

DRAFT ART STRATEGY FOR WOODBERRY DOWN

**commissioned by
Berkeley Homes**

**researched and written by
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1. INTRODUCTION

This strategy document outlines a way of working that uses contemporary art to bring people together to share in the history of Woodberry Down, to celebrate the diversity of its old and new communities, to draw on its unique environmental offer, and to project into its future. It does not refer to the as yet unallocated 106 monies in relation to public art, but it is hoped that, once approved, this strategy will aid the decision-making in respect of those funds. It describes a process that involves community activity and contributions from relevant professional artists around which a division of financial and managerial responsibilities can be agreed using the methodologies outlined, with the understanding that many of the projects will have the capacity to also attract further funding from external and internal sources.

The Art Strategy should be seen as a live document - one which builds on past achievements to kick start a new means of engaging with the arts at Woodberry Down, but one which can be continually revised and updated to take account of changing circumstances, successes and failures, and most crucially to reflect the responses from existing and incoming residents.

This document has an emphasis on process. This is in order to enable the overall vision for art within Woodberry Down to be made manifest. The aims and objectives for the Art Strategy were clearly articulated in the original strategy, so this document uses those as a starting point and suggests how a strategy might turn into a programme.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Woodberry Down regeneration will replace the existing 1,890 homes with over 5,500 mixed tenure dwellings. The development programme, spanning twenty five years, is driven by the Woodberry Down Regeneration Partners: Berkeley Homes (BH), The London Borough of Hackney, Genesis Housing Association, Manor House Development Trust (MHDT- a social enterprise project) and the Woodberry Down Community Organisation (WDCO). The Partnership's aim is for Woodberry Down to be a flagship development that showcases the role the arts can play in enhancing its regeneration.

Both before and during the regeneration a number of successful arts projects have been enjoyed at Woodberry Down, and any future programme will build on their achievements. This strategy is intended to provide a framework for delivering future arts projects in a coordinated and transparent way.

3. THE SITE: ITS HISTORY AND CHANGING CHARACTER

The Woodberry Down Estate, built soon after the Second World War, was the largest public authority housing estate in Europe at the time. Now, some fifty years later, the regeneration of the estate, to create a new complex of social and private housing, is one of the largest projects of its kind in the UK. Ninety-five per cent of existing residents have elected to remain on the estate and they will be re-housed in new, more environmentally efficient dwellings, set within improved landscaped areas and adjacent to new community facilities.

WDCO have produced an impressive publication 'The Peoples Story' which charts the history of the estate between these years. Using the words, photographs and memories of many residents (some of whom have been here for the life of the estate) it demonstrates the importance of building an integrated and mixed community for our time.

Fifty percent of the new development will be made up of private rented accommodation (mostly flats that appeal to young, single professionals), whereas young families make up most of the large, current, shared-ownership population. Existing residents, one third of whom are over 60 years old, contribute to a hugely diverse community. There is a large Turkish population, and many residents with African, Asian, Afro-Caribbean or Irish heritage.

This diversity is reflected in the schools and religious buildings within the development: Jewish Girls Primary School; Skinners Academy (a mixed secondary school); Woodberry Down Primary School; a small Mosque; and an Evangelical CofE Church. Any future arts programme will have to take into account this rich cultural mix.

A key geographic feature of the current site is the Woodberry Wetlands. Many estate residents campaigned in the 1990s to prevent the eastern reservoir being concreted over and the result is seventeen acres of reed-fringed water rich in flora and fauna providing an unique wildlife environment among London's parks and green spaces.

4. PLANNING REQUIREMENTS AND THE 2014 MASTERPLAN

Attached to the 2014 planning approval for a second Masterplan and the detail of 670 homes in Phase 2 a condition states:

"Prior to the occupation of the development, a Public Art Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, for the integration of art into the public realm, setting out a process for engaging artists and the community in the selection and procurement of artwork in strategic locations within the public realm of the site"

The second Masterplan states that Public Art projects should in principle:

- i. celebrate the legacy and character of Woodberry Down and its residents
- ii. contribute to place-shaping
- iii. enhance and animate usage of public space
- iv. contribute to social cohesion

5. DEFINITIONS AND BUILDING ON PAST ACHIEVEMENTS

For the purposes of this document it is necessary to understand what is meant by the term 'Public Art'. This is a phrase commonly used to describe an artwork by a visual artist created for a public site, usually outdoors, and capable of being experienced by the population at large. However, within the context of Woodberry Down and in particular with reference to the requirement to engage with the resident community it will be necessary to adopt a broader definition of what is meant by public art. To do this it is useful to see what projects have been successful in the past.

