

## Public Art Code of Practice

**This document offers recommendations and guidelines for design, artworks, and interventions in the public realm of the Jurassic Coast and its setting.**

### Introduction

In 2001, the Jurassic Coast was designated a World Heritage Site (WHS) due to the 'Outstanding Universal Value' of the geology, palaeontology and geomorphology. Put simply, the rocks, fossils and landforms are amongst the most important in the world, and specifically, the coastal exposures provide an almost continuous sequence of Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous rock formations documenting 185 million years of Earth's history.

The Jurassic Coast is unique and creatively inspirational. The geological, scientific and environmental interest in the coast, and its beauty as a place to live, visit, relax and find inspiration is a powerful mix. Moreover, the implications of being on the World Heritage List (defined by UNESCO, and governed by the World Heritage Convention) are that properties have a "*cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole*".

### The Site and its setting

The Site is a long, narrow strip that includes the continuous exposure of Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous geological strata within the coastal cliffs, and the coastal geomorphological features. Specifically, the Site is the area between mean low water mark to the top of the cliff (or back of the beach if there is no cliff), and excluding the built up areas in the Gateway towns (Exmouth, Sidmouth, Seaton, Lyme Regis, West bay, Weymouth, Portland Port, and Swanage).

The Setting of the Site is its hinterland. It has no formal definition, but with respect to protection of the Site it should be considered as "*the area around it in which change or development is capable of having an adverse impact on the World Heritage Site, including an impact on views to or from the Site.*" For any questions about what constitutes Site or setting, please contact the Jurassic Coast World Heritage team.

### Management Plan

Those responsible for managing World Heritage properties, in our case the Jurassic Coast Steering Group, have a common obligation to ensure that they are protected for present and future generations, not just through legal means, but through responsible, inclusive, sustainable management practices. This is why the Jurassic Coast has a Management Plan, which sets out aims, policies and actions for its protection, conservation, understanding and enjoyment. This Plan sets out what can and can't happen with respect to the Site and any public realm work which has a bearing on the Site or its setting should take account of the policies. The plan is available at [www.jurassiccoast.com/whs-management](http://www.jurassiccoast.com/whs-management)

### The Jurassic Coast Arts Strategy

In 2005, the Interpretation Action plan for the Jurassic Coast was published. This document was the result of a year long consultation along the coast to determine how best to interpret the Site. As a result of this, an Arts Strategy was developed to take forward the outstanding artistic legacy of the coastal region by supporting and co-ordinating the creation of contemporary arts work which adds to the enjoyment and understanding of this fantastic natural resource.

The Arts Strategy led to the development of a package of implementation – the Jurassic Coast Arts Programme (2008 – 2011) – which was awarded funding from Arts Council England and local authorities in January 2008. There is a need for a code of practice, so that organisations and people wishing to be part of the Arts Programme can meet the aspirations of the Jurassic Coast arts strategy and the Management plan – thus contributing to meeting the aims of the World Heritage Convention.

### **Jurassic Coast Arts Programme**

The purpose of the Arts Programme is to encourage residents and visitors of all ages to visit and experience the Jurassic Coast for themselves and to understand it more profoundly through high quality arts experiences.

The projects which form the Arts Programme must be of the highest quality to match and underpin the international importance of the Jurassic Coast and provide opportunities for artists\* to create new work in a context of international significance.

### **Public Art Code of Practice**

#### **The ambition**

To create opportunities for \*artists and craftspeople to contribute to the built and natural environment, through initiating and supporting projects which encourage quality and innovation in regard to the concept, context and medium used. We work in partnership with a wide range of professionals and organisations within the public and private sector and welcome collaborations with those who care about the quality of the environment.

The term 'public art' therefore refers to the engagement of artists in the creation of built and natural public spaces. The artist's contribution may be identifiable as an artwork or may be assimilated into an overall scheme or project, but it will always influence how we see and interact with a place. Works can be permanent and last for centuries or can be temporary installations for days, weeks or months (see below for definitions of the various kinds of public art).

World Heritage Sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located. It is important for the communities of people who live and work along the Jurassic Coast to understand the site and for it to become a vibrant part of their lives. They are a vital part of the Arts Strategy. Their lives are shaped, at least in part, by the geology and landscape and in turn they influence and enrich the culture and understanding of the coast. Internationally important work stimulated by the Jurassic coast should connect with local people and visitors, enhancing a sense of ownership and pride.

All activities need to :

- a) Identify the direct relevance to the Jurassic Coast
- b) Engage a range of audiences
- c) Be of high quality
- d) Have no adverse environmental impact
- e) Be appropriate to site location - or appropriate to the character of the site

The arts in the Jurassic Coast Arts Programme, and the potential contribution that they can make to the built environment around the site need to reflect the international importance of the site and be of the highest quality.

#### **Temporary works**

These are art works, installations or events that tread lightly on the land. They are there for a limited period of time and will not leave any evidence of being installed. Please refer to policy 1.5 in Management Plan<sup>†</sup>.

