

Bristol Building Schools for the Future Wave 1 Pathfinder

Pupil Engagement through Public Art Evaluation Report



Dr Roz Hall June 2008

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Appendices

Appendix One: Interviews and questionnaires
Appendix Two: Diary of the evaluation process

Both available on request:

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1. Introduction

‘Projects that do not engage in a meaningful way with their stakeholders run a far higher risk of failure’

Partnerships for School (PfS) Website – Lessons Learnt in Preparation and Planning.

This report has been informed by a year long evaluation process, which has sought to explore the extent to which stakeholders have been meaningfully engaged in the Public Art process, that has been facilitated by Creative Partnerships/Real Ideas Organisation (RiO), in four new Bristol schools being developed as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme, and the consequent outcomes and impact of that engagement. This report aims to outline the key findings from the evaluation process and to make recommendations, for further public art programmes in such contexts, which are informed through those findings. The report will consider the potential for the process utilised in the four Bristol schools to be used as a model and will offer suggestions regarding the development of this process as a model.

Building Schools for the Future

Building Schools for the Future is the government’s secondary school renewal programme, which aims to transform every secondary school in England. Partnerships for Schools (PfS) was established in 2004 by the DCSF and Partnerships UK to deliver Building Schools for the Future (BSF). The key role for PfS is to ensure that investment in secondary schools is based on robust educational strategies and that BSF schools are well designed, built on time at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer, and are properly maintained.

Bristol City Council

Bristol City Council has a strong Public Art Policy¹ that was applied to BSF through planning conditions, with an imperative to engage the community of the buildings’ end users in the commissioning and design processes. Creative Partnerships (CP) Bristol / RiO were invited to bring in the expertise of establishing creative projects with schools, providing not only the Project Manager but additional funds as well.

Skanska

Skanska is a leading construction group with expertise in construction, development of commercial and residential projects and public-private partnerships. Skanska was appointed Preferred Bidder for the BSF building programme in Bristol in December 2005.

RiO / Creative Partnerships Bristol

RiO is an ethically based social enterprise focusing on children, young people, communities, creativity and change that delivers Creative partnerships in the South West. RiO believes in harnessing the energy, enthusiasm and creative abilities of young people. RiO work with children, young people, teachers and

¹ http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=514074

creative professionals to actively encourage them to take decisions, lead their learning and make real change happen.

Project details and partners

PFI contract through Local Education Partnership (LEP)

Bristol City Council and Skanska

Architect: WilkinsonEyre

Brislington Enterprise College (BEC) with Design Artist Walter Jack
Bristol Brunel Academy (BBA) - formally Speedwell Technology College -
with Sculptor and Graphic Artists Gordon Young and WhyNot Associates
Bristol Metropolitan College – formally Whitefield Fishponds Community
School (WFCS) – with Poet and Sculptor Artists Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce
Hartcliffe Education Campus (HEC) with Sound Artist Loben Tatlow

Outline of the Process

The aims of the public art programme were established through a set of questions, developed out of conversations with the schools:

- How can we facilitate Young People to have input into their new school buildings?
- How can we use the Public Art programme to facilitate the expression of the cultural identity and specialist status of each school?
- How can we help build excitement, changes in attitude, a sense of ownership and enhanced expectations of the school communities in preparation for occupation of their new school buildings?

A Public Art Commissioning Body was established in each school, with representatives from the School (senior management and teachers), Bristol City Council, Skanska Design Manager or Project Manager, Architect, Landscape Designer where possible and up to twelve students from different year groups. Students are the core members of the groups, which have been facilitated by CP/Rio. The primary responsibilities and basic programme of this group are to:

- Understand the new building design and design language, issues etc
- Research public art and decide strategy for the school
- Write an artists brief, request submissions, short list and interview artists
- Facilitate artists work with stakeholders
- Help develop, then approve the design concepts and detailed designs
- Disseminate to other stakeholders the process and progress of the project
- Ensure timetable and budget are on target
- Document and evaluate the project throughout
- Celebrate achievements

The programme of activities was planned to have a large impact upon the 'commissioning group' students, giving them a quality in depth authentic experience with real responsibility and enabling them to make well informed decisions. Larger numbers of students and the wider school communities have been drawn in to the programme through various methods such as artists' workshops, and gathering ideas and input through other mechanisms such as postcards and assemblies.

2. Executive Summary

“The whole thing was very democratic and I’d do it again with different children to give them the experience and to know that their voice is listened to.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

2.1 The significance of ownership

All partners involved in this work have expressed a keen sense of the value and significance of ensuring that a school’s community, especially its students, have a sense of ownership of their school and how that can be nurtured through a participatory public art process:

“...the final work was really informed by the pupils. This is important because of ownership of the new buildings; if the pupils can see a thread of what they have done in the final work then they will have greater ownership and therefore will be inclined to look after it more and use it appropriately.” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

The evidence generated through this evaluation process indicates that the project has been highly successful in establishing such a sense of ownership. The key components of the approach that have enabled such a sense of ownership to develop have been indicated as being:

The students’ proactive and primary role.

The involvement of students in the commissioning group and the opportunity for those students to carry out research into public art prior to the artists being appointed is pivotal, as it enables the group to establish a sense of confidence and equips them to direct the artists after appointment. Similarly, the student’s role in appointing the artists is key to establishing the project as being theirs.

Students being listened to and explicitly informing the project.

The range of opportunities for young people to engage in the process and inform its development, with a range of partners as well as the artists, has been crucial, not only in ensuring a space in which young people can voice their opinion, but also in making explicit the impact their input has had and the ways in which they have informed development.

The role of the Public Art Project Manager.

The role provided by RiO has been highlighted as key to ensuring that the above two points are realised throughout the project process.

