



**'Pride of Place'**

**PUBLIC ART IN HASTINGS**

**A Strategy**

**For Developing Public Art in Hastings**

## CONTENTS

The Role of Public Art in Creating Civilised Places .....	3
Local Needs and Aspirations .....	5
Health .....	6
Education & Skills.....	7
Environmental Improvement .....	7
Community Safety .....	8
Community Development .....	10
Strategic Context .....	10
Strategy.....	13
Public Art Strategy Objectives.....	13
APPENDIX: National Initiatives.....	20

**Good public art brings creativity, originality and quality to an environment. It can achieve this either as part of landscape or building design, or through the introduction of specific artworks in public spaces.**

## **The Role of Public Art in Creating Civilised Places**

1. Public Art is an important tool for creating successful communities and places. It has a role to play in public business and residential areas. The past decade has seen a renaissance of activity and interest in public art that has been driven by a new urban regeneration agenda. The message is clear: public art aids urban regeneration and has the unique ability to bring together social, economic and physical aspects of urban improvement.
2. Public Art is defined as art in public places or areas of private places open to the public, such as foyers or railway stations. It can be art as object: a sculpture, a painting, a fountain; it can be an artefact: paving, seating, lighting, colouring; it can be an art performance in an outdoor public space; or it can even be an element in structural or landscape design: the curve of a path, the lighting in a lift, the noise levels in a reception area.
3. Hastings and St. Leonards faces a period of rapid change and economic growth. The physical improvements planned to Town Centres and Seafront will create a new public face for the town which will engage visitors, residents and potential investors. No less significant are the residential areas being planned via millennium communities and anticipated through development by the private sector. The creation of new areas in the town for business investment and the anticipated building of a link road will also bring major change to the town.
4. Hastings Council views public arts being essential for good **regeneration**. Without the creative use of art and design it is entirely possible to create sterile and unattractive environments. Our town is unique and already enjoys a high quality environment in many respects. However, the creation and retention of a quality environment depends upon an expanding economy sufficient to sustain wealth and creativity. In the next 10 years the regeneration effort in Hastings is expected to

Attract investment  
Foster civic pride  
Promote tourism  
Unite communities  
Raise quality of life

5. The Council expects that public art will play a central and naturally supportive role as part of these regeneration plans and that the importance of this will be shared by the private and public sector developers delivering regeneration schemes.
6. Public art contributes to **social health and well-being** by placing a sense of value on individual citizens and by provoking thought and an awareness of the world around them. It elevates and enriches the simple experience of being in a place. This shared experience in public spaces in turn fosters social interaction.

- Public art is also good for **business** and the business of image-making. As such, it is a powerful aid to regeneration in the context of raising a town's profile and creating a quality image. It inspires confidence in a place and attracts inward investment. It also creates a quality environment attractive to workers which contributes to their sense of well being.



Figure 1 Fulcrum by Richard Serra in Broadgate

**Example: The Broadgate Development, London**

The Broadgate Development of business offices in the area surrounding Liverpool Street Station incorporated art as a prime factor in the creation of vibrant public space throughout the area. Today it is widely accepted that Broadgate has demonstrated that including high quality art in internal and external design can produce long-term commercial success. To quote John Ritblat, Chairman of the British Land Company PLC “British Land, as owner and manager of Broadgate takes pride in this hugely successful marriage between commerce and art.”

8. Public art can enhance the **physical environment** not only through the introduction of quality design in the art itself but in the elements of the street environment: lighting, pavings, street furniture and signage. The government has recognised the important role that public art can play in achieving joined-up urban regeneration and this is expressed in a number of initiatives that have originated from the Urban Task Force, DETR, DCMS and DTI (see appendix).



Figure 2 “Blue Carpet” benches by Thomas Heatherwick

**Example: The Blue Carpet by Thomas Heatherwick in Newcastle upon Tyne.**

Blue Carpet has created a new public square in the city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne. The whole point of the new place is the beguiling if fundamentally absurd idea that this hard masonry object is a carpet – curling up a little at one corner, with benches mysteriously peeled in strip out of this pretend fabric, with bollards pushing through rents in it. Beneath the carpet is, not floorboards, but a mysterious world of hectically-coloured neon light, glimpsed through glass.

