

**APPENDIX F**

# **The Cambridge Perspective: Making Public Art Work**

**Public Art Commissioning Programme  
(March 2024)**



## Executive summary

Cambridge City Council has taken a national lead in its approach to commissioning public art. It has achieved an impressive legacy of public art outcomes which benefit the city and for everyone who visits or lives and works here. Public art has been supported through robust planning policy<sup>1</sup>, guidance and processes and with expertise to oversee its development and delivery. A wide range of permanent, and temporary and process-led works have been developed with communities. These have helped to shape the public realm and have played a role in integrating existing and new communities. This contributes to the quality of life in the city and brings social benefits.

In March 2022, the Council published its Public Art Manifesto<sup>2</sup>. This is a public declaration of the Council's commitment to deliver new public art and to support best practice when commissioning. It contains key strategic objectives that will guide public art commissioning in Cambridge. The Manifesto informs all public art delivery, including the Council's own commissions or public art developed through the planning process.

Now, this Public Art Commissioning Programme sets out a range of public art projects to meet those objectives. It also aims to make effective and timely use of the financial contributions from developers (also known as S106 funding) that is currently available for the Council's public art projects. Efforts continue to identify other sources of funding for further new public art commissions.

The development of this programme has involved consultation with local communities, community organisations and other Council partners. It will evolve in the coming years, with further community engagement helping to identify new local public art projects.

(A Foreword by the Executive Councillor for Communities will be added to this document after approval)

1. [Public Art Supplementary Planning Document](#)
2. [Public Art Manifesto, March 2022](#)

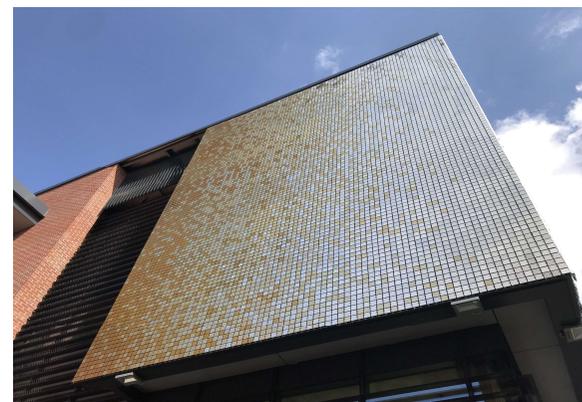
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*All images (except those in the 'Urban Voices' section) are from commissions in Cambridge delivered through the Council's Public Art SPD.*



[Watch: "I'm laughing at the clouds" \(external link\)](#)

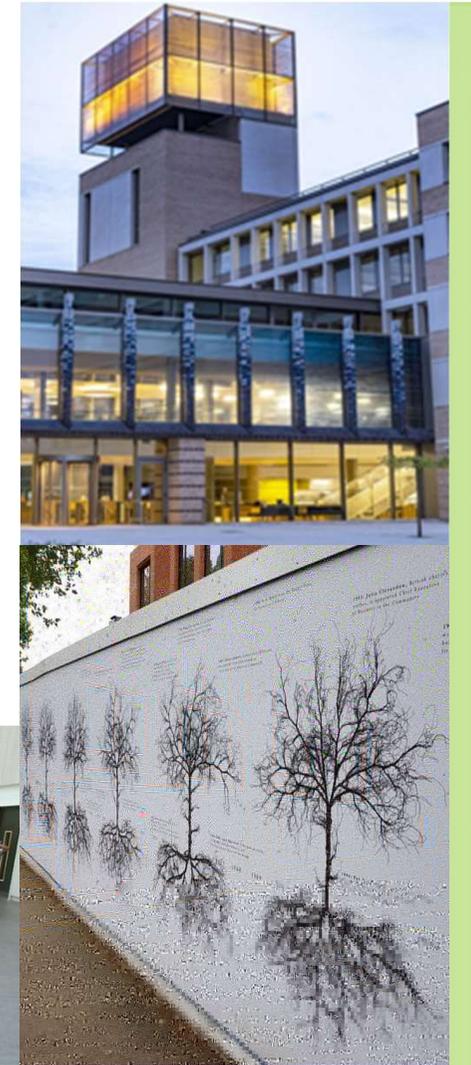


[Watch: "Transformation" public art \(external link\)](#)

## Defining public art in Cambridge

Public art is a means of engaging artists' creative ideas in the public realm and with the community. It is not a distinct art form but refers to permanent, temporary or socially engaged/participatory works of art in a variety of media. Successful public art is new and demonstrates ambition and innovation. It is relevant to its context, engages people and contributes to civic identity. The only constant element of public art is that it is community or site specific. Public art commissioning in Cambridge seeks to connect people and places across the city.