Flexible approach of the artists

The approach of the artists, their skills in participatory ways of working and their openness to ideas and direction from students has also been essential:

“This journey didn’t have a structure until we constructed it; it was like making our own stepping stones; we’d throw one stone into the stream and then someone else would find another stone and we would throw that in, so we didn’t know where we would step next or where it would lead us until we were on the way.” (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

The openness of partners

Skanska, Bristol City Council and the architects have all played a significant role in terms of the extent to which they have responded to and valued student input. Ultimately these partners’ roles are crucial in terms of ensuring that the students work is actually physically realised in terms of the final artwork being installed and in terms in their opinions informing the wider build.

Connecting to the wider school community

Students in the commissioning groups have strengthened their sense of ownership through their roles in representing and communicating the project to the wider school. Furthermore, this connectivity and the activities which have been devised and facilitated by the commissioning group to generate input from the wider school, have also been key to establishing a wider sense of ownership amongst the school community.

The extent to which the school communities have developed a sense of ownership through the project process is evidenced throughout this report. This sense of ownership in itself has multifarious outcomes and forms of positive impact for all involved. Most apparent is the impact that ownership has on the potential for the building to be ‘looked after’, as has been clearly articulated above by Chris Donoghue. However, many of the outcomes listed below can also be understood as dependent on first establishing a sense of ownership.

2.2 Summary Outcomes

The following outcomes of the work have been identified through the evaluation process and are evidenced in sections 4, 6, 7 and 8:

- Students have developed (greater) knowledge of Public Art processes and awareness of (local) Public Art
- Young people’s voices have been listened to and acted upon
- Young people have developed greater confidence
- Young people have developed a strong sense of responsibility
- Young people have developed a sense of ownership of the new schools
- There has been positive impact for the wider school communities in terms of ownership of the new buildings
- Useful connections have been made and sustained between schools and across schools
- Young people have become familiar with workplace practices and artists’ processes and the development of life skills
- There has been a positive impact on Partners’ and Artists’ Approaches
- The process of the work and its outputs have raised Skanska’s profile and reputation amongst the school communities and beyond

- The 'outputs' have been the successful production and installation or plans for installation, of relevant and informed Public Artwork
- The flexibility of the process has ensured an inclusive and responsive approach
- The work has successfully facilitated young people's input into the development of new buildings
- The public art process has ensured that the cultural identities of the schools are expressed
- The public art process has helped to build expectations and aspirations for the schools of the new buildings
- The partners involved have worked together successfully to support the process and concur regarding its success, for example:

"There hasn't been any impact on the overall cost of the work, we have got what we needed, and so have the pupils." (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

Has the process been what you hoped for?

"It's probably been a lot more than I originally hoped for. I had probably quite a simplistic notion of what public art would be and we've ended up with something that's taken me way outside of my comfort zone, but has been brilliant, and that's what the process has done, which is fantastic." (Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant School)

2.3 Summary Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the issues and the successes that have been highlighted through the evaluation process, and are expanded upon and evidenced in sections 5 to 8:

- To utilise the model in other contexts.
- To extend the process to incorporate the design of the building itself.
- To continue to ensure that students and the wider school community are involved in the process of appointing an artist.
- To continue to ensure that the 'commissioning group' has opportunity for research into public art prior to appointing an artist.
- To continue to maintain a fluid and flexible process in terms of the final artwork and the form it will take.
- Money for artists' fees should be released by Skanska to Rio at the outset in order to make the payment process easier for all involved.
- A key person with an overview at Skanska should be identified as a central point of contact for all involved, so that all involved know 'who to ask', thereby avoiding 'red herrings', clarifying scope and feasibility and ensuring clear and consistent communication.
- Direct lines of communication between architects, design and landscape design teams and the artists would make the process smoother in terms of practicalities of installation, etc.

- Architects and landscape architects need to have time written in to the fee structure for exchange and work with artists and commissioning groups and to ensure that site visits take place.
- To extend the timescales of the process and the duration of artists' and RiO's involvement, to ensure follow up work can take place beyond installation. (E.g. launch celebration events and extending upon and / or 'using' the artwork.)
- To extend the timescale of the process to ensure earlier involvement of the artists (although this should not precede engagement with students and the wider school community) and to increase the artists fee accordingly.
- To build upon the PR success of work to date through a 'joined up' approach to PR involving all partners and through budgeting for PR.
- To sustain and ideally expand upon RiO's role, as it has been shown to be pivotal in ensuring cohesion between all partners and therefore in ensuring meaningful partnership working.
- To build upon the roles of the existing commissioning groups as experts in new BSF contexts.
- To allocate part of the budget for teacher supply time to ensure the attendance of teachers and that students are supported to work off timetable on the project.
- To build on the potential for students to use the work they do through this process to qualify for a Young People's Arts Award or to be used in other as course work such as GCSE PSHE etc.
- To develop more embedded evaluation processes that can help to make all aspects of the process explicit; for example through an artists blog, which would articulate the decision making process that takes place outside of contact time and thus 'mind the gaps' and ensure a common sense of everyone's expectations.
- To ensure that the recruitment of students to the commissioning group happens in a transparent and democratic way, through the wider school voting for students to represent the school within the commissioning group. This also acts to strengthen the wider sense of ownership of the project amongst the school community.

3. Evaluation approach / methodology

Current debate in the field of participatory arts practice has highlighted the problems there are with measuring the benefits of cultural engagement and there is consensus that what needed is a new way of appreciating and exemplifying the positive impact of cultural activities. (Holden, J.: 2004; Selwood, S.: 2005). The methodological approach to this evaluation process is one that is informed through such current debate and therefore aims to evidence the value of the work through a qualitative and dialogic approach.

