

# DEVONPORT

## ARTS STRATEGY

&

## ACTION PLAN

**DENNA JONES**

COMMISSIONED BY DEVONPORT  
REGENERATION COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

&

**APRIL 2008 WRITTEN  
JULY 2008 ENDORSED  
JUNE 2009 UPDATED**

**NEW  
AND  
IMPROVED**

# STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

The Devonport Arts Strategy and Action Plan explains to stakeholders and interested parties the process by which we will achieve the Vision and Objectives agreed by the Commissioning Advisory Group.

The Arts Strategy has been drawn up with the guidance and support of the Devonport Community Arts Commissioning Group, consisting of the DRCP, Plymouth City Council, local residents, Public Art South West, Redrow Homes, the Primary Care Trust, Firmac Developments and Registered Social Landlords.

The Arts Officer of Plymouth City Council and Maggie Bolt, Public Art South West, offered guidance to ensure that the Devonport Arts Strategy complements the work of the Regional Arts

Council and Plymouth City Council's emerging Cultural Arts Strategy.

The Strategy was written in 2008 and unanimously endorsed by Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership July 2008.

In a sense, Devonport is leading the way within the City of Plymouth, as at 2008 the City Council does not yet have an Arts Strategy.

## ABBREVIATIONS

DRCP	Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership
PCC	Plymouth City Council
PASW	Public Arts South West
DAS	Devonport Arts Strategy
DHT	Devonport Heritage Trail
HMNB	Her Majesty's Naval Base Devonport Also known as Devonport Dockyard

# FUNDING

In 1999 Devonport received £48M round two funding from Central Government's "New Deal for Communities" regeneration programme targeted at Britain's most deprived neighbourhoods.

DRCP in cooperation with PCC is responsible for the NDC programme and disbursement of monies. DRCP's ten-year NDC programme ends in 2010.

Core funding for the DAS Action Plan and commissioned works for the DHT (to be commissioned in 2009) is provided by DRCP and managed by DRCP and PCC.

Exceptional activities within the DAS, e.g. Devonport Dinners, a Madalene and Louisa Pasley event to celebrate the Darwin Bicentenary and the proposed Royal de Luxe spectacle in 2010 will be achieved financially through fundraising from a variety of private, private and local, re-

gional, central government and European Union grants.

# DEVONPORT BRIEF HISTORY

Devonport is a historically important Naval port in South West England. Formerly called Plymouth Dock, it was one of the "three towns" (Plymouth, Stonehouse, Devonport) that were merged in 1914 to form what would become the City of Plymouth in 1928.

Although Devonport was a historically prominent and wealthy settlement, its post World War II prosperity declined, exacerbated when the Ministry of Defense requisitioned a significant section of Devonport's central district for a Naval Store.

After more than fifty years of enclosure, the walled Naval Store area was returned to the community in 2007, and the wall removed.

## VISION

We will create a thriving, vibrant Devonport that makes people want to be a part of what we are creating.

We will demonstrate what is spectacular in Devonport, and enhance its distinct character through commissioning bold, innovative and exciting permanent and temporary works that span the art forms.

We will use the Arts Strategy to “make places” but more importantly to “make memories”, raise community aspirations, and demonstrate that the tools for change already exist in Devonport.

We will create common community goals and make the community an integral part of the vision.

An ambitious but achievable vision for Devonport requires courage and trust. We will ensure the strategy and its promoters earn the trust of Devonport’s community and the people who create and support other areas of achievement in Devonport, Plymouth and the region.

## KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives provide the framework for setting priorities. We seek to enhance the outstanding physical environment and history of Devonport for local communities, new residents and visitors.



**1**

**Build a sense of place that reflects Devonport's unique and distinct character. This is Devonport's unique strength. Project this image regionally and nationally**

**Ensure community ownership by embedding artists within Devonport to promote local debate and interaction between artists and local residents.**

**2**

**3**

**Capitalise on existing strengths including the built environment (e.g. Devonport Column), industry (e.g. Naval Dockyard and maritime), local communities and artists (e.g. Frameworks) and the geography (e.g. marine landscape).**

**Take key sites of interest and ideas for a heritage trail and temporary "spectacle" to the wider community for discussion, endorsement and change if required.**

**4**

**5**

**Use the DAS to support and enhance the DRCP and PCC call for "inward migration" using creatives as the "test case".**

**Make memories through temporary works as well as capital projects, and focus on a phased programme of "spectacle" from micro to macro.**

**6**

**7**

**Ensure commissioned artists, designers or companies address training and capacity building (i.e. "Community Benefit Clause") with the local community, and that long-term "spectacle" productions include apprentice opportunities.**

**Create community consultation opportunities and begin to create ways to ensure the arts strategy instils pride in Devonport.**

**8**



**Devonport is a brand. Reveal, include and market the elements that make the current brand, and discover new elements to add to the**

**brand strategy.**

**Use DAS to share good practice with colleagues and with other communities regionally and nationally.**



## ACTION PLAN

The Arts Strategy Action Plan 2008 – 2011 spreadsheet (Appendix 1) outlines major strategy outcome for the next three years.

The DAS reflects more than six months of immersion in the cultures and communities of Devonport and

Plymouth, and meetings with diverse individuals and groups. It also reflects the cultural continuum taking place in Devonport and Plymouth in particular, as well as the South West region in general.

The Action Plan does not record all events but demonstrates how Devonport's activities sit within a larger framework. The DAS Action Plan reveals a diverse number of major projects, both capital and events-based, which demonstrate why the Department for Culture, Media and Sports designated the South West as one of two pilot UK regions for the DCMS Creative Economy Programme.

The Action Plan spreadsheet spans May 2008 to summer 2011. It reads left to right (programmed events from week-to-week) and top to bottom to allow overview of how different events overlap and complement one another. A top to bottom analysis reveals six peak activity periods from 2008 – 2011.

**SEPT / OCT 2008**

● Devonport Dinners

- Website launch
- Heritage Trail artists commissioned
- Part Exchange Company's "Hidden City Festival"
- Artist site visit for Devonport Column "Subscription" Fair
- Notification of "Sea Change" grant recipients
- Royal de Luxe decision for 2010 spectacle

## JANUARY 2009

- Frameworks interim site visits to commissioned artists' studios
- 2<sup>nd</sup> site visit - Artists for Devonport Column "Subscription" Fair
- Engineering and cleaning - Devonport Column
- Site prep and planning for "Darwin 200"

- Royal de Luxe planning

## MAY 2009

- Wildworks "Beautiful Journey"
- Phase 2 South Yard Naval Visitors Centre
- Darwin event opens

## SEPTEMBER 2009

- Guildhall renovations complete
- Column restoration complete – open to public
- Devonport Column "Subscription" Fair

## JULY 2010

- Royal de Luxe, Devonport

**JULY 2011**

- British Art Show, Plymouth

## **ACTION PLAN**

### **PEAK ACTIVITY**

Peak activity periods are fluid, and adjustments will need to be made to timings in the Action Plan, but the overall scope of activity is accurate, and can be augmented as and when other events are announced.

Of particular interest to the Action Plan are the activities of the three major developers working in Devonport: Firmac, Redrow and Midas. The development of the hotel at Mount Wise (Firmac) is key to the progressive cultural development of Devonport, as well as the regeneration of the Mount Wise, Richmond Walk and Mutton Cove areas.

Allied to the developer initiatives is the planned development of the Naval Visitor's Centre at the South Yard, which will eventually allow public entry through the Mutton Cove Gate.

The "Zest" art programme at the Peninsula Dental School will also need to be allied to the DAS as and when Zest initiatives are developed.