The Hidden River Festival is an annual event organised by MHDT and embraces a great range of activities from live music, art workshops, theatre shows, readings and more, and is well attended by a cross section of residents.

In 2008 the art collective Something and Son was commissioned to undertake a community sculpture project involving 3d printing. 100 ceramic trees reflected each participating resident's relationship to the estate: the people they knew and the events they'd been part of. The resulting project is now suspended in the Redmond Community Centre.

The Found Sound Project, a collaboration between London Wildlife Trust, MHDT and The Edge, offered young people an opportunity to develop a creative response to the local natural world under the guidance of a sound artist/musician. Many other community focused activities have also been successful, including the Big Dance Bus that came to the estate, offering a full day of dance activity and culminating in a carnival procession.

To date there has been little evidence of community involvement in the acquiring or devising of permanent works for the built environment and landscaped areas, but a recent consultation with young people from The Edge project is worth noting. When considering the detail of the design for the southern edge of Spring Park the landscape team from Murdoch Wickham met with a group of young people to discover what they most look for in outdoor spaces. The Edge ran workshop sessions in advance to encourage the teenagers to think about their relationship with public realm. Concerns about safety, wanting proximity to active frontages, and places to charge mobile phones were among key points made.

Public Art for Woodberry Down in the future will not therefore be restricted to static, stand alone works by visual artists, rather it will need to embrace all kinds of community participation and engagement with residents and in so doing will require input from artists across the cultural spectrum, involving theatre, dance, music, filmmaking, writing, reading, story-telling and more, with each activity selected for its pertinence to the particular context.

An ideal scenario would be one where the commissioning of a key visual art work for a public square, would be linked to a programme of community focused activities, generated by artists from a range of disciplines.

6. KEY ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE ART PROGRAMME

6a. There is general agreement that all art projects should be approved and delivered through the same process, be they community driven, participatory projects, artists on design teams or commissions for permanent art works.

6b. To this end a Woodberry Down Art Steering Group (WDASG) should be established. This group would consider all proposals for art events, workshops, commissions and appointment of artists to design teams. Its role and make-up is described more fully in 'Governance' below.

6c. During the research period the principles established in the Masterplan and reflected in the original strategy (listed in item 4. above) are generally felt to provide appropriate aims for the art programme, although particular emphasis should be given to projects that encourage community cohesion and explore ways in which the existing and incoming residents can be brought together.

6d. Projects that have a long term impact for local residents would be of particular value, especially where they can result in transfer of skills, employability within the local population, and all round sustainability.

6e. Projects should be devised on a collaborative basis, with all relevant partners involved in the early stages of project development.

6f. Over a period of, say, three years the programme should employ a range of art forms, focus on a variety of sites within Woodberry Down (including meanwhile spaces, making particular use of empty retail units) and appeal to different communities of interest among residents.

6g. The London Borough of Hackney is in the process of establishing a Cultural Policy Paper and where possible it would make sense for the Woodberry Down Art Programme to reflect this strategy which is likely to revolve around five themes: Employment, the Economy, Education, Community Cohesion and Health & Wellbeing. These themes reflect many of the issues raised during the research.

When anticipating the benefits of a future programme the latter two are key concerns for Genesis Housing Association.