Essentially the approach has ensured input from a diverse range of relevant individuals and stakeholders. For a thorough account of the process please see Appendix 2: Evaluation Diary. The evaluation process utilised is one that has stimulated dialogue about and reflection upon the activities that have been facilitated. The process involved the documentation of dialogue stimulated and the sharing of that documentation with those interviewed for their further reflection, comment and approval. This dialogue is recorded in its totality in Appendix 1: Interviews. The dialogue has been analysed in order that pertinent extracts, representative of the over all set of exchanges, could be used within this report to highlight both successes of the work and the issues that have been indicated.

- 1 Work with students at BBA to define the criteria for evaluation
- 2 Stimulating dialogue with students as part of the project process (e.g. supporting young people to produce presentations about the public art work and process, as a way to articulate and reflect upon what has happened. Please see Appendix 3 (on CD) for examples of these presentations.)
- 3 Interviews with students in commissioning groups
- 4 Interviews with staff involved: teachers, learning assistants, etc.
- 5 Interviews conducted by students with wider school community
- 6 Interviews with key partners: Skanska, BCC, etc.
- 7 Feedback from students not in commissioning groups
- 8 Collation of all gathered data into the appendix
- 9 Collection of existing evidence (See Appendix 3)
- 10 Reflection on appendix materials
- 11 Production of report

Interviews

Interviews or exchange took place with:

- Students from commissioning group at Bristol Brunel Academy (BBA)
- Students from commissioning group at Brislington Enterprise College (BEC)
- Students from commissioning group at Whitefield School
- Students from commissioning group at Teyfant Primary (HEC)
- Students from commissioning group at New Fosseway (HEC)
- Students not in the commissioning group at Bristol Brunel Academy (BBA)
- Staff at Bristol Brunel Academy (BBA)
- Visitors at Bristol Brunel Academy (BBA)
- Head teacher at Brislington Enterprise College (BEC)
- Art teachers at Whitefield School
- Art teacher at Hartcliffe Engineering College (HEC)
- Head teacher at Teyfant Primary (HEC)
- Parent Volunteer at Teyfant Primary (HEC)
- Learning Support worker at New Fosseway (HEC)
- Gordon Young, artist at BBA
- Walter Jack and Paul Channing, artists at BEC
- Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce, artists at Whitefield
- Loben Tatlow, artist at HEC
- Senior Design Manager: Skanska
- Design Manager at Whitefield: Skanska
- Project Architect: Wilkinson Eyre
- BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council
- Director: Creative Partnerships / Rio
- Head teacher at Whitefield

4. Outcomes: the successes of the work

“For the students, the experience has been very powerful. It has really given them a sense of ownership, engagement and responsibility. They have realised that they are representing the school community and so it’s been an incredible experience for them, with lots of positive outcomes.”

(Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant)

Successes of the work, in terms of the students’ experiences, have been numerous and far reaching, as is indicated in the following quote from a BEC commissioning group student when asked to state 3 things that he had got out of the project:

- Insight (Knowledge of the arts)
- Perspective (How far a budget can spread)
- Skills (Modelling, debating)

Many of the successes of the work will be expanded upon throughout this report, but, in summary, the key outcomes in terms of the findings of this evaluation are as follows:

Development of students’ knowledge of Public Art processes and awareness of local Public Art

What did you know/think about public art before we started this project?

Before we started the project I wasn’t aware of the amount of public art there was in Bristol, also the process it goes through and how it arrives at its location.

What has changed – what do you know/think about it now?

I know the amount of meetings and money that go into the final piece, it makes you think of bigger buildings and the process behind it.

(BEC commissioning group student)

I’m now well-educated and knowledgeable about public art. (BEC commissioning group student)

What has changed – what do you know/think about it now?

I think it’s a lot of work to produce it.

It’s hard to get ideas down on paper, it can be very confusing.

I still think public art is cool but I probably look at it and think about it longer.

(Whitefield commissioning group students)

What have been the best things about it?

“Going down town. I didn’t know that there was loads of art stuff there. I live here, but I never noticed any of it before; like the horn bridge, which is good close up, and even the water that goes down the steps; so it was good, looking at things like that, which I’ve never seen before.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)



BEC research trip to Bristol City Centre. ‘Pero’s Bridge’. Photo: Kim Tilbrook

Young people’s voices being listened to and acted upon

What have you got out of the process?

Having my opinions listened to (BEC commissioning group student)

“It’s been good because we got to know more about our new school and what it will be like. At the beginning a man from Skanska came in and showed us pictures and plans and talked to us about what we would want in the new school and then we went to Skanska and saw the new plans that had changed.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

“Lots of things get put onto you, or put onto students, decisions that have been made elsewhere and by others, so it was great that the pupils were involved in decision making.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

“I’ve been more aware of the commissioning group at Speedwell and what they’ve done, and that has been great. At BEC too, students really did manage the public art process, from what I’ve heard.” (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

Young People Developing Greater Confidence and Communication skills

“..the students in the commissioning group have been able to take back information about the development of the public art to the student council and they have given presentations at assemblies, so they have developed presentation skills and skills in group-work, along with problem solving skills and confidence. They have developed the confidence to be able to sit in a meeting and actually speak out, which takes a lot of guts. I take my hat off to our students, they’ve done a great job.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

“The process, for me, has been brilliant; for Sam it’s been great, especially in terms of his communication development, he has really shined.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

Young people developing a sense of Responsibility

“Their first job was to appoint an artist and their reaction to this was wonderful, ranging from complete surprise to excitement. They responded incredibly and the responsibility, that they realised they had, had huge impact upon them, just in one hour, which was thrilling and quite magical to observe. Between them they then went through a proper interview process and appointed Walter Jack.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)



Voting for the artists at HEC Photo: Kim Tilbrook

What have been the best things about it?