9. The Council has and will continue to include specific targets for public art within its performance planning. The Council will ensure that public art plays a key role within its own capital projects and will ensure a consistent standard to the delivery of its own projects and those of other developers within the town.

## Local Needs and Aspirations

10. Hastings and St. Leonards faces unique levels of social and economic deprivation within the South East. Despite the value of the town’s natural environment the poorest communities are often excluded from sharing this by a number of factors. In some of these areas:

The landscape and open spaces are environmentally unattractive

Economic decline has led to the physical infrastructure declining because of lack of economic and social purpose  
Residents are effectively excluded from decisions effecting the control and change of their environment

The Council will seek to use public arts as an approach in addressing these issues.

11. Additionally, consultation and participation in public arts development is a means of including previously excluded communities in helping to shape the development of their environment. Public art is accessible to all and a great leveller. It therefore acts as an aid to capacity building and social inclusion. In many instances public art within neighbourhoods can actually be created by communities themselves with the aid of a professional 'artist in residence'.

## Health

12. As a tool for improving health The Primary Care Trust and health practitioners have strongly identified the role that public art can play in opening up access to public space. This is an important issue. Physical welfare depends upon exercise and movement which in turn depends upon attractive and safe environments to move in. Mental wellbeing is directly linked to social interaction and a sense of belonging.



Figure 3 "Weir" by Joc Hare at Summerfield Ponds

**Example: Summerfields Ponds, Hastings.**

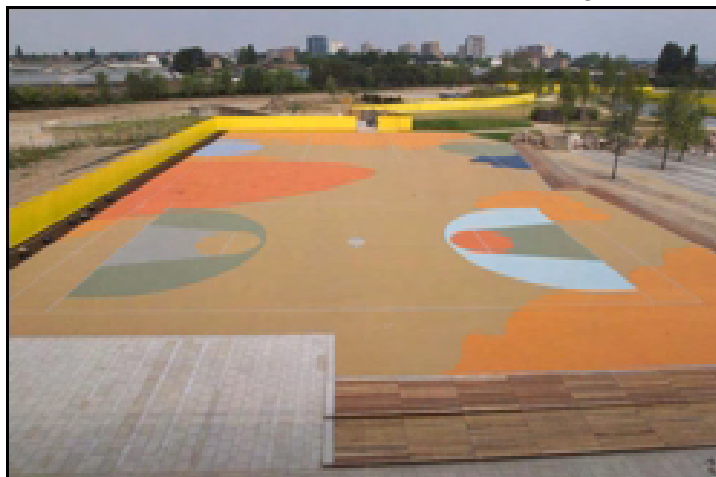
Hastings Park Rangers recount an increase in walkers on Brisco's Walk in Hastings since the regeneration of the Summerfields Ponds area through public art.

**Education & Skills**

13. Hastings and St. Leonards urgently needs to increase the educational and training levels of its residents. The role of creative industries in their broadest sense will play a key part in our future.
14. 16 schools from Hastings and East Sussex are the beneficiaries of a Creative Partnerships programme from 2005 –2008. The Arts Council of England's Creative Partnerships scheme forms one of the initiatives of the Government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, providing additional funding to enable schools in deprived areas to benefit from the input of arts and creativity across the curriculum. This is achieved through a range of arts and regeneration projects that include public art.
15. Art and related creative studies are the most popular GCSE options for young people in Britain today, particularly in deprived areas. This demonstrates that young people are stimulated to learn creative studies and be influenced by their value. It is a popular myth that arts qualifications are less likely to lead to future employment: the creative industries are a significant contributor to Britain's balance of trade at £11.4 bn, employing some 1.9m people nationwide (DCMS figures August 2004).

**Environmental Improvement**

16. The introduction of public art into areas of major dereliction can contribute significantly to the impetus for environmental change. The process of consultation prior to public art installation employs strategies to inform and engage the public. This process and the installation of the art itself draws attention to the economic and social benefits of upgrading and reutilising derelict properties as prioritised in the Hastings Borough Council Empty Homes Strategy 2004 and also serves to encourage pride of place amongst residents.
17. Quality in the environment and quality of life is a stimulus for business to invest and relocate in the area or expand. The Council must look to initiate improvements in the public realm in order to attract new businesses and quality jobs.
18. Furthermore a quality environment has been proven to attract and retain a quality labour market, and is an incentive to individuals and companies not to relocate elsewhere. Both these factors are positive stimuli to would-be investors in Hastings.