#### **Stand alone permanent art works**

There will be no permanent pieces allowed on the site, and on the setting these are viewed as the exception not the rule. Artists wishing to put forward ideas for work are invited to start a dialogue with the Public Art Steering Group. This would need to include what they are wishing to achieve and why with relevance to the criteria as stated in the appendix. Please refer to policy 1.5 in Management Plan.

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\* the word artist includes practitioners from all art forms – e.g. writers, composers, performers as well as visual artists

<sup>†</sup> You can download the Management Plan from [www/jurassiccoast.com/plan](http://www/jurassiccoast.com/plan)

### **Public Realm works - walkways, paths, bridges, street furniture, car parks etc.**

Necessary works to the infrastructure need to be sensitive to the surrounding environment and of high quality. There are many examples of best practice where artists are brought in at the beginning stages to look at concept development with the design team, and this is the approach recommended in relation to projects taking place on or near the site. Please refer to policy 5.5, 5.21, 6.4 in the Management Plan.

### **Interpretation Centres/ Other new build facilities with direct relation to the WHS**

All permanent structures and any building directly related to the Site, e.g. interpretation centres, are recommended to be designed as artist/architect projects and encourage the highest quality of design. Best practice advocates that an artist is integrated into a project team from the earliest stage. Interpretation Centres will reflect the creative interpretation and diversity of the context and will start to form a 'collection' of carefully crafted structures which in themselves will provide a fitting legacy to this unique Site. There are currently opportunities to create wonderful gems of buildings which promote the best concepts, best design, best materials, and best quality, which leave exemplars and promote a faith in contemporary design. Please refer to policy 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 in the Management Plan.

### **What to do next**

We can provide advice and support on all of the above. In the first instance, please contact Cleo Evans, Arts Officer for Dorset County Council and the Jurassic Coast, Library HQ, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ. Email; [cleo.evans@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:cleo.evans@dorsetcc.gov.uk)

### **Appendix 1 – Case Studies**

### **Appendix 2 – Jurassic Coast Arts Strategy**

### **Appendix 3 – Further considerations for implementation of permanent public art in the setting of the Jurassic Coast**

### **Appendix 1 - Case Studies**

### **Durlston**

This has been heralded by Public Art South West as an example of best practice. Artist Lulu Quinn was appointed to work as an integral member of the design team to work on concept development of the redevelopment of the interpretation centre. The artist sat on the panel to appoint the architect. She has since been commissioned to produce a piece of interpretation that will make up one of the wall surfaces.

### **Newtons Cove and Charmouth foot bridges**

Artists were appointed to work collaboratively with Dorset Engineering Consortium to produce bridges that are fitting to their location, as opposed to off the shelf bridges. The Newton's Cove bridge has been awarded merit by the Weymouth Civic Society and has had excellent feedback from the public. Both bridges have been awarded the Inspire Mark by LOCOG

### **Helen Poyner**

**Helen Poyner** is an independent movement artist whose approach has evolved out of 30 years of professional practice on four continents. She specialises in movement in natural environments, site-specific, autobiographical and improvisatory performance and cross art-form collaborations combining movement with installation, text, film and the visual arts. She has done several dance pieces on and about the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.

## Appendix 2

### Jurassic Coast Arts Strategy (2006-13) sections on Public Art (for information)

#### 4.4 Public Art (Page 13 – OUTLINE OF KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAMME)

4.4.1 The term ‘public art’ refers to the engagement of artists in the creation of built and natural spaces. Best practice advocates that an artist is integrated into a project team from the earliest stage. The artist’s contribution may be identifiable as an artwork or may be assimilated into the overall scheme, but it will always influence how we see and interact with a place. Works can be permanent and last for centuries or can be temporary installations for days, weeks or months.

4.4.2 Public art was strongly supported during the consultation process by artists, local authority officers and members, countryside managers and landowners. There will be considerable opportunities to incorporate public art into projects on the Jurassic Coast and therefore it has an important role to play in the Arts Strategy.

4.4.3 The Jurassic Coast is a sensitive landscape and it is essential that the right framework for commissioning and overall co-ordination is put in place for the public art programme from the start. Key issues are the purpose and location of each public art commission, best practice for selecting, appointing and working with artists, issues of physical and aesthetic quality, temporary or permanent work, scale and materials.

4.4.4 The priorities for public art on the Jurassic Coast are to appoint artists as integrated members of design teams for regeneration initiatives, interpretation centre buildings and the displays they contain and to identify locations along the Coast where public art can help manage visitors and encourage exploration of the Coast.

4.4.5 Dorset Strategic Partnership’s Champions for Design and Heritage and the Devon Quality Design Initiative should provide the context for this.

#### **Recommendation:**

**R3 That a freelance public art consultant is appointed to develop a detailed public art action plan with key partners and make recommendations on how its delivery is to be supported.**

#### **3 Public art (Page 49 – BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGY)**

3.1 Public art influences public places and how we see and interact with them, whether urban streets and squares, or the open countryside. It has a crucial role to play in the implementation of the Arts Strategy.