“Knowing more about what’s going to happen in our new school and whose going to be doing it. When I go back to class after the public art stuff I’ve been able to tell my class what’s happening and show them the photos that Kim put on a CD for me, which is good, because they want to know what’s happening and so it’s good to be the one who can tell everyone else about it.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

“I feel like I was helping all the people in the school, it was special job to do. I’m older but I want to help people my age and younger ones too. We did an assembly to tell everyone else in the school about it. Jordan showed photos and I talked. We did assemblies on Fridays whenever anything had happened. We showed Loben around the school and introduced him to everyone.” (New Fosseway commissioning group student)

Young people developing a sense of Ownership

“One of our girls is constantly checking with Kim to find out what’s happening. It’s given them ownership of things, which is great as they are representatives of Hartcliffe and feed back to year eight about it...” (Abigail Bush: Art Teacher: HEC)

“For the students, the experience has been very powerful. It has really given them a sense of ownership, engagement and responsibility. They have realised that they are representing the school community and so it’s been an incredible experience for them, with lots of positive outcomes.” (Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant)

Engaging meaningfully with and having positive impact for the wider school community

“I think when I was approached to do it I thought they had the wrong person, because I thought it was art and didn’t think I’d be much help, but the experience has been really good. I’m really glad I’ve done it, the experience has been brilliant.” (Marie Weaver: Parent Governor and Ambassador Parent Volunteer: Teyfant School)

Has the project had impact on you or the way you do things?

“It has had impact in that I understood the project and I didn’t think I would, so yes, it has had an impact, as in “yes, I can do this and do understand this.”” (Marie Weaver: Parent Governor and Ambassador Parent Volunteer: Teyfant School)

“Everyone in the school knows who Loben is and I think the relationship with him will keep on going. It’s great to have someone external coming in who isn’t a ‘pist’: e.g. a therapist, as we have an open door policy here and welcome visitors, but most of them tend to be ‘pists’.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

The commissioning groups have been active in designing the processes by which the wider school has input. For example, at Whitfield students designed postcards to distribute to the school that asked everyone to consider a variety of questions about 'family', 'fantasy', 'poetry' and 'life'. The students then collated the responses, which have been edited and the words taken from the responses have been used to make the final work. At BBA the students used a similar process to collect three wishes from everyone attending or working at the school.

The extent to which the wider school community felt their contributions were valued led to those contributions being well considered:

"I could have anticipated having to edit out hundreds of wishes to win the lottery, but it wasn't like that, there were endlessly different wishes, which are like a spotlight on humanity." (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)



Artist Gordon Young and the 'Wall of Wishes' Photo: Kim Tilbrook

Making connections between schools and across schools

“We worked with different people from our school who we wouldn’t have known otherwise because we are in different year groups.” (Whitefield commissioning group students)

This has been particularly relevant at HEC where Teyfant pupils and New Fosseway pupils will move to the new building in 2009 and so this project has

been important in creating opportunities for pupils to become familiar with each other and with the different schools:

"It's been nice, I like it. We met new people, at Teyfant and Hartcliffe School. ...We went to the library at Hartcliffe school, which is very big and I liked being in such a big library because it has more books in it." (New Fosseway Commissioning group student)

"Everyone has made long term friendships through the project. I know I will continue to work with Lorraine and women from Teyfant. Now I know them and so I can chat to them at parents' evenings and other events, which is great because it breaks down boundaries between the schools, and that's just because of meeting them through the project. More projects like this would mean you wouldn't have the barriers between schools that often exist. It's sad that it has finished.' (Abigail Bush: Art Teacher at HEC)

"I was only part time last year so being involved in this project made me feel more part of the school and also working with people from the other schools has given me the chance to make connections with those schools, and plan ways of working together, so, for example, the students here will now be going to run workshops at New Fosseway." (Abigail Bush: Art Teacher at HEC)

Furthermore, all involved have been successful and developed skills in working as a team:

"It seems to have been very successful, especially given that the group is representing three different schools and is made up of people from a range of backgrounds. It has been very successful in that the group has, firstly, worked together well as a team and secondly, have managed to make the process come to a conclusion / outcome." (Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant School)

4.7 Familiarisation with workplace practices and artists' processes and the development of life skills

"Working with various professionals was and is an enjoyable and inspiring experience." (BEC commissioning group student)

"Young people have been empowered through this process to make those requests and to know how organisations work. For example, they now understand how to book a room or arrange a meeting and that diaries need to be booked, which is a life changing set of skills, so it has been a life changing opportunity for them. It has taught them lots, very early on in their lives, about communication and responsibility." (Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant School)

"They have enjoyed it and it's given them an opportunity they wouldn't have had otherwise, to develop key life skills. For example, how they have interviewed people, to appoint an artist, which is an experience that all children

would benefit from. Now, when they go to an interview themselves, they'll know what it is like to be doing the interviewing and will understand the process much more clearly because of that. That was an important experience for them.” (Marie Weaver: Parent Governor and Ambassador Parent Volunteer: Teyfant School)

4.8 Positive Impact on Partners' and Artists' Approaches

Has the project had impact on you or the way you do things?

“Yes, it certainly convinced me, once again, of the value of young peoples' voices and parents' voices too. The consequential thing is that my management style is probably less controlling in terms of how far I feel comfortable with 'letting go'. It has been a bit scary, but it has proved that it is possible to not have so much control and for the outcomes of that to be positive.” (Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant School)

“For the facilities managers there's potential impact regarding the cost of looking after the building because young people's ownership and involvement means that young people will look after the building more, so it should consequently be cheaper to look after and maintain. That's part of the rationale and justification for the process, but I haven't been able to find the relevant person to articulate that to at Skanska, to highlight to them the potential cost savings there are in the long term when using a participatory process.” (Matt Little: Director: RiO)

“I don't think anyone at Skanska knew what we would get, re Public art, as it's the first time I've done anything like it. It's also the first time I've worked with schools and so we are now well armed for future school build projects, which we have lined up, so it has been a very good and useful experience.” (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

Has the project had impact on your own practice or approach?