**Example: Chiswick Park Development.**

"Chiswick Park is one of Stanhope's latest major office developments. Located in Chiswick, west London, this 1.5m sq ft development designed by Richard Rogers Partnership has built on Stanhope's experience at Stockley and Broadgate and is designed to provide the occupier with the best working environment both internally and externally. The scheme addresses the desire of companies to attract and retain key employees. The logic is simple – enjoy-work. If people enjoy work, they do better work: if they do better work, you have a better business." – Stanhope plc website Nov 2004.

IAS/ OAS Development of the Year Awards 2001- Winner "Best town centre/ suburban office development"

Civic Trust Award 2002

## **Community Safety**

19. The Borough Council is committed to contributing to the reduction of crime and fear of crime. Public art can contribute to this in two significant ways:
20. As a design issue leading to the reduction of crime and anti social behaviour. Studies show that improvements in the public realm can literally design out crime. Better lighting, overlooking and increased footfall, use of certain colours, all contribute to lower incidence of crime. Good public art and lighting will attract footfall and overlooking in public spaces and pedestrian routes. This has lead to the Council incorporating the guidance contained in Circular 5/94 entitled "Planning Out Crime". The circular makes it clear that crime prevention is a national issue in planning matters.
21. As a way of involving target communities in the planning of new facilities within their areas. In many cases this will be young people or others perceived to be the cause of problems or anti social behaviour.





**Figure 5 Lea Hall Railway Station**

**Example: Lea Hall Railway Station, West Midlands.**

“Public art was integral to the refurbishment of Lea Hall railway station. As well as consulting the local community over the theme and design...local people were involved in laying a mosaic floor, to foster a greater sense of ownership. ...Since re-opening in 1998 there has been very little vandalism at Lea Hall. The majority of respondents in a survey in early 2001 said that the artwork improved their feelings of safety at the station. - “Graffiti and Vandalism on and around Public Transport” – Department of Transport Briefing Paper.

## Community Development

22. Public art is a key community development tool active and effective community consultation is central to the success of public arts development as is community participation in the development of artwork. Community involvement in the process and in the art itself has the benefit of including local people in discussion and decision-making about their environment, engendering a sense of ownership and social responsibility.



Figure 6 'The Colourway' by Carly Ralph



Figure 7 'The Colourway' detail by Carly Ralph

### **Example: “The Colourway”, Bethune Way Underpass, Hastings.**

'The Colourway' was conceived by the artist Carly Ralph and involved the design of individual tiles by members of the public. Colour workshops with over thirty local community groups, organisations and schools took place and Hastings residents submitted their designs by post and the local Information Centre having downloaded forms from the internet. Over 500 designs were submitted.

## Strategic Context

23. The role of public art is recognised nationally, regionally and locally. The town has strong foundations on which to build due to the strength of its artistic community and the initiatives already undertaken in the town.
24. Nationally the importance of public art has been recognised. The Urban Task Force report in 1999 said:

“People respond to beauty in cities. They choose to walk from one destination to another along favoured routes. Good design should provide a stimulus to the senses through choice of materials, architectural form and landscaping .....It influences how easy and pleasant it can be to move from one area to another; how much daylight, landscape and beauty we can enjoy”.

Towards an Urban Renaissance' Urban Task Force 1999

25. Regionally the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has specifically identified the role that public art can play within regeneration

“SEEDA recognises the importance of integrating the cultural and artistic agendas within urban redevelopments and includes public art within its major projects, for example at Chatham Maritime. SEEDA is working with the Kent Architecture Centre to build their capacity in managing competitions to procure public art.” – “Urban Renaissance Strategy 2002 – 2004.” – SEEDA.

26. East Sussex County Council is leading the East Sussex Arts Development Partnership and has identified public art as one of four target development areas over the next few years. The aim is to:

“develop a county wide partnership public art vision & plan” and to

“...develop a county wide public art programme that enhances the built and natural environment and helps to create a unique sense of place, promoting the area as an attractive place to live, work and visit.” – East Sussex Arts Development Plan, 2004.