6h. Wherever possible future art projects should celebrate the unique natural landscape and rich cultural heritage of Woodberry Down working with local archives and the resident community to uncover creative ways of bringing the past into contemporary focus

6i. In considering the financial support to this programme, it is unlikely that the 106 monies will support all that the WDASG may want to deliver. For this reason certain financial priorities might be established for example: a) projects that have in place, or are likely to attract, external funding, or b) high profile commissions and artist appointments that will contribute to place-making, establish an identity for the development and enhance Woodberry Down's cultural status in the region, and that are likely to attract direct support from Berkeley Homes, or c) self generated and self supported projects, that meet other criteria, but which require little or negligible subsidy

7. ART AT WOODBERRY DOWN

In order to reflect the aims for Public Art identified in the Masterplan and in the original strategy, to take account of research subsequently undertaken, and to reflect the objectives and key issues raised in item 6 above there is a case for dividing the future programme into three key elements.

7.1. Community Projects:

These are projects that are essentially participatory in nature, responding to local need, embracing all arts disciplines, and working through local partnerships (for example with MHDT and the Edge) that come together at an early stage in the project planning. Particular emphasis will be given to projects that can demonstrate an ability to draw communities together.

The projects will come about in the following ways:

- a) suggestions from members of the WDASG
- b) suggestions from residents and local partnership organisations
- c) as a result of consultations on the Art Strategy and requests for project suggestions to be incorporated into local events such as the Fun Day, Community Days and the Hidden River Festival

7.2. Public Art Commissions:

Assuming that a very specific brief is created for each public art opportunity, and that included within it is a requirement for the artist to work with an identified local

constituency to develop and refine their ideas and proposals, then these permanent works can become genuinely rooted within the communities in which they are sited.

In this way public art becomes much more than a visual addition to a landscape or building, but can be a genuine expression of the history of the site and its relationship to the local community. Just in the way that on visiting the cinema not everyone enjoys the same film, so not all public art is loved by everyone. It is the narrative behind the work that is vital here. An important element in the commissioning process is to give the appointed artist a chance to tell a story – one to which many people have contributed. The resulting work may be abstract in nature, but the story is something the wider community can share in, and in so doing they become champions of the work.

Opportunities for contemporary artists to be commissioned to create site-specific work for Woodberry Down are particularly relevant to the landscaping programme. Possibilities to invite artists to intervene have already been identified at the southern edge of Spring Park (Phase 2), in the Green Link from the reservoir to Seven Sisters Road (Phase 3) and within the Market Square (Phase 4).

Opportunities for these and future commissions are most likely to be identified by BH Development team as they are aware of the timing and context in each case. Each proposal would be assessed by the WDASC to ascertain that it fulfils the aims i, ii, and iii in the masterplan public art objectives, and to confirm that there is appropriate funding and management of the commissioning process in place. In each case a related programme of community focused projects, could mean that a single commission with its partnership activities would also meet objective iv. The process for appointing the artist and the management and delivery of the public commissions is detailed in 'Methodologies' below

7.3. Artist embedded onto the design team:

Involving an artist in this way will help to establish a particular visual identity for Woodberry Down within its built environment and in so doing will come some way to fulfilling aims i and ii in item 4 above. Architects and landscape designers are adept at delivering high quality buildings and public spaces that perform a particular function, whereas artists bring something unexpected to the project and their involvement can reinforce the unique character of the place.

This appointment could be planned for a future phase of the development where there is genuine opportunity for an artist to make a contribution to the detail of the built environment, possibly during phase 4 of the development. The artist would be an integral part of the architects' team, appointed early in the detailed design phase, and able to contribute to the overall visual identity of the project, and to the detailing of particular aspects, for example the fritting of glass on balconies, the detailing of entrance areas and gateways. The appointment would be time limited, and it would be important to involve the architects in drawing up the artist's brief, in the timing of

the appointment and in determining the overall remit of the artist. Details on appointment and management of the artist are included in 'Methodologies' below.

8. A POSSIBLE FUTURE PROGRAMME

The WDASG will of course be responsible for assessing and approving all ideas for the future programme. Nevertheless it might be helpful to describe briefly one or two projects that have been suggested during the research for this paper. The detail of each project and its funding will be for the WDASG to determine, so what follows should be viewed as early ideas for future debate. In addition, outline budgets for projects in year one are also included (in item 11) below in order to anticipate what financial commitments may be required.