“Yes, it has helped us to design a successful process for working with a client group, whether students or otherwise, where they can steer the work, so we should be able to use that to inform the next project we do, where ever that may be.” (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

“In this work, during the early days we thought we would be determining what the public art was a lot more, but Kim turned it on its head, so the pupils were defining what the public art was and we were agreeing it, instead of the other way around, and that has been fine.” (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

“...in the future, we won't draw up plans for the prospective public art element of a new building before the artist is involved, to ensure the public art element and building fabric are fully realised in their own right. So the artist will need to be involved at an earlier point in time so that there's still a blank canvas when they start their work.” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

Has the project had impact on your own practice or approach?

"The context of a sound installation that could be linked over four different sites is a pretty unique 'canvas' to be given... The integration of the installations and making it interactive, the piece has become in effect, a playable and updateable cross-campus instrument. This concept has caused me to think and apply my skills and experiences, in new and (hopefully!) exciting ways." (Loben Tatlow: Artist: HEC)

"It's half informed the way that RiO has developed and how you can make a little bit of public money make a big difference. It's been really helpful to inform wider thinking about work for Creative Partnerships and RiO, about constructing partnerships where there is public and private money involved and a bit of Creative Partnerships money too. We are doing more work like it now so it has been useful in informing our thinking about such work. " (Matt Little: Director: RiO)

4.9 Raising Skanska's Profile and Reputation amongst the School Community and Beyond



Gordon Brown and the 'Wall of Wishes' Photo: The Times

"All the PR at BBA has the wall of wishes in it; it's been the focus for a lot of the press and TV coverage and so it has had quite an impact upon us." (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

What has working with Skanska and the architects been like?

“We’ve always invited everyone into the school and they’ve been very obliging, they’ve always come in, throughout different aspects of the build. It’s the first time I’ve worked with a big multinational company and I’ve been surprised at how approachable they have been. Working with them has been very good; they’ve come in and talked to people. A few years ago we had the new lower school site built and there wasn’t any involvement in that like there has been on this project and we do have specific needs so it is important that the young people here are involved. We learnt this through the previous build of the new lower school and fortunately it was a few years ago so we have had chance to think about it and realise what could have been better.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

4.10 The flexibility of the process has ensured an inclusive and responsive approach

“They (the artists) were very flexible in terms of their ideas and their process; for example, we talked quite a lot outside of school time, about the work.” (Sue Willicombe and Helen Harman: Teachers at Whitefield)

“It’s been different for different pupils. For example, Sam has enjoyed every minute of it and it’s opened up avenues for friendship and extended his community; he has got to know young people who live near him because he lives closer to HEC and Teyfant than to here. Jordan, it turns out, is a great photographer, so he has found a hidden talent and has made links with people. Jordan has struggled sometimes with afternoon meetings and in depth discussions but photography has been a great thing to come out of it. It’s been good in different ways for different pupils.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

“I have been trying to keep the concept as flexible as possible, while at the same time, keeping it in touch and informed with the technical, practical and financial limitations.” (Loben Tatlow: Artist: HEC)

It is clear that students have been able to get very different things out of the process, for further example:

Please state 3 things you have got out of being involved in the project?

(BEC commissioning group student 1)

- Being involved in the process
- Having my opinions listened to
- Getting to interview an artist

(BEC commissioning group student 2)

- Meeting with Skanska
- Designing for the first time
- Seeing the prototype



BEC Commissioning Group and the 'bunchedupbench' prototype Photo: Kim Tilbrook

4.11 Relevant and Informed Public Artwork

"...the Wishing Wall is a real showstopper and it's a real reflection of input from all sorts of people from BBA; students, staff, builders, etc.. Visitors always stop and look at it on their way into the school, in silence; there's some terrifically powerful stuff in that work." (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

What are your thoughts about the final public art work?

"I think it's fantastic. I love it. I think that the concept really suited our school, as a specialist language college, and in terms of our commitment to student voice." (Theresa Thorne: Head Teacher: Bristol Metropolitan College (Previously Whitefield))

5. Issues highlighted through evaluation

5.1 Timing

“We would make sure there was more time, we needed more time to think about it and really could have done with at least a year to work on it before it was due to be installed.” (BBA commissioning group students)

“We’re not sure why it’s taken quite so long, but we are used to working within a shorter timescale and there being a greater sense of urgency; without this urgency it is easy to overrun. Because the deadline seemed so far off at the beginning there wasn’t any sense of urgency about finishing it. There was always a window, at the end of the build, for us to install the work, but then something happened towards the end of the process to delay things for a month and so now we have missed that window.” (Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce: Artists: Whitefield)

“The reality of our situation is that we have to put buildings like this together and given everything involved and the number of people involved it can be very complicated to ensure that the public art and the space it will occupy are feasible in the wider plans and that the practicalities, such as having power supplies in the right place, are confirmed early on enough to be able to plan for and realise during the construction process.” (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

“The process has been quite protracted and it’s not quite resolved yet, which is cutting it close to the deadline, which concerns me. Kim’s deadline seems to have been compromised.” (Alun Hopkins: Skanska: Whitfield)

