



The Woodberry Down Public Art Commission / Phase 4 26th March 2026

**Mat Jenner, Culture Development Officer, Woodberry Down, LB
Hackney**

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Woodberry Down Public Art Commission is a key cultural initiative planned for Phase 4 of the regeneration of Woodberry Down. The project involves the commissioning and installation of a permanent piece of public art to be installed in the new central square for Woodberry Down, adjacent to Woodberry Grove and Seven Sisters Road.
- 1.2. The project includes the development and support of a community commissioning group to lead the commissioning process, including brief development, artist research and recruitment, and community engagement & consultation. The group would be supported by Public Art specialists, secured through tender, who would be overall responsible for the delivery of the project.
- 1.3. This paper also provides an update on the wider Woodberry Down Culture Programme.

2. PURPOSE OF PAPER

- 2.1. This paper outlines the specifics for a proposal to commission and install a piece of public art as part of Phase 4 of the regeneration of Woodberry Down.
- 2.2. The paper gives an overview of the approach being taken, examples of similar projects, the financial and governance requirements, and the proposed timescale and next steps.
- 2.3. The paper provides an opportunity for the project to be reviewed by the Woodberry Down Partnership Board at an initial planning stage and inform the project structure, approach, aims and objectives.

3. CONTEXT / HISTORY

- 3.1. The Woodberry Down Public Art Commission for Phase 4 was identified as a key cultural and civic opportunity through the Woodberry Down Phase 4

Cultural Plan. The Woodberry Down Phase 4 Cultural Plan formed part of the approved planning application for Phase 4.

- 3.2. The Phase 4 Planning Application Design and Access statement sets out and identifies opportunities for public art to be installed in Phase 4 of Woodberry Down. This includes the installation of an anchor public piece of art for the new central square in Phase 4.
- 3.3. Following the preparation of the Phase 4 Cultural Plan, as part of the Phase 4 Planning Application in 2023, Section 106 funds totalling £499,388 were secured for the development and delivery of the Woodberry Down Culture Programme. A key aim of the Woodberry Down Culture Programme is the commissioning and installation of a permanent public artwork for the proposed central square.
- 3.4. The revised masterplan for Phases 5-8 of Woodberry Down includes an Outline Culture Strategy (for Phases 5-8). Elements of this are being taken forward via the current Woodberry Down Culture Programme.
- 3.5. The Woodberry Culture Programme is supported with a total budget of £595,725. Of this £96,000 was provided from UKSPF, with the remaining £499,388 from S106 funding.
- 3.6. £503,240 was allocated for programme activities, including £300,000 for the Public Art Commission. £92,484 was budgeted for staff costs to deliver the programme over 3 years (2024 to 2027).
- 3.7. The Woodberry Down Culture Programme is a series of cultural projects supporting the development and co-production of public art and events, linked to the development of Phase 4 of Woodberry Down. Public artworks can include permanently installed artworks, temporary artworks and artistic experiences such as live events.
- 3.8. The proposal for the public artwork for the Central Square aligns with the aims of the Woodberry Down Culture Programme. This programme includes activities which:
 - Work with communities, groups and organisations in Woodberry Down to collaborate and co-produce high-quality artistic experiences with artists and cultural organisations.
 - Realise ambitious, socially engaged, relevant artworks that are embedded in the communities and fabric of Woodberry Down.
 - Empower local communities and groups representative of diverse voices in Woodberry Down.
 - Bring exceptional cultural experiences to the local area
 - Positively raise the profile of Woodberry Down.
 - Celebrate the history and legacy of Woodberry Down
 - Use culture to underpin community cohesion.

- 3.9. Projects and activities undertaken also aim to support a legacy for future cultural activities in Woodberry Down, laying the foundation for cultural activities in subsequent phases and supporting sustainable networks, knowledge, and skills for a healthy cultural ecology.
- 3.10. The Woodberry Down Culture Programme responds to the following strategic documents and plans.
- The Hackney Arts & Culture Strategy 2019-2022: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GVFNGsblQr57mNU7K-UIXpxUVVxvUggC/view>
 - The Woodberry Down Phase 4 Planning application: Design and Access Statement- Phase 4 Cultural Plan: <https://wdco.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/2024-Phase-4-Design-and-Access-Statement-Cultural-Strategy.pdf>
 - The Woodberry Down Masterplan Phases 5-8: Outline Cultural Strategy: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gSGeBSZCwU3j25rMhNK24WxXj_7lwRwf/view?usp=sharing
 - The Hackney Public Art Guidance (currently in draft).