Art and art practice continually evolve. Digital and web-based projects are as valid as physical works. Traditional, contemporary and experimental work should all be supported. Public art projects can be informed by social activity. It can relate to local stories and history and be aimed at community building. Public art can also be purely process-led where taking part is the outcome. These types of projects directly engage a diverse audience about issues directly relevant to people's lives. They can create strong community legacies.



## Benefits

Cambridge's Public Art planning policy references many benefits that public art can support. These include:

### Community

- Contributing to the creation of the artwork
- Improving community safety in the public realm
- Contributing to community building and social cohesion

### Place-making

- Strengthening a sense of local identity
- Animating the place and building on its uses and activities
- Improving the environmental quality through the creation of artworks

### Education

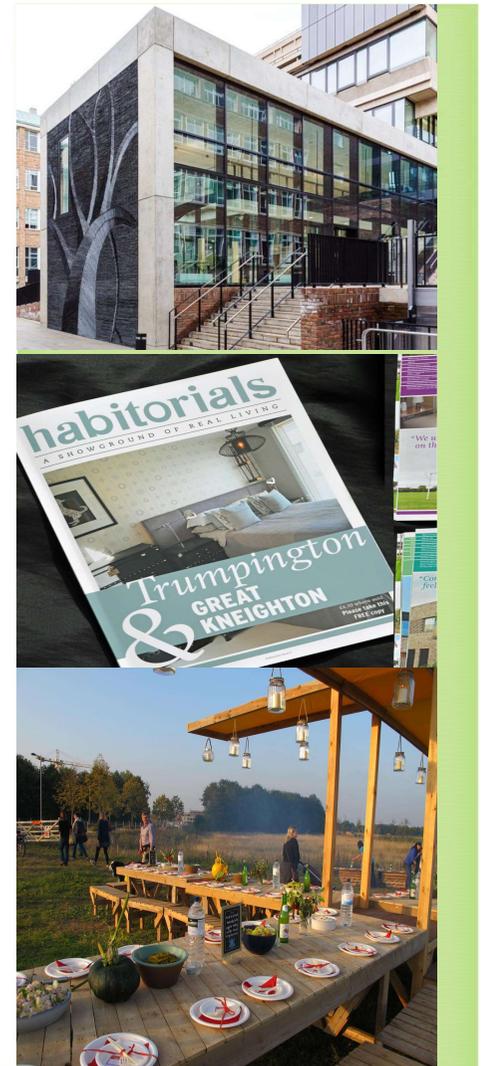
- Developing and enabling formal and informal learning opportunities in, and through, the arts

### Arts

- Increasing public perception of, and interest in, art and the artistic process
- Providing opportunities for artists to create work and have it seen by large numbers of people.

### Well-being

Promoting social engagement, relaxation and encouraging public health



## Vision and objectives

The overarching vision is to develop a programme of public art commissions that genuinely engages and benefits communities.

The Council continues to support cultural experiences in the public realm by ensuring art and artists are at the heart of policy and process so that artists can respond and contribute to the strategic aims of the Public Art Manifesto, which are Community, Place and Change.

***‘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 and ensuring a clear process is set out to achieve this.’***

(from the Council’s Public Art SPD)



Some key points from the Public Art Manifesto's strategic objectives.

**Art and Artists:** To put art and artists at the heart of the process to create public art of high quality, which engages people, is relevant to places and people's lives.

**Art and Community:** To engage local people in the planning, design and animation of their environments and social spaces through public art delivered via the development process. To encourage a greater sense of social cohesion and ownership of the public realm and public art. To enable residents to experience high quality cultural activity and can develop themselves as makers, participants, and audiences.

**Art and Place:** Public art can help create a high-quality public realm and improve environmental quality through the creation of artworks that provide visual and emotional delight. Public art commissions can animate Cambridge's public spaces and help to create unique spaces whether in the urban or natural environments, as well as create identity both at a local level and citywide with each artwork being specific to its location. The streets and open spaces of Cambridge offer excellent opportunities for the creative thinking of artists to interpret use, history, or a hidden narrative.