Year One 2018/19

Community Project: The Gallery in the Park

This is an idea proposed by WDCO and much loved locally. The project is included in the most recent Masterplan and involves a number of robust, self-supporting display cases to be installed in the next phase of the Spring Park landscaping scheme. A programme of two exhibitions each year could be built around an annual theme, which might consider aspects of health and wellbeing, the local natural history and heritage, or other locally relevant issues. For the first show an artist would be invited to respond to the theme and explore its pertinence to the history, geography and demography of Woodberry Down, and the second exhibition could elicit contributions (written and visual) from young and old (through the Edge and a group of elderly residents) to the same theme, perhaps working through ideas under the guidance of the first show's artist.

This proposal has many benefits. The exhibitions will be devised with and for local people focussing on locally relevant issues, bringing professional artists together with residents' groups to share skills and ideas, generating a complementary programme of related activity.

The Redmond Centre was once used for occasional exhibitions, but as the building is now offering a range of new services, the space is now less suitable, so the establishing of an outdoor gallery does fulfil a local gap in provision.

In the longer term, the Gallery in the Park could be a vital part of a Woodberry Down cultural quarter, with the Redmond Centre and the proposed Western Reservoir Centre as linked spaces offering cultural and wildlife programmes for residents and visitors alike.

Public Art Commission: Spring Park

Following the landscape team's consultation with young people from The Edge, an opportunity has emerged to commission an artist to create a permanent work at the southern edge of Spring Park. The commission brief would take into account all the issues raised by the teenagers, and would require the appointed artist to continue to liaise with them during the development of the proposals. The brief might for example include a requirement to incorporate energy generation via wind or sun to support a phone charging element.

The process for appointing the artist and the managing of the project is referred to (in item 10) below.

Artist on the Design Team: Phase 4 Building Design

BH has an opportunity here to involve a professional artist as an integral member of the design team. Working with a freelance public art curator and the architects, a time limited artist's brief incorporating a number of outputs could be agreed. These might involve detailing on external surfaces of the buildings, and contributions to gateway and entrance designs. The brief might also require the artist to liaise with a group of local residents, and/or to explore the specific history of that site with a view to devising proposals that are inspired by its particular context and legacy. With the exception of the artist's fees, it would be expected that the implementation of all design contributions made by the artist would be part of the construction budget.

Year Two 2019/20

Public Art Commission: Green Link from Reservoir to Seven Sisters Road

Currently described as the Green Link, this site might naturally lend itself to a commission that is driven by environmental concerns within a natural history context, perhaps involving a partnership with the London Wildlife Trust and Skinners Academy, so that the appointed artist would work with both institutions to develop proposals for a permanent work.

Community Projects: Workshops and Performances using the new outdoor Performance Space

This is a space adjacent to the Redmond Centre and as such could be seen as a natural outdoor extension to their facilities. MHDT has a good track record of delivering projects devised in response to local need and are no doubt already deliberating on its potential use

Year Three 2020/21 and beyond

Community Projects: Writer in Residence

The indoor community space currently being planned is likely to include facilities for the elderly as well as a children's nursery and other organisations, and this would offer an opportunity to involve a writer-in-residence who could bring the various in-house constituencies together, establish local writers groups for the wider resident community, link into the Redmond Centre Library, set up readings, book clubs and more.

Public Art Commissions: Market Square

An artist could be appointed to create a public work for this central square and key retail hub. An ambitious brief could require the artist to consult with nearby residents, local organisations and retail managers to devise proposals that reflect local and historical issues. A related programme of activities and workshops during the development of the project would involve people in the issues that the artist might raise and the final work would be genuinely rooted in the community. The service charge to the retail units could cover the ongoing maintenance of the outdoor work.

Currently in the planning stage, and not yet fully confirmed, there are likely to be many other opportunities for involving artists both in the build process and in making work with and for the resident community. It is not the responsibility of this Strategy to document all those possibilities, but it is hoped that some of the examples given above will present the WDASG with a starting point for debate and decision and ensure that a new phase of the art programme at Woodberry Down is sparked into action.

