

WIDE OPEN SPACE

Developing creative places in Dorset

ARTIST BRIEF

Commission	Putton Lane
Location	Chickerell, Dorset
Client	C.G. Fry and Sons & Dorset Design and Heritage Forum
Date	17 th July 2009



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“The built environment can contribute to a more equal, inclusive and cohesive society if the places where we live, the facilities we use and our neighbourhoods and meeting places are designed to be accessible and inclusive.”

CABE, Inclusion by Design, 2008

“The concept of pleasure in planning policy is rarely tested. This is partly due to its subjectivity as a concept. All policy guidance now tends to state that “good design” makes more successful places, but this is a vague term at best. “Attractive” is another word often used and “enjoyable”...“Pleasant” is used sometimes but does not convey the euphoric fun that slides provide.”

General Public Agency in Testsite, Tate Publications, 2006

1.0 Summary

- This commission is for an artist/designer/maker to research and develop proposal(s) for the public spaces of a new housing scheme at Chickerell in Dorset.
- The key themes of the project are heritage/ecology and intergenerational space.
- The project is a partnership between Dorset Design and Heritage Forum and housing developer C G Fry and Sons and will take place between September 2009 and January 2010.
- The resulting designs will be implemented as part of the build phase, the fee for this stage of the work is £5,000 inclusive.

2.0 Context

This project is a partnership between [Dorset Design and Heritage Forum](#) (DDHF) and [C G Fry and Son Limited](#). The project is being undertaken as part of [Wide Open Space](#), a scheme which aims to support the production of innovative art in the public realm that addresses rural agendas, supported by [Public Art South West](#) and [Arts Council England](#). The project is curated by [Willis Newson](#), the leading arts, health and education consultancy in the UK.

Wide Open Space aims to engage with key rural issues:

- Affordable and sustainable housing
- Developing the rural economy
- Protecting landscapes and safeguarding environments
- Creating safe, strong and inclusive rural communities

This commission is the initiative of an award-winning regional housebuilder C G Fry and Sons, and relates to a forthcoming mixed-use development scheme in the village of [Chickerell](#) in West Dorset District near Weymouth. This coast is part of an area with many visitors each year and will become part of the approaches to Weymouth as the Olympic sailing venue in 2012. The village is also adjacent to the [Jurassic Coast](#).



Chickerell from Chesil Beach

3.0 Scheme background

This multimillion pound scheme seeks to take forward an existing Local Plan allocation with a development of around 220 dwellings, employment uses, a vet's surgery, a doctors' surgery, informal open space, allotments and community facilities including an extension to an existing village hall and a multi-use games area (MUGA). The project is currently at outline planning application with a detailed masterplan expected to be considered by West Dorset District Council's (WDDC) planning committee in the next couple of months. The current outline followed a very successful period of consultation with key stakeholders, including the main utilities, local service providers, Dorset County Council's Youth Service, Chickerell Town Council and the local community. The engagement with the Town Council and the local community was particularly successful and identified a number of key issues and aspirations that informed the scope of the outline planning application. A public consultation day was attended by well over 300 people and over 100 responses were received to a questionnaire that was available in hard copy and online.

Drawing Number 0444/35A attached shows the location of the site, an aerial view of the site and the overall extent and layout of the site. From this drawing, it can be seen that the site performs a crucial role in the future spatial development of Chickerell and that it needs to integrate successfully with the settlement and its community. Drawing Numbers 0444/45, 46 and 47 show the site in more detail. Drawing Number 0444/47 shows a large green area (in excess of two acres) between the proposed development and Putton Lane. This green is protected due to its archaeological significance being the site of the old medieval village of Putton and an associated "hollow way".

Discussions have been held with the County Archaeologist to explore the future role of this area and a relatively low level management regime is required to preserve any earthwork remains in situ. The masterplan responds to the archaeology but also seeks to provide positive frontages and good natural surveillance wherever possible onto the green. However, whilst this area is positively framed by the new development and has good linkage to the rest of the settlement, there is a danger that the archaeological site could become little more than a "sterile green carpet" or dog walking area and its significance lost on both the new and existing elements of the community.