## **ACTION PLAN**

### **KEY STRANDS & ACTIONS**

The Action Plan has a number of key strands and actions:-

Programme unique events; commission temporary and permanent works that build momentum and move from the micro to macro from 2008 to 2011.

Recognise and record other events taking place in Devonport or with direct relevance to Devonport (including housing and the Naval Yard).

Cross-reference events to DAS. Build on the relationships between events. Create a bigger and better 3 year + creative strategy for Devonport and Plymouth.

Commission temporary and permanent works. Ensure a life-span determination and de-accession policy.

Ensure an intriguing mix of art forms and outcomes relevant to Devonport.

Create a well-managed programme to ensure artist and community benefit.

Build a “Community Benefit Clause” into the Artist Commissioning Contract. Weight CBC contribution to the value of the contract.

Ensure outcome of a planned series of Flameworks workshops and events reflect a broad community response that is in turn reflected in the Artist Brief.

Build a momentum of community interest, support and ultimately continued direct participation and benefit from planned events

Create a public, community online web resource that reflects the DAS Action Plan for at least the next four years.

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The DAS is based on a fusion of ideas resulting from monthly consultation with the Commissioning Group and the views of the arts consultant.

The DAS has also been informed by the residency of the arts consultant that commenced October 2007, and includes the discussions, meetings and fact-finding detailed in the appendices.

Community consultation is an essential part of taking forward the strategy. But what is the best method to

obtain accurate feedback on proposals? Is it even possible to ascertain a holistic view of what the community wants?

The capture and analysis of public opinion is at best a “soft science”. A “hard science” (e.g. physics) is quantifiable, accurate and objective. Response-capture and evaluation are unavoidably subjective, and will always – even with best practice – fail to capture all community opinion.

These difficulties are why scientists often refer to the “hard sciences” as “simple”, and the “soft sciences” as “complex”. Subjectivity, reluctance to come forward (or conversely, vocal community representatives whose enthusiasm may represent a minority viewpoint) and logistics mean that even with the best consultation methodology, the viewpoints of some members of the community will not be represented.

The consultation challenges outlined in the preceding paragraph mean our best hope of capturing a wide body of Devonport public opinion is through a diverse consultation strategy.

The Arts Strategy proposes a four strand consultation methodology:-

- vox pop survey
- Flip Video workshops and site filming
- website
- Devonport Column “Subscription” event and community art fair

**DEVONPORT**  
**VOX POP & STREET SURVEY**

**JUNE 2008**

In 2002 artist and gallery owner Kenny Schachter captured the opinions of random members of the public in New York City.<sup>1</sup> His vox pop<sup>2</sup> included all ages

<sup>1</sup> Jasper Who? Kenny Schachter, zingmagazine books no. 6, 2003

<sup>2</sup> vox populi. Latin for “voice of the people”. Frequently used in broadcast journalism to capture unrehearsed opinions of people on the street. Vox populi was a central point of V’s introductory speech in the movie *V for Vendetta*.



and races from Harlem to lower Manhattan and the five boroughs.

Schachter's questions ranged widely. "Does art have any relevance in your life? What do you think of contemporary art? What do you think of artists? What do you think of museums, art galleries? Do you think contemporary art is only for the rich?

Regardless of location, age or ethnicity, the answers to Schachter's questions were broadly similar.

One of the most striking findings of Schachter's vox pop was the public's generous definition of art. "Art has a democratic definition that is more expansive than anyone in the art world, myself included, could have ever conceived", Schachter said. "It is this openness

that must be embraced, not shunned."

The question "If you could be an artist what type of art would you do?" elicited replies that ranged from chef to rapper to barber. When Schachter asked what artist or artwork the interviewee liked best the answers were weighted heavily in favour of artists who were part of their community, or serendipitous urban discoveries such as street artist James de la Vega.



Schachter's findings are salient and meaningful for arts professionals in the UK, and should be remembered when commissioning work for Devonport.

## METHODOLOGY

The intimate aspect of one-on-one, face-to-face “interviews” will attempt to capture the opinions of those members of the Devonport community who do not attend public meetings, who do not respond to written questionnaires, and who quite probably represent the least vocal and most difficult to reach demographic areas within Devonport – unemployed, young adults, single parents and children (outside a school environment).

## 3 KEY AIMS

- build one aspect of a comprehensive audience profile;

- understand the type of public art Devonport prefers (e.g. temporary, performance, sculpture, media, architecture etc);

- demonstrate a seriousness of purpose by allying public opinion to DAS objectives.

Subject to agreement, the vox pop will take place one day per four consecutive weeks in June 2008 (*i.e.* four days total). Frameworks will lead the vox pop.

Location is important. Rather than hold the vox pop at public or private housing estates, which runs the risk of endorsing an insular or potentially inward-looking public life, the locations must represent a freely accessible public realm.

- outside the Iceland store in Marlborough Street
- outside the Mount Wise Coop
- Devonport Park
- Mutton Cove



Iceland and Coop managers will be contacted to agree locations.<sup>3</sup> The Council and Police will also be notified. Conducting interviews in a freely negotiated public realm - the same public realm in which proposed artworks will be sited - reinforces the community aspect of the Arts Strategy.

Questions - no more than five - will be brief and printed on one-side A4 as a tick box exercise.<sup>4</sup> The

<sup>3</sup> Coop will also be asked to sponsor the Devonport Dinners with in-kind donation of ingredients for the meals.

<sup>4</sup> This methodology is similar to the event organised by Genine Farnos, Community Development Worker, Pottery Quay, on secondment from Westcountry Housing Association. Denna Jones selected thirty images representing many different types of play areas, numbered the images (no text). Images were projected in random order during an informal social event. Residents were asked to note which numbers they liked or didn't like, and if possible to say why. At the



sheet will be accompanied by printed visual images to help elicit response. Additional responses will be recorded on paper or by video. Participants will be asked to agree to dissemination of their input via a signed permission release form.

Those who agree to be filmed will be recorded on a hand-held Flip Video Ultra - a small, simple USB camcorder.

The Flip Video will attract younger respondents who will be familiar with youtube and intrigued by a hi-res device that has eye-candy appeal and is relatively new to the UK market.

Allowing the public to see how the Flip Video works will also prepare the way for public Flip Video work-

end of this short evening event, a very clear picture emerged as to what options residents preferred.

shops organised by Flameworks. The workshops will allow the community to create shorts of the Heritage Trail sites.

Shorts will be uploaded to the proposed DRCP Arts website and / or to [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com) and / or other social networking sites. Public feedback will form part of the Artists Brief for the Heritage Trail.

## FLIP VIDEO SITE FILMING

**SUMMER 2008**

A series of Flameworks-led Flip Video workshops timed to coincide with the vox pop, will sustain interest and excitement about the potential for outcome created on the Flip Video, but also ensure at least one aspect of community-created content is available for

upload to the proposed DRCP Arts website when the site launches.

The accessibility of website and Flip Video are key to achieving the Consultation objectives of the Arts Strategy.



Flip Video Ultras are one-touch recording devices available in 30 and 60 minute versions. Cost per 30-minute unit is approximately £100. No memory cards, chargers or tapes are necessary. An internal flash drive records, and an integral USB memory stick plugs directly into a computer for uploading. Instruction time is minimal, and all age groups can use the device easily.

Flip Video workshops will introduce users to easy-to-use technology; basic filmmaking and content upload to the web. Sharing, authorship and making memories will be additional outcomes.

Workshop participants will film and voiceover the proposed Heritage Trail sites. Participants will select sites. Their site selection will in itself create another layer of consultation, as it should reveal which of the designated sites are most popular (or conversely, least popular).