OUTLINE OF PUBLIC ART PROJECT

- 3.11. The Public Art Commission would be the first major artistic public commission for Woodberry Down's long-term regeneration. It therefore needs to be of the highest quality, alongside showcasing innovative approaches to site-specific commissioning and community engagement.
- 3.12. This is an opportunity to radically enhance the day-to-day lived experience of communities in Woodberry Down, whilst providing a clear social and cultural legacy for Woodberry Down.
- 3.13. Phase 4 includes an improved central square as the civic heart of the Development, providing 3,310 m² of public space, adjacent to Woodberry Grove and Seven Sisters Road.
- 3.14. Our aims for the commission include:
- Positively contributing and shaping the experience of the public realm, including its spatial and aesthetic experience, and the potential of public space.
 - Contributing to the overarching goals of the Woodberry Down Culture Programme (see above).

- Realising an ambitious and high-quality work with regional and national significance, that is inspired by and specific to Woodberry Down.
- Championing and supporting diverse artists, practices and aesthetics.
- Working with and supporting residents and communities of Woodberry Down to develop and learn about public art and cultural production through involvement in the commissioning process.
- To work collaboratively within the context, with communities, partners, and the ecology of Woodberry Down.
- To bring the highest quality of materials, fabrication, production, and engagement to the commission, ensuring a 30yr + life span for the artwork and longevity in terms of relevance and impact to the local area.
- For local fabricators and businesses to be engaged and used wherever possible in the commissioning process and fabrication.

3.15. The Project has **3 distinct elements** -

- The commissioning and installation of a **permanent piece of high-quality public art** for the new civic square in Woodberry Down.
- The support and development of a **Community Commissioning Group** to lead the project decision-making and embed cultural leadership in Woodberry Down. Supported with a training programme and a budget to support participation, access and payment.
- A **programme of community engagement and consultation** to support the development of the commission and ensure the public artwork is reflective of communities in Woodberry Down.

3.16. The proposed commissioned artwork can be of any material and scale. Artistic proposals developed through the commissioning process might be small and intimate interventions, or a larger and more substantial artwork of scale. Proposals may also consider a connection and narrative between multiple artworks, and commissioning more than one artist to make works.

3.17. The convening and creation of a **Community Commissioning Group** will play an active role in realising the public artwork. This group will be supported by a Public Artwork Delivery Team appointed through a competitive tender process.

3.18. Membership of the group will need to be identified and developed by the delivery team. Community group members will be remunerated for their involvement in order to facilitate and ensure equitable access and acknowledgement of people's labour, time and skills (*see FINANCE*).

- 3.19. The group will be supported to:-
- Provide community Involvement and leadership for the commissioning process.
 - Lead and support wider community engagement and consultation.
 - Develop knowledge, skills and experience of contemporary art, artists and public art.
 - Support final selection and commissioning of lead artist(s) for the project.
- 3.20. The group will be provided with the opportunity to learn the technical skills, curatorial knowledge, and confidence needed to be involved and lead this commission, with the potential of further project involvement in the future. This hands-on experience of commissioning could include research trips, workshops, and studio visits.
- 3.21. The proposed **time scale for the project is likely to be up to 3 years**, commencing in early 2027, with an estimated earliest completion date by 2030. An indicative timeline would be as follows
- Tender issued for the delivery team to deliver the WD Public Artwork project- August 2026
 - Shortlisting and Interviews - September / October 2026
 - Appointment and contracting - January 2027
 - Commencement of project February 2027
 - Convening of the Commissioning group June 2027
 - Artist selected June 2028
 - Installation of Artwork May 2030
 - Completion of project June 2030
- 3.22. It is possible that the timeline for the Public Art Project may not align with the completion of Phase 4 and the Public Square, with external factors impacting the timeline for Phase 4 or the artwork. If the new public square is not completed and ready to receive artwork by 2030, then the public art programme will need to be amended. The timeline for the production and installation phase of the artwork will be monitored and coordinated in relation to site readiness, and if necessary, production will be delayed to align.
- 3.23. The proposed budget for the project is **£300,000 ex VAT**. (please see the FINANCE section).

4. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- 4.1. The Woodberry Down Public Art Commission would be led, project-managed and delivered by an expert, 3rd party Public Artwork Delivery Team. They would be identified and secured through a public tender process undertaken by Hackney Council. The appointed Delivery Partner supports the community group and brings expert artistic and production knowledge to the project.

- 4.2. The tender process includes a selection panel to inform and undertake decision-making. This should include representation of stakeholders and partners from across Woodberry Down.
- 4.3. The panel should include representatives from Notting Hill Genesis, Berkeley Homes, Wood Co, MHDT, and Mill Co. A representative from the Hackney Council's Culture team would chair both the selection panel and/or the Steering Group.
- 4.4. Community involvement and contribution to the development of the artwork is led primarily through the Community Commissioning Group. The group will also shape and lead the community consultation and engagement with the commissioning brief and development of the artwork, supporting the commissioned artist(s), and Public Artwork Delivery Team to ensure the artwork is representative of communities in Woodberry Down.
- 4.5. Community representation is further supported via Wood Co representation on the project steering group.
- 4.6. It is proposed that on the successful appointment of a delivery partner, the selection panel becomes a steering group to support the project's realisation over its 3-year duration.
- 4.7. The Cultural Development Officer for Woodberry Down, as part of the Hackney Culture, Libraries and Heritage team, would be overall responsible and accountable for the delivery of the project, managing the relationship with the selected Public Artwork Delivery Team and supporting the Community Commissioning Group.
- 4.8. The Public Artwork Delivery Team and Cultural Development Officer would report to the steering group on a quarterly basis and be accountable to the Strategic Partnership board as required.
- 4.9. It should be noted that the Cultural Development Officer role has a term of 3 years, which ends in April 2027. Plans will need to be developed to ensure the Hackney Culture, Libraries and Heritage team retains the capacity to manage and oversee the project

5. PRECEDENTS

- 5.1. The socially engaged approach to the Woodberry Down Public Art Commission has several precedents both in the UK and abroad. These provide a comparable model for the project, its scale, time and budget.
- 5.2. Notable examples include

- **The Thamesmead Public Art Commission**
(www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/explore/arts-culture/new-artwork/)

Commissioned by **Peabody Housing** as part of the regeneration of Thamesmead in 2022 with a **total budget of £250K**. The project was delivered by **Company Place** and supported 8 young people to commission a piece of public art. The group undertook training, delivered public consultation to develop a brief and commissioned and worked with **Turner Prize-winning artist Jasleen Kaur**.

The final piece was installed in Cygnet Square, and presented to the public in November 2025.

- **Curate Enfield - the Citizen Curation Programme**
(www.letstalk.enfield.gov.uk/curate-enfield)

Curate Enfield is a grassroots public art programme designed to produce public artworks led by **the London Borough of Enfield** across its main town centres and priority places. It was shortlisted for a Community Engagement Pineapple Award in 2025.

It works with local people to form **citizen-led commissioning groups** consisting of young people, residents, and elder groups, who work closely with artists to develop briefs and the resulting public artworks.

To date, Curate Enfield has delivered **40 pieces of public art** in Enfield Town, Angel Edmonton, Palmers Green, Southgate and Southbury. It is supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Arts Council England. Public Artworks include murals, mosaics, and public realm interventions with budgets ranging from **£2500 to £20,000**.

- **The Windrush Art Commissions, Hackney Central**
(<https://www.artfund.org/our-purpose/art-funded-by-you/hackney-windrush-art-commissions>)

Commissioned by the **London Borough of Hackney** to celebrate the Windrush generation, with a **total budget of £264,256**. The project was delivered by **Create London** and resulted in 2 x permanent figurative bronze and marble artworks by **Thomas J Price**, and **Turner Prize Winner Veronica Ryan**. The project was accompanied by an extensive public engagement programme and was completed in 2022.

- **The New Patrons**
(www.nc-na.ch/en/new-patrons)

New Patrons is an ongoing citizen-led commissioning project working in towns and cities in Switzerland and Germany. It works with groups of residents to commission and realise artworks. Citizens are supported with

training, workshops and a ‘mediator’ 3rd party expert, producer and curator to develop place-specific briefs for public artworks. The citizens work with the artist directly throughout the whole commissioning and production process. Commissioned projects include sculptures, pavilions, ornate gates, memorials, and billboards. Budgets range from **£30,000 - £250,000**

6. FINANCE

- 6.1. The proposed budget for the project is **£300,000 ex VAT**. This is consistent with other public artwork projects with a social legacy element (see above).
- 6.2. There is an expectation that the budget should be allocated to support community involvement and access within the Community Commissioning Group, via payment for time, expenses and access costs.
- 6.3. Below is an **example indicative** budget for what might be expected in tendered responses by a Public Artwork Delivery Team.

