**Arts Dream** **Report on Public Art for Selsey:**

**1. Introduction/ Terms of Reference:**

In light of the newly proposed housing developments in Selsey and the resulting 106 money for Public Art, Selsey Town Council has asked Selsey Community Forum using Arts Dream Selsey as a lead advisory organisation to conduct a consultation process about the development of Public Art for Selsey. Although a long term Public Art Strategy for Selsey would be advantageous this report only deals with the current monies available from Pye and Landlink Housing Development. However as a result of the consultation process and public preferences and the aspirations as detailed in the Draft Selsey Neighbourhood Plan 2014 (DSNP) a strategy could be easily developed if further monies for arts projects became available.

Throughout the consultation process, representatives from Chichester District Council, Selsey Town Council and Landlink have been kept fully informed of all developments.

**2. Cultural Context:**

Whilst it is clear from the Selsey Community Vision and Action Plan update August 2014 that there is extensive and sustainable art activity in Selsey, there is little Public Art. The ‘Wave’ at the entrance to Selsey has provided a visual statement of Selsey’s unique environment and the proposed new housing developments give Selsey a valuable opportunity to redress this imbalance and provide more visual enhancements to the environment.

It is suggested that any Public Art Projects should be relevant to the aspirations of the Selsey Community Vision Document 2011, the Chichester District Public Art Strategy 2010, and the DSNP 2014

**3. Public Art Definitions:**

‘The term ‘Public Art’ means art commissioned for public spaces, either outdoors or in public buildings. Public Art pieces can be in a variety of media and can include temporary work such as street art. It can be a very visible and tangible contribution to the environment, especially if it is inspired by a sense of place at both local community and wider district level’ (Chichester District Public Art Strategy 2010)

Public Art as such is not an art form but a process as indicated by Maggi Bolt (2011) ‘Public Art is not an art form. It is a principle whereby the involvement and activities of artists contribute to the identity, understanding, and appreciation and enhancement of public places’

One would hope that any strategy for Public Art should be built on the premise that Public Art can act as a catalyst for enhancing the quality of life for residents, community wellbeing, economic prosperity and the encouragement of tourism. Through the adoption of a specific Public Art project/ or projects for Selsey one could develop cultural, educational, and economic benefits to the Manhood Peninsular, whilst acting as a catalyst for the enhancement of the area.

The forms of Public Art are many and varied and can include:

* The renovation of buildings or the creation of new architectural space
* Landscaping elements such as environmental land works and earthworks
* Photography
* Film or light projections
* Electronic imaging, projection and moving images, computer generated images
* Painting
* Textiles
* Performance events and music commissions
* Performance events, music commissions

Public Art can be conceptual, text or narrative based, humorous or challenging. The forms of Public Art can be innovative, exciting and as dynamic as the imagination of the people who are charged to develop them. The best Public Art can be seen as collective community expression and an expression of community values and the involvement of artists, business representatives, developers and the community can have a lasting impact and dramatic end result for any town or city.

To contextualise the debates and discussions about Public Art the following Aims, Objectives and Benefits of Public Art for Selsey were drawn up by the Arts Dream Committee and these were adopted by the participants in the first meeting.

**4.** **Aims/ Objectives/ Benefits:**

Aim: Through the adoption of a specific Public Art project/ or projects develop cultural, educational, and economic benefits to the Manhood Peninsular, whilst acting as a catalyst for the enhancement of the area

Objectives:

* enhance the profile of Selsey by a wide range of stakeholders, and aid in achieving social and economic wellbeing
* encourage tourism and contribute to local distinctiveness
* engage the Selsey community through a wide consultation process in the design, production and development of a specific Public Art project/projects
* work with internal and external agencies in the production of the project by maximizing resources and sharing skills
* recognize and promote the skills, vision and creative abilities of artists

within the project planning, developmental process, and final execution.

* introduce innovation and experimentation into the process of how spaces and places are developed and create an environment which meets the needs of the inhabitants and visitors
* help to create a sense of identity and community and improve the quality of the environment and of people’s lives

Benefits:

* Increased tourism in Selsey
* enhance developer’s status and image locally and nationally
* through the consultation process build up knowledge, trust and confidence in local environments
* give people a sense of pride and ownership in their environment
* provide a cultural legacy for the area
* Stronger partnerships developed between public sector agencies, business the voluntary sector, the community and artists.

**5. Consultation Methodology:**

Consultation as a democratic process is recognised as a dialogue with the community and relevant stake holders that has a defined start and end date and informs a decision about a particular proposal. In this case Public Art. A variety of mechanisms were chosen for this public consultation:

1. ***Informal consultation:*** through face to face discussions, phone calls, and email notifications.

