

That word ‘art’

A strategy to promote the TCPA’s vision of civic art

Introduction

Art is vital in helping us to both understand and express what it is to be human, and people need art in their everyday lives to connect to each other and the places in which they live. This means that to plan successfully we need to think both artistically and scientifically about the future.

‘Civic art’ was one of the foundations of the Garden City movement and was central to the success of places like Letchworth Garden City. In March 2020 the TCPA launched an [initial project](#) to explore how planning might reconnect with its artistic roots. One of its first outputs was a [provocation paper](#) which argued for the importance of art in the development of the wider planning movement, as well as to the process and outcomes of town planning itself. It also identified some of the key principles of a new approach to ‘civic art’. This thinking fed into [a guide for councils on embedding art in planning](#), which the TCPA published in March 2021.

The provocation paper, and the subsequent publication of guide, have begun a conversation about the transformative role of art in the renewal and creation of places. Perhaps most

importantly the publication of these papers has distilled the TCPA’s approach to civic art, which contrasts sharply with the current mainstream debates about the promotion of beauty in building design. There are three distinctive aspects to our approach:

1. A focus on social justice;
2. The importance of the co-creation of art with communities (rather than imposing design ideas upon them); and
3. The use of art as a tool for advocacy and understanding in the process of planning.

This strategy represents the third output of the TCPA’s initial programme of work on art and planning. As well as setting out the strategic aims and objectives which will guide the next stage of the TCPA’s work to reunite art and planning, it inform the Association’s approach to delivering and communicating its wider projects and events.

Aim

Our aim is to promote the values of civic art in order to transform the philosophy and practice of town planning.

Objectives

Our objectives are:

1. To use art more effectively and ambitiously as a medium for the TCPA's wider communications and advocacy work;
2. To promote public awareness of the value of civic art through our own arts events, such as 'Land of Promise';
3. To work on a small number of practical projects with artists and planners and to capture and share the learning of this process;
4. To ensure that we promote opportunities for new, young, diverse and disadvantaged voices through artistic work we undertake or commission across all our projects; and
5. To shift the culture of planning practice by focusing on training practitioners and reshaping planning education.

communicates research findings and key messages.

To progress objectives 2 and 5 the TCPA will be seeking financial support for additional training particularly for planning schools and for performances of Land of Promise. This will build on the Association's previous success at using arts events to find new audiences and inspire new interest in the values of planning.

The TCPA will also be seeking to expand the RE-Place art and planning network and to secure closer strategic relationships with Arts Wales, Creative Scotland and the Arts Council in England.

Where necessary, the TCPA will seek to secure expertise on arts funding bids which we do not have in-house.

**TCPA
March 2021**

Delivery

The delivery of these objectives and in particular objective 3 is dependent on future funding partnerships. To this end, the TCPA has secured some funding from the Lady Margaret Paterson Osborn Trust to fund a community public art project in Peterlee in 2021.

Progress is being made towards securing objectives 1 and 4 through ongoing dialogue inside the TCPA about how the organisation