

North West Cambridge

Future Phases of Eddington

September 2025

Public Art and Culture Strategy



University of Cambridge
North West Cambridge Masterplan
Public Art and Culture Strategy



Company, Place
with
Rebecca Heald
Donna Walker

North West Cambridge Masterplan

Public Art and Culture Strategy



Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Vision
- 1.2. Relationship to the North West Cambridge Public Art Strategy, March 2012
- 1.3. Aims of the Public Art and Culture Strategy
- 1.4. Strategy Area
- 1.5. Objectives and Benefits

2. Description of Site & Policy Context

- 2.1. Local Context: North West Cambridge Development
- 2.2. Wider Context: Cambridge
- 2.3. Planning Context: Cambridge

3. Principles for Working

- 3.1. Core Principles
- 3.2. How and When to Involve Artists
- 3.3. Artist Placement Programme
- 3.4 Skills Development
- 3.5 Themes
- 3.6 Areas of Development for Artists Placement Programme

4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes

- 4.1. Artist Placement Programme: Appointment Process on Design Teams
- 4.2. Artist Placement Programme: Delivery Phases on Design Teams
- 4.3. Artist Placement Programme: Appointment Process to Shared Gardens
- 4.4. Artist Placement Programme: Delivery Phases on Shared Gardens
- 4.5. Build Up – Research, Concept Development, and Design
- 4.6. Spaces In Transition - Commissions for Temporary Infrastructure and Events Programme
- 4.7. Habitation - Temporary Commissions, Events Programme, and Artist-Led Stewardship

5. Funding and Governance

- 5.1. Budget
- 5.2. Funding Model
- 5.3. Governance

6. Management Structure

- 6.1. Management of the Project
- 6.2. Roles and Responsibilities

7. Programme Activation

- 7.1. Timescales
- 7.2. Relationship to Other Strategies
- 7.3. Material-Led Approach
- 7.4. Briefing Practitioners
- 7.5. Pitch Process
- 7.6. Contracting

8. Programme Development

- 8.1. Consultation and Community Engagement
- 8.2. Partnerships and Collaborative Working
- 8.3. Concept Development
- 8.4. Detailed and Technical Design
- 8.5. Planning
- 8.6. Fabrication and Installation

9. Long Term Plan

- 9.1. Maintenance
- 9.2. Decommissioning
- 9.3. Legal Ownership and Duty of Care
- 9.4. Evaluation and KPIs

References

Executive Summary



The North West Cambridge Masterplan Public Art and Culture Strategy spans the full site of the Future Phases outline planning application. It has been developed in collaboration with the Design Team and in response to relevant planning documents to ensure art is an integral part of the site's public spaces and never an afterthought.

The strategy sets out a framework for commissioning accessible to all site-specific artworks and Artist-led programmes that respond to the immediate landscape, architecture, and communities. The intention is that the resulting artworks exist harmoniously with those commissioned following the inaugural Art Strategy of 2012.

Structured around the concept of an 'Artist Placement Programme' and Community Steering Groups, the proposed art and cultural outcomes will be developed over a period of years. The primary focus throughout is supporting the delivery and enriching enjoyment of the nature-led, playable, and productive landscapes prioritised in the site's overall design.

Consisting of phased opportunities devised according to principles that include local thematic connection, responsible material choice, active engagement of audiences, and contribution to well-being, the outlined approaches ensure Artists positively support the development of North West Cambridge as a distinctive and attractive place to live, work, and play.



Fata Morgana Teahouse, Wolfgang Winter and Berthold Hörbelt, 2018 on Brook Leys parkland, commissioned by Contemporary Art Society. Image: Eddington

The North West Cambridge Masterplan Public Art and Culture Strategy puts art at the centre of everyday life, resulting in deep connections to place, nature, and each other.

1. Introduction



1.1. Vision

Eddington is the University of Cambridge's response to the need to provide affordable housing for its staff so it can attract and retain top talent to maintain its global competitiveness. By housing staff in a purpose-built, high quality neighbourhood, the University also reduces the demand on the wider housing market in the city. By providing 50% of housing for staff and the remainder contributing to increasing the overall supply of housing in the city, the Eddington development supports the highly successful Cambridge eco-system which provides long-term growth and prosperity for the local, regional and national economy.

1.2. Relationship to the North West Cambridge Public Art Strategy by Contemporary Art Society, March 2012

Originally submitted as part of the North West Cambridge development outline planning permission LPA ref.11/1114/OUT and S/1886/11, approved in February 2013, this strategy centred around:

- a six strand programme with a variety of outputs;
- management by the University of Cambridge, with curatorial oversight from a Public Art Advisory Panel and a Public Art Advisor;
- highlighting opportunities for artist such as, Wayfinding, Lighting, Landscaping and Public Amenities, that connected to strategic themes such as 21st Century Communities, History & Archaeology, Ecology, and Sustainability.

Primary outcomes of the activated strategy were:

- [Artist in Residence](#) and Design Collaborator initiatives that delivered five [permanent physical art works](#), alongside

temporary interventions, events and educational programmes.

This Public Art and Culture Strategy takes the previous strategy as a starting point and builds upon it. The following document is a refreshed and revised update of what is possible in line with this new stage in the site's development as well as current best practices.

1.3. Aims of the Public Art and Culture Strategy

The Public Art and Culture Strategy aims to provide a robust guide for all those involved in delivering the art and culture programme as part of the future phases of the North West Cambridge development.

While the North West Cambridge site affords many opportunities for public art, the combined factors of it being a large, multi-plot area with multiple stakeholders and with development planned over many years constitute a series of challenges.

This strategy outlines and provides direction on both the opportunities and challenges of the site ensuring the continuation of a rich and high-quality art and culture programme for North West Cambridge and as part of a wider Cambridgeshire offer. Adopting an expansive approach to art to include craft, design, play, music, food, horticulture, and vernacular architecture.

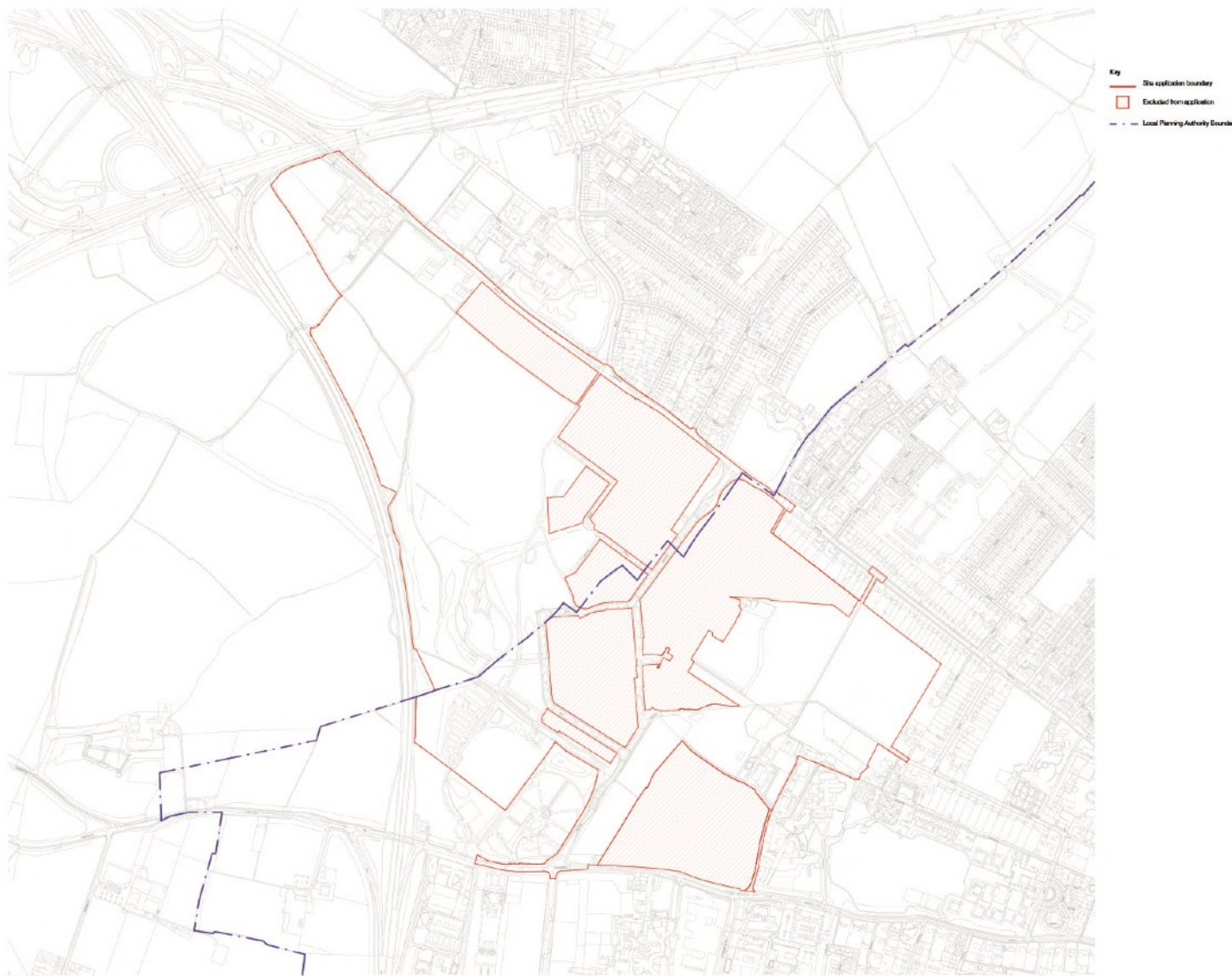
Throughout, art and culture are embedded, they are never an afterthought.