The wider consultation exercise gave rise to a strong opinion that the green should reflect these histories in a contemporary way, also that the scheme should contribute to leisure facilities at the existing Willowbed Hall on Putton Lane by providing opportunities to remodel the existing hall, provide additional multi-purpose indoor space and also provide an opportunity to combine the management of the new MUGA with the wider management of the Hall, its car park and Willowbed Field. The green is closely related to the Willowbed Hall (where various groups, clubs and societies meet) and Chickerell Primary School (a short distance west of the Willowbed Hall) so the location provides opportunities for many groups and ages to understand and appreciate the site.

This is an ideal opportunity for a novel approach to the treatment, interpretation, role and ultimately understanding and enjoyment of this space beyond the usual paths, interpretation boards and dog waste bins. In addition the site has an ecological interest and there are also opportunities to explore the use of any features in and around the archaeological area to also address wildlife mitigation and biodiversity gain goals.

4.0 Commission aims

This project provides the perfect opportunity for using artist and design input that supports both a better understanding of the heritage of the site and the creation of an intergenerational public space. Intergenerational space is open space that provides support for children, adults and encourages socialisation, i.e. space that is youth-friendly, elder-friendly, and supports relationship formation between the two. Today's youth have little access to nurturing environments that contribute to creative invention, joyful interaction, self-discovery, exposure to nature and cultural exchange. The separation of children from the adult realms of work and leisure prevents individuals of different ages from sharing time, space, and experience.

Research has shown that the tradition of separate play spaces even in residential areas has not been successful and that these play areas are often underused or misused. In contrast, an intentional strategy to develop engaging open spaces that support intergenerational congregation and interaction, especially if supplemented with programs and policies that facilitate intergenerational interaction, can yield profound results in terms of providing more social support in people's lives, strengthening a shared sense of community and promoting a sense of collective memory and history. (See Appendix 1).

The demographics of Chickerell are interesting in that it is, in C G Fry's experience, a living, working place. It is not dominated by one socio-economic or age group as can be typical of many other coastal Dorset villages. It is largely a "blue collar" village consisting of an interesting mix of the indigenous population and migrants from (mainly) Weymouth and who still work in Weymouth. It is also a mix of ages with many younger families whose children attend the local Primary School (which is heavily over-subscribed) and Budmouth College and also older retired residents. There is therefore considerable scope to bring together the generations and social groups in this new development for the village.

In this case it is envisaged that an artist would be employed to bring together the unique heritage and/or ecology of the site to inform the design and creation of art work(s) aimed at both young and old. It is important to state that we are looking for approaches that go beyond standard interpretation and a didactic approach. Also, whilst the new green is currently the focus, the site as a whole should be considered – landscaping, paths, structures such as shelters and housing design could all be opportunities/sites for intervention. Community involvement is also a key requirement in the project with potential partners such as the Town Council, Youth Club, County Youth Service and Primary School.

The expected outcomes from this brief are for an artist to:

1. Creatively involve the local communities in the planning and design process, in association with Dorset Community Action, Devon Youth Services and others as identified by the process.
2. Research and detail a proposal for a work(s) of art within the scheme in collaboration with C. G. Fry's design team.
3. As part of the above consider the potential for the use of sustainable materials, products or resources in designs, for example using locally sourced stone or wood.
4. Suggest any other opportunities for the commissioning of art and design over the whole life of the project

As one of the main aims of this project will be to influence not only the long term development of this project but also other projects in Dorset and further afield it will be important to disseminate the results as widely as possible. Therefore the artist employed will need to document their work and produce a final "report" on their involvement in a format to be agreed e.g. text/publication or exhibition / installation / presentation / performance.

5.0 Process

The commission will be offered as an open competition with three shortlisted artists being invited for interview. The commissioned artist will be expected to work directly with CG Fry throughout the process although the project will be commissioned by Dorset County Council and supported by Willis Newson.

The following is an outline schedule of activity for the project.