**Art and Change:** Public art can be used as a conduit for community engagement and participation, especially in recognition that changes are taking place in the city. This is particularly important in Cambridge, with the changes that the growth agenda is bringing to the city, as well as changes that will happen because of climate change and the biodiversity emergency. Public art should support and enable critical debate, which addresses the impact of growth, climate change and the biodiversity emergency.

## Research and consultation

The Commissioning Programme is the result of reflection and consultation over two years, listening to feedback and public suggestions for projects. The Programme also connects to objectives within the Council's Corporate Plan and other strategies. Developing projects that genuinely engage people will require a partnership approach.

The Programme aims to develop and deliver projects in line with some of the cultural dividends set out in the Cultural Strategy.



Key feedback from the consultation of the Manifesto, which informs the development of the Commissioning Programme, is that public art:

- adds distinctiveness, character and contributes to place-making;
- contributes to resident well-being and is appreciated;
- should be inclusive; fun; relevant and accessible; and
- should provide experiences that enrich lives and strengthens communities and social networks.

This includes support for contemporary public art (including murals) and projects involving engagement and learning and/or encouraging a greater sense of social cohesion and ownership of public spaces – where the community can participate; not just being an audience.

The research and consultation process strongly indicated a need for the Commissioning Programme to promote inclusivity, equality, and accessibility with a desire for contemporary artistic practices, that include participatory or socially engaged practices, which support social cohesion and inform elements of the projects. Creating interactions between communities is a key consideration. There is strong support for public art to be fun, create delight and be playful.

## The Emerging Programme

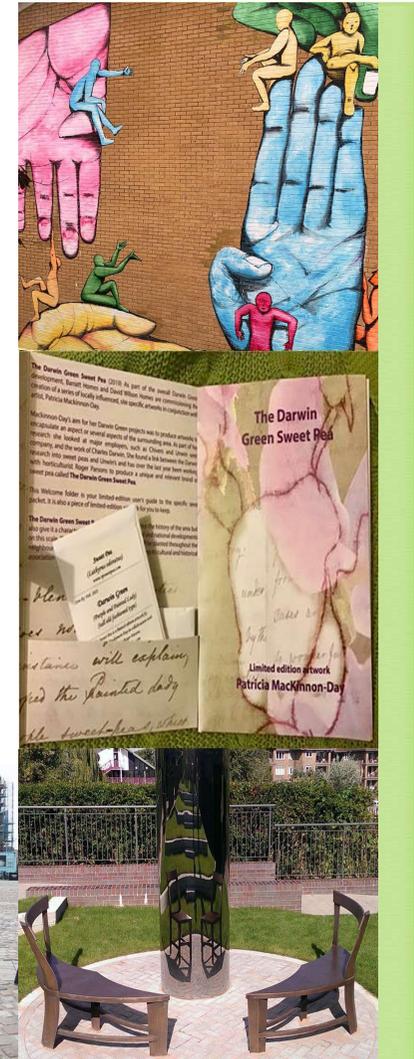
The Council is currently looking to take forward four new public art commissions<sup>3</sup> as well as supporting a public art project<sup>4</sup> that came forward through the 2023/24 grant applications round. The four commissions relate to:

- Nightingale Avenue Recreation Ground public art
- 'More Playful Art, Please' public art
- 'Urban Voices' public art
- Romsey Recreation Ground

More details can be found in the pages that follow. The programme will be further developed in the coming years (e.g., with proposals for new local public art projects in Cherry Hinton, Coleridge and Trumpington).

Best practice will be followed to develop commissions and applied to all public art projects covering management and various commissioning approaches, setting project budgets, supporting the case for inclusion, environmental considerations, embedding learning and participation, communication, evaluation, and maintenance.

3. Although funding for the first of these four projects has already been approved, the other three are still subject to approval.
4. For more details about the recent grant applications round, see the Public Art [committee report](#) in March 2024.



## 1. Nightingale Recreation Ground (already approved).

### Description:

A new commission inspired by this recreation ground in the Queen Edith's Ward of the city), with its new pavilion and its community garden. An artist is being commissioned to design and deliver bespoke artwork that is contemporary and site-specific. This could help to encourage use of the open space and its facilities. The artwork/s will be authored by the artist but there will be an engagement process with the local community through artist-led workshops or the artist being in Residence in the Recreation Ground.