27. The key policy document effecting the future work of the Council and all its key partners is the Hastings & St. Leonards Community Strategy. This is under-pinned by a number of other more detailed policies. Public art can make a significant contribution to the achievement of identified targets

Take our five most deprived wards out of the worst 10% nationally

Increase the percentage of local people satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live

Increase the proportion of young people who think the town is a good place for them to live in

Halve the gap between overall crime rates per 1000 for Hastings & St. Leonards and the average for England and Wales

Increase the percentage of 15 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A - C or equivalent

Reduce death rates from circulatory disease (coronary heart disease and stroke) and cancer in people under 75

28. “A Town that’s Good to Live in”, the Cultural Strategy for Hastings and St Leonards, makes a commitment to:

“promote investment in leading designs, architecture, urban design and public art to transform the look and feel of the town.”

29. The Arts Development Strategy for Hastings and St Leonards states:

“Public art has a central role to play in ensuring distinctive and high quality local environments and public spaces”

and undertakes to:

“Continue to advocate for the role of high quality public arts practice in Hastings, especially as part of regeneration initiatives, and prioritising the active engagement of local people in the processes of developing projects

Work with the East Sussex Arts Partnership to develop a public art programme including opportunities for new commissions

Where appropriate, ensure that opportunities are provided within commissioning processes for less experienced artists to be mentored by more experienced practitioners”

30. The Local Plan is the key planning document for the Borough. Key elements include:

9.47 Public art can play an important role in enhancing local distinctiveness and as sense of place. It can also benefit the local economy, by providing opportunities for local artists and local community involvement, and will also help to enhance the appeal of Hastings and St. Leonards as a tourist destination.

9.49 Where major developments are proposed, the Council will seek a contribution towards public art from developers. The nature of the contribution will be negotiated with the developer and will take the form, either of provision for works of art or artists' input to the building and its surroundings, or through a financial contribution towards public art works, arts facilities or events. The type of public art and level of contribution will depend on the nature of the development proposal, the characteristics of the site and its surroundings. However, a nationally acceptable guideline is that it will be around 1% of the construction costs.

### **Policy DG20**

**A material consideration in the determination of a planning application for a major development scheme will be the provision of public art. The Council will have regard to the contribution that would be made by any such works or effects to the appearance of the scheme and to the character of the area.**

31. In addition Supplementary Planning Guidance states:

### **Public Art**

Public art helps to foster a sense of place, making it memorable, and provides useful landmarks. As the supporting text to Policy DG20 makes clear, it is especially valuable in a borough like Hastings that attracts a significant number of tourists. Public art can take many forms and the Borough Council has a relatively open mind on what may be appropriate. It will certainly be willing to consider sculpture, stained glass, murals, fountains, special railings and gates or art-driven treatments to ground surfaces. In general terms, the Council will prefer developers to include public art within their developments, but in appropriate circumstances may agree to accept contributions to off-site artworks. The Borough Council considers 1% of construction costs as an appropriate contribution to public art. The Council would like developers to give preference to incorporating the work of artists based in Hastings and its surrounding area.

## Strategy

### Public Art Strategy Objectives

32. The strategy will guide and inform Hastings Borough Council policy for future capital projects and funding bids to external agencies and comprises the following six objectives which state that the Council will:

**“Continue to advocate for the role of public art in Hastings and St Leonards.”**

33. The Council will continue to make the case for public art through:

public consultation in the form of meetings with community groups and surveys  
partnership initiatives with local organisations such as Sea Space, Hastings Chamber of Commerce, 1066 Housing and Hastings Voluntary Action Council.

**“Implement public art projects as part of regeneration initiatives being led by the Council as appropriate.”**

### Location

34. Commissions will be considered in conjunction with ongoing and prospective capital development schemes and urban improvement projects. The Council will prioritise the most deprived wards and the key regeneration initiatives.
35. The Council will consider the whole environment including the design of the seating, railings, decorative features to shop and building fronts, lighting, steps, walkways, arches, bollards, gateways, planting, bedding, play areas, key architectural and sculptural features.
36. Public art will be used to promote the contemporary use of open spaces. As illustrated by Alexandra Park and the Hastings Greenway Project.
37. Planning for future regeneration will incorporate public art. This will integrate and include the seafront from Rock-a-Nore and the Stade to Bulverhythe, and Central St Leonards. Plans for inclusion of public art have already been identified in the Seafront Strategy and will be included in all future plans for area based regeneration.