Artist Fees and Production		notes
Artist Fee(s)	£20,000	R&D and Fabrication
Materials / Production and Fabrication	£40,000	
Shipping and Installation	£20,000	including support, engineering etc
Community Engagement		
Programme of activities and workshops	£9,000	includes materials and hire costs for space, 3K per year
Marketing	£4,000	
Documentation	£2,000	
Public Art Community Launch Event	£4,000	
Community Commissioning Group		10 people, over 24-36 months
Commissioning Group Learning and Research	£12,000	costs associated with activities undertaken by the group
Commissioning Group Fees	£48,000	10 people x £4800 each - calculated as a set rate of £15 per hour x 40 days (320 hrs) over 36 months
Refreshments and Per Diems	£4,000	Travel or Food calculated as £10 per day x 40 days x 10 people
Staff & Management Costs		
- Curator	£24,600	36 months / pro rata 0.2 @ £41,000
- Project Producer	£46,800	36months / Pro Rata 0.4 @ £39,000
Evaluation and Legacy		
Learning and Reflection	£4,000	
documentation	£1,500	
subtotal	£239,900	
OH @ 20%	£47,980	<i>presumed full cost recovery - inc support staff, project on costs for 36 months, insurances, and admin costs</i>

Contingency @5%	£11,995	<i>risk management</i>
total	£299,875	

Proposed project budgets would operate broadly within these parameters, with opportunities within the commissioning process to refine and review the budget within the chosen, selected proposal.

7. MAINTENANCE

- 7.1. Consideration of the longer-term needs for maintenance, care, and any likely associated costs (with a focus on keeping long-term maintenance costs to a minimum) will be a key specification of any subsequent commissioning brief(s) developed through the project.
- 7.2. Any public artwork installed in Woodberry Down will need to be adopted by an appropriate lead organisation, who would be responsible for ensuring and maintaining the artwork once the regeneration programme for Woodberry Down has been completed.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1. Next steps for the development and implementation of the tender include:
 - Input and agreement from the WD Partnership Board on project specifics.
 - Commencement of tender development, including completion of Risk Analysis, Procurement Impact Assessment, and Business Case Report
 - Agreement for internal capacity and management plan with Hackney AD for Culture, Libraries and Heritage, and the Director of Regeneration, Economy and Housing Development.
 - Development of Project Tender Document with finalised brief, timeline and budget.
 - Project to Tender August 2026.

9. SUMMARY OF WOODBERRY DOWN CULTURE PROGRAMME - UPDATE ON PROJECTS.

- 9.1. The Woodberry Down Culture Programme is currently focused on **4 key projects**, of which the proposed Woodberry Down Art commission, as noted, is one. This section of the paper outlines the other projects for context with a brief update on their current status.
- 9.2. All of the projects in the Woodberry Down Culture Programme employ an approach of putting active creative citizenship at the heart of the culture programme, either as decision makers, producers or artists/designers.

9.3. Projects within the programme seek to build sustainable, impactful and embedded structures and capacity for Woodberry Down's future cultural offer, and work strategically with partners and in alignment with wider socio-economic regeneration objectives where possible

9.4. These projects are as follows:

The Woodberry Down Pavilion

The Pavilion project was successfully piloted in 2025 as part of the Hidden Rivers Festival. Led by architects **Yaya & Roy**, and the London School of Architecture with support and resources from **Notting Hill Genesis, Berkeley Homes and MHDT**. The pavilion supported 15 young people to design and build a temporary, reusable pavilion structure. Young people received qualifications and some went on to pursue employment or study in the built environment.

The project also included a 3-week community public programme with small grants trialled for community members to run their own events

In 2026 the Pavilion will return with two public presentations over a period of 3-4 weeks each. These will be at key green public spaces in Woodberry Down, Spring Park and Rowley Gardens.

