

Children's Feature – Bespoke Atelier

Background and concept

An artwork to engage young people and families with the river and the city, the Children's Riverside Water Feature will be an interactive artwork, relating to the River Ness, informed by and for young people.

This is also an education project involving 4 Inverness primary schools and UHI art degree students who have been using the project as a case study. A student from the Contemporary Art and Contextualized Practice course has been on an 80-hour placement on the project which is now completed.

Update August 2019

The schedule for installation has been planned, including works outwith the scope of the project (£5,000 was approved by The Inverness Common Good Fund for upgrading the paths in the Ness Islands). Stone fabrication is awaiting client instruction before proceeding. The next step for this project is for the ICArts Working Group to consider the risk assessments undertaken and, on that basis, whether to agree to progress the work.

Consultation

Consultation was carried out through the following methods for the River Ness Art Programme

- Public consultation events
- Public Survey - launched January 2016
- Exhibition
- Artist – led community consultation and co-curation
- Informal public consultation by artists and team members
- Community engagement and research in development of artists' briefs
- Meetings with specific community and business groups
- Stakeholder events (including community councils)
- Education Programme
- Social media and website
- ICArts Working Group - Member engagement with Community Councils, Inverness BID and the Lochness Tourism BID

Public consultation events (all commissions)

- Trinity Hall - 2nd April 2015 – all Community Councils invited. Attended by Community Council representatives who received a presentation on the concept of linking the River and the Community. This embedded the theme of the project programme which has underpinned all work to date
- Eastgate Centre - 23 January 2016 – Full details of the project programme were displayed in the central forecourt on the 1st floor. Display Boards and Members of the ICArts Working Group along with the Lead Artist and Officers were present and discussions took place with members of the public who were informed about the projects. This fed into project development which allowed for continuing focus on linking the River with the Community.
- Inverness Museum & Art Gallery exhibition and media launch - 19th January 2016 – a further opportunity was given to meet the Artists and provide information to Media from which significant TV and Newspaper coverage followed. This event was designed to increase the profile of the Project Programme and again gave clear focus on linking the River and the Community.

Specific Activities undertaken as part of the Engagement Events

Exhibition – Promotional Opportunities

- An exhibition about all the River Ness Art Projects was displayed at the Engagement Events held in the Eastgate Centre Inverness on Saturday 23 January 2016 and then viewed in Inverness Museum and Art Gallery until 20 February 2016.
- A series of 6 pull up banners were commissioned and maquettes of some of the artworks were exhibited.

Stakeholder events (including Community Councils)

- The Engagement Events at Eden Court - 23rd January 2016 (all commissions) and
- Eden Court - 22nd June 2017 (My Ness) provided for input from cross – sections of the Community including Business Representatives, those with an interest in the built environment and Community Councils.

Education programme -

- Schools project with Architecture + Design Scotland - this was undertaken as part of the Development Phase of the Project Programme.in 2013/14 it involved engagement with young people about what they thought of the River

and how they believed the Project Programme could be developed to best reflect their views.

- Artist-led Schools programme - Primary school pupils were involved in the development of the design with the Artists – Bespoke Atelier

The Children's Water Feature was designed as an education project and further specific consultations relevant to the project took place as follows:

- **UHI 2016**

3rd year UHI Students used the CWF as a case study for the Contemporary Art and Contextualised Practice BA Hons course (Tutor Rachel Fermie)

An 80 hour student placement was set up at IMAG to study the project at close hand and to assist artists with workshops and engagement (Lar MacGregor, Sandy Gilmore)

Schools Workshops with Bespoke Atelier to inform the design of a Children's Water Feature

- Primary schools in Inverness were approached to with the offer of art and design workshops to provide the opportunity for children to work closely with Bespoke Atelier to input into the design of the Water Feature.
- The response from the Inverness primaries was overwhelming and four schools were selected for the artist to visit - Crown Primary, Merkinch Primary, St Joseph's and Daviot Primary. The workshops took place on the 27th and 28th February.
- Bespoke Atelier were assisted by Lar MacGregor, a UHI art student who is undertook an 80 hour placement with the River Ness Public Art project.

Social Media

- Email icarts@highland.gov.uk
- Twitter [#rivernessarts](https://twitter.com/rivernessarts)
- Facebook

Planning

Planning permission for the installation of public art and footpath improvements was submitted on the 6th July 2018. Ref. 18/03143/FUL

Consultation responses were sought from statutory and non-statutory consultees, neighbours were notified and a press advertisement made.

Approval under Delegated powers was made on the 17th December 2018 subject to the following conditions:

- No development or work to commence until a construction access plan is submitted to, and approved in writing, by the planning authority;
- Prior to any site excavations or ground works, all trees to be protected from construction damage;
- Public access to the Ness Islands core paths within, or adjacent to, the application site shall at no time be obstructed or deterred by construction related activities.