#### **3.2 The term ‘Public Art’ encompasses a range of work including:**

- Artists integrated as members of a strategic planning or design team for an area or buildings; this may not result in an identifiable artwork;
- Artists creating a single permanent work or a sequence of works, sometimes combined with a practical function;
- Temporary installations lasting from a day to a year, using enduring or ephemeral materials.

3.3 Best practice advocates that the artist is involved from the earliest stage of a project and is able to influence planning as well as execution. The exemplary practice of integrating artists into design teams will be especially important for strategic developments along the Coast. Details of ownership, maintenance and decommissioning need to be agreed as part of the original commissioning process.

3.4 There are particular issues for public art on the Jurassic Coast. Permanent works may still be in place in 100 years or more. Public art, especially if promoted as a public art trail, can be a powerful attraction to visitors, which may cause over-use of paths. Conversely, public art can help manage visitors, dispersing

them away from pressure points. So for public art in any location the important question is 'Why – what is the purpose of this commission, and what will be the effect?'

3.5 Linked to this is the question of quality. Permanent works need to be of the highest quality to stand the test of time. Temporary installations offer greater flexibility, giving opportunities for more challenging work and for less experienced artists and communities to share their work. They leave no permanent mark and allow room for future temporary installations to follow.

3.6 Along the undeveloped Coast, low key artworks will avoid altering the remote feel of the place and impacting on the open vistas whilst adding an interpretative dimension. Only very exceptionally will a more prominent small-scale permanent work be desirable. Materials should be sympathetic to the countryside and should weather well in the coastal conditions. Use of traditional materials should not restrict the contemporary expression of the work. Further guidance may emerge from the Dorset Champions of Design Consultancy and the Devon Quality Design Initiative.

3.7 In the towns, the constraints on size and materials for public art are defined by the environment for which a work is created. Two of the key purposes of public art in the Gateway Towns are to bring the Jurassic Coast into the town and to encourage residents and visitors to explore the Coast from the town.

3.8 Opportunities for the Jurassic Coast are to:

- Include artists on the design teams for Interpretation Centres at Seaton, Exmouth, Weymouth and Durlston Castle, and regeneration initiatives at West Bay and Lyme Regis;
- Engage artists to design interpretation displays in new and refurbished Interpretation Centres including the Chesil Beach Centre, and at museums;
- Signal with public art work the points where the South West Coast Path enters and leaves each resort;
- Commission public art to disperse visitors and encourage exploration including along circular walks from the Coast Path, beside the Swanage – Durlston Victorian Walk, and along cycle routes from National Cycle Route 2 to the Coast;
- Commission a high profile programme of topical and challenging temporary installations at significant locations along the Coast, for example for the Olympics;
- The issue of an iconic public art commission is discussed at greater length in Appendix B.

3.9 Dorset County Council's Arts Officer, working with District Arts Officers where possible, is coordinating public art projects as part of regeneration schemes in West Bay and Swanage. There is no similar post to support public art development in East Devon.

It is essential that people take a long term view and understand the potential and that all partners including local authorities understand what is trying to be achieved and help get there via 'enforcing' our requirement for high quality design. Communication between partners is currently poor and this needs to be re-dressed (e.g. the submission for an interpretation centre by East Devon – memorial seats currently being installed at West Bay)

Artists can bring a creative twist through being encouraged to work on concept designs and realisation. There are also opportunities to respond to documents such as the 'Jurassic Coast Transport Infrastructure Gap Analysis'. Projects could be resourced which provide collaborations between artists and designers to work on other infrastructure such as bus stop environments and how they can be enhanced both physically and in terms of the written material currently provided..

A public art steering group will be set up to advise planners on any permanent proposals and be guided by this document. This will provide advocacy and promote working in partnership.

### Appendix 3

#### **Permanent Art Works in the setting of the Jurassic World Heritage Site**

Stand alone permanent art works should be viewed as the exception not the rule, as the effect of permanent work can have a major impact on the natural environment. There may be exceptions, and artists are invited to start a dialogue with the Public Art Steering Group which would need to state what they are wishing to achieve and why in relevance to the criteria as below:

- a) Relevance to the Jurassic Coast
- b) Land ownership / permission issues
- c) The extent to which it encourages a profound understanding of the context
- d) How audiences would be engaged and community consultation undertaken
- e) World Class quality
- f) Environmental impact
- g) Proposed life span
- h) Decommissioning Plan

When considering a permanent commission the Steering group will also take into account the

#### **Maintenance, insurance and review**

Clear agreements would need to be drawn up as to who would be responsible for maintenance and insurance of any stand alone works. The public art steering group would be responsible for instigating periodic reviews of the work.

- i) Maintenance requirements of the work
- j) Insurances required
- k) Land ownership issues, planning implications
- l) Two yearly review period and decommissioning strategy