1. Introduction



1.4. Strategy Area

This strategy has been developed in tandem with the Design Team and covers the outline planning application area between Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road referred to as North West Cambridge, with Eddington at its centre.



1.5. Objectives

According to the Public Art and Culture Strategy Vision, a high-quality and accessible public art and culture programme:

- Is site-specific and embedded into the development process;
- Includes a range of outcomes, temporary and permanent, as well as events;
- Is intrinsically linked to nature and landscape;
- Makes space for intergenerational, interdisciplinary, and interspecies activities;
- Is developed in partnership with inhabitants and local communities;
- Builds on, invests in and celebrates existing community groups and organisations;
- Includes a budget for local expertise wherever possible, from fabrication to steering groups;
- Follows or exceeds industry best practices;
- Creates opportunities to connect around amenities and in shared spaces, as well as celebrating culture and heritage.

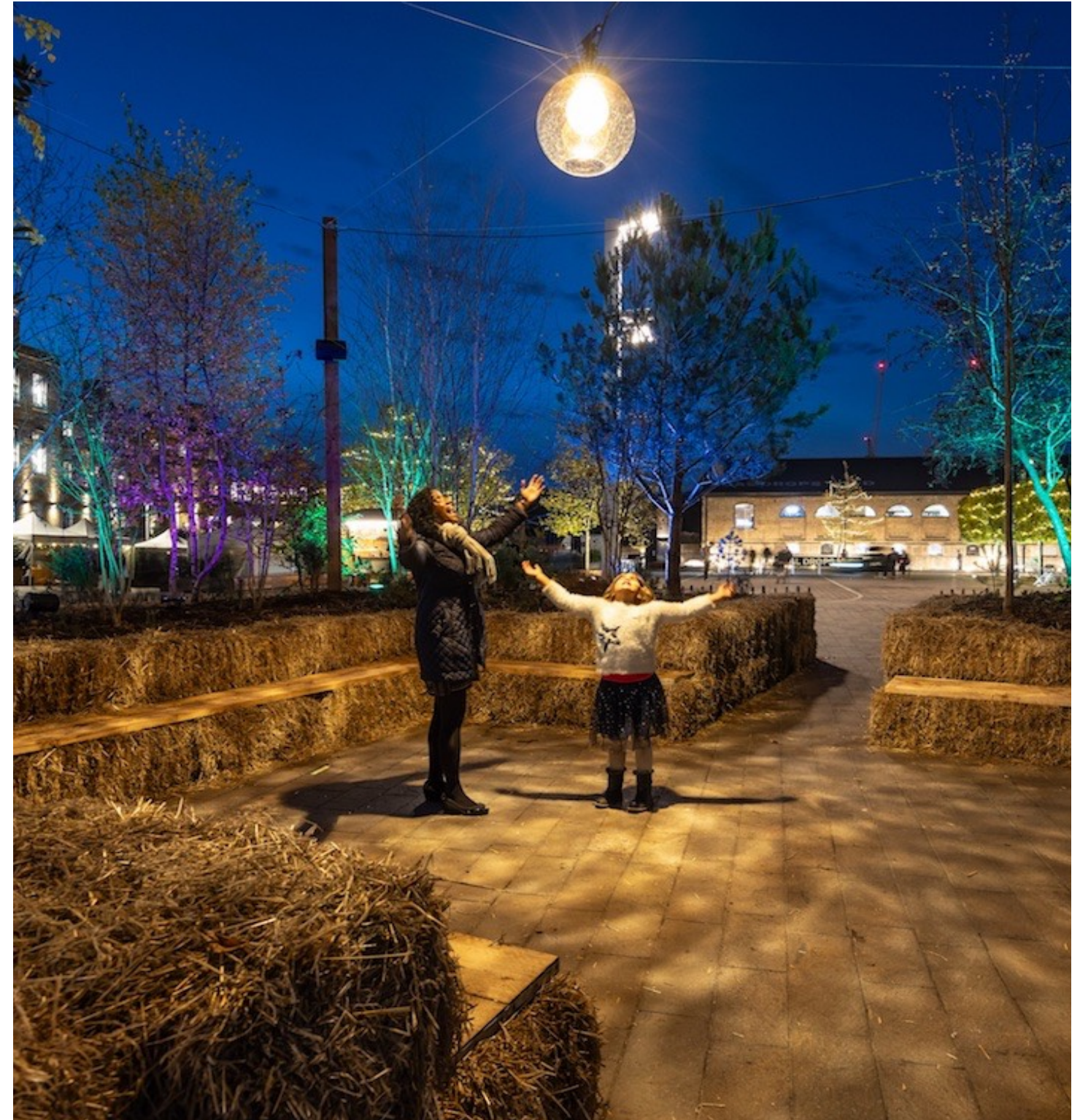
1. Introduction



Benefits

An arts and culture programme of the kind outlined here will help ensure that this new part of Cambridge:

- Creates a vibrant and welcoming place to live, work and visit;
- Supports the health and wellbeing through access to nature and culture;
- Fosters community cohesion, knowledge exchange, local pride and identity;
- Improves orientation and legibility of the area, helping with cognitive wayfinding and encouraging active travel;
- Provides skills development for community participants as well as commissioned creative practitioners.



Fleeting Forest, Assemble and Local Works Studio, 2023 - 24, commissioned by Rebecca Heald for King's Cross Central Partnership Ltd. Image: John Sturrock

2. Description of Site & Policy Context



2.1. Local Context: North West Cambridge Masterplan (NWCN) Site

The NWCN Site is located approximately 2km north-west of Cambridge city centre. The Site is roughly triangular in shape and comprises land between Huntingdon Road (A1307), Madingley Road (A1303) and the M11. The Site forms part of the emerging settlement of Eddington.

The Site covers a total area of approximately 114 hectares (“ha”) and is located across the administrative boundary of South Cambridgeshire District Council (“SCDC”) and Cambridge City Council (“CCC”) which are therefore the Local Planning Authorities (“LPAs”) for the site. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (“GCSPS”) manages planning services on behalf of SCDC and CCC.

The Site predominantly comprises grassland fields, construction areas, and sections of Huntingdon Road (A1307) and Madingley Road (A1303). Barcroft Centre and associated buildings are located within the most northerly extent of the Site, along Huntingdon Road. The Site contains areas of hard standing as well as a variety of amenity and green spaces including swales, ponds, grassland, areas of woodland, hedgerows and individual trees.

2.2. Wider Context: Cambridge

Cambridge has a rich and varied public art collection. As well as standalone sculptures and memorials, façade and surface based artworks abound across the city, and arts and culture are an important part of every new development.

Arts and culture never exist in a vacuum; they reflect and reveal our society. They humanise the places we live and help make them distinct.

The city is known worldwide for its university and as a place of learning and innovation where disciplines exist side by side. Interdisciplinary working can invigorate thinking on today’s most pressing issues: climate collapse, Black Lives Matter, AI and political polarisation. It can also lead to material advances, as, for example, with the university’s [Natural Material Innovation programme](#).

2.3. Planning Context: Cambridge

The North West Cambridge Masterplan Public Art and Culture Strategy has been developed in response to:

- Cambridge Local Plan (2018): Policy 56, 59 & 85;
- Cambridge City Council Public Art Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted January 12th 2010);
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) Policy H/Q2;
- North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009) Policy NW22;

These planning documents set out the requirement for an embedded and coordinated plan for public art that makes an important contribution to the character, visual quality, and community cohesion of the city, and that is succinctly articulated in the City Councils 2010 Public Art SPD:

“To deliver outstanding communities and places by joining the best contemporary public art practice to community engagement, architecture, landscape and urban design in order to shape and improve the experience of the city as a place of creativity and innovation that offers a high quality of life.” - Cambridge City Council Public Art Supplementary Planning Document, 2010

2. Description of Site & Policy Context



All key public art related planning documents have been summarised and strategically addressed as follows:

- Achieving high-quality public art in Cambridge that inspires multiple publics
 - The Artist Placement Programme ensures Artists' time and financial security to produce work that is thoughtful, site responsive, visible, and delivered at scale. See sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Clear roles for Artists in the design process, involving a Lead Artist at the earliest opportunity
 - Early embedding of Artists in Design and Management teams ensures that art is included from the outset and as part of Reserved Matters Applications. See sections 4.1 to 4.4 and 6.2.
 - To demonstrate the value of this approach, two Artist Placements informed the development of this strategy, helping to shape Artists' scope and opportunities for art. See section 3.4.
 - Artist-led community initiatives were delivered as part of this strategy to test of ideas around Nature and Landscape. [See Tracing Trees Report.](#)
- Artworks that are integrated into the design of development
 - The Artist Placement Delivery Programme aligns with RIBA stages and outlines a broad selection of typologies for artworks. See sections 4.2 to 4.4.
- The themes have been updated from the 2012 strategy to complement the wider design of the Future Phases outline planning application. See sections 3.5 and 3.6.
- Engaging local people in the development of Public Art:
 - The curatorial and commissioning process from 2012 has been refreshed, bringing community voices into the process earlier. The Arts Advisory Panel has been replaced by a Community Steering Group. See sections 6.2.3 to 6.2.5.
- Reinforcing local character and cultural identity:
 - Principles for working have been outlined to ensure the development of a unique local vernacular. See section 3.1.
- Delivering Public Art that provides cultural, environmental, social, and economic benefits:
 - The Objectives and Principles of Working are geared towards supporting the development of local economies and social cohesion. See sections 1.5 and 3.1.2 to 3.1.6.
 - The Future Phases outline planning application has shared gardens at its centre, and this strategy holds them as an important site for art and community engagement. See sections 3.6 and 4.7.

2. Description of Site & Policy Context



- Outline methodologies for successful management and delivery of Public Art:
 - This strategy adheres to current best practices for commissioning Public Art, setting out how to ensure projects have robust foundations while still providing Artists with artistic freedom. Methodologies will need periodic reviews to stay up to date with best practices. See sections 5 to 9.