**Who for:** Residents (all ages)

**Budget:** Up to £44,000 (including £40,000 of public art S106 funding)

**When:** Being commissioned by April 2024, for subsequent development and delivery from Spring 2024.

**Strategic Context:** The proposal is being developed to meet the public art policy criteria and to deliver the objectives of the Manifesto.



## 2. More Playful Art, Please! Abbey/Petersfield

In response to public demand and to build upon the success of the of the Cambridge PlayLaws, we propose to reimagine the project in other areas of the City.

### Description:

The project was originally proposed by Ward Councillors to create a project based upon playfulness that engaged the local community in the process. The approval of the principles of the original project included hopes that an artist might be appointed who responded to the brief, with a proposal, which could be reimaged in other areas of the City; to create a playful City and to build upon and strengthen the projects legacy, in relation to community benefit and engagement. Artist Pippa Hale and social Enterprise Playful Anywhere were appointed by a Project Steering Group resulting in the creation of the Cambridge PlayLaws.

The outcomes of the Cambridge PlayLaws were authored by the artists through an engagement process in response to the artist brief and the outcomes have directly been influenced by the process, but part of the brief required the artist to author what the outcome might look like, which is the PlayLaws plaques and the creation of Play Agents.

The reimagining of the project will include the same playful engagement, (which people have provided such positive feedback on and is proposed in response to requests for more projects like this in other areas). The outcomes of the project will be different to the PlayLaws Plaques. The community engagement process will inform the project's outcomes, which could include playable, interactive, or sculptural outcomes. The community is at the heart of the process, as well as the artists. It also facilitates the Play Agents to continue and build upon their experiences and creates opportunities for new volunteers to join the network; providing additional legacies for the project.



## Aims:

- Encourage playful and interaction to nurture social cohesion.
- Create high quality works of art that delight, and create playful or active moments through engagement with community
- Enhance the sense of belonging by residents to their local neighbourhood
- Recognise and raise awareness of the importance of open space and facilitate community ownership

The project has so far exceeded the delivery of its original aims. The project has become an exemplar in public art commissioning and is being followed by other Local Authority's, organisations related to creative play and urbanism.

## Who:

Residents (all ages) and visitors

## Budget:

Up to £60,000

## When:

September 2024

## Strategic Context:

The proposal is being developed meet the Public Art Policy criteria and to deliver the objectives of the Manifesto. It supports the Community Wealth Building Strategy, the Cultural Strategy, the Single Equality Scheme, and the Children's and Young People's Strategy.



### 3. Urban Voices - Phase 1 and 2 (and setting the scene for a potential phase 3) North, South, East and West Central

#### Phase 1 – Urban Voices

##### Description:

Urban Voices is a project which aims at giving a voice to a generation of young people who feel their views are not being heard and whilst they belong to the City, they may not feel like the City belongs to them. Urban Voices is a youth urban art project, which aims to create a more equitable city that reflects, celebrates, and nurtures its young residents. The project recognises the importance of young people at a time when there are lots of challenging issues for them, particularly relating to their mental health and the impact of the pandemic. A key aspiration of the project is to engage young people, who don't get involved because they don't feel a part of a democratic process. The project will also set the scene for the expansion of urban art commissioning in the City.

The project aims to develop relationships and create outputs to support delivery of the Council's Wealth Building Strategy, the emerging Children's and Young People's Strategy, and the future Youth Assembly; through creativity, respect and listening. Artist facilitators/youth workers working with urban artists will be commissioned to explore what it means to be a young person living in Cambridge through creative workshops and to understand the challenges and issues in their lives, which cause anxiety. A requirement will be to provide a vehicle for the voices of young people to be heard, which informs the Council's Policy's and the decision-making process alongside the development of mural/s or works by young people working with urban artists. Urban artists will also respond to the learnings through the creation of their own murals/work.

The project will take place in four areas: North, South, East, and West Central. There are ambitions to create an element of the project, which will culminate in an outdoor exhibition of work in the City Centre for the wider public to hear the Urban Voices of our young people.



Urban Voices has been developed in response to consultation feedback, through conversations with the Council's Community Development and Culture teams and with community groups and organisations. There has been a theme in conversations relating to the need to create projects, which positively engage young people through urban art and a creative process. During a recent Public Art Grants round, the most enquiries from Community Groups related to the potential opportunities to fund urban art projects for young people. The project will create partnerships with organisations such as Cambridge Junction and Addenbrookes Hospital.