The Pavilion will be remodelled with the **addition of a large canopy awning to create a covered performance space**, enlarging the footprint, capacity and ambition of the pavilion. The awning is to be designed by the **Woodberry Down Design Studio** (see below)

With each presentation, the Pavilion will be activated by **the Pavilion Public Programme**, consisting of:

- Workshops led by the Woodberry Down Design Studio
- Community-led activities proposed and funded as part of the Culture Club (see below)
- Invited and commissioned project by artists and arts organisations as part of the wider Woodberry Down Culture programme
- Public consultation on the regeneration of Woodberry Down

The Pavilion will continue to be led and managed by Yaya & Roy, with the support of a cohort of young people (see below).

It currently has a proposed budget for structure design, installation & de-installation, and public programme of **£35,000** and is supported with in-kind support estimated at **£22,500**.

The project is planned to re-commence in **May 2026**.

The Pavilion is co-commissioned and funded by The Woodberry Down Culture Programme and Notting Hill Genesis, with in-kind support from Berkley Homes.

The Woodberry Down Design Studio (working title)

The Woodberry Down Design Studio is a **new youth-led design studio** that has evolved out of the Woodberry Down Pavilion. The studio will develop, convene, and support a group of up to **20 young people living, working, or studying in Woodberry Down, who are 15-25 years of age.**

The Design Studio will lead and undertake projects with a spatial or built environment focus in Woodberry Down, including public realm improvements such as benches, signage and other interventions, alongside activities such as mapping, planning, design and consultation.

It is envisaged that the Design Studio will be structured to undertake commissions, receiving funding or earning income, for this work.

Young people will be supported to creatively lead the studio's work, learn new design and architecture skills, and gain accredited qualifications. The Studio will use **the Pavilion** as an engagement platform with the wider community in its work.

The studio is led by architects **Yaya & Roy**, with pastoral support and youth development undertaken by **Young Hackney and the Edge Youth Club.**

In 2026 the Studio will work on:

- The brand identity of the Studio
- The design and fabrication of the Pavilion canopy awning
- The mapping and planning of public realm improvements for the New River Walk
- The structure, planning and sustainability of the studio
- The Studio's integration into pathways towards employment and study with Berkley Homes and Hackney
- Aligning the work with the Hackney Youth Parliament and Skinner's Academy's collaboration with the Edge on active youth citizenship.

The Design Studio is projected to start recruitment in **April 2026 and run for an initial 12 months until April 2027.**

The studio has a proposed budget of **£40,000** that would include all activities, management and evaluation (excluding Pavilion redesign and siting), and is supported with in-kind support estimated at **£22,000**

The WD Design Studio is co-commissioned and funded by the Woodberry Down Culture Programme and Notting Hill Genesis.

Next Steps

The WD Culture Programme and Notting Hill Genesis are in discussion with **Hackney Co-operative Development** regarding identifying and securing a **studio space for the Design Studio** to use as an office and base, and to support a more professional, creative and learning environment for the young people taking part.

The Woodberry Down Culture Club (working title)

The Culture Club is a proposed **community-led structure** to support the development of community-led activity in Woodberry Down by making decisions about funding cultural activities by people living or working in Woodberry Down.

A key challenge for developing the Culture Club model is the lack of existing nimble community structures to manage and distribute funds that currently exist in Woodberry Down. Wood Co is not structured to play this role directly, and other partners either do not have capacity or do not offer value for money in terms of management and OH costs.

Hackney's capacity to issue small grants is insufficiently responsive and not geared towards individuals seeking support of up to £300 for a community activity with light touch monitoring.

To date the project has

- developed a **draft framework** for decision-making
- worked with members of **Wood Co** to develop and test frameworks and opportunities for the Club and how it will work.
- Funded **Culture Nights**, a series of community-led **evening events at Cafe Nar** as part of the business development and night-time economy agenda. These events have been curated and organised by members of Wood Co and will finish in early April. Nar paid community members directly.
- Funded a series of community-led events as part of the **Pavilion Public Programme 2025** during the Hidden Rivers festival.

Next Steps

- Review and evaluate **Culture Nights** with Wood Co
- Promote the **Pavilion Public Programme 2026** call out for proposals
- Test decision-making framework for making community grants as part of the **Pavilion Public Programme and Culture Nights**, with small grants supporting activities.
- **The Cultural Development Officer, with support from Wood Co** to develop and convene a group of volunteer community members to test the decision-making framework