3. Principles for Working



3.1. Core Principles

The North West Cambridge Public Art and Culture Programme will be defined by the following principles:

3.1.1. Integrated Artworks

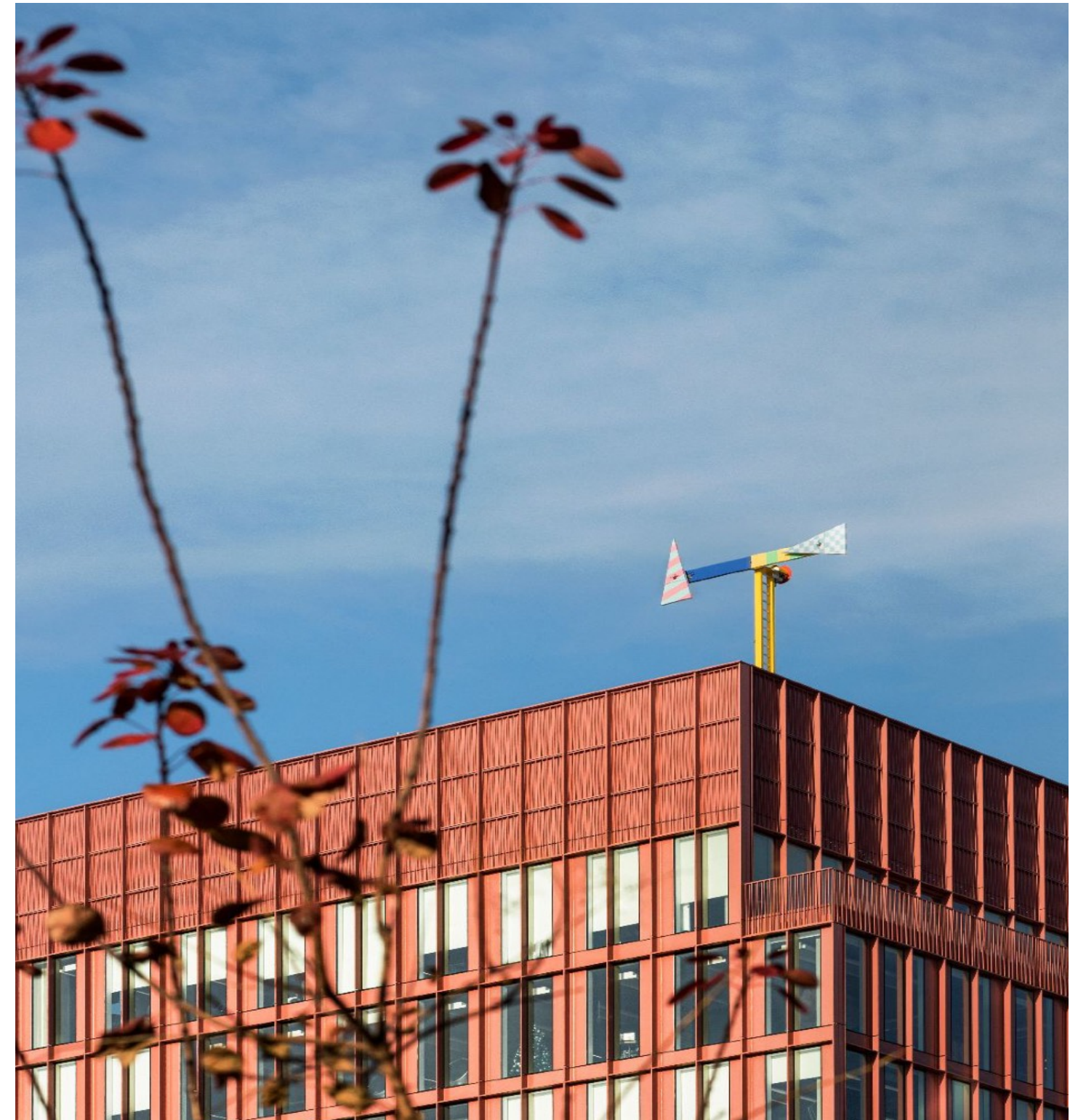
Wherever possible, artworks will be embedded into the material fabric of the development. This approach brings multiple benefits including contribution to the creation of a unique local identity and value for money.

3.1.2. Locally Informed Subject Matters

Subject matters for Artists to work to are not prescribed, but all must be related to Eddington and/or the wider Cambridge area. Inspiration might come from the natural history of the place, or involve knowledge exchange with local experts, within the University or beyond.

3.1.3. Material Choices

What artworks are made of is key. This strategy advocates for a material-led approach in which materials used are sourced and/or developed locally, including the use of waste streams from the construction process. Working in this way ensures a deep connection to place as well as aligning with the site's ambitions for carbon efficiency and investment in local economies.



Amalia Pica, Semaphores, 2019, commissioned for King's Cross Central Limited Partnership by Rebecca Heald. Image: Thierry Bal

3. Principles for Working



3.1.4. Active Audiences

How Eddington's community engage with the artworks is at the core of the arts and culture programme. All project briefs will include the necessity to work with and include people in the development of artworks. In some cases this will also include the long term stewardship of artworks and spaces. The Art Advisory Team will draw on key pillars from [The Civic University's framework](#) (see section 9.4) on all projects to ensure broad audience engagement.

3.1.5. Health and Wellbeing

The role of arts and culture in health and wellbeing is increasingly evidenced.* The art programme will support the University's commitment to improving people's quality of life, particularly through meaningful engagement with the natural world.

3.1.6. Working with Others

Collaborating with existing local organisations and groups, co-creating opportunities and building on existing knowledge, will help ensure the arts and culture programme's success.

Potential partners include: Wysing Arts Centre, Kettle's Yard, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge University Botanic Gardens, PEDAL Hub: Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development, and Learning, Eddington Community Orchestra, Eddington Grow Club, Water Sensitive Cambridge, Friends of the Cam, The Cambridge Room, Cambridge University Farm and Rural Estate, Skateboard Cambridge CIC, the Centre for Family Research, the Centre for Natural Material Innovation, and the Centre for Material Culture.

*See Social Prescribing Reports in References



Students designing a mobile kitchen as part of a project with STORE, at Coal Drops Yard, 2021, commissioned by Company,Place. Image: Paul Plews

3. Principles for Working



3.2. How and When to Involve Artists

Site-responsive and integrated approaches to making artworks take time. This strategy emphasises the appointment of Creative Practitioners at the earliest opportunity in the design phase, maximising the potential for integrated art, while ensuring research and engagement methods can be delivered to the maximum.

This strategy addresses:

- the evolving nature of multi-phased development; working over long time periods and with multiple stakeholders necessitates structure and flexibility;
- the need to include community co-design and engagement across all phases of the development;
- the fact that public art projects are often financially draining and stressful for Artists.* The proposed fixed-term employment of Artists as part of a team ensures opportunities are open to practitioners from all financial backgrounds.

**Primary occupation visual artists earn a typical median income of £12,500 per annum in respect of their self-employed earnings as visual artists. This is 64.2% lower than the typical income for individual UK workers (£34,963 in 2023) and 47.5% lower than the income of full-time minimum wage workers (£23,795 assuming a 40-hour workweek).*

- UK Visual Artists 2024: A Survey of Earnings and Contracts

3.3. Artist Placement Programme

In order to meet the strategy's vision of commissioning art that is deeply connected to place and the people who live there, an 'Artist Placement Programme' is proposed.

Central to this programme is the inclusion of 'Lead Artists' in Design and Estate Management Teams. This is delivered across the shared public spaces;

3.3.1. Artist Placements on Design Teams bring Artists onto Project Teams early in the process to work collaboratively on embedding their work across the design and build programmes.

3.3.2. Artist Placements on Shared Gardens invite Artists onto Estate Management and Community Engagement Teams to help inspire local stewardship and help shape the identity of the green spaces.

According to the unpredictability of construction projects, Artists will be appointed on part-time, fixed-term employment contracts. This will provide them with more secure working conditions, meaning they are better enabled to contribute their time and energy to the project(s). In turn, this will ensure higher quality outcomes that are more fully considered and minimise waste.

Embedding Creative Practitioners in this way will also ensure oversight of art commissions throughout the process, from conception to material development, through to stewardship and maintenance.

3. Principles for Working



3.4. Skills Development

The Artist Placement Programme affords all stakeholders the opportunity to learn about creative ways of making places where people thrive.

For Artists, having the opportunity to work within Design and Estate Management Teams will enable them to gain multiple transferable skills and insights. It will allow them to:

- expand their practice beyond the gallery and at scale;
- learn how to meet the needs of new, broader audiences;
- gain rare insight into building and development, opportunities and constraints;
- test ways to engage with communities and develop new collaborative ways of working;
- meaningfully integrate their work into an evolving site, as opposed to produce work in isolation.*

For the Development Team as a whole, appointing Artists and Creative Practitioners to projects as early as possible will help mitigate some of the changes and retrofitting often necessitated when artworks arrive late in the process.

Further, monitoring, documentation and evaluation of the Artist Placement Programme will promote wider knowledge exchange with an ambition to share best practices across the sector.

*List developed in dialogue with Artists Ella McCartney and Alastair Kwan



Tracing Trees workshop in Eddington, by Alastair Kwan and Jo Sinclair, June 2025. Commissioned by Company,Place. Image: Sophie le Roux

3. Principles for Working



3.5. Themes

In order to ensure work undertaken as part of the public art and culture programme maintains shape and meaning, four site-specific themes have been identified.

These themes have been devised in line with the proposed masterplan and link to wider objectives related to: community engagement, social cohesion, biodiversity, play, health, and wellbeing.