9. GOVERNANCE

The Woodberry Down Art Steering Group would be ultimately responsible for assessing and approving all art projects coming forward. Each proposal would be evaluated according to the aims and objectives of the art programme described in 4) and 6) above. Once it has been agreed that a project fulfils these ambitions then a budget and management plan would need to be put in place.

The WDASG should be small but effective and dynamic. Its membership should include one representative from each of the following organisations:

- Berkeley Homes Development Team
- The London Borough of Hackney, Regeneration Team
- The London Borough of Hackney, Arts and Culture Team
- Genesis Housing Association

Manor House Development Trust
Woodberry Down Community Organisation
The Edge

It may also be deemed useful to invite an external Public Art Advisor to join this Group. Such a person will have a wealth of experience in all kinds of public art projects and could advise on the management and budgetary implications for each project. The North West Cambridge public art programme has delivered a hugely impressive programme of activity involving local and special interest communities. It has been overseen by an Art Advisory Board, and although not so large in scale the ambition at Woodberry Down should aspire to this level of achievement, which will be made all the more possible with the continuing advice of a public art specialist.

WDASG should meet four times a year to consider applications for new projects, to monitor those ongoing, and to evaluate those completed. As there is some overlap between this group and the membership of the Design Committee it might be sensible to plan the four meetings each year to coincide with the timing of the Design Committee.

10. METHODOLOGIES AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Each community project, public commission and appointment of artist to a design team will require a different management and delivery process. The skills required for each of these projects will vary, and it would therefore be best to agree an appropriate management plan to suit each occasion. On this basis it does not make financial sense to appoint a permanent, part-time manager of the art programme but rather that the WDASG should ensure that the budget for each project contains an appropriate fee for its management and delivery and the WDASG should identify a suitably qualified person to undertake this role. The following is an outline methodology for the management of the three different aspects of the public art programme.

Public Art Commissions

Once the WDASG has identified an opportunity for a public art commission to be taken forward and an overall budget has been agreed then in order to ensure that the commission meets the overall aims and objectives of Woodberry Down's art programme an experienced Public Art Curator should be appointed. Answerable to the WDASG this person will be responsible for the following:

- Establish a small Commission Working Group (CWG) drawn from members of the WDASG, to approve artist's brief, appointment of artist, and finalisation of proposals

Following consultation with all partners/stakeholders devise an overall approach for the commission, its aims and objectives

Draw up a brief for the artist, reflecting the above, outlining the scope of the commission, identifying the timetable, budget, and local consultation required, and listing the artist's responsibilities

Establish criteria for selection of artist, identify all skills and experience required to complete the commission

Present to (CWG) the work of a number of artists who fulfil the criteria, CWG to select 3 or 4 artists to interview

Manage the shortlisting, interviews, and subsequent appointment of the artist.

Draft contract for the artist with client (likely to be BH)

Oversee effective research and development period during which artist presents early ideas to CWG

Once approved by CWG, oversee application for planning and any other necessary permissions

Act as the conduit between artist and CWG throughout the fabrication and installation stages

Ensure art commission is fully integrated into construction timetable and/or that there are appropriate systems in place to oversee its production and technical implementation

Coordinate any related events and activities

In relation to the commission and in collaboration with artist produce interpretative material for use by all residents, and ensure its distribution

Establish maintenance guide with artist and client

Complete evaluation of project

Liaise with BH to establish publicity and, if appropriate, manage launch of the commission.

Artist on a Design Team

A similarly experienced public art curator should be appointed to manage the appointment of the artist. Although their role will be smaller than that outlined above they will be responsible for the following.

Respond to an opportunity sufficiently early on in the design phase, so that the artist can make a genuine contribution to the scheme

Work with the architects and BH to devise a time-limited appointment of a contemporary artist to the design team

Agree with architects and BH exactly what areas of design the artist will be invited to contribute to, establish a sensible remit with identified outputs

Manage the short-listing and appointment of an artist with suitable skills and experience

Outline fee agreement and timetable for artist

Oversee successful integration of artist into design team and maintain ongoing monitoring of project, acting as conduit between artist, architects and client

Community Projects

Each community project will have different management requirements and these should be assessed and agreed by the WDASG. The fee for managing each project should be included in each project budget. There might be occasions when projects are proposed that either have inbuilt management already provided, or are delivered on a voluntary basis. The following management plan relates to the one community project that has been included in the masterplan and which already has good local support.