“I think at HEC, it could have started earlier. The work Loben is doing could have started two or three months earlier. This would have helped in terms of being able to confirm the location for the final work a bit earlier. It was easier at Bristol Brunel Academy because the final work could be just put up on the walls, whereas here there will be four different units which all need to be hard wired in.” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at Bristol Brunel Academy and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

“I do think that the artists don’t really understand the building we are making here or that they understood the space they were making work for at an early stage, which hasn’t helped the commissioning group.” (Alun Hopkins: Skanska: Whitfield)

“It had to be changed for reasons to do with health and safety, so it was out of our control. We didn’t feel that involved in it because it was a quick decision that had to be made, so we weren’t involved.” (Whitefield commissioning group student)

“Timing is so important. What we are doing pre artist selection is to try to allow for art designs in the plans, but that means guessing where the art will be, so

for example, at Bristol Brunel Academy, formerly Speedwell we allowed for art to be incorporated into the main entrance glazing, but in the end that wasn't where it was located. This makes it difficult to make an accurate financial allowance for the artwork and building fabric where they are combined as well as leading to practical issues, because there is often a mismatch between what we anticipate and what actually happens." (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

"They should get the design finalised in plenty of time before it has to be installed, to make sure that it can actually happen." (Whitefield commissioning group student)

"It's important to recognise that it isn't any one person's fault that the construction timelines haven't been realised, that's been everyone's fault, and has been about not fully understanding each other's processes." (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

5.2 Fulfilling all Expectations of the process

"I'd have liked to have made more things, made a part of the actual piece of work." (Whitefield commissioning group student)

"It was never the intention to have a hundred authors." (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

"...what I was hoping and possibly expecting was that how the process would work would be to harness the talent that there is in schools. There's amazing talent in the schools and I was hoping that that talent would be harnessed and that through involvement of an artist, as a facilitator, the work of the students could be developed into the final artwork. I expected the work of the students, designing, making and locating the finished products would happen through the support of the facilitating artists. I had hoped that there would be shared authorship of the work, that it would be as much the students' work as the artists. I think that the Wishing Wall is just this, the students feel real ownership of it, but that there has been a missed opportunity in some other instances." (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

5.3 Minding the gaps

"At some point Walter and Paul took away the ideas the students had developed and came back with an idea. There was a bit of a gap between the two, in that the conceptual design process, whereby the artists transform a set of ideas into an idea for a piece of work, happened outside of time with the students. It would have been good for the students to see the link between the ideas they had and how that was worked up through a design process, but there are limitations around cost impacting on such things." (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

“They should get students more involved, as involved as they can be, to actually come up with the design.” (Whitefield commissioning group student)

5.4 Fulfilling Expectations of the final work

Did you get what you wanted out of the project?

“The group responded by saying that they mostly had. However, they thought that their aspirations re the dream / aspire piece was not quite realised because it hadn’t been executed as well as the idea.” (BBA Commissioning group students in the project evaluation diary)



The final work installed at Whitefield: Photo: commissioning group student

“It’s not completely as was originally conceived and the three dimensional version would have been stunning. Towards the end of the process we have had endless meetings about the fitting of the work and have had to compromise on the design, for technical reasons, which is a shame.” (Theresa Thorne: Head Teacher: Bristol Metropolitan College (Previously Whitefield))

“I am disappointed with final art work and with the fact that we ended up with our backs up against the wall and had to make a really hurried decision with no real alternatives. I think we ended up in this situation for several reasons; Skanska could have been more helpful earlier by mentioning light fittings etc. This meant that Ralph and Steve then had to alter the design and then approached the design company right at the last minute, which then brought up the problems of the materials being used.” (Sue Willicombe: Art teacher: Whitefield)

“I’m pleased with it, it may not be made using the materials we had originally intended, but it’s still the original concept of layering words and it is still the original words so it still makes a dramatic impact, because of what they said.” (Ralph Hoyte: Artist: Whitefield)

“I think it still looks good, but the first thing I noticed was that it’s flat, which means there aren’t any shadows or anything, but it still looks good.” (Whitefield commissioning group student)

“I think it still looks good; the original designs were better, but obviously, because of the health and safety issues, we couldn’t have put it up. I think though that the colours could have been reconsidered when it turned out that it had to be a two dimensional piece. There is too much grey and it doesn’t really jump out at you when you walk in, like the three dimensional version would have, so there needs to be more colour to make it stand out instead.” (Whitefield commissioning group student)



The final work installed at Whitefield: Photo: commissioning group student

5.5 Limitations of the budget

“We have had to cut back on length for example, and height and have had to simplify it, but we have been able to do that without losing any of the expressive quality of the shapes and curves. So the issues have been like manufacturing issues and how much is actually possible within the budget.” (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

“The cost of health and safety, having to have the rubber crumb floor beneath the bench has limited the amount of bench that can be paid for. It wouldn’t have taken much more than what we’ve got to have still pursued the original concept, because at the points where it became costly we could have made it disappear back into the ground; that was part of the concept; but it has been limited beyond this.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

5.5 Different school processes of recruiting students to the commissioning group.

The process of recruiting students for the commissioning groups seems to have varied across schools in terms of transparency. The groups that have been most sustained and engaged are those who have been voted into role by the wider school:

“The only issue with the process really was that we had no input into deciding who the students would be who were involved. I was just given a list of students, and I don’t even know where that list came from or what it was based on. Some of the pupils on that list weren’t so interested and some were quite negative or just didn’t turn up, so it would have been better if we had been able to select students differently.” (Sue Willicombe and Helen Harman: Teachers at Whitefield)

“I think we chose the right pupils to be involved, who are willing to put their views forward and with the short time frame it’s been important to have the right pupils.” (Abigail Bush: Art Teacher: HEC)