**Figure 8 "Stream" by Esther Rolinson, St Leonards on Sea (photo Ian Craig)**

**Example: "Stream" by Esther Rolinson, St Leonards-on-Sea.**

Funded by Hastings Borough Council, South East Arts and the Millennium Fund, and installed in March 2002, "Stream" has become a significant landmark along St Leonards promenade, signalling new aspirations for Hastings' promenade neighbour and setting the standard for future seafront developments in the borough.

### **Allied Initiatives and Partnerships**

38. Partnerships are a key ingredient to the success of all public art projects. Sometimes public art will help fulfil the potential of projects initiated by other agencies. Sometimes the help of other agencies will be needed to further investment into the visual environment.
  
39. The Council will identify potential sites for artworks and will incorporate public art into the design of, for example, free-standing features or wall-mounted orientation markers and other signage and paving adaptations.



Figure 9 Greenway signage by Karen Wilks Figure 10 detail of Greenway signage by Karen Wilks

**Example: Hastings Greenway Signage, Brisco’s Walk, Hastings, by Karen Wilks.** The signage showing maps of the Greenway and directions to specific places has artistic design elements in its sculptural shape, and in the presentation of information.

40. Hastings Borough Council officers will initiate potential partnerships and public art commissions using external programmes e.g.: AIF, Lottery, Interreg, Objective 2 and other regeneration budgets at initial planning stages, prior to formal decisions being taken at Cabinet level.

**“Actively encourage developers of major schemes to incorporate public art initiatives.”**

### Planning Obligations

41. Section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act enables a planning obligation to be entered into by an agreement between a developer and the Council to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure and community facilities directly relating to a proposed development.

## **Per Cent for Art**

42. The Council will operate a Per Cent for arts policy in regard to major developments. Per Cent for Art schemes aim to improve the environment and enhance public spaces. 1% of the cost of all relevant developments will be used for public art. It is desirable that this is an integral part of the development, to combine art and architectural design at an early stage of planning to generate an enriched environment.
43. It should be emphasised that the per cent for art system does not automatically mean a named sum is spent specifically on individual artworks. The real figure may vary depending on the extent to which artists' contributions can be realised from existing components of the budget.
44. An example of this would be an artist-designed alternative paving scheme for a courtyard, or new street furniture. Such elements will already have capital cost, which would also contribute to the Per Cent for Art Scheme.

## **Criteria for Eligibility**

45. All developments over 25 units/1.25 hectares housing or over 1000 sq m floor space retail/business/leisure/health/education/or industrial will have a requirement for public art.

## **Artist as Part of the Design Team**

46. In most successful instances of inclusion of art in capital projects, an artist has been appointed as part of the original design team to work alongside the project architects from the outset. This has brought originality and freshness to the design in unexpected ways, as well as ensuring that art is integrated successfully into the fabric of the building or space under development. The implementation of the "Per Cent for Art" scheme at the outset of a project is often used to employ an artist in this capacity.

**"Give clear guidelines as to how those commissioning public art can ensure that their schemes are of high quality."**

## **Commissioning Public Art**

47. There are different types of public art commission, either discrete commissions or those that function as architectural enrichment. The Council will take the widest possible view of public art and include for example use of materials in building design, treatment of spaces, finishes and textures applied to buildings, ground surfaces and other elements of the physical environment.
48. In some cases, as with some of the public art in seafront developments, surplus materials may be made available to artists for use.
49. Consideration will be given to the siting of temporary works; this can be made possible with the creation of permanent sites for temporary work. With the mounting of temporary works there is more room for imaginative risk and the chance to encourage a diversity of public works. The concept of changing temporary works also sits well within the rich and dynamic



arts scene in the town. Long term, a series of imaginative temporary works might help smooth the path for a series of more permanent works.

## Commissioning Process

50. In general the process for commissioning new works of art will take the following form:

Identify the opportunities and sites for public art input

Outline the cost of works to be commissioned

Identify possible sources of funding

Identify category of commission whether:

- Open Competition
- Limited Competition
- Purchase or direct commission.