## DEVONPORT ARTS WEBSITE

**SUMMER 2008**

GrOw Collective is a co-operative based in Bristol. They create clear, simple, accessible web design, consultancy, software and hosting.

GrOw's objectives ally closely with the Art Strategy. They create simple, clear and beautiful sites that rely on external, free sites such as Flickr, Vimeo, Twitter and Tumblr to power content. The most important aspect of GrOw's design is ownership. Unlike the majority of websites, GrOw teach clients the basic HTML coding necessary for the client to have complete control of the site and uploads. What this means in a practical sense, is that unlike most websites, which

not only appear static, but also are static<sup>5</sup>, a Gr0w site is dynamic and visibly so.<sup>6</sup>

A dynamic web presence for Devonport is essential. Google “Devonport” (January 2008). The first hit is Babcock Marine. The second is Devonport, New Zealand and the third is Devon County Council. Elsewhere in the initial page results are Devonport, Australia, HMNB Devonport, Devonport Yachts and “Hotel Club”.

Aside from the Royal Navy, the only Devonport, Plymouth-specific site on the first page results is Devonport High School for Boys. Subsequent pages reveal a strong presence for Devonport, Tasmania, Australia, including their “Devonport Regional Gallery”.

Local, national and international web users can be excused for believing Devonport exists only in the Antipodes, or that it is a name allied only to commercial operations such as Babcock Martine and the yacht industry.

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<sup>5</sup> Personal and professional experience of web design and maintenance confirm the belief that most sites are updated at most weekly, and more often monthly if not longer. There are also inherent conflicts between when a client requires content upload and when the provider can juggle time to do so.

<sup>6</sup> Gr0w design created [www.dennaajones.com](http://www.dennaajones.com). My experience with Gr0w’s revolutionary approach, ease of use, and content creation is why I recommend Gr0w to create a site for Devonport’s art strategy. There are no Gr0w incentives coupled with my recommendation.

## MARKETING

Devonport must promote and market itself locally, nationally and internationally. Maintaining a healthy population level and attracting investment and businesses relies on effective marketing<sup>7</sup>.

Devonport must compete on the web. Site design and content needs to state who, what, where and why. We can’t leave it to visitors to try and figure out which Devonport we are and which country – we must show them.

The website must be clear and succinct. It should trumpet Devonport’s assets. It must show the dynamic quality of the people, and it should have a domain name that reflects the Devonport community. The website will be an arts-based, but ultimately it will achieve much more.

It has yet to be decided whether the proposed Art website will be a subsidiary of the DRCP website, or

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<sup>7</sup> Marketing is not just what external consultants create for Devonport, marketing depends on the local community aiding the process by creating a positive buzz for the place they live.

whether it will be a stand-alone domain. Regardless, we should approach Babcock Marine and request they re-assign [www.devonport.co.uk](http://www.devonport.co.uk) to Devonport, in recognition that the domain name is a community asset.

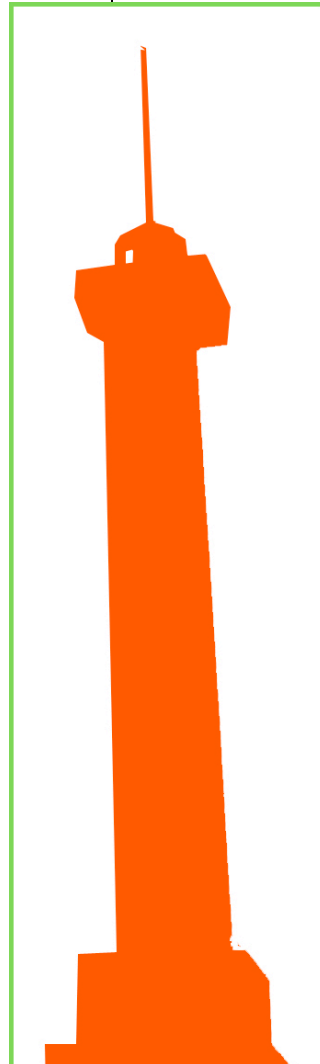
The community approach to Babcock should be via their Corporate Social Responsibility officer.<sup>8</sup> Now is the time to make this request. Babcock Marine acquired DML (the original owners of the Devonport domain name) in 2007. Babcock are in the process of creating a Babcock Marine website. “We’re working to develop the Babcock Marine brand which will replace the DML name in due course.”<sup>9</sup>

Although not explicitly stated on their homepage, it is probable Babcock’s planned website will use “babcockmarine” and the current site name will be archived. Devonport’s request to Babcock for domain transfer should include a request for modest financial support to create our new website.

<sup>8</sup> I was unable to discover CSR policy on Babcock Marine’s website. If they do not have a CSR policy, then an alternative route might be through the Government’s CSR unit ([www.csr.gov.uk](http://www.csr.gov.uk)).

<sup>9</sup> Babcock Marine homepage at [www.devonport.co.uk](http://www.devonport.co.uk)

A domain transfer request should not be delayed, and must be viewed as urgent and immediately actionable. Devonport Column is no longer a direct asset of the people of Devonport and neither is the web domain [www.devonportcolumn.org.uk](http://www.devonportcolumn.org.uk). We must ensure the domain name “Devonport” is re-allied to the community of Devonport, England, ensuring the community as a whole control its use.



**DEVONPORT COLUMN**

**SEPT 2009**

**HISTORY**

Devonport Column is arguably the most important visual symbol of Devonport. A Grade 1 listed Doric column, it is 124 feet (from street level), and stands at the civic centre of Devonport, part of a historic en-



semble of surviving Devonport buildings designed by John Foulston in the 1820s.

On petition to George IV in 1824, Plymouth Dock became the town of Devonport. Devonport Column was built by public subscription to commemorate the name change and the Charter of the Borough.

Subscriptions were a common method of funding speculative enterprises in the 18th and 19th centuries<sup>10</sup>. They were a useful way of determining public support – if only amongst the middle class who could afford to buy shares.

<sup>10</sup> Subscriptions pre-date the 18<sup>th</sup> century and continue to this day, e.g. an appeal to the public to donate money to save a painting for the nation. Raphael's "Madonna of the Pinks" was purchased for the National Gallery Collection (2004) in part through public donation (subscription) appeal.

Devonport Column was built with twenty-pound shares bought by the public, and the cumulative share total was intended to cover the cost of a statue of George IV for the top. But not all subscribers paid up when notes were due.

**INSTEAD OF BEING A TROPHY,  
RECORDING THE HONOURS WHICH  
BELONG TO A HIGH SOUNDING NAME,  
IT IS LIKELY TO REMAIN A MEMORIAL  
OF NEGLECT AND INJUSTICE.**

**JOHN FOULSTON**

THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF PLYMOUTH HISTORY, [WWW.PLYMOUTHDATA.INFO](http://WWW.PLYMOUTHDATA.INFO)

The statue was abandoned. Foulston was unhappy.

**MY FATHER HAD BEEN INVALIDED OUT OF  
THE MARINES AND WORKED IN THE DOCKYARD.  
AT NIGHT HE BECAME A FIRE-WATCHER, WORKING  
AT THE TOP OF DEVONPORT COLUMN,  
AND SPENT MOST NIGHTS UP ON TOP SPOTTING FOR  
THE FIRE BRIGADE. HE SAID OF ONE  
AIR RAID, THAT ONLY A FRENCH NAVY SHIP WAS  
FIRING AT THE ENEMY, FROM THE COLUMN  
THEY COULD SEE A GREAT DISTANCE INCLUDING  
THE LINES OF VEHICLES HEADING OUT FROM  
PLYMOUTH TO DARTMOOR EACH EVENING.**

**JOHN MCGARRY**

**WWII PEOPLE'S WAR<sup>®</sup>, [WWW.BBC.CO.UK](http://WWW.BBC.CO.UK)**

In the 170 + years since the Column was built, various ideas have been suggested for the top of the column. The Column top remains bare, and though structurally sound, the Column has been closed for decades.