2. A series of ***meetings*** held with relevant stake holders. These meeting were advertised through:

An advertisement in Selsely Life Magazine circulation 11000

* Information on Arts Dream Website and Face Book Page, circulation 300
* Information on Selsey Information exchange Website and Face Book Page, 400 circulation
* Selsey News and Gossip Face Book Page, circulation 2000
* Chichester Observer What’s on page on line. (Selsey 400)
* Selsey Business Partnership Website circulation 150

These meetings were held on:

* 22nd of September. Arts Dream introductory meeting with representatives from Chichester District, Selsey Town Council and the artistic community, to discuss terms of reference for the consultation process and to generate initial ideas.
* 24th of September Selsey Community Forum.4.15 the Academy Selsey. Initial proposal and ideas presented
* 6th of October -10am-12pm and at 6pm-8pm on both days. Public meetings with lead discussions and visual presentations
* 7th of October 10am Selsey Funding Meeting. Initial proposal and ideas presented
* 7th of October 7.45 Arts Forum Meeting in Selsey Town Hall. Initial proposal and ideas presented with enhanced visual material
* 20th of October 10am-12pm, and at 6pm-8pm in Selsey Town Hall, where the general public were asked to select their preferences for Public Art

3. ***On line debate and discussion:***

Further ideas were received from the Arts Dream Website and face book page, and the Selsey Information Exchange, website and face book page, and through twitter and email.

4. ***Discussions with specific focus groups.***

These groups included:

* The Selsey Community Choir,
* The Academy Selsey (staff )
* SACOS
* Snak Shack
* History Group of U3A

The majority of ideas are reflected in the following table. The comments in table 1 are made by the Arts Dream committee to briefly indicate if the proposals could be achieved within the allocated monies.

The more extensive projects would use the seed money to achieve further funding. Table 2 indicates the number of votes that were received in the final preference meeting. Please note many other people were engaged in the discussions but did not cast a vote.

**6. Table 1 Public Art Ideas: (comments ):**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Idea :** | **Notes/comments** | **Numbers** |
| 1.The development of a Heritage/ Educational centre for Selsey | Need to indicate where and how it will operate. Dependant on site and scale of the project could be achieved within the budget, or monies used to generate more funding/ plus would need a business plan for operation | 18 |
| 2. Renovation of the East Street toilets to make an Arts Centre and Arts Park, or a ‘man shed’ | Need to buy land from CDC and renovate. Could be achieved on the budget but would need a business plan for operation | 11 |
| 3. Build brand new Performance Space for Selsey | Public Arts money used to generate other monies. Need land, build, and business plan to indicate how it will operate. Lots of expertise in Selsey of how this could be achieved | 70 |
| 4 .Renovation of the Pavilion as a performance /exhibition space. | Pavilion would need to be signed over to a trust, charity from the private owner. Plans need to be drawn up, plus feasibility study to see if it is a viable project. Public Art money used to generate other monies. Need a business plan for the running of the building. | 40 |
| 5. Seal Parade. Use of life size fibre glass decorated seals to be used to construct a trail around Selsey | Relatively straight forward project. Could be done within the budget. Lots of expertise in Selsey of how this could be achieved. Great project for community involvement | 15 |
| 6. A Coastal trail with the continuation of the paving slabs from the Town Beach to the Coastguard Beach | Relatively straight forward project. Could be achieved within the budget | 10 |
| 7.A pedestrian area for Selsey | Where, how, what kind? | 10 |
| 8.The use of mosaics to decorate Selsey pavements, walls, shops etc. | A straight forward project. Could be achieved with the budget. Great project for community involvement | 8 |
| 9.A sound installation and music trail around the Selsey Coast | A straight forward project that could be achieved within the budget | 0 |
| 10.A decorative Graffiti project to decorate the Selsey Sea Wall | A straight forward project that could be achieved within the budget | 12 |
| 11.A Town Square, that could include a space for entertainment/ musical activity/Bandstand | Where, how, what kind? Could possibly be achieved within the budget. Suggestion made to move the Fire Station? | 22 |
| 12.A constructed Star Disc | Simple ‘off the shelf ‘project, 200k to buy, so would need to generate other monies to purchase it | 6 |
| 13.The construction of a Bronze long bench on the Oval Field with a statue of Patrick Moore sitting on it | A straight forward project that could be achieved within the budget | 10 |
| 14. Graffiti walls on the new skate Park at East Beach. | A straight forward project that could be achieved within the budget | 34 |