The intention is that once Development Partners have secured plots they will engage with the Artist Placement Programme and appointed Artists and Creative Practitioners will explore and subsequently select themes to inform their work.

The identified themes are:

3.5.1. Desire Paths

Artists and Creative Practitioners will be invited to work with Design Teams to shape the identity of the site and help form routes around it. The resulting projects will enliven journeys, aid wayfinding, and help navigate ways in and out of buildings.

Outcomes: Artist-led interventions across paving, including building thresholds, interiors, façades, and furniture.

3.5.2. Elements of Nature

Across the site there are exciting opportunities for Artists to amplify and celebrate the environment by connecting to the area's natural environment, past, present, and future. Working with the Infrastructure and Ecology Teams, the natural elements of sun, wind and rain can be harnessed to create artworks that engage audiences not only with their surroundings but wider issues such as climate change, flood mitigation, and landscape restoration.

Outcomes: Art projects and artworks that explore the hyperlocal ecologies of Eddington.

3.5.3. Play on the Way

The proposed masterplan encourages inventive use of shared spaces, outside and inside, for intergenerational and interspecies activity. Building on this, Artists and Creative Practitioners might choose to devise impromptu opportunities for people to engage playfully with their surroundings.

At present, play offers across Cambridge are highly traditional, and there is an opportunity for Eddington to distinguish itself in this area.

Outcomes: Artist-led projects that provide play opportunities at ground and lower levels for all ages and abilities.

3. Principles for Working

C,P

3.5.4. What Grows Together Goes Together

Long-term, the site's shared gardens are envisaged as a key space for artists. A series of Artist Placements in these spaces will help shape and maintain their identity. Working with communities and Estate Management Teams and following the pattern of the seasons, there is huge potential to celebrate the cycle of plants, appreciate the site's rural past, and create new traditions.

Inherently multifaceted, these projects will include aspects of community-led skills development, co-design, and stewardship.

Outcomes: Experimental architectural forms that provide spaces for communities to gather, and event programmes that encourage residents to engage with the nature on their doorstep in practical ways that encourage long-term stewardship.



Community plant identification workshop in the Weed Garden at Begbroke, by Assemble and Sarah Alun, 2025. Commissioned by Company,Place. Image: Yesenia Thibault-Picazo

3. Principles for Working



3.6. Areas of Development for Artist Placement Programme

These maps set out how themes might be applied across the site in accordance with the Design Codes and as part of allocated plots of land. The application of themes to particular areas supports the creation of unique neighbourhoods and ensures art is threaded across the site. **There are Two Typologies for Artist Placements:**