**Aims:**

- to give a genuine voice to young people
- to understand the challenges and issues in the lives of young people, which cause them anxiety
- to Improve the perceptions of and to create an understanding of the decision-making process
- to influence the decision-making process
- to improve well-being
- to Improve perceptions of urban art and increase local distinctiveness

**Who For:**

Young people, residents, and visitors

**Budget:**

Up to £30,000 per area

**Timeline:**

March 2025

**Strategic Context**

The proposal meets the criteria required by the Public Art Policy and delivers the objectives and visions in the Manifesto. The project supports the Council's Wealth Building Strategy, the Single Equality Scheme, the emerging Children's and Young people's Strategy and the Cultural Strategy.



## Urban Voices - Phase 2

### Description:

To build upon Phase 1 and to begin to create an Urban Art Festival. The project will involve the young people who took part in phase 1 to ensure there is a genuine legacy from the first phase. It will include urban art commissions around the City.

### Aims:

- to build upon phase 1 with continued relationships with young people
- to improve perceptions of street art and increase local distinctiveness

### Who For:

Young people, residents (all ages), and visitors

### Budget:

Up to £65,000 of s106 contributions with potential for match funding and sponsorship

### When:

January 2026

## Urban Voices Phase 3

### Description:

To create an Urban Art Festival inspired by the Cheltenham Paint Festival

### Budget:

To be confirmed. Funding could include s106 contributions or sought from external funders and sponsorship

**Timeline:** Long Term and dependent on the delivery of phase 2 and securing funding.



## 4. Romsey Recreation Ground Commission

### Description:

Working with Ward Councillors and the local community to develop a new commission in Romsey Recreation Ground. The work will be developed and authored by an artist engaging with the community and responding to an open brief; the work must be new and be site responsive.

### Aims (could include):

- to promote and support Biodiversity and Ecology
- to understand and experience biodiversity including what's happening underground or out of sight or hearing ranges
- to enhance the sense of belonging by residents to their local neighbourhood
- to recognise and raise awareness of the importance of open space and facilitate community ownership
- to promote the Recreation Ground and encourage use of it

### Who For:

Residents, intergenerational, visitors

### Timeline:

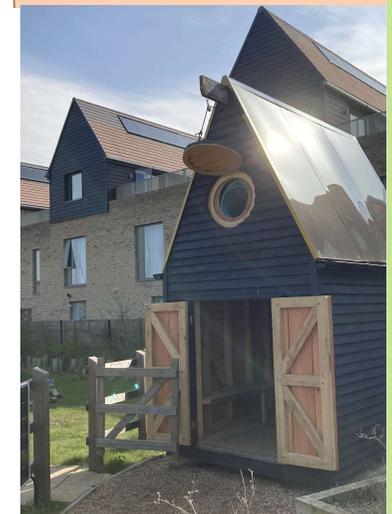
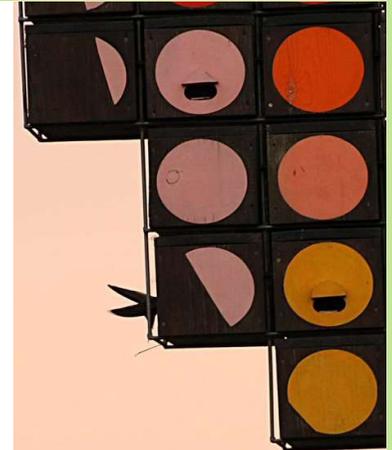
July 2025

### Budget:

Up to £66,000

### Strategic Context:

The commission will be developed to comply with the Council's Public Art policy and the objectives in the Manifesto



## Appendix 2 - Glossary of Images

All Images except in the Urban Voices section are from projects in Cambridge delivered through the Public Art SPD