Project Title: Artist in Residence: Coast Road								
	Responsibility	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10
Advertise	WN							
Interviews	WN/CG/DF							
Site visits and meetings (2 days)	CG							
Artist development of project	A							
Community engagement	A/CG/DF							
Artist development of project	A							
Review meeting	A/WN/CG/DF							
Artist development of project	A							
Final report	A							
Exit meeting - next steps	A/WN/CG/DF							

Key	
Willis Newson	WN
CG Fry	CG
Dorset Design and Heritage Forum	DF
Artist	A

Applications consisting of up to 10 examples of previous work as digital files (for PC, e.g. jpeg, mpeg, pdf etc), an expression of interest in the commission and a CV must be received no later than 5-30pm on the 3rd of September 2009. Expressions of interest will be judged against the artists experience and/or quality of work shown in working in public contexts, creative public engagement, collaboration with design teams, stimulating dialogue with project partners and level of innovation within their practice. Applications should be sent by e-mail to creativeplaces@westdorset-dc.gov.uk or by post to the address below. Please note that it may be difficult to send and receive emails over 5mb in size, so if they are over this please send via an ftp site (for example <http://filezilla-project.org/>). Interviews for the work will take place on the 15th September 2009 in Dorchester.

6.0 Budget

The artist will be employed by Dorset County Council. The total budget for the residency is £5,000 based on £4,000 in fees and £1,000 for travel and expenses (figures ex VAT).

This fee is to pay for the outcomes listed above. The cost of the construction of proposals developed will be identified by the artist as part of this process in negotiation with C G Fry and other interested parties. It is expected that the cost of proposed works will be largely met from existing allocations for landscaping and construction budgets.

Artists attending interview will be paid up to £100 against travel or expenses.

7.0 Contact

This project is being managed by independent artist and curator Alex Murdin on behalf of Willis Newson. If you would like to discuss the project please contact him via:

Alex Murdin

Wide Open Space

c/o West Dorset District Council, Stratton House, 58/60 High West St, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ

mobile: 07885409750

e mail: creativeplaces@westdorset-dc.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Design attributes of intergenerational spaces

Public open space is the common ground for people to engage in activities and rituals that bind a community together (Carr et al. 1992). What are the qualities of such an intergenerational space? Many attributes for the creation of responsive open spaces have been identified as: sensory stimulation, legibility, comfort, privacy, adaptability, control, sociality, accessibility, density, meaning, and quality:

Sensory Perception pertains to the quality and intensity of stimulation experienced by the different senses. Sight is obviously an important sense, but the other senses are just as crucial. It is not enough for children, or even adults, to just look at well-designed spaces and objects—they need to feel, touch, and explore the surfaces and their forms. It would be pertinent to explore ways of sensory stimulation to respond to age variations in the design of open spaces.

Legibility in relation to the spatiality of the place refers to the ease with which its constituent elements or parts can be recognized as a consistent pattern. For adults and the elderly, the ability to develop an “internal representation” or “image” of a civic setting is directly related to the manner in which environmental information is processed and assimilated.

Adaptability can be defined as the flexibility that a particular environment affords to the users, so elements within the environment or public space can be changed, manipulated or restructured for new activities. The ability to change the character of a space, even to a limited degree, engages adults and children in a positive way. Identifying design strategies for open space that adapt to the changing needs of a community and its residents is a prerequisite for intergenerational appeal.

Control is simply defined as the degree to which the environment or space permits personalization and territorial claim. Territorial claim can be facilitated through the use of various symbols and clues that invite children and adults to exercise control of the public space. Children have a natural affinity for ambiguous objects and undeveloped space, and prefer these kinds of settings for play. At the same time, children do not want to be completely separated from adult activity areas. Public space that engages both adults and children, as well as provides a degree of autonomy to both, is generally successful in many urban contexts. Hence environments should provide accessible spaces to retreat and not force interaction among the various user groups.

Sociality refers to the degree the open space encourages social contact or interaction among people. There is a correlation between the frequency of building-centered social activities and the immediacy to the assets that the community enjoys. Sociality is also related to accessibility or physical, visual and symbolic ease of experiencing and negotiating an environment, which can motivate interaction through exploratory use of an open space.