Few people are alive who remember when the public could climb to the top of the Column and enjoy not

just the view, but also a sense of civic pride and entitlement. Not only is the Column a community symbol, it was a working asset in World War II when it was used as a fire-watch station.

Without the intended statue of George IV, Devonport Column is more fittingly a symbol of the people, rather than a monument to monarchy. It is a public

asset and must remain so. It should to be returned to active public use, and the public allowed access – and encouraged – to climb to the top.

The importance of the Column to Devonport is similar to the importance of Smeaton's Tower to Plymouth. Smeaton's Tower is a proud public asset open to the public. The same must be achieved for Devonport Column.

Plymouth City Council confirms the Column is “dry as a bone” and suffers no structural impairment. A study commissioned by DRCP in 2006 also confirms the structural solidity of the column. “There appears to be no major structural problems or defects. The column is generally sound and in a good structural condition.”<sup>11</sup>

Estimates to clean and ready the Column for public use are in the region of £150,000. The

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<sup>11</sup>“Professional Structural Appraisal: Devonport Column, Ker Street, Devonport, Plymouth”, GSK for pdp Green Consulting Ltd, September 2006. Commissioned by DRCP.

Corporation of London maintains the 1666 Memorial Column to the Great Fire of London as a publicly accessible asset. The Engineer of Tower Bridge also manages the Memorial, and he has offered his expertise and assistance to Devonport to return the Column to daily public use.

The Column was included in Plymouth City Council's 2008 asset transfer of the Guildhall (also by Foulston and adjacent to the Column) to RiO<sup>12</sup> (Real Ideas Organisation) – a “community interest company”. RiO's plans for the Column are not known.

Studies pre-dating the asset transfer outline options for the Column. These include an adjacent multi-story building with mid-level walkway to the Column.

It's too late to debate the merits or otherwise of removing the Column from public ownership. The community

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<sup>12</sup> “£1M Boost to Transform Devonport Guildhall, RiO Press Release, 8 April 2008

## **“BE GENEROUS TO A STARVING POET”**

**JOHN BETJEMAN'S FIRST LETTER TO  
RONALD BOSWELL, BBC, MARCH 1944**

**BOSWELL WOULD LATER COMMISSION  
BETJEMAN TO RECORD A RADIO SLOT  
FROM THE TOP OF DEVONPORT COLUMN.**



must work with RiO to ensure this significant landmark is returned to open, public use, and that the integrity of the Column's design and build is not compromised.

One way to aid public awareness of the Column's future is with the public event described below.

## ARTIST PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION EVENT

### COMMUNITY ART FAIR & RE-OPENING OF DEVONPORT COLUMN

**CONTEMPORARY ARTWORK APPEARS UNBIDDEN IN STREETS AND SQUARES. IT COMES WITH THE OFFICIAL WISH TO 'CREATE COMMUNITY', BUT THIS IS THEIR VISION OF COMMUNITY, NOT OURS. THAT IS WHY THIS GROWTH IN PUBLIC ART DOESN'T REGISTER ON THE PUBLIC RADAR — PEOPLE OFTEN JUST WALK PAST IT, AS THEY WOULD A LAMPPOST, BARELY NOTICING THAT IT'S THERE.**

**JOSIE APPLETON**  
**THE SPECTATOR, 2005**

**SEPT 2009**

Josie Appleton believes public art should return to a subscription system. A hard fought battle to convince the public that Artist A's proposal should be funded in preference to proposals by Artists B, C or D.

John Foulston believed the subscription insolvency which resulted in no statue for the top of the Column demonstrated neglect and failure. He would likely view the closure of the Column in the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as insult added to injury.

Let's rise to Appleton's challenge. To celebrate the regeneration of the Guildhall by RiO and the re-opening of Devonport Column, we can create a 21st century public subscription to commission a sculpture,

a tech or new media piece or a series of temporary works to top the Column as the fourth element of the Community consultation.

The process of the public subscription event – how it is advertised, managed, and resolved - is more important than whether or not an actual sculpture is commissioned. Equally, the community Art Fair that forms part of the proposed weekend event will create a platform for celebrating the creativity of Devonport.

Frameworks will manage the subscription event as part of a weekend Festival and Community Art Fair. A shortlist of artists (advertised as part of the DHT Commission) will be invited to submit ideas for the top of Devonport Column.

Artists will have a Brief and fantasy budget. The brief will explain how the selection process will be achieved through public subscription. The community will “vote” by buying shares in the proposal(s) they like

best. No jury or arts professionals will interfere or influence the outcome.

Artists must consider how they will pitch their idea to the public during the weekend Festival. They will have a tightly defined timeframe in which to sell their shares. The performance aspect will be as important

as the actual artwork pitched. Marketing skill and savvy will influence “buyers” in the same way that Foulston and other subscription scheme sellers attracted buyers for shares in their speculative ideas.

Artists will be invited to Devonport on two occasions to determine where they will set-up their “pitch” to appeal to the community to buy shares in their idea. Will they host an open surgery in a Devonport shop front window? Or can-



vass person-to-person during the Festival? Will they create a staged performance piece to announce their idea and sell their shares?

The method of communication to the public is vital to the success of the event and the Festival. Ample time has been scheduled in the Action Plan to allow for space negotiation, logistics and preparation.

Devonport fantasy paper “money” in denominations ranging from one to twenty will be distributed to De-

vonport residents at a launch event prior to the weekend Festival and Art Fair.

During the timed canvassing period, Devonport residents will buy shares directly from the artist(s). Residents can buy shares from just one artist, or hedge their bets and buy shares from several. If they don’t like any of the artist proposals, they can voice their disapproval by not spending any money and depositing the money in a “none of the above” box.

**PEOPLE TEND TO TAKE MORE PLEASURE IN EXPERIENCES THAN IN THINGS. SO IF YOU HAVE “X” AMOUNT OF DOLLARS TO SPEND ON A VACATION OR A GOOD MEAL OR MOVIES, IT WILL GET YOU MORE HAPPINESS THAN A DURABLE GOOD OR AN OBJECT.**

**ONE REASON FOR THIS IS THAT EXPERIENCES TEND TO BE SHARED WITH OTHER PEOPLE AND OBJECTS USUALLY AREN’T. PEOPLE THINK A CAR WILL LAST AND THAT’S WHY IT WILL BRING YOU HAPPINESS. BUT IT DOESN’T. IT GETS OLD AND DECAYS. BUT EXPERIENCES DON’T.**

**YOU’LL “ALWAYS HAVE PARIS” — AND THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT BOGART MEANT WHEN HE SAID IT TO INGRID BERGMAN. BUT WILL YOU ALWAYS HAVE A WASHING MACHINE? NO.**

**DANIEL GILBERT, HARVARD UNIVERSITY SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGIST  
AKA “PROFESSOR HAPPINESS”**

The end result will be tallied (taking into account unspent money) and announced at a public event at the close of the Festival. A decision can be made at a later date whether to actually commission the “winning” concept.