Artist Placements on Design Teams



3.5.1. Desire Paths

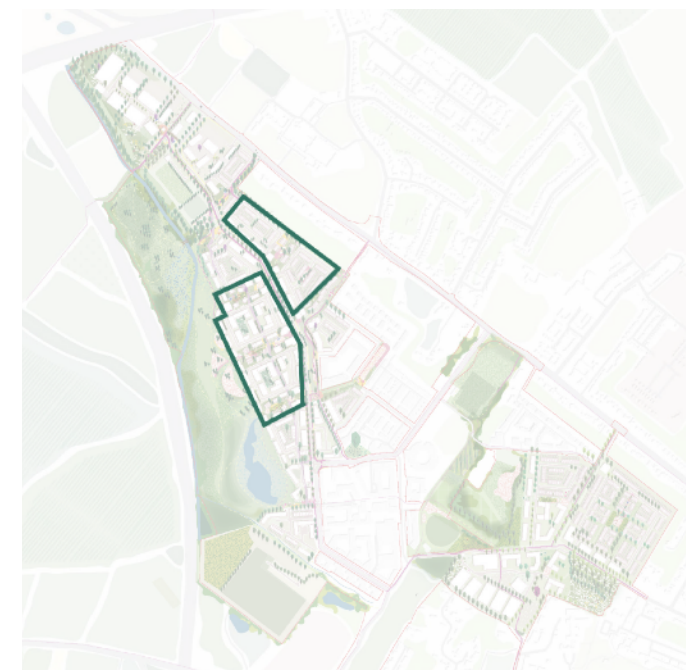


3.5.2. Elements of Nature



3.5.3. Play on the Way

Artist Placements on Shared Gardens

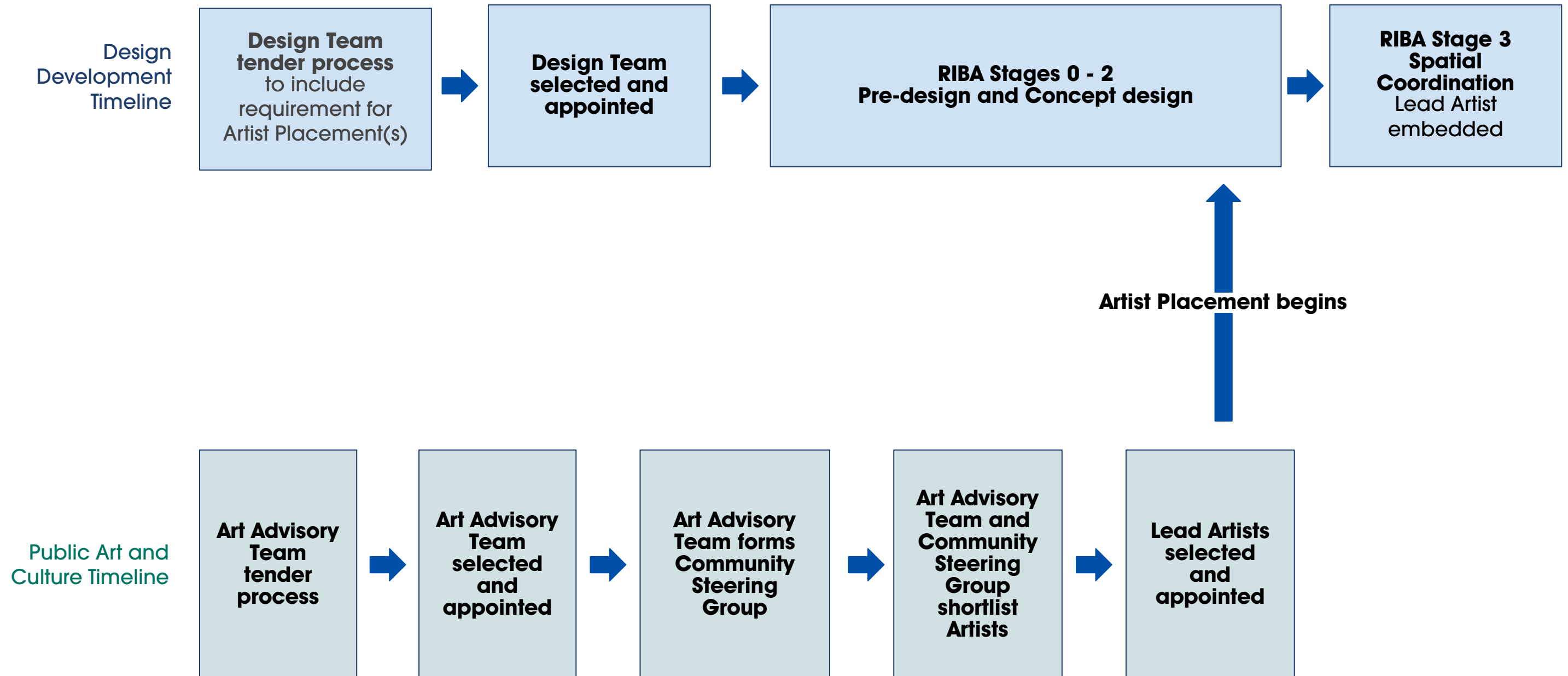


3.5.4. What Grows Together Goes Together

4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



4.1. Artist Placement Programme: Appointment Process for Artists on Design Teams

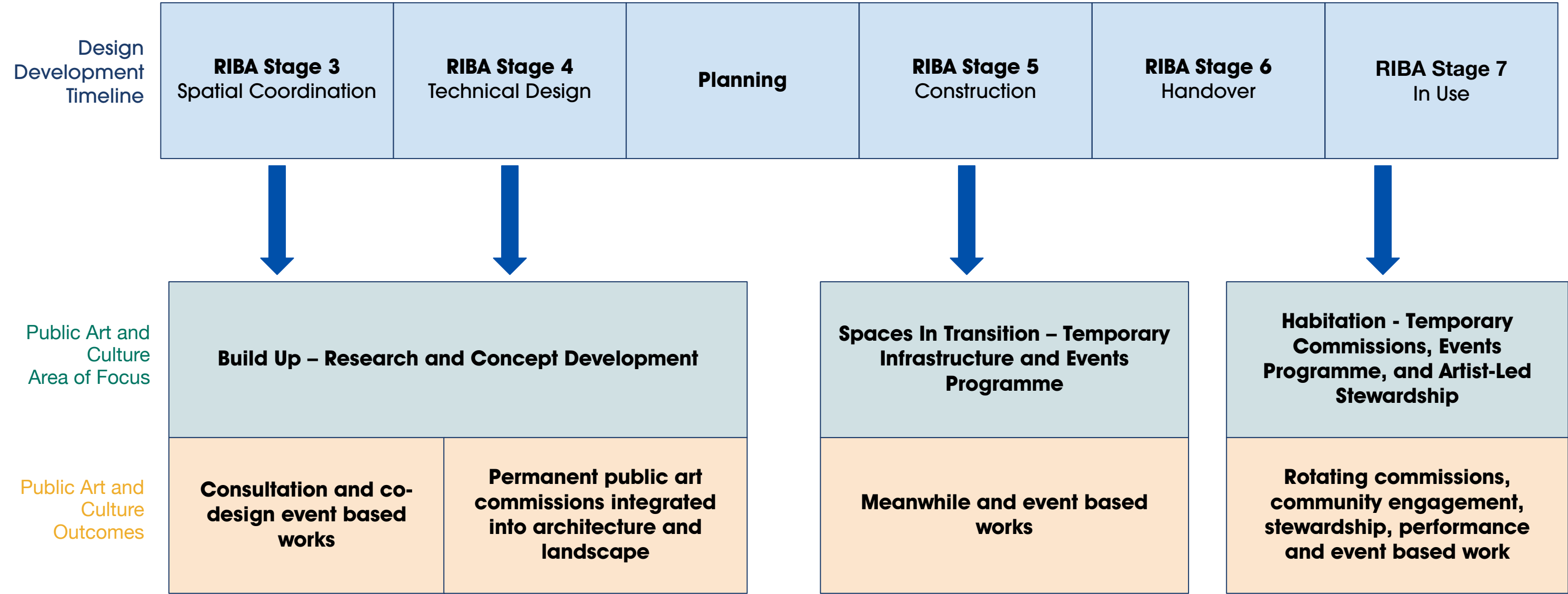


4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



4.2. Artist Placement Programme: Delivery Phases for Artists on Design Teams

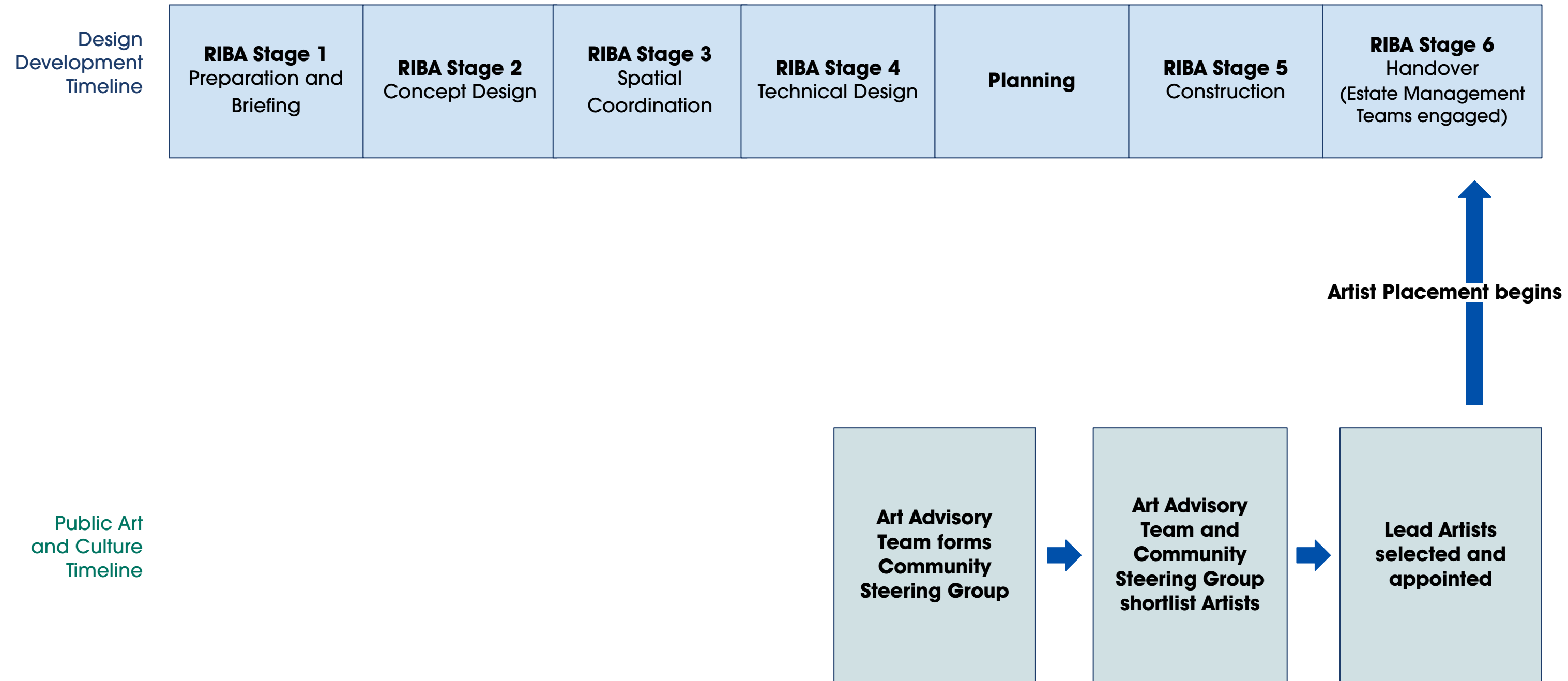
The North West Cambridge Public Art and Culture Strategy embeds Artists and communities into design and delivery processes. Aligned to the RIBA stages, the programme ensures the generation of new artworks throughout the development programme.



4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



4.3. Artist Placement Programme: Appointment Process for Artists on Shared Gardens

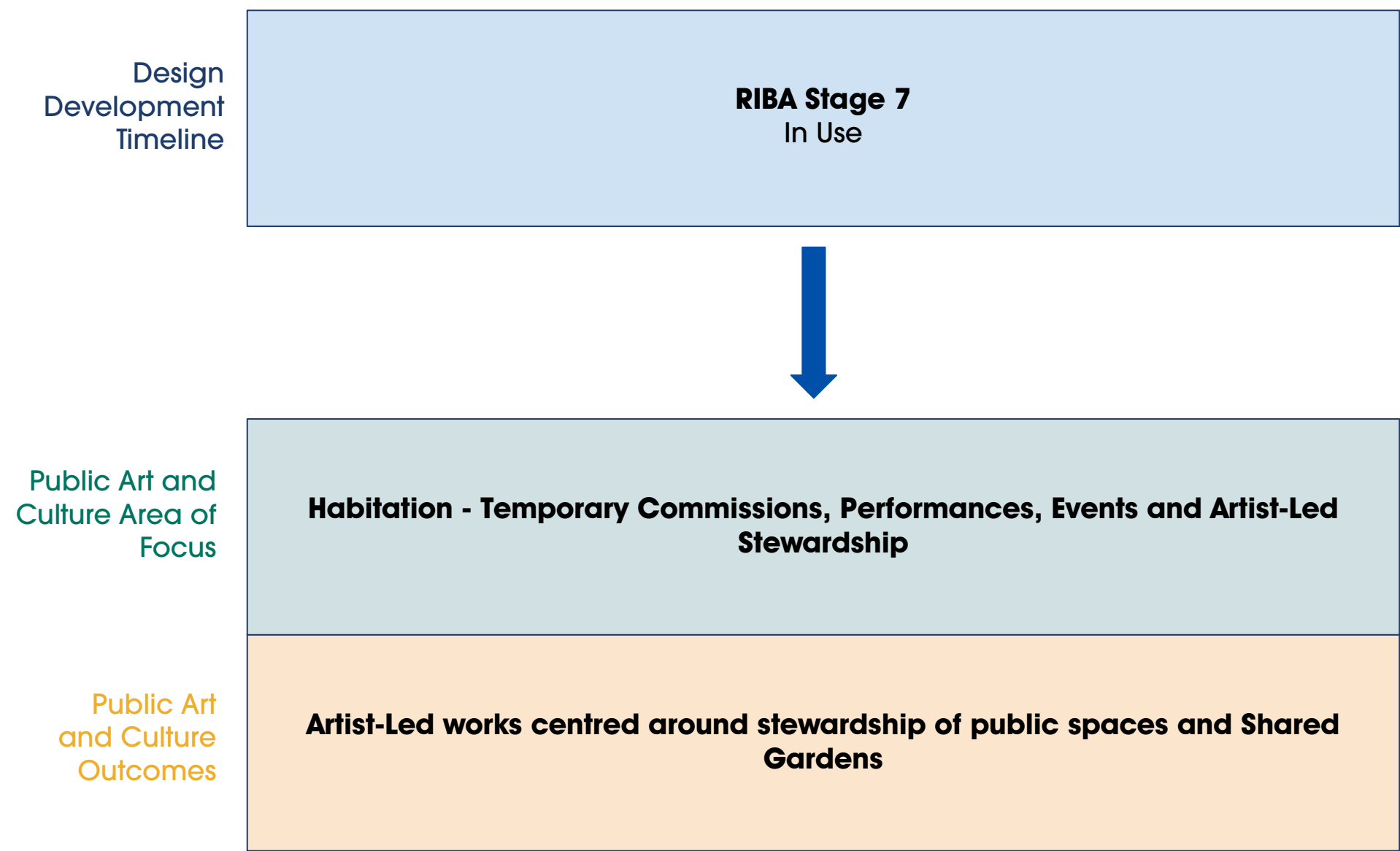


4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



4.4. Artist Placement Programme: Delivery Phases for Artists on Shared Gardens

The North West Cambridge Public Art and Culture Strategy focuses on embedding Artists and communities into the Estate Management and stewardship of Shared Gardens and follows a phased approach in line with the handover stages of development, allowing Artists and communities to shape the early growing phases.



4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



The delivery of the masterplan requires an affordable and sensitive public art and culture strategy that is appealing to both commercial and creative partners.

This section provides detail of the short and long term opportunities to stages of development, divided into three areas of focus:

- Build Up - Research, Concept Development and Design
- Spaces in Transition - Temporary Commissions and Events Programme
- Habitation - Temporary Commissions, Performances, Events Programme, and Artist-Led Stewardship

4.5. Build Up – Research, Concept Development, and Design

As part of the Design Team, Artists and Creative Practitioners will gain deep understanding of construction plans, while simultaneously researching and embedding themselves across the site. These experiences will facilitate rooted and practicable concept development.

Opportunities in which to include Artists:

4.5.1. Consultation and Co-Design Work

Artist-led creative workshops increasingly play an important part in involving communities in development plans, meaningfully helping to inform design.