Open spaces that can be observed from different perspectives encourage people to occupy them, and reduce the likelihood of unwanted or criminal behavior. In this context, the incorporation of simple and affordable eating places, vendors and street performers is a welcoming gesture for users of all ages from different areas in the city. This strategy is extremely effective in attracting a variety of people. Designers can maximize opportunities for meeting through simple planning gestures, such as arranging for children's paths (biking or walking to and from school) to pass senior and family housing.

Meaning connotes the socio-cultural values the inhabitants of a city share. Traditions and shared memories are an important aspect of urban open space. Admittedly, most successful environments are memorable to both children and adults. The goal of promoting "sense of place" is approached when what is designed taps into feelings and stories the community cherishes, promoting a sense of shared citizenship for all members of a community.

"Reclaiming Open Space For The Young: An Intergenerational Perspective On Design " Haider, J. and Kaplan, M. Open Space People Space Conference 2007 (<http://www.openspace.eca.ac.uk/>)

Other links

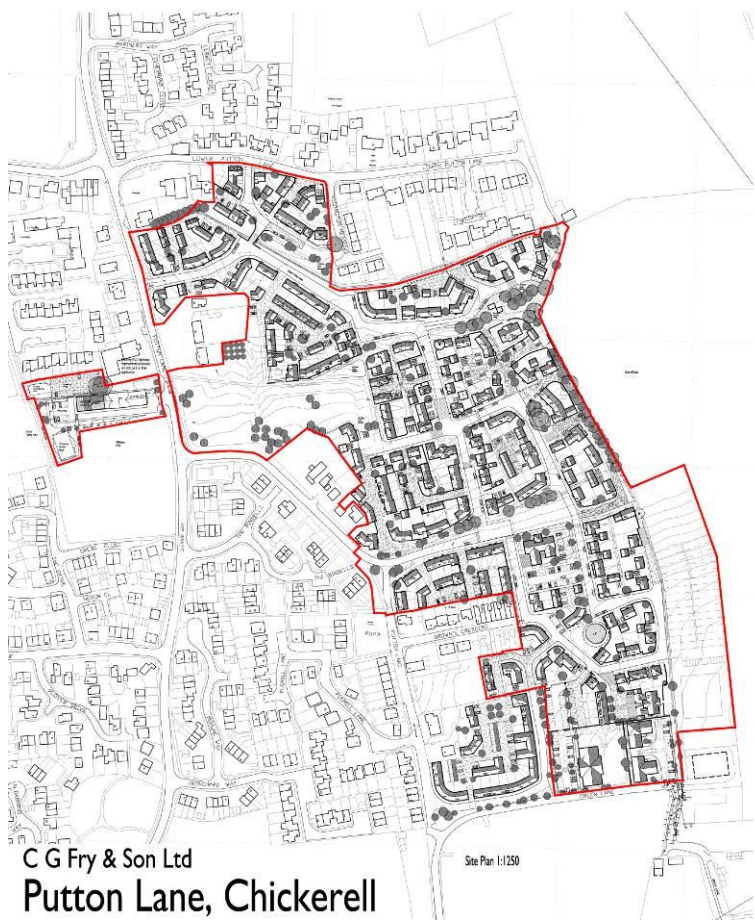
<http://www.cabe.org.uk/public-space/play-space>

http://www.engage.org/publications/..%5Cdownloads%5C2077190F8_EJ_19_S.Anglama.pdf

http://www.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/project_flyers/la_piazza.pdf

<http://shop.niace.org.uk/thinkcommunity.html>

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C G Fry & Son Ltd
Putton Lane, Chickerell

Site Plan 1:1250

Location Plan 1:5000

A 1:1250 Site Plan
Date: 17/03/2018
Scale: 1:1250
C G Fry & Son Ltd
Putton Lane, Chickerell
Date: 17/03/2018
Scale: 1:1250
0444.35 A



- Key:
- Access Road at 5.0m min width with 2.0m footways
 - Access Road at 3.0m min width with 2.0m footways
 - Shared surface at 4.5m min width with no footways



C G Fry & Son Ltd
Putton Lane, Chickerell

Date: 17/03/2018
Scale: 1:1250
0444.45



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