## SPECTACLE

A giant mechanical elephant moves slowly through Covent Garden, London. Tethered to a team of people on the ground, they manoeuvre him through a heaving crowd. The audience represents a spectrum of ages, professions and nationalities. They know the elephant is not real and yet everyone – young and old – are pulled into the spectacle, the magic and the moment. They believe the elephant is real. They cheer. They shout. They jostle to get the best view. This is a Royal de Luxe performance.



Royal de Luxe are in demand. They work internationally and their performances – spread over several days – have been seen in London, Reykjavik, France and South America. Such is the demand for commissioning Royal de Luxe that you do not choose them; they choose you.

Devonport is in a uniquely envious position as in April 2008. Royal de Luxe are interested in performing in Devonport. We must ensure they do.

## THE CASE FOR SPECTACLE

Temporary spectacle is an ancient idea. The Romans knew chariot races in the Coliseum were a guaranteed crowd pleaser. The Chinese discovered fireworks more than a thousand years ago and used them to celebrate military victories.



And one of the most vivid and memorable temporary spectacles occurred in 1520. In June that year King Henry VIII of England and Frances I of France met for seventeen days on a site near Calais. Each King used splendour and spectacle to outdo the other. Everything was temporary, but all gave the illusion of permanence.

A huge temporary palace with an internal courtyard was erected. Canvas walls were stretched between timber frame uprights and painted to look like brick and stone. Its roof was a *trompe l'oeil* triumph. Canvas was painted to look like lead shingles. Huge expanses of glass caused visitors to question whether they were outside or inside. Feasts, jousts, and games were held. Frances's finest choir entertained guests. Gold ornaments and decoration were everywhere.

Tents and costumes used so many hundreds of metres of silk cloth woven with gold thread that the event became known as the "Field of the Cloth of

Gold". So memorable was it that almost five hundred years later it is not only remembered, but designers for the Harry Potter movies adapted elements of its style for the sets.

**EXPOSING MEMORIES AND HISTORIES  
IN A MANNER WHERE THEY ARE NOT  
FORGOTTEN OR OBSCURED REQUIRES A  
DEGREE OF TRANSIENCE**

**DARIEN ROSENTALS, MEMORY THEORIST**

The best temporary spectacle becomes mythology. Imagine the stories told by those who witnessed the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Or better still, the stories retold – and most likely embellished – by their children and grandchildren. "My dad

saw Henry VIII and he was ten feet tall, wore pure gold and shone like the sun!"

This is the secret weapon of temporary spectacle, performances and art. If it is good, it will be an event that makes memories. It will take on a life that endures far longer than its physical elements. Its marketing value, the RoI - "return on investment" - will be immense.

Temporary spectacle is not always planned, nor does

Excitement about the shipwreck was heightened by

**THE WRECKAGE HAS SET THIS SLEEPY BEACH TOWN ABUZZ WITH SPECULATION ABOUT THE NAME OF THE VESSEL AND THE STORY BEHIND ITS DEMISE. WAS IT A MAJESTIC, THREE-MAST SCHOONER THAT SAILED SHORTLY AFTER THE CIVIL WAR OR A WORN, WOODEN BARGE, STRIPPED OF ITS MASTS, BRIMMING WITH COAL THAT SANK IN THE LATE 1800S.**

**BUT EVEN IF THE SHIP RAISES MORE QUESTIONS THAN IT ANSWERS, IT HELPS FOSTER INTEREST IN THE REGION'S MARITIME PAST. THIS IS EXCITING FOR THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE NOW, BURKE SAID. IT IS KIND OF A CHANCE TO CONNECT WITH SHIPPING HISTORY. ITS EVOCATIVE, NEWCOMB HOLLOW, EMPTY MOST WINTER MONTHS, SAW AS MUCH ACTIVITY AS IT WOULD ON A BALMY, SUMMER DAY. THE LOT WAS FULL, CHILDREN PEERED AT THE WRECK, AND DOGS SCAMPERED ALONG THE SAND.**

**"WRECKED SCHOONER DRIFTS ASHORE AND INTO MYSTERY" BY ANDREW RYAN AND JONATHAN SALTZMAN, BOSTON GLOBE, 1 FEBRUARY 2008**

it need to cost money. In January 2008 the wreck of a mysterious 19th century schooner was thrown ashore in Cape Cod, Massachusetts after a violent storm churned it from the deep. Word spread quickly. Hundreds of people flocked to the beach. The bony wooden wreck was marooned on the sand like a dead whale's ribcage.

the knowledge that at some point soon another storm would pull the wreck out to sea. One of those who made the pilgrimage said, "I wanted to check it out before it was gone." Impermanence, temporary, transitional is not only attractive, it is essential to spectacle and essential to sustain vibrant communities.

Spectacle and temporary art are often seen as problematic by those responsible for public and private realms. If they are not sanctioned are they safe?

**SOMETIMES IT IS BETTER TO SEEK  
FORGIVENESS  
THAN ASK  
PERMISSION**

the edge of roof, and a half-on, half-off red high heel dangled above the heads of visitors.

Surprisingly, this apparent bastion of tick boxing had

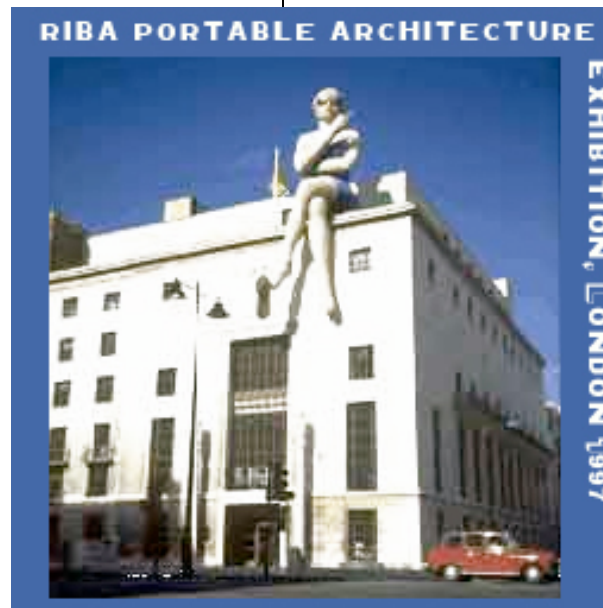
If they are not within institutional walls, how are they monitored? If they are open access, how is quality ensured? Sometimes it is better to seek forgiveness than ask permission.

no planning permission for the inflatable. Because, as a RIBA spokesperson explained, “If we had asked for it we wouldn’t have got it.”<sup>13</sup> If the Royal Institute of British Architects can create “joyful anarchy”, why not Devonport?

The Royal Institute of Architects took that advice in 1997 when they opened the exhibition “Portable Architecture” at their headquarters on Portland Place, London.

The 1930s Grade II listed building is beautiful but intimidating. How could they attract a wide audience?

How about a giant 24-metre high inflatable woman sat on the edge of the roof? She wore sunglasses, a short skirt and balanced a cigarette (naughty!) in one hand. Her crossed legs swung over



The UK is at a turning point for spectacle. We have always been a nation of festivals and events, but there is a surge in demand for both ad-hoc and established transient performance and street art. What differentiates current demand is that increasingly we want to be participants, not observers.

<sup>13</sup> “Inflatable marks launch of RIBA’s portable exhibition”, The Architect’s Journal, 15 May 1997, p 9

Several theories can explain the shift. Media explosion and increased web access encourage shorter attention spans. Users hover and dart like hummingbirds on a constant search for information, excitement, and niches within the “long tail”.<sup>14</sup> Open source software encourages innovation and has enabled the rise of the amateur. Websites allow consumers to create bespoke products (e.g. trainers, food); media welcomes readers to comment on and add to content.