5.6 Clarity of Scope, Integration and Feasibility

“There were lots of opportunities talked about at the start, like the fence, and there seemed to be almost five or six projects that we could have done, but then we realised we could only do one project in the time...The idea that we might have input into the designs of elements of the building such as the fence were quite a distraction at the initial stages of the work.” (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

“One of the things we were asked to do was to consider how the work we made could be part of the existing school design, for example, to design seats or screens, and we were encouraged to do that on the basis that it would help the money go further, as there was additional money for those elements. We tried to do that but it didn’t happen as the designs were actually fixed and / or there was no extra budget attached to those things for them to be bespoke... So there were some red herrings swimming about.” (Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce: Artists: Whitefield)

5.7 Clarity re Roles and Communication between Partners

“The thing that has happened is that the lighting has been fitted in the very spaces where the art is going, which wasn’t in the plans we saw, and so we have had to redesign the work to fit into the space there is, taking the lighting into consideration, which has set us back by four weeks.” (Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce: Artists: Whitefield)

“We realised eventually that Theresa, the head teacher, and the others involved at the school, hadn’t seen the plans either. It was just the planners

who seemed to have received them and we thought everyone would then see them, but it seems that the commissioning group didn't even get to see them.” (Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce: Artists: Whitefield)

“We should have kept in closer touch with the architects to avoid the issue with the lighting, which was not what we had hoped for....There was no direct line of communication.” (Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce: Artists: Whitefield)

“There was a minor issue with the hanging of the sculpture at BBA, we thought it was meant to hang straight and the artist confirmed it should be on a slant – It's differences of opinion like these that make the design process worth while!” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

“At Whitefield, for example, when the final plans came through for the work, the designs for the panels were such that the work would have gone through the ceiling by about three quarters of a meter. There must have been a gap in the communication between the construction team, planning team and architects, and the artists.” (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

“Skanska is a huge company and so there are lots of people involved who don't even know each other, such as the builders and the building facilities managers, who are in different teams. So things have to be first agreed at the front end, with the planners, which then has to be conveyed to the builders, who don't necessarily know anything about what is going on with the public art element of the work.” (Matt Little: Director: RiO)

“There have been so many teams involved, such as Skanska design, the architects and the artists, that communication has been an issue and I think there needed to be a more holistic approach from the beginning. However, it may be that it is in the nature of the approach or process for there to be such issues, when the final piece of work isn't predetermined. There were layers of issues, for the artist as much as anyone else, regarding the complexity of the design process and project management.” (Theresa Thorne: Head Teacher: Bristol Metropolitan College (Previously Whitefield))

“I spent a lot of time working with someone from Wilkinson Eyre, but then the construction manager more or less dismissed their input into it in one sentence, so, as a public artist in that arena you don't know who to listen to and who not to listen to.” (Ralph Hoyte: Artist: Whitefield)

“It would be useful to have a nominated mentor or contact person within the client body, whether that's an architect or an architect's assistant, whose specific role is to bear the artist in mind. For example, when the light fittings were decided upon, if there had been someone present whose specific brief included keeping an eye on the artists plans in relation to the construction plans, they might have been able to flag up the issue that the position of the lighting would cause for us.” (Ralph Hoyte: Artist: Whitefield)

5.8 Financial Processes

“Skanska didn’t seem to know or appreciate how artists work or have the financial systems in place to be able to pay artists easily. They can’t treat artists like they treat other contractors because other contractors tend to be big organisations that have money to spend up front, but artists tend to need to be paid up front to be able to pay for materials etc., rather than being paid once the work is done. ...For example, the scaffolding hire for installing the work will be about £1000 and we will have to pay that up front and then claim it back, which is problematic for us but would be impossible for some artists who are more on the bread line than us. Skanska don’t want invoices coming in every five minutes, obviously, so it would be better to have some of the money up front.” (Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce: Artists: Whitefield)

“...setting up different contracts and that sort of admin takes a lot of time. It would also be easier if we could contract all the artists through one agency... so that only one system and payment has to be set up instead of many.” (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

“The first thing to do is to get the payment system sorted out because otherwise you are just setting yourself up for bad relations really.” (Ralph Hoyte: Artist: Whitefield)

“I am worried about how long a payment system to pay me took to set up. With this installation, the components and technology will be being ordered from several different sources, and I am concerned that the time factor could have an impact on the production phase on the project.” (Loben Tatlow: Artist: HEC)

5.9 Agreeing Financial Priorities

“...my only criticism would be that a lot of money is spent on agreeing what the public art process will be and that takes money away from the final actual artwork, limiting its scale. But the process has been good I think.” (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

However, what has been indicated through this evaluation is the significance of the process in terms of the success of the projects. So, the process itself should continue to be funded to such an extent to ensure continued success. What might need to happen therefore is for additional money to be allocated to the realisation of the final artwork.

6. ‘Leaving a Mark on the Community’

How can public art facilitate young people's input into the development of new buildings?