<b>Front Cover</b>	Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain	David Batchelor.	Eddington	<a href="http://www.nwcambridgeart.com/commissions/eddington-david-batchelor-commission/">http://www.nwcambridgeart.com/commissions/eddington-david-batchelor-commission/</a>
<b>Contents</b>	I'm Laughing at Clouds	Michael Pinsky	ARU	<a href="https://youtu.be/HcpxRjnk6BU?list=PLex444wywMXR5c3BoqVL76joHZGuc0RfU">https://youtu.be/HcpxRjnk6BU?list=PLex444wywMXR5c3BoqVL76joHZGuc0RfU</a>
	Transformation	Annie Catrell	ARU	<a href="https://vimeo.com/303353713">https://vimeo.com/303353713</a>
<b>Page 3</b>	KickstART	Zoe Chamberlain	Cambridge City FC site (Mitcham's Park)	<a href="https://www.zoechamberlain.com/kickstart">https://www.zoechamberlain.com/kickstart</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/58BDtdddF1E">https://youtu.be/58BDtdddF1E</a>
	Infectious Agents	Jo Chapman	University Technology College	<a href="https://jochapmanart.co.uk/projects/infectious-agents">https://jochapmanart.co.uk/projects/infectious-agents</a>
	Cinder	Umbrellium	Trumpington Community College	<a href="https://t.co/Y4mLhkq39f?amp=1">https://t.co/Y4mLhkq39f?amp=1</a>
	In Other Words	Vong Phaophanit and Claire Oboussier	Cambridge Assessment	<a href="https://atopia.org.uk/commission/in-other-words/">https://atopia.org.uk/commission/in-other-words/</a>
	Hoardings from 'Beyond Thinking'	Cathy de Monchaux	Newnham College	<a href="https://newn.cam.ac.uk/about/architecture/contemporary-projects/beyond-thinking-by-cathy-de-monchaux-2018/">https://newn.cam.ac.uk/about/architecture/contemporary-projects/beyond-thinking-by-cathy-de-monchaux-2018/</a>

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Slate Works and Engagement Programme

Ackroyd & Harvey

David Attenborough Building

<http://www.commissionprojects.co.uk/new-museums-site/>

Showground of Real Living

Britt Jurgensen, Jeanne Van Heeswijk

Great Kneighton

<http://habitorials.org.uk/showround-of-real-living/>

<https://vimeo.com/151146766>

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Microscape

Michael Brennand-Wood

Addenbrookes Hospital

<https://michaelbrennandwood.co.uk/commissions/addenbrookes-hospital-clinical-research-centre-cambridge/>

The Great Hall Window

Martin Donlan

Coleridge Community College

<https://www.axisweb.org/p/martindonlan/workset/203546-the-great-hall-coleridge-college-cambridge/>

Cambridge PlayLaws

Pippa Hale and Playful Anywhere

Central Cambridge

<https://cambridgeplaylaws.fun/>

The Green and the Gardens

Ryan Gander

Cambridge Biomedical Campus

<https://cambridge-biomedical.com/public-art-cambridge/commission/the-green-and-the-gardens/>

<https://t.co/t35rNU4EBj?amp=1>

Page 6

Hunch

Emma Smith

Parkers Piece

<https://www.emma-smith.com/works/hunch/>

<https://t.co/9H4exPoyNh?amp=1>

Mural

El Seed

Arbury Court

<https://elseed-art.com/projects/>

Bird Screen

Nils Norman

Great Kneighton

<https://futurecity.co.uk/portfolio/an-edible-park/>

Playful Seating

John Hopkins

Riverside

<https://futurecity.co.uk/portfolio/playful-seating-and-terrace/>

The Darwin Green Sweetpea

Neville Gabe

Patricia Mackinnon-Day

<https://www.mackinnon-day.com/projects/darwin-green/>

The Human Touch

RUN

Parkside Pool

<https://www.museums.cam.ac.uk/blog/2021/02/01/an-interview-with-street-artist-run/>

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Selection of Works

Kay Aplin

<https://kayaplin.com/>

Page 11 and 12	Cambridge PlayLaws	Pippa Hale and Playful Anywhere	Central Cambridge	<a href="https://cambridgeplaylaws.fun/">https://cambridgeplaylaws.fun/</a>
Page 14, 15 and 16	Cheltenham Paint Festival	Various Artists	Town wide	<a href="https://www.cheltenhampaintfestival.co.uk/">https://www.cheltenhampaintfestival.co.uk/</a>
Page 17	Swift Tower	Andrew Merritt	Logans Meadow	<a href="https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/swift-code-swift-tower">https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/swift-code-swift-tower</a>
	Insect Breeding Institute	Alex Murdin	Trumpington Park Primary School	<a href="https://ruralrecreation.org.uk/portfolio/insect-breeding-institute-2019-22/">https://ruralrecreation.org.uk/portfolio/insect-breeding-institute-2019-22/</a>
Back Cover	A Wary Heracles meets Galatea	Matthew Darbyshire	Cambridge North Station	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10or3B5tlo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10or3B5tlo</a>