The Apple i-pod, music downloads and YouTube have helped shape a demand for live music. Small to medium size live music venues that were converted to clubs are now being turned back into live venues.<sup>15</sup>

It isn't just contemporary music that benefits. Dead and niche performers gain new fans on video share sites. Rather than limit experience, sites such as YouTube encourage experimentation. A search for one performer can easily create the serendipitous discovery of someone unknown. Amy Winehouse is available on YouTube, but so is one

<sup>14</sup> Chris Anderson, editor of Wired Magazine, wrote the 2006 book “The Long Tail: The Future of Business is Selling Less of More,”

<sup>15</sup> “Old concert halls to reopen amid live music boom”, Owen Gibson, Guardian, 17 November 2007. Describes plans by Academy Music Group, the UK's biggest owner of live venues, to radically increase their portfolio of live venues, by purchase of existing and creation of new venues.

of the most spectacular dance sequences ever performed and captured on film. “Jumpin Jive” (1943) from the movie “Stormy Weather”, performed by Cab Calloway and the Nicholas Brothers.

People crave community. They want shared experiences and opportunities to make memories. Spectacle, performance and temporary public art can provide it.

## SPECTACLE ENDNOTE



It seems illogical, but sometimes spectacle can be so bad it's good. The fact that a “bad” event can be “good” goes a long way to explain just how powerful spectacle is as a shared community experience.

“Moose Murders” was a play performed on Broadway twenty-five years ago. Not only was it panned by critics, it was universally deemed the worst play in Broadway history. National reviews included statements such as



## **NEGATIVE SUPERLATIVE: SOMETIMES IT'S A GOOD THING**

“titanically bad”, “indescribably bad,” and “would insult the intelligence of an audience consisting entirely of amoebas.”<sup>16</sup>

But rather than turning the play into a forgotten footnote of live theatre, “Moose Murders” became a legend. The show closed immediately, but it became in the words of its playwright, “a negative superlative”. It entered folklore.

The few people who can honestly claim to have been an audience member has “multiplied beyond physical possibility, like those who claim to have seen the Beatles at Shea Stadium or Game 5 of the 1956 World Series.”<sup>17</sup> Actors who performed in the play now highlight the show in their biographies.

The moral of “Moose Murders” is simple. It relates back to remarks made by “Dr Happiness”. Objects get old and are eventually taken for granted. Shared experiences don’t. Even a “bad” shared experience can

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<sup>16</sup> “A Broadway Flop Again Raises Its Antlers”, Campbell Robertson, The New York Times, 21 April 2008

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

be better for the health of a community than a “good” piece of public art.

## **PLACEMAKING**

Devonport is a place of unique character. Every village, town and city in Britain would like to make that claim – and many do – but few can make the claim with the assets to back it up.

Or if other places possess assets - history, location, built environment, industry etc; - they will be fortunate to have more than two. If places are very fortunate indeed, their assets will not be impaired by dubious improvements of the last 40 years or so, such as elevated roads that cut through and divide town centres or “clone town” high streets that eradicate local identity.

Devonport has a multitude of assets and few if any of the dubious improvements. It is true that the retention of its asset base has come at a cost. Devonport's social and economic deprivation sidelined the community. The MoD store enclave removed the centre from public use for fifty years. Developers, road builders and retail chains focused their activity elsewhere.

But attitudes towards urban regeneration and placemaking have evolved. And now Devonport is at a point in its development and history many would envy. It is ready for managed change yet it still has much of its physical assets – its family silver if you like.

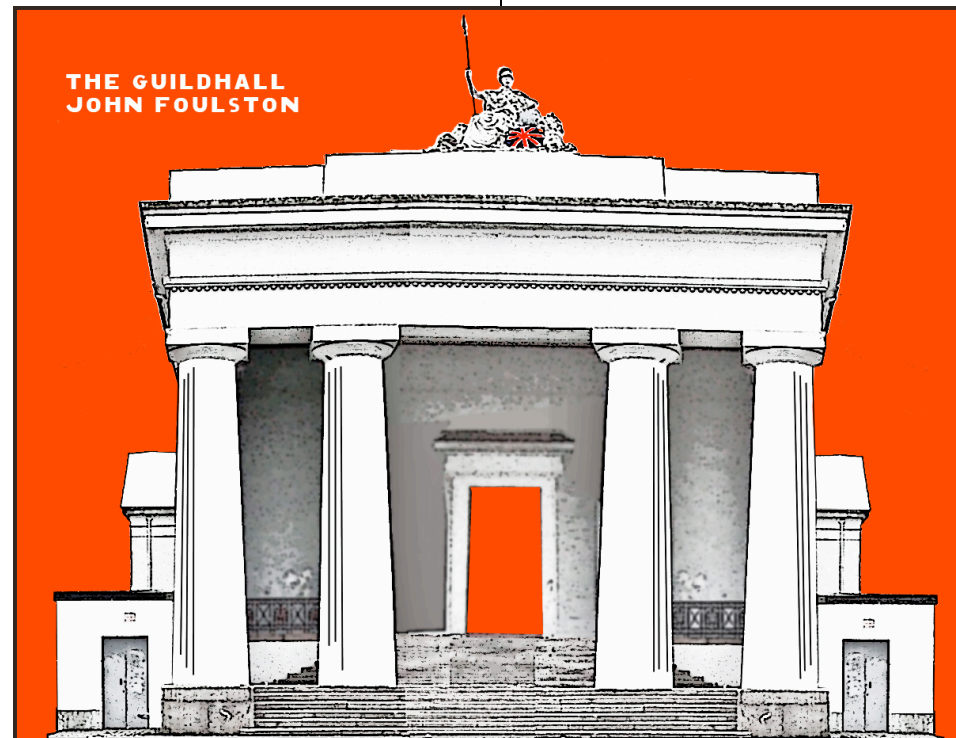
The silver needs polishing and a few new additions, but the set piece is not only enviable and unique, but can be compared to a diamond in the rough.

## BACKGROUND

Placemaking is an urban regeneration buzzword. A popular word used by local authorities, planners, developers, architects and artists to describe the process of creating public realms that reflect local context and build community as a by-product.

The word placemaking is not new. In common use since the 1970s, placemaking has become a mantra and taken on such an enlarged significance – particularly in an urban context – that is almost shamanistic.

If we “placemake” we can cure what is sick in the public realm, predict the future and take control of



events within its boundaries. Or to misquote a baseball analogy from a well-known movie, “if we place-make, they will come.”

Arguments for change and managing change exist in most urban areas. Devonport has one of the most compelling arguments for change of any English community. The Ministry of Defense Store area replaced much of the historic centre of Devonport when it was built shortly after WWII.

The MoD returned the requisitioned land to the com-

munity after more than fifty years occupancy, and Redrow Homes began building houses on site in 2008. This 7.3-hectare site includes Devonport’s historic Market Hall. It is adjacent to the symbolic and civic heart of Devonport – the Guildhall, Devonport Column, and the Egyptian Revival Oddfellows Hall - all designed by architect John Foulston in the 1820s.

The importance of the former Naval store site is equal to the new housing developments envisioned for Ker Street and Mount Wise. Collectively these sites create arguments for sympathetic but imaginative builds; for

**WHEN PEOPLE LIVE CLOSE TOGETHER THEY FIND THEY HAVE MORE AND MORE THINGS IN COMMON. THEY BEGIN PERHAPS BY DOING BUSINESS WITH EACH OTHER. THEN THEY STRIKE UP FRIENDSHIPS. THEIR CHILDREN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL. YOUR NEIGHBOR HELPS YOU OUT; YOU HELP HIM OUT. AND GRADUALLY COMMUNITY PROJECTS DEVELOP AND THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY GET THE SENSE OF ALL BELONGING TO ONE COMMON GROUP.**

**GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK, ALFRED E SMITH,  
WNYC RADIO, NEW YORK CITY, 9 SEPT 1943**

physical identities compatible with the wider community but heterogeneous in design; and for outward facing, permeable streetscapes not inward looking defensive enclaves.