**7. Table 2 Order of Preference:**

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| --- | --- |
| I | Build brand new performance space for Selsey |
| 2 | Renovation of the pavilion as a multimedia space |
| 3 | Graffiti walls on the new skate Park at East beach. |
| 4 | A Town Square, that could include a space for entertainment/ musical activity/Bandstand |
| 5 | The development of a Heritage/ Educational centre for Selsey |
| 6 | Seal Parade. Use of life size fibre glass decorated seals to be used to construct a trail around Selsey |
| 7 | A decorative Graffiti project to decorate the Selsey Sea Wall |
| 8 | Renovation of the East Street toilets to make an Arts Centre and Arts Park, or a ‘man shed’ |
| 9 | A Coastal trail with the continuation of the paving slabs from the Town Beach to the Coastguard Beach |
| 9 | A pedestrian area for Selsey |
| 9 | The construction of a Bronze long bench on the Oval Field with a statue of Patrick Moore sitting on it |
| 10 | The use of mosaics to decorate Selsey pavements, walls, shops etc. |
| 11 | A constructed Star Disc |
| 12 | A pedestrian area for Selsey |
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**8. Points for Consideration:**

a.) The provision of a Cinema/ Theatre was mentioned in the Selsey Community Vision and Action Plan document 2011 and the current DSNP2014 reiterates this point by indicating

***‘Entertainment will be focused around small-scale attractions which are sustainable year-round and which do not rely on the tourism trade solely. These will include the reintroduction of the Selsey Cinema*** ‘(DSNP page 13) and goes on further to say under the Priorities for Society on page 68 of the report that the Selsey Hall is of historic importance, the building should be conserved, and be supported and developed (if the correct criteria/conditions are met) to be operational as a Cinema/Theatre.

Arts Dream suggests that ‘any’ performance space could also operate as a single amenity as the DSNP page 13 indicates ‘***be used to host ‘pop-up’ events or facilities and would be highly desirable and would offer maximum flexibility and economic***  These could include for example Exhibitions, Choral/ Dance/ Drama/ band, activities, conferences, rural touring, heritage educational activities and craft workshops and events.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Whilst the development of a Performance Centre, the renovation of the Selsey Hall[[2]](#footnote-2), and the Heritage/ Educational Centre would need more long term planning to become operational. 43 % of the people who voted indicated that performance space would be an asset for Selsey If other monies became available this may be the time to undertake such a development.[[3]](#footnote-3) (Although currently this appears not to be given a high priority in the DSNP)

b.) Many of the ideas selected are reasonably straight forward to achieve and in economic terms it may be that more than one project can be selected, or a number of ideas could be collaborated such as:

* The sea wall and skate park graffiti decoration with part use of mosaics
* The Performance Centre with a heritage aspect
* A formal coastal-path signage scheme could include decorative elements, and the Seal Parade could also lead through into the High Street.
* The DSNP 2014 indicates that the ‘Town ***Council will look to support the provision of a Stellar and Solar observatory at Oval Field and the provision of a café / kiosk at Hillfield Road ‘***Whilst a nearby Star Disk and the bronze long bench could make a neat package that would be attractive for tourists and the Selsey Community alike. The Star Disc surprisingly (considering this Public Art consultation) is already mentioned in the DSNP on page 78. There appears to be no community priority against it, but one would assume that as there is a Star Disc competition that STC will be leading the funding bid, hence its mention under Public Art.

c) A Pedestrian area for Selsey and a Town Square would need further discussion as they are both complex issues in relation to providing suitable sites that do not impact on business.

Most of the Ideas are appropriate to the benefits as listed on page 2 although some of the ideas such as Seal Parade would have much more community involvement from for examples, schools, businesses care homes as participants would be more actively involved within the design process.

Recommendations

* Any project selected should be sustainable and applicable to all age groups
* Arts Dream not Sports Dream as indicated on page 77 of the DSNP should lead on any discussion regarding the Selsey Hall
* Arts Dream be kept fully informed regarding any project developments
* Arts Dream be allowed to bid to project manage any developments (as seen as appropriate from the initial idea through to fruition)
* As there is a national competition for the Star Disc it is advised that local money should not be spent on this when a national competition could render it free

This report is presented by SCF and Arts Dream on behalf of the voluntary sector. Both organisations are willing to be involved in future strategic and specific developments provided the circumstances and administrative support are appropriate.

Chris Butler 29/10/2014 Director Arts Dream Selsey

1. Havant Arts Centre is an excellent model of how a multipurpose space operates [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Please note ADS has already started discussion with the private owner and the Heritage Lottery Fund regarding this building. Whilst at some stage there may be other developers involved ADS should take this through the initial negotiation stage [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The ShowRoom Theatre Chichester is an excellent model of how a simple box structure has been turned into a working multi -purpose performance space [↑](#footnote-ref-3)