Tracing Trees workshop in Eddington, by Alastair Kwan and Jo Sinclair, June 2025. Commissioned by Company,Place. Image: Sophie le Roux

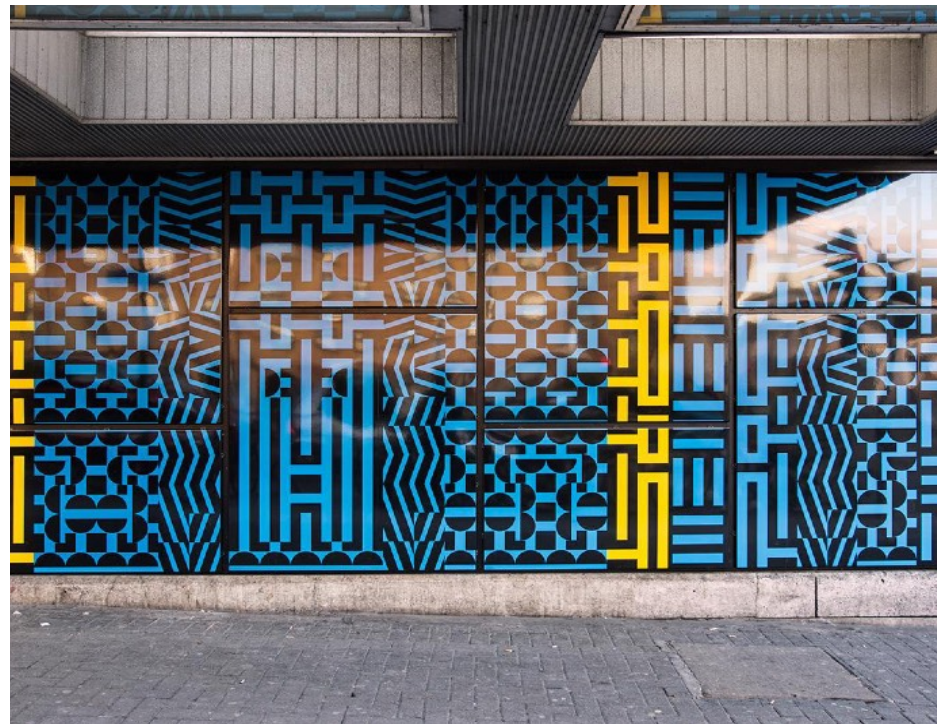
4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



4.5.2. Integration into Architecture and Landscape

In selecting projects for realisation, focus must be placed on potential aesthetic impact as well as use value, with a view to maximising budget. The following types of intervention all help with building character of place and wayfinding:

Façades - Embedding artworks in the material fabric of buildings is an effective and durational way to make buildings distinct.



Giles Round, *Design Work Leisure*, 2017.
Commissioned for the Victoria Line by Art on the Underground, Transport for London. Image: Thierry Bal

Interiors - While this strategy's emphasis is predominantly on outside spaces, interiors also afford many opportunities for Artists including: walls, lighting, soft furnishings and furniture.



Tobias Rehberger, *Almost Everybody*, 2018.
Commissioned for the King's Cross Central Limited Partnership by Rebecca Heald. Image: Thierry Bal

Infrastructure for Rotating Commissions - Building in off-the-shelf infrastructure, e.g. rigging points, colonnes Morris, billboards, video walls, etc. make space for temporary and seasonal interventions. The provision of shade should also be considered here.



Kaye Song, *Outdoor Canvases*, 2024.
Commissioned by Company,Place for Oxford University Development Ltd. Image: Kaye Song

4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



Hard and Soft Landscaping – Creative interventions across paving and pathways encourage use and exploration. Employing natural, locally found materials, positively contributes to the existing ecosystem and lays a foundation for long-term stewardship.



Assemble and Sarah Alun-Jones, *Weed Garden*, 2025 - onwards, at Begbroke Science Park, Oxford. Commissioned by Company,Place and Rebecca Heald for Oxford University Development Ltd. Image: Yesenia Thibault-Picazo

Public Realm Furniture – Commissioning Artists to create functional objects i.e. seating, fountains, clocks, bollards, and bridges, provide distinctive centrepieces that can serve as meeting points.



Yinka Ilori MBE, *Take it in and Take Time*, 2021. Commissioned by Company,Place for Related Argent. Image: Vickie Hayward

Playscapes – Imaginative environments focused in playgrounds or distributed across areas and pathways support free play, happiness, and wellbeing.



Lauren MacDonald, *The London System*, 2025. Commissioned by Company,Place for Olympia. Image: The Gentleman Racer

4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



4.6. Spaces In Transition - Commissions for Temporary Infrastructure and Events Programme

Mitigating the impact of construction is important to ensure positive relationships with neighbours and other publics.

Empty plots and building works risk alienating those intended to inhabit a site longer term. Yet it is now well-accepted that spaces in transition also provide exciting opportunities for temporary and event-based work. Work done in these spaces sets the tone for future programmes, demonstrating the principles and intentions of the final scheme; in this case, sustainability, collaboration, engagement, and lasting value.

Hoardings, Empty Plots, and Meanwhile

These opportunities hold genuine potential for a broad range of creative partners, including charities and voluntary organisations. Supporting organisations with space and seed funds often has considerable and far-reaching impact. Artists can utilise hoardings and spaces to host temporary projects and other interventions to animate spaces in transition.

Events Programme

This stage of events will build on and enhance Eddington's current calendar of events, for example the regular Toy Swap sessions and the weekly Lego Club. Artist-led engagement and co-creation activities will add to the rich existing programme and draw people towards newly completed spaces.



Rana Begum, No.700 Reflectors, 2016. Commissioned by Rebecca Heald for King's Cross Central Limited Partnership. Image: John Sturrock



Rochester Square Food Plates workshop at STORE Store in Coal Drops Yard, 2019. Commissioned by Company,Place. Image: John Sturrock

4. Public Art and Culture Outcomes



4.7. Habitation - Temporary Commissions, Events Programme, and Artist-Led Stewardship

Long term there are multiple opportunities for Artists to be involved in seasonal programmes or stewardship initiatives across the site.

Inviting Artists to work in shared spaces will contribute to both placemaking ambitions and maintenance, with the potential to combine with, and draw from, other budgets, such as CapEx. Throughout, it is important to acknowledge and collaborate with established groups, who have the potential to continue on long after the Artist has gone.

Temporary Commissions

Low-cost hardware (rigging points, lightboxes, etc.) can be installed and activated with rotating art programmes, led and delivered by local institutions or grassroots organisations.



BUAISOU, *Indigo Hands*, 2019. Commissioned by Company,Place for King's Cross Central Limited Partnership. Image: John Sturrock

Events Programme

Cultural professionals and institutions must be engaged early to develop frameworks that empower communities to enliven the site's public spaces long term.



STORE STORE and their wider community group, *Growing A Feast*, 2021. Commissioned by Company,Place for King's Cross Central Limited Partnership. Image: Cecilia McCormick

Artist-Led Stewardship of Public Spaces and Shared Gardens

Artists and artist groups invited to take up residency in spaces across the site will generate engagement and inspire stewardship.



Jaimini Patel with Fine Art MFA and BFA Students, *A Hügel Story*, 2024. Commissioned by Company,Place for Oxford University Development Ltd. Image: Vickie Hayward

5. Funding and Governance



5.1. Budget

The Artist Placement programme is scalable and responsive to available funds and development needs. Integrating artwork into the fabric of the development ensures existing budgets are maximised. Projects are made using allocated build budgets and supplemented using S106 contributions. This approach delivers higher quality outputs for smaller outlays. The Artist Placement Programme provides opportunities to combine resources with other elements of the programme i.e. marketing, CapEx, consultation or contractor social value contributions.

5.2. Funding Model

All permanent artworks must be devised in full coordination and collaboration with Construction Teams. This approach ensures art is built in as part of planning, as well as realisation. It is an approach that saves both time and money.

However, it is still necessary to have a separate, ring-fenced monies to pay for artist fees and other costs that take the project over the baseline budget, such as alternative materials, additional engineering requirements, etc.

5.3. Governance

The University of Cambridge runs the NWC Public Art and Culture Programme in-house with curators and organisers either as employees, subcontractors, or freelancers working directly for the University. Funds can be accessed from:

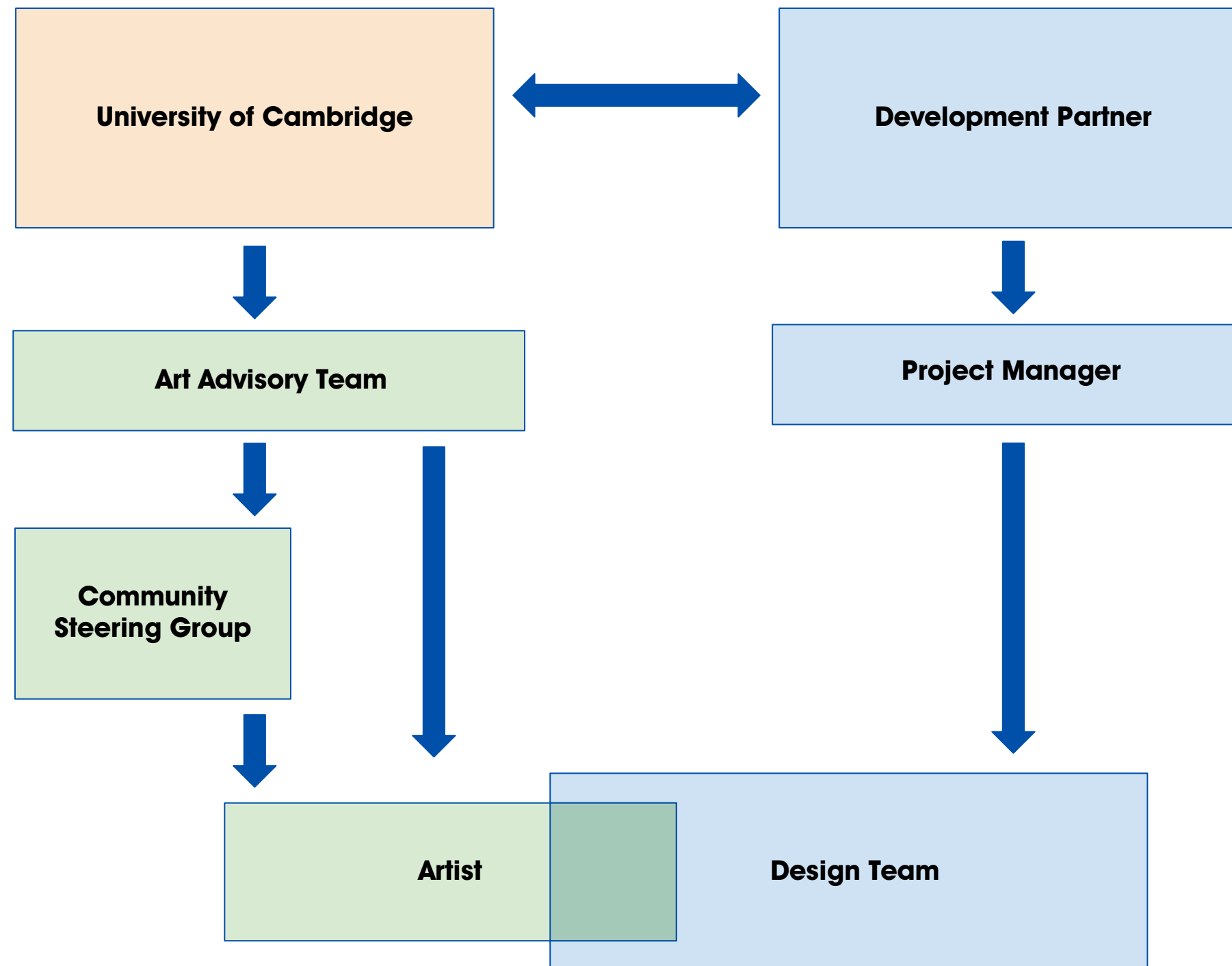
- Landowner/manager/developer partner— either direct revenue funding or an endowment or both;
- Research funding;
- Estate levy;
- Commercial sponsorship;
- Contractor Social Value Contributions;
- Statutory funding, e.g. Section 106.

6. Management Structure



6.1. Management of the Project

The University of Cambridge will act as commissioner and owner of all artworks resulting from the NWC Public Art and Culture Programme. Delivery will be facilitated by an Art Advisory Team, with Artists being selected and informed by a Community Steering Group.



6. Management Structure



6.2. Artist Placement Programme: Roles and Responsibilities

Integrated art can only be achieved if Artists are engaged early enough in the process. It also requires an agreed collaborative partnership between the Landowner, Developer, and Design Team.

To successfully deliver this long term strategy, it is essential that each party adheres to clear roles and responsibilities. This section details what is required.

6.2.1. University of Cambridge and Developer Partnership

The University of Cambridge is the Landowner and will form a working partnership with a Development Partner to design and build each parcel of land.

The University, in dialogue with their Development Partners, has the responsibility for instigating the public art programming as part of the party agreement.

The partnership is responsible for:

- Working with the Art Advisory Team to outline opportunities within the development and existing budget lines;
- Assigning, holding, and approving related expenditure;
- Issuing briefs to design partners that include provision for a Lead Artist;
- Contracting and managing employment of all those involved in delivering the Public Art and Culture Programme;

- Forming an artist selection group with the Design Team to sign off Artists' choices and artwork proposals in dialogue with the Community Steering Groups.
- Supporting the formation of and working in partnership with the Community Steering Group;
- Construction project management;
- Securing planning permissions;
- Marketing and PR;
- Ownership and maintenance of any permanent artwork.

6.2.2. Design and Construction Teams, Other Consultants

To deliver integrated artworks, Artists will be working in partnership with the Design and Construction Teams and other consultants, including Structural Engineer, Ecologist, Planning, and Play or Sport Equipment Specialist.

Responsibilities include:

- Sharing early concept designs and discussing opportunities for integrated art with the Art Advisory Team;
- Providing relevant expertise to Artists and Art Advisory Team;
- Consultation on fabrication, cost, load limits and other information needed to deliver integrated artworks into builds;
- Working collaboratively with Artists and the Art Advisory Team to devise detailed proposals for planning and subsequent delivery.

6. Management Structure



6.2.3. Art Advisory Panel

To support and endorse the delivery of the first phases of North West Cambridge's public art and culture programme, there was an Arts Advisory Panel made up of local specialists, predominantly institutional. Moving into this new phase of work, there is a desire to meaningfully engage resident and local communities. Hence, this new phase effectively replaces the Arts Advisory Panel with Community Steering Groups.

6.2.4. Art Advisory Team

The Art Advisory Team plays a key role in bringing stakeholders together and projects to life. With increasing demands on Artists to provide social value and meet sustainability targets, the Art Advisory Team is key in ensuring the strategic aims and principles of the Public Art and Culture Strategy are delivered.

Art Advisory Team responsibilities include:

- General oversight of Public Art and Culture Programme;
- Recruitment and co-ordination of Community Steering Groups;
- Co-ordination of selection processes and advice on appointment of Artists;
- Main liaison between Artist, Design and Construction Team, University of Cambridge and Development Partners;
- Detailed support on Artist proposal development and planning;
- Budget and milestone monitoring and reporting;
- Identification and resolution of challenges arising through process;

- Documentation and evaluation;
- Regular contribution to PR and marketing.

6.2.5. Community Steering Groups

The Community Steering Groups play a key role in providing local knowledge and helping to ensure new artworks are welcomed into the area. Through sessions guided by the Art Advisory Team, residents will be given unique insight into the process of commissioning artworks for public space and have the potential to influence outcomes.

Appointment to a Community Steering Group is selective to ensure broad, intergenerational representation. Participation is paid to enable a range of people to take part who might not otherwise be able to. Participants will be clearly briefed on their scope.

The Groups' role includes:

- Support the vision for the community stewardship of shared spaces;
- Participation in setting briefs and selection processes for Artists;
- Provision of local insight, knowledge, and project-specific feedback to the Artists;
- Advocacy for the Public Art and Culture Programme, at local, university, and wider levels;
- Across the life of the project, supporting project evaluation and making recommendations as the programme develops.

7. Programme Activation



7.1. Timescales

The onboarding of an Artist follows the appointment and phased delivery process set out in sections 4.1 and 4.2. A full project timeline will be developed by the University of Cambridge and its partners and shared with the appointed Art Advisory Team, for them to develop a detailed Public Art Programme that is in alignment.

7.2. Relationships to Other Strategies

The Public Art and Culture Strategy has been developed in response to the proposed NWC Masterplan by Hawkins\Brown with Grant Associates, MaxFordham, KMC, Aecom. As development phases come online and Lead Artists are engaged, it will be necessary to align with other strategies as they are adopted.

- Desire Paths: Transport, Landscape, Open Space and Recreation Strategies.
- Play on the Way: Landscape, Open Space and Recreation
- Elements of Nature: Drainage, Flood Risk, Wind and Sun Path Modelling, Heritage and Open Space Strategies
- What Grows Together Goes Together: Landscape, Open Space and Biodiversity Strategies

7.3. Material-Led Approach

In order to deliver projects that meet the site's high environmental standards, materials and ways of making must act as the foundation of all proposals. Working with local palettes and suppliers is strongly encouraged as a way to actively decrease the carbon footprint.

7.4. Briefing Practitioners

Briefs for Artists will be developed by the Art Advisory Team in collaboration with the University of Cambridge, Development Partners, and key stakeholders, including Design Teams and Community Steering Groups. Wherever possible, the briefs will be kept as open as possible in order to enable freedom of thought and expression.

Project briefs need to be written accessibly and cover:

- Detailed project introduction;
- Allocated theme and associated research/strategies;
- Existing research on local materials and suppliers;
- Scope of work and involvement;
- Expected level of community engagement;
- Project programme linked to specific phases of the development deliverables;
- Approval processes;
- Key deliverables in each phase;
- Site documentation and information;
- Main contacts and working relationships;
- Budget and fees;
- Delivery and payment milestones;
- Selection process and criteria;
- Details on IP and ownership;
- Marketing and PR commitments;
- Decommissioning process / requirements.

7. Programme Activation



7.5. Pitch Process

Securing commissions is time-consuming for Artists and Creative Practitioners. Pitching will be a paid process with a limited shortlist group of practitioners (three to four) that are selected from a longlist drawn up by the Art Advisory Team (eight to ten).

The selection panel must be made up of key stakeholders, including, but not limited to, representatives from the Community Steering Groups, Design Teams, Development Partners, and University of Cambridge.

It is the role of the Art Advisory Team to create an appropriate longlist and guide the panel to ensure they are selecting Lead Artists based on their ability to respond to the brief, as opposed to personal preference.

As artworks will be developed in collaboration with Design Teams and over a period of years, there is no need for Artists to deliver fixed proposals at pitch stage. Instead, they will be asked to present ways of working and initial thoughts on possible approaches to the brief.

7.6. Contracting

The Artist Placement Programme on Design Teams is split into two parts, and Artists are contracted for each part separately. The first part involves working within the Design Team and devising the permanent artwork(s) for the reserved matters application, as part of the wider design process. The second part involves the Artists' oversight of the delivery of those artworks, alongside their development of related art projects that correspond to Future Phases.