“Placemaking” emphasizes the verb “to make”. And “make” implies a place needs to be created - that it doesn’t already exist or exists in a lesser form. But aside from the razed scar left after the MoD returned the current Redrow site to the community, Devonport is a unique, beautiful and readily identifiable place.

Areas of Devonport warrant use of the term “picturesque”. It does not need to be “made”, it needs to be saved, revealed and enhanced. The role of a public arts strategy must be to explore imaginative ways to achieve these goals.

Place is made by its people. Place is created through an organic process. It cannot be manufactured, marketed or dreamed into being. It is slow. It needs to be nurtured.

Governor Smith’s view (see orange box above) preferences groups over the individual, recognizes the power of community and endorses thoughtful or

“slow” community building. One of the chief means by which Devonport will achieve its vision, is through a collective sense of purpose. A unity of spirit. And a belief in the power of community over territorial enclaves.



Devonport’s unique character has been saved - ironically - by economic downturn. Some would argue DRCP haven’t spent the Government’s “New Deal” money fast enough; that change has been too slow.

The flip side of this argument is community empowerment through slow, thoughtful urban regeneration. DRCP buck the trend for overnight change. It might be at odds with Government funding cycles, but as a movement slow change is gaining ground.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> In 2007 Plymouth Arts Centre launched its new visual arts programme to encourage debate regarding the role of “slow” in culture. The changing urban context of Plymouth was used to inspire events that included the exhibition “Slow”, “slow” meals and “slow” education projects.

## **REGENERATE IN HASTE; REPENT AT LEISURE.**

DENNA JONES

Allied to the sustainability movement, to locally sourced food, to the rewards derived from the local and the “authentic”, the slow movement is linked to the explosive growth of DIY creativity and respect for the hand-made, particularly the art of make-it-yourself.

Slow regeneration is the opposite of “clone towns” where High Streets and housing developments fall like dominoes beneath the juggernaut belief that one-size-fits-all.

Canadian architect John Brown hosts the website [www.theslowhome.com](http://www.theslowhome.com). His movement says *no* to “fast-food architecture”.<sup>19</sup>

SlowLab Design think-tank looks for design that is wilfully “slow” and often with an intentional short shelf

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<sup>19</sup> “The Slow Life Picks Up Speed”, Penelope Green, The New York Times, 31 January 2008

life. Each design is something you cherish “because of its temporary and therefore precious nature.”<sup>20</sup>

Devonport is actively following elements of the “slow” movement, and a healthy living agenda is an area targeted by the Council, DRCP and the new Peninsula Dental School.

“Slow” – a move away from fast food and towards hand-made meals, a revival of allotments and the creation of a lively, weekly market (perhaps at the newly released Market Hall?) that can become a focal point and meeting place for the community - are crucial areas of forward planning.

## **DEVONPORT DINNERS**

“Devonport Dinners” – a series of meal-based events in collaboration with Plymouth Arts Centre. In-kind support will be sought from the Coop supermarket.

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid*

Daytime meals will take place Summer 2008. The food served will be hand-made. Ready-meals and junk food are banned. Ingredients will be sourced within or near Devonport. This will create difficulties – Devonport does not have a fresh fruit and vegetable market or a range of food choice – but will demonstrate that good food can be made with products and produce available near the centre of Devonport.

The meals will be another form of Community Consultation. Guests will be invited from all areas of Devonport, and will represent a wide mix of ages and backgrounds. The meals will be fun. There will be no obvious didactic element, but guests will be encouraged to talk about the theme of “food” and “water” in any way they choose.

If for example, we have participants from Blagdons Boatyard, fishermen from Mutton Cove, representatives from the Marine Training Centre at Cumberland Gardens and residents from Pottery Quay and other estates, we should achieve a lively mix of conversation. A documentation process

BIG ISN'T ALWAYS BEST

SINCE

will form part of the collaborative strategy with Plymouth Arts Centre.

## CASE STUDIES GOOD PRACTICE

### COPYCAT CITIES

Ironically, the push to placemake often results in emulation of other places. Banners in Leeds city centre announce Leeds as the “Knightsbridge of the North”. Croydon in South London aspires to be the next “Barcelona”. Blackpool is uniquely British, yet it covets the moniker “Las Vegas of the North”.

We are not yet in a “post-Angel”<sup>21</sup> world. We are in still its thrall. Public authorities and developers are enamoured by the idea that if they

<sup>21</sup> A reference to Antony Gormley’s “Angel of the North”, Gateshead near Newcastle, which is credited with spurring area regeneration.



commission the next “Angel of the North” or build a version of Guggenheim Bilbao, prosperity and prestige will follow.

Ebbsfleet, Kent announced it would commission a sculpture nicknamed the “Angel of the South”. Five major artists are short-listed. The sculpture is to be twice as tall as its namesake. One of Britain’s leading art critics despairs. “I feel horrified by the latest commission in Britain’s apparently insatiable quest to build the biggest, most imposing, most monstrously public work of art.”<sup>22</sup>

Another critic disagrees. Exhibiting unique logic, she argues the UK has “a growing need for statement public art”<sup>23</sup>. Why? Because it is the way in which we can be known as some-

**YOU'RE THE NILE**  
**YOU'RE THE TOWER OF PISA**  
**YOU'RE THE SMILE ON**  
**THE MONA LISA**  
**LYRICS, “YOU'RE THE TOP, COLE PORTER**

<sup>22</sup> “Angel of the North: what is it for?” Jonathan Jones, The Guardian blogtheart&architecture, 29.01.08

<sup>23</sup> Why the Nation needs an Angel of the South, Rachel Cooke, The Observer, 27.01.08.

thing other than a nation of shoppers. The competitive consumption race cannot be won.

The University of Nottingham announced in it would build a soaring sculpture named “Aspire”<sup>24</sup>. The press release prose is remarkably similar to press releases for other monumental sculpture projects.

“Aspire” will be “Britain’s tallest free-standing work of public art”.<sup>25</sup> The press release ticks off the obligatory list of competitor’s heights: “Higher than 20-metre ‘Angel of the North’. Higher than 56-metre ‘B of the Bang’” (and hopefully minus the multi-million pound lawsuit).<sup>26</sup> “Higher than 57-metre ‘Nelson’s Column’. ‘Aspire’ will be 60-metres high. One metre for every year of the University’s royal charter.”

<sup>24</sup> Unveiled: design for Britain’s tallest freestanding work of public art. PA14/08, January 18 2008, University of Nottingham

<sup>25</sup> Although not classified as a “sculpture”, Portsmouth’s 170m-high Spinnaker Tower, designed by Herrington Architects, opened six years behind schedule and £9 million over budget.

<sup>26</sup> In December 2007, Manchester City Council instigated legal proceedings against Thomas Heatherwick and partners over the instability of the B of the Bang.

Cambridge University has a 480-year-old royal charter. The public can hope Cambridge chooses not to compete in this new sculptural version of “University Challenge”.

## THE BILBAO & ANGEL EFFECT

Do costly, largely vanity-led, public art and architecture schemes actually deliver benefits to local communities? It’s difficult to quantify, but there are signs they do not.