This outline plan assumes The Gallery in the Park is established as an annual programme with two exhibitions each year and a related programme of workshops, events and activities. The role of the Project Manager answerable to the WDASG would be as follows:

Devising with local partners (different in each year) the annual theme

Drawing up a brief and overseeing selection of professional artist for first exhibition

Managing the Budget (fees to artist, materials, expenses, workshop costs, display and installation costs)

Establishing system for involving and inviting local groups in second exhibition

Setting up workshops with the artist to generate material

Managing the delivery of both exhibitions and their installation

Organising suitable local and regional publicity, the launch of the project and its ongoing evaluation

Liaising with Parks team in respect of any necessary maintenance

It should be noted here that the Arts Coordinator at MHDT is part time, and has all the skills and experience required to manage The Gallery in the Park. Given that this might be considered a natural complement to her current role, it could be discussed as a possible extension to this post.

11. OUTLINE BUDGETS

Community Projects : The Gallery in the Park

The Gallery in the Park has a number of costs associated with it. The most obvious are the costs for producing and installing the display cases. The specification for these should be as high quality as possible, as this will ensure their longevity, their resistance to vandalism, and their negligible maintenance requirements. Bespoke lockable cabinets made of steel and reinforced glass could be produced by a number of street furniture manufacturers.

Notional Annual Project Costs:	£
Project Manager (part time, between 30-40 days p.a.)	6,000.00
Artist fee including expenses	3,000.00
Workshops, Materials, Display costs x2	2,000.00
Publicity and Launch costs x2	2,000.00

Public Art Commission : Southern Edge of Spring Park

Artist's Fee	15,000.00
Design, Fabrication and Installation of artwork	60,000.00
Related programme of community activities	2,000.00
Interpretation/Guide for residents	1,500.00
Documentation	500.00

Artist Embedded onto a Design Team: Phase 4

Fees to artist for an agreed period of time to undertake local consultation, work closely with the design team, contribute design proposals at a daily rate of £300

12. FUNDING

All funding of future art projects will be subject to approval by the WDASG and to subsequent negotiation and agreement between Berkeley Homes and the London Borough of Hackney, particularly in relation to allocation of support from 106 monies.

Some projects will come forward with external financial support already in place. For example WDCO and MHDT have been very effective in securing outside funding for past projects and their skills and experience in this respect should be harnessed in support of the future programme. The Heritage Lottery Fund, and Arts Council England, Grants for the Arts scheme are two recent sources of support to projects.

There are sources of funding within Woodberry Down that could respond to applications in support of the future programme:

Genesis Housing : fund to support Health and Wellbeing projects £50,000.00

106 Monies allocated for public art, but exact spend yet to be confirmed by LBH :

Phase One £19,000.00

Phase Four (allocated but unpaid) £80,000.00

Further support to Woodberry Down Art Programme may be forthcoming from an unallocated £1.5million 106 monies.

Berkeley Homes have already invested hugely in art projects at Woodberry Down and will no doubt continue to do so when an appropriate project emerges via the WDASG.

Jeni Walwin

February 2018

13. CONSULTTEES

Modi Abdoul, Team Leader Hackney Young Peoples Service, The Edge

Lucy Whitford, Arts Coordinator, Manor House Development Trust

Geoff Bell, Chair, Woodberry Down Community Organisation

Anne Byrne, London Borough of Hackney, Head of Regeneration

Nicola Hudson, London Borough of Hackney, Project Manager, Regeneration

Lucy McMenemy, London Borough of Hackney, Cultural Programme Officer

Petra Roberts, London Borough of Hackney, Cultural Programme Officer

Anthony Were, Area Manager, Genesis Housing Association

Samantha Cheadle, Social and Economic Regeneration Manager, Genesis Housing

Jaime Powell, Development Manager, Berkeley Homes

Farrah Hussain, Development Coordinator, Berkeley Homes

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