Available documents under can be found online:
<https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PBFYNMIHIEG00>

A Building Warrant is not required for the works and confirmed by the duty building standards officer on 25th April 2018

Impact Assessments

- **Environment**

An environmental Impact Assessment was undertaken by Mott MacDonald and formed part of the Ness River Flood Alleviation Scheme planning application ref 08/008628/FUL. The available document can be found on the following link https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/files/E9D516DBBD7AC272BD8082C8868B18B8/pdf/08_00862_FULIN-ENVIRONMENTAL_MANAGEMENT_PLAN-521084.pdf

Liaison with Ness Fisheries has been ongoing to review any concerns about the impact on breeding fish. Their findings will be taken into account in planning the timing of the works.

- **Access**

The Access Panel was consulted as part of the planning application for the Children's Water Feature artwork and an impact assessment undertaken on the overall programme. No negative impacts have been identified for this project.

- **Risk**

Risk assessments and steps to mitigate the risks have been carried out. Findings included:

- Potential risk of slipping or tripping due to part submersion of design and on raised stones – the need for a maintenance programme and appropriate signage

- The need to access to water's edge be kept clear for access in emergencies – to be included in maintenance programme
- That a life ring should be made available on site
- Potential flooding risk to the area – whole Islands site closed off in the event of flooding

The risks assessment is a live document, will evolve over time and will be monitored at regular intervals during the life of the project.

The assessment was completed after consultation with the Corporate Resources Occupational Health, Safety and Well Being Manager and D&I CDM Officer and then checked and signed off by D&I Programme Manager on the 20th June 2019.

A maintenance programme will be devised - Ongoing maintenance of groundworks, physical structure or related elements will be the responsibility of Community Services under the existing arrangements for the Maintenance of Ness Islands. Maintenance arrangements, cleaning, repair, security and monitoring will be factored in advance and discussed with key contacts.

Funding

Funding for the Children's Water Feature is from:

- Inverness Common Good
- Creative Scotland

The budget for the project is as follows:

Overall Project Budgets	Agreed Budget	Spends to Date	Remaining Budget
Children's Water Feature	£ 40,000.00	£12,902	£ 27,098

Funders Position on Programme Termination/Adjustment

1. Programme Termination -

Creative Scotland - it is unlikely that Creative Scotland would seek to recoup payments already made, unless those payments were not used for the agreed purposes.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) would withdraw the offer of any further funding and seek to recover from the Highland Council the sums paid out to-date of £10,374 on the grounds that the project was not completed following a decision made by the Council not to do so.

2. Termination of the Gathering Place (My Ness) Project and retention of the Children's Water Feature and Trail (the latter being agreed to be funded from the Education allocation within the Grant)

Creative Scotland – Noting the terms of the Grant, Creative Scotland would review their commitment to the Project Programme

HIE would withdraw the offer of any further funding and would review what had been achieved so far against the project's original goals. It is possible, following that review that HIE might seek to recover from the Highland Council the sums paid out to-date of £10,374 on the grounds that the project was not completed, on a decision made by the Council, to a degree to warrant the payment of the claim. The payment being made on the expectation that the project would be completed as agreed.

3. Termination of the current Gathering Place Project and agreement to seek a new Project for the Gathering Place/My Ness element

Creative Scotland - would not agree to support any further project to replace the current Gathering Place/My Ness element of the River Ness Public art project. Creative Scotland agreed to award funds based on the Stage 2 Capital application which remains the point of reference for releasing any funds relating to the project. It should be noted Creative Scotland's considerable concern at the level of expenditure incurred to date on the River Ness Public Art project, in particular the Gathering Place/My Ness design development, should all or part of the programme be terminated providing very limited public benefit for the cost incurred. Creative Scotland have confirmed their position is to see this project delivered as outlined in Highland Council's Stage 2 funding application

HIE - would withdraw the offer of any further funding and would review what had been achieved so far against the project's original goals and whether the original funders and particularly Creative Scotland remained in place. It is possible, following that review that HIE might seek to recover from the Highland Council the sums paid out to-date of £10,374 on the grounds that the project was not completed, on a decision made by the Council, to a degree to warrant the payment of the claim. The payment being made on the expectation that the project would be completed as agreed.

4. Termination of the Project Programme with funds being allocated to amenity improvements decided upon by the Council in consultation with Communities and funding partners.

Creative Scotland – position is as stated above

HIE - would withdraw the offer of any further funding and seek to recover from the Highland Council the sums paid out to-date of £10,374 on the grounds that the project was not completed following a decision made by the Council not to do so.

Highland Council – Funding was originally confirmed in August 2013 by the Planning Environment and Development committee when it approved funds from the City Gateway project for the ICArts riverside project. The initial funding of £66k was supplemented by a further £40k at a later stage as another project was cancelled.

£40,000 of Development and Infrastructure funding has been drawn down into the Common Good account. £6,150 has been spent to date. The remaining £66,000 is unspent. The Director of Development and Infrastructure has advised that in the event of any of the above decisions being reached, any decision to continue funding would be referred to the Environment Development and Infrastructure Committee.