Architectural critics are widely agreed Guggenheim Bilbao does not work as an effective space for art<sup>27</sup>. The museum opened in 1997 in a former shipyard area complete with pervasive stench from the polluted Nervión River. Ten years later the city has lost

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<sup>27</sup> At Almost Every Point the Space You are in Seems Simple and Serene, Edwin Heathcote, *Architectural Journal*, 26.07.07 pp 24-227. “... buildings like the Bilbao Guggenheim or Museum of Modern Art, New York, which paradoxically fail to fulfil their brief to effectively display art ...”

the smell and grittiness but also much that might be called its authentic soul.

A New York Times journalist describes how a range of starchitects – Stern, Moneo, Hadid, Starck, Calatrava – were commissioned to build additional icons in Bilbao. Yet despite this, the reporter describes Bilbao as a single-attraction town. One where local culture has not integrated with the Guggenheim and vice-versa. The report ends with the comment of a local 22-year old. “I’ve never been to the Guggenheim. It’s for tourists.”<sup>28</sup>

Antony Gormley’s Angel of the North in Gateshead was completed in 1998, and like Guggenheim Bilbao, it is credited with sparking a regional economic upswing. But is it evidenced or anecdotal?

The Angel did not convince selectors to name Newcastle “2008 European City of Culture”. That honour went to Liverpool. And neither the Angel as an economic incentive nor Gormley as Trustee has helped the fortunes of the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead.

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<sup>28</sup> Bilbao, 10 Years Later by Denny Lee, *New York Times*, 23 September 2007

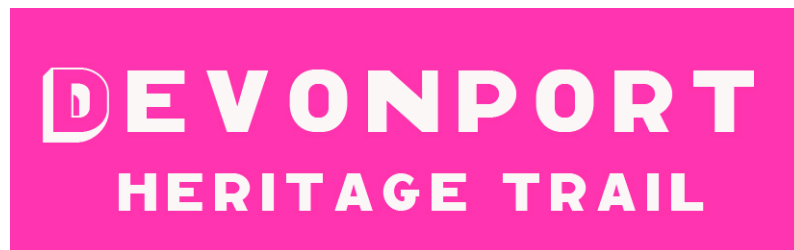


Dogged by controversy since it opened in 2002, the Baltic Centre has lost three directors in five years, and visitor figures continue to fall. Its annual £1.5 million public subsidy expires in 2008, and whether it will be renewed is questionable. Many believe the gallery will either close or reduce in size and output. Artist studios may fill empty exhibition floors.



works should be made and placed on top of the Column).

The sites represent “Opportunities for Change”. The next stage of DAS actively seeks public opinion through community consultation as outlined in previous sections. “Opportunity for Change” sites will also be represented on the proposed website through community-created Flip videos and still photography.



The Heritage Trail is proposed as a layered, two-strand approach. The Artists Brief will be detailed, but in summary, outcome will manifest in both temporary works (e.g. the Devonport Column Subscription event) and permanent works (e.g. also the Devonport Column if the community decide one of the proposed

Denna Jones as arts consultant and Devonport Resident Curator, made the provisional site selection following a combination of months of walking site analysis, review of historical and contemporary documents, consultation with the DAS commission group and residency at Admiralty House .

The Heritage Trail does not have a traditional beginning or end. It can be accessed individually or as a group of sites. The next stage of the DAS should incorporate a marketing plan for the Heritage Trail in particular and Devonport in general.

Many of the main sites contain sub-sites (e.g. Mount Wise). Site selection interpretation is detailed in the Brief.

- Pottery Quay
- Devonport Park
- Granby Green
- Cumberland Gardens
- Devonport Column and area surrounding Column Richmond Walk & Mount Wise Pools
- Mount Wise redoubt
- South Yard – HMNB
- Stonehouse Bridge

## WHAT NEXT?

The next stage of the Arts Strategy will focus on:-


1


Write the Artists Brief (AB). The call for artists should include, but move beyond, traditional catchments for creative response. Organisations such as CoastNET are keen to respond to the call for the creation of a temporary heritage trail, and diverse responses to the brief should be encouraged.

2


The AB will suggest specific art forms for various sites. For example, Cumberland Gardens will benefit from a treatment that considers landscape form, architecture and engineering (assuming the road layout leading to the Guildhall can be rationalised.) Devonport Park may benefit from a light installation. The base around Devonport Column could be turned into a mixed-use area to include a climbing wall. Site

definition will be discussed with the Commissioning Board as part of Stage 2.

 Reflect the need to expand the definition of artists beyond a traditional context, and in order to attract appropriate responses to sites, advertisements will be placed in a variety of targeted media to include architect and landscape media, as well as AN (Artist Newsletter) and more to be decided.

 Budget allocations for permanent works will be made prior to advertisement & after agreement is reached on site description and suitable media.

## TEMPORARY WORK

 Heritage Trail will allocate £5,000 (plus £500) each to three artists (or “creatives”) to produce temporary works.



Devonport Column Public Subscription Event will allocate £5,000 (plus £1,000 expenses) each to four artists (or “creatives”) to produce a “fantasy” artwork and performance as part of the Subscription public event and Festival.

## ARTIST BRIEF – KEY POINTS

- Temporary work
- Permanent work
- Community Benefit Clause
- Lifetime assessment and de-accession policy

## ADDITIONAL

- Write “Darwin 200” grant application with CBC
- Ongoing Community Consultation

- Create Artist Shortlist & interview process
- Plan, logistics and preliminary financial programme for Royal de Luxe in 2010

## FUNDING SOURCES

DRCP financial allocation of £400,000 for the Heritage Trail will be used as leverage to attract private sector sponsors and apply for additional funding. Firmac, Redrow and the Registered Social Landlords will be encouraged to support the Arts Strategy through the planning application process.

Plymouth City Council now has a Draft Design Supplementary Planning Document on Sustainable Design in Plymouth that encourages developers to include public art at the earliest stage in the design process and includes public art as a basis for Section 106 Obligations. This strategy should be used to guide de-

velopers to support the delivery of the Heritage Trail in particular.

Funding will be sought from a variety of sources, including a grant application for “Darwin 200” (a 2009-specific funding stream to celebrate Charles Darwin’s bicentenary).

A meeting with the Head of Science, British Council, will be held in London to discuss the possibility of BC support for a Darwin-themed event. Partnership formation to create collaborative grant bids (e.g. Darwin 200) may reveal other areas of funding sources.

## JUNE 2009: POSTSCRIPT

The British Council agreed to in-kind support for Devonport’s Darwin celebrations by lending their bespoke Darwin 200 travelling exhibition for summer 2009.

The exhibition is hosted by Mount Edgcumbe House in Cremyll, Cornwall – a short ferry ride from Devonport.

Why Cornwall? When Charles Darwin lodged at the Royal Clarence Baths on the foreshore of Devonport's Mount Wise prior to sailing on HMS Beagle in 1831, the Cremyll area of Cornwall belonged to Devon. Centuries of Devon ownership of this area of the Rame Peninsula altered in 1844 when an Act of Parliament shifted the land to Cornish control.

Mount Edgcumbe House is also hosting our Madalene

and Louisa Pasley exhibition – a companion piece to the British Council exhibition –, which celebrates two young Devonport sisters who in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century “entomologised” with enthusiasm, and captured their adventures in fantastical watercolour drawings.

The Pasley exhibition is the result of research by the Devonport Resident Curator, and is the first time the watercolours have been publicly displayed since they were created.

Both exhibitions are supported by DRCP and PCC.

**DOCUMENT CONTENT  
& DESIGN : DENNA JONES**

**STAY TUNED:**  
**THERE'S MORE TO COME**  
**IN DEVONPORT**