choosing the shortlist**

Shortlists are usually selected by a sub-group of the selection panel and involve looking at evidence of the artists' past work and current projects. Agreement and understanding of the selection criteria is required at this stage

## **c) Final Selection**

The final selection from the shortlist can be carried out in three ways:

- i) Competitive Interview
- ii) Limited Competition
- iii) Direct Appointment

### ***i) Competitive Interview 3-6 artists***

Presentation - of work and experience.

Respond to the artist's brief

The panel will ask artist questions about their presentation.

Selection of ONE artist

<i>Advantage</i>	Time-efficient does not disappoint runners-up (as much) Begins the process of dialogue More direct involvement of all parties
<i>Disadvantages</i>	Difficult for those who do not perform well in interview situations. Requires confidence in the selected artist. Project management essential to ensure proposals developed in

response to brief.

**ii) Limited Competition 2-3 artists**

Short listed artists are offered a fee to develop concept design proposals based on the project brief. The selection panel makes a choice based on the presentation of the proposal by the artist, as well as their track record.

Fee paid for this – minimum £750 to each artist

*Advantage* The selection panel are offered choice in the proposals to be implemented

*Disadvantages* Less cost-effective to administer  
Commitment from project team to work with 2/3 artists in briefing and liaison activities

**iii) Direct Appointment**

One artist from the longlist may be selected by the panel directly without others being interviewed. This direct invitation must be done for specific clearly stated reasons.

*Advantage* Time-efficient

*Disadvantages* Appropriate on occasion to a particular artist for specific reasons  
Exposes selection panel to potential criticism