The Artist Placement in the shared gardens will be a single contract.

The Artists, Art Advisory Team, and any professional services needed to deliver the residencies and potential resulting artworks will be appointed directly by the University of Cambridge.

NB. For smaller event-based projects, budgets can be given for contractors to be directly appointed to the Art Advisory Team or Artists.

8. Programme Development



8.1. Consultation and Community Engagement

Community engagement and co-design programmes will be integral to the Artist Placement Programme. Crucially, this model ensures an Artist is employed over a longer than usual period of time, allowing for more opportunities to deliver co-design and engagement activities. These ways of working will be included in all scopes of work and overseen by the Art Advisory Team.

8.2. Partnerships and Collaborative Working

It is imperative that the North West Cambridge Arts and Culture Strategy is sensitive to what has been before, what currently exists, and what will come after. Where possible, projects must be devised in partnership with local organisations to build on existing energies and momentum.

8.2.1. Cultural Organisations - Artists, Creative Practitioners, and the Art Advisory Team are encouraged to develop dialogue with local cultural organisations such as Wysing Art Centre, Cambridge Botanical Gardens, Kettle's Yard, and the Women's Art Collection at Murray Edwards College.

8.2.2. University of Cambridge Research Groups and Students – There is an opportunity to enrich Artists' work by partnering with students and researchers at the University of Cambridge. In order to foster these relationships, this strategy encourages:

8.2.2.1. Artist longlists that include practitioners who live locally or have previously studied at or partnered with the University;

8.2.2.2. Early outreach to department leads to establish Eddington-related research and co-design projects within study programmes, with an initial focus on Architecture, Design, Engineering, and Natural Sciences.

8.2.3. Non-academic and Grassroots Groups – It is important to engage with organisations and groups beyond the university. Gardening, youth, fitness, food, and music groups will all be invited to play a role in delivering a culturally rich neighbourhood.

8.3 Concept Development

Each Artist Placement will begin by working with the Design Team to identify opportunities within emerging plans that link to the allocated theme and could potentially be enhanced by an artwork. In order to maximise budgets, wherever possible, interventions must be based on uplifting existing budgets, rather than necessitating entirely separate funds.

Artists will be required to develop proposals for permanent artworks, meanwhile projects, and community engagement / stewardship activities in line with the phasing, and with support from the Art Advisory Team.

Concepts will be presented to the Community Steering Group, University of Cambridge, and the Development Partners for concept and budget approval before any detailed development work is done.

8. Programme Development



8.4. Detailed and Technical Design

Upon concept approval, the Art Advisory Team will work with relevant consultants — Fabricator, Structural Engineer, Health and Safety, Planning, etc.— to undertake a full feasibility and cost assessment of the proposal.

Selected consultants will be contracted in line with the University of Cambridge and the Development Partner's procurement guidelines. All designs will go through a full technical process and be set against Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The Artist will work under the guidance of the Art Advisory Team and alongside the selected consultants to develop and refine their proposal, ensuring it meets the original concept, health and safety requirements, site requirements, and budget. A full set of drawings and technical information will be provided to the University of Cambridge and Development Partner (where applicable) for final approval.

Smaller event-based projects can be developed with a reduced team comprised of the Art Advisory Team and a Health and Safety Consultant.

8.5. Planning

Depending on the nature of the work, some projects may require advertising consent, planning permission and/or building control approval from the relevant Local Authority. The Art Advisory Team will liaise with all relevant parties to ensure that the information required by the University's appointed Planning Consultant is delivered within the necessary timeframes.

8.6. Fabrication and Installation

Once all approvals are received, Fabricator and Engineer will move forward with the fabrication and installation process. Throughout, the Art Advisory Team will support Artists in monitoring the work as it is produced to ensure it is in line with the approved designs, as well as ensure all contractors provide the necessary paperwork.

Installation of works will be implemented in line with the project programme, with the Art Advisory Team leading on liaison with Artist, Contractor, Development Project Manager, Construction Team, University of Cambridge and Development Partner.

The Principal Contractor will be responsible for providing full health and safety paperwork before works commence on site. This must include as a minimum: Construction Phase Plan, a Site-Specific Risk Assessment and Method Statement, Delivery and Installation Schedule, and evidence of any specific required training certificates of people carrying out works, i.e. PASMA.

Depending on the complexity of the works to be installed, it may be a requirement for the Structural Engineer to review and sign off the work once installed. Artworks will be supplied with appropriate warranties, operations and maintenance manuals from the Fabricator and the Artist. Where possible, local suppliers will be prioritised.

For smaller event and performance-based projects, Artist, Art Advisory Team and Health and Safety Consultant will deliver a Risk Assessment and Method Statement for the full event programme, including install and strike.

9: Long Term Plans for Public Art



9.1. Maintenance

No matter how ambitious or successful an artwork is at its launch, if it is not properly maintained throughout its life span, it is likely to become an eyesore, a hazard to the public, and potentially a catalyst for vandalism. Hence, cleaning and maintenance of artworks must be central to all proposals and planning and detailed in all relevant contracts.

As part of the commissioned deliverables, each artwork will have an operations and maintenance manual (O&M), which will be supplied to the University of Cambridge and cascaded to contractors responsible for maintenance.

Permanent artworks that are integrated materially and can be taken care of as part of general estate management programmes will be encouraged, posing less risk of additional costs and falling into disrepair. In some instances, artworks might require an endowment, the sum of which might depend upon the complexity of the artwork and its anticipated lifespan.

N.B. For planting-based artworks such as gardens or growing projects, Artists must agree to have a more flexible approach to the specification and 'finish'. This will need to be agreed upon between Estate Management and Artist in the appointment.

9.2. Decommissioning

Most permanent commissions have an intended lifespan of 15 - 25 years, depending on the type of artworks realised; digital artworks, bronze sculptures, plant-based artworks, and drinking fountains all have varying lifespans. Over their lifespan they must adhere to safety and aesthetic standards. Accompanying the maintenance plan, there must be a process for decommissioning.

Decommissioning plans must be in line with the Artist's wishes. If the artwork is no longer fit for purpose, discussion on whether it can be remade must be had. There will be conditions attached to this remaking that will need to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Ultimately, as owner, the University of Cambridge will determine feasibility on both practical and financial grounds.

9.3. Legal Ownership and Duty of Care

Ownership of any permanent artworks will remain with the University of Cambridge, who will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the work. In the instance of a work being integrated into a property that is on a long term lease to a Development Partner, who is then responsible for the site and/or operations and maintenance, the work will form part of a loan agreement. The Intellectual Property of the work will always remain with the Artist.

9: Long Term Plan of Public Art



9.4. Evaluation and KPI's

A reflexive approach to evaluation and lessons learnt is an important part of improving and adjusting programmes as the site develops.

The Art Advisory Team will incorporate key pillars from [The Civic University's framework for civic impact, Domain 4: Cultural](#), at all stages of any project. In order to successfully assess universities' activities and progress of their cultural contribution, the framework sets out the following:

- Mapping: Where are we now? Use local demographics to identify gaps and opportunities.
- Partnering: Where do we want to go and with whom? Ensure a wide range of local organisations are engaged and welcomed.
- Agreeing: who will do what and when? Identify priorities for support, both internal and external to the University.
- Resourcing: How are activities supported? Platform and fund activities that enrich and celebrate local cultural life.
- Evaluating: How are we doing? Ask for feedback and listen to local views.
- Learning: What will we change and how? Actively consider how to make activities better using local knowledge and expertise.

Some projects might necessitate an external organisation or university-led research group to be appointed to manage the evaluation. This must be factored into all working budgets.

All data collection will be coordinated via the University of Cambridge to ensure it is aligned across the programme and to avoid repetition.

The North West Cambridge
Masterplan Public Art and Culture
Strategy celebrates the best of local
heritage and creates spaces that
future generations will thank us for.

The North West Cambridge Arts and Culture Strategy has been worked up in tandem with the NWC Masterplan and in response to

- Cambridge Local Plan (2018): Policy 56, 59 & 85;
- Cambridge City Council Public Art Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted January 12th 2010);
- The Cambridge Perspective - A Manifesto (March 2022);
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) Policy H/Q2;
- North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009) Policy NW22.

2012 Public Art Strategy

- North West Cambridge Public Art Strategy by CAS, March 2012
- ToR Public Art Advisory Panel 3.9.18 (1).pdf

Consultations

- Eddington second consultation overview by Field – December 2024
- Tracing Trees with Alastair Kwan - 28th June 2025
- The Future of Eddington – Year 3 & 4 pupils from the University of Cambridge Primary School - July 2025

Evaluation

- [The Civic University's framework for civic impact, Domain 4: Cultural](#)

Social Value and related policies

- [Social Value the Hill Way](#)
- [National green social prescribing delivery capacity assessment: final report, commission by Department of Health and Social Care, March 2023](#)
- [Green Social Prescribing Toolkit from the National Academy of Social Prescribing](#)

- [Arts and Culture social prescribing details from the National Academy of Social Prescribing](#)

Environmental Policies

- [Gallery Climate Coalition](#)

Citizen-Led Decision Making

- [Citizens in Power](#)

Cambridge-based Organisations

- [Create Cambridge](#)

Other

- [UK Visual Artists 2024: A Survey of Earnings and Contracts](#)

Local experts consulted:

- Ella McCartney, Local Artist
- Alastair Kwan, Artist & Former Cambridge Student
- Jo Sinclair, Local Writer and Tour Guide
- Rosie Cooper, Director, Wysing Art Centre
- Harriet Loffler, Curator of the Women's Art Collection, Murray Edwards College, University of London
- Ellie Breeze, Co-Founder and Community Director of Together Culture Cambridge
- Debbie Hall, Local Artist
- Hilary Cox Condon, Local Artist