Identify the appropriate form of promotion, briefing and selection

Write brief and circulate to relevant parties for discussion and approval

Agree form of local involvement including mentoring, consultation, education and community arts input.

## Contracts

51. Commissioners will be advised of the desirability of clear contracts with artists that define the process and identify areas of contractual responsibility. Artists will be commissioned by Hastings Borough Council according to the terms of the Borough's own commissioning contracts. Durability and maintenance issues including the necessary budget should be addressed at the outset of any commissioning agreement.

## Quality

52. The Council will ensure commissioned artworks are of excellent quality in terms of the work, the commissioning process and community involvement by:

53. Providing advice and promoting best practice.

54. Expecting all public art schemes to address the following factors which are critical to the success of public art projects:

Quality

Context

Community consultation and involvement

Health and safety

Sustainability

Vandal resistance

Good practice in commissioning process

**“Ensure that local artists have the opportunity to tender for and participate in public art projects and public art support projects.”**

55. The Council will encourage programmes and mentoring schemes for local artists, crafts people and designer makers to work alongside the design team installing public arts projects. The Council will also make a particular point of ensuring that local artists are invited to

compete for commissions while ensuring that such commissions are suitably advertised in line with the scale and size of the proposed commission.



**Figure 11 "Continuum" by Rick Kirby, Alexandra Park, Hastings.**

## APPENDIX: National Initiatives.

1. New initiatives that have originated from the Urban Task Force, and the following Government departments: Department of Environment Transport and Regions (DETR), Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and Department of Trade and Industry(DTI).

Towards an Urban Renaissance published by the Urban Task Force was the precursor to the Urban White Paper. It states “An Urban Renaissance should be founded on principles of design excellence, economic strength, environmental responsibility, good governance and social well-being”.

the Urban White Paper published by DETR sets out a range of initiatives that will support art in the public realm: Spaces for Sport and Arts and the development of Creative Partnerships. It also provides initiatives for making streets and open spaces more attractive and pedestrian friendly.

Creating Opportunities published by DCMS sets out guidance for production of Local Cultural Strategies that all Local Authorities are required to produce by the end of 2002

Creative Industries Mapping Document 2001 published by DTI sets out the growing economic importance of the creative industries in the nation’s economy

2. New strategies and policies from central government and the regions that clearly identify public art as a cost effective means for achieving their objectives.

Towards an Urban Renaissance, Urban Task Force

The Urban White Paper, HMSO

National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, Social Exclusion Unit

Creative Industries Mapping Document, DTI

The Cultural Cornerstone, GOSE

Power of Place, English Heritage

Sea Changes, English Tourist Council

3. ***Towards an Urban Renaissance*** advocates a shift in our design approach to our towns and cities and their public realm; “*The poor quality of the urban environment has contributed to the exodus from English towns and cities. To redress this balance, we must re-establish the quality of urban design and architecture as part of our everyday urban culture, as it is in the Netherlands, Spain and the towns and cities of many of our other European neighbours*”.
4. ***The Urban White Paper*** refers to culture, leisure and sport “*A healthy and vibrant cultural, leisure and sporting life enhances cities in a positive way. It helps to create places where people want to be, are proud of and can achieve their potential. It contributes to a city’s uniqueness and diversity*”.
5. ***The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal*** identifies a number of arts initiatives that can help to address key social problems and in which public art can play an important role:

diversionary activities for young people and young offenders

environmental and open space improvements

creative partnerships for schools

space for sport and art

safe routes to school

6. GOSE's **Cultural Cornerstone** states *"The consortium sees cultural investment and innovation as potentially the main engine of regeneration of both urban and rural communities within the South East. We believe that the economic growth and competitiveness of the region will rely upon the success of the creative industries in particular"*.
7. English Heritage's **Power of Place** specifically refers to the public realm *"Improvements to the public realm have, perhaps, the highest payback in terms of attracting jobs and people back into an area"*.
8. The English Tourist Council's **Sea Changes** advocates the need for declining seaside resorts to diversify and develop a unique selling point and local distinctiveness: *"All resorts have the draw of the sea as a major attractor. However, almost without exception, the total visitor experience will require a catalyst that both differentiates the resort and acts as a major draw for visitors. This may be sport, health, gaming, culture, architecture or tranquillity"*