"This was a bit frightening from a management point of view, but it's gone extremely well and has been a wonderful experience for those people involved who wouldn't necessarily usually be involved in this type of work. As such it has presented an opportunity for those people to leave a mark on the community."
(Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant School)

The evidence collected indicates that young people in the commissioning groups, across all schools, have a clear sense of their own input into the development of their new school through the process of public art commissioning and development:

"I have learned a lot and also influenced the shape of our new school." (BEC commissioning group student)

"We get to work on how our school would turn out." (Whitefield commissioning group student)

Furthermore, the students have offered insightful feedback indicating the reasons why the specific approach has worked, as a process of consultation, when compared to others:

"Our class was involved in choosing the name for the school. It's been decided that it will be The Bridge Learning Campus. Most of the people in our class were disappointed with the name and wonder why it couldn't just be Hartcliffe or have the name Hartcliffe in it. I'm not disappointed in the work we've done with Loben though, because we got to go out and go to the other schools and talk to other people, like from room 13, so we have had a longer process and more time to properly talk about and agree things, rather than just having a short argument in class about it, like with the school name, where one name just had to be picked really quickly." (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

The artists' approaches have been key to the success of this process, in terms of their sense of value for the commissioning groups' guidance:

"I tried to be respectful of their ideas and to interpret those ideas accurately. I listened to general concepts and to detail; e.g. the macro would be let's do this wall of wishes, the micro would be that they didn't want a formal layout to the wishes, but wanted it higgledy piggledy. I think it's valuable for them to be taken seriously, we've all got certain skills and knowledge and I'm not sure how

often they'd be given this access and these resources and opportunities to work in this way." (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

"We then found ways to come to understand the new building together, such as making a cardboard model of the new school that filled the entire sixth form common room. That helped us to see how the spaces would fit together and we also got the students to use it to show us where, when and how they moved through the space of the school and how they used different areas in and outside of the building. This was a very useful exercise in terms of thinking about what areas we might make the work for. It was a particularly effective activity." (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)



The cardboard school model made by students at BEC

"We did activities with the students, such as the young people cutting up images of the bench and we got them to work in groups to locate the benches on a plan of the school and think about where they could be." (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

"The process actually started during the workshop at the final interview... I wanted the 'users' to have as much input to the creative process as possible. I had designed the workshop tasks to act as a way for the commissioning group to gain a better idea of what I do, what they wanted and the possibilities and limitations beyond that. I also wanted the workshop to expand and add to the basic idea and to generally form a clearer picture of what we are all collectively aiming for. It helped establish the conceptual and technical elements of the project and that these 2 distinct areas needed to be developed jointly." (Loben Tatlow: Artist: HEC)

Young people's ownership has been made explicit through the process in ways that have heightened awareness of that ownership:

“...when we presented that idea to the group they weren’t really interested in it because they wouldn’t be able to interact with it as it would be too high up. The fact that we then went away and came up with a completely different idea showed them that their opinion was important and would actually determine what happened, so they had a real sense of ownership from then on.” (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)



One of Loben Tatlow's presentations to the commissioning group. Photo: Roz Hall

The potential for the process to be successful, in terms of young people taking ownership of and steering the project, has been enabled by young peoples' roles being established as central at the outset, through their initial research and involvement in the appointment of artists:

“The young people had worked with Kim to explore public art before we were appointed so they were able to give us a clear brief about what they wanted.” (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

“Before day one they (the students) were involved in thinking about how we were going to take the project forward. They had ownership of the project because they were thinking about it before we even knew about it. It's important that, for this school site, the young people have ownership, which will filter through into future generations, so its important to do everything you can do to make sure they can be proud of the building and their role in it.” (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

“At some point in the process the students sense of ownership was such that they began talking about Walter as ‘our artist’ and introducing him by saying ‘this is our artist.’” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

The process has also been identified as successful because of the extent to which everyone involved was learning together, rather than any one being an expert:

"I didn't know what I hoped for because I'd never done anything like it before."
(Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

"There was a good, in-depth process of involvement from the point where none of us knew what was wanted, to developing a design. We are still involving the students regarding the practicalities of where the final pieces go." (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

"...we are all extending our practices, by solving problems together. It solves itself as it goes along; as things emerge you have to solve them and if people buy in they move the work in directions you might not have envisaged. So you have to keep an open mind on things and you have to be working with people who also understand that." (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

The group also said that they hadn't been sure what to expect from the project and therefore weren't sure what they would get out of it. However, they added that they hadn't expected to necessarily get that much out of the project, but that they had actually got a lot out of it. (BBA commissioning group students)

"I know that our students have done lots of work with Room 13 so they know what's going on and what to ask and who to ask, so I've learnt a lot from them."
(Abigail Bush: Art Teacher: HEC)

"We are all novices in this context. If you were doing a school magazine it would be similar, lots of people doing different parts to it. That would be the nearest thing you would have in a school context." (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

Feedback from students who were not members of the commissioning group has also been very positive, with over two thirds of respondents stating that they had been involved, and indicating what was valuable for them about that contribution, for example:

Have you enjoyed contributing your wishes to the Public Art project?
Yes.

What was important about making that contribution?

People know how I feel. (Non commissioning group Student at BBA)

What was important about making that contribution?

I had my say (Non commissioning group Student at BBA)

Do you think the finished work represents the school?

Yes because it is about everyone

What do you think is important about the finished work?

That everyone has had their say. (Non commissioning group Student at BBA)

Furthermore, the wider school community has also had input, whereby staff and parents have also contributed through the project processes:

“I will never forget the impact of seeing that work for the first time, and then subsequently seeing the faces of the students when they first saw it, and seeing how moved they were by it. It’s one of those most precious moments in life, which you never forget. What was good was that you knew it came from them, from that whole school community, not just the students, but the whole school community.” (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

“I was listening to staff like the cleaners too and people were really positive about having their own wishes up on the wall.” (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

“The process also involved the wider school, not just the commissioning group; for example we ran a workshop for parents too.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

“An important part of the brief was the inclusion and input from the users. The commissioning body is my first point of interaction with the schools, but I was also keen to set up a series of day visits with the individual partners. This would increase the input/ feed back from not only the students, but I also wanted to record responses from teachers, support staff, parents and governors.” (Loben Tatlow: Artist: HEC)



Loben Tatlow and a member of the commissioning group at HEC. Photo: Kim Tilbrook

The way in which the wider school community has been involved has been specific to each project, as outlined previously. The different methods for engaging the wider community have reflected the commissioning groups priorities in terms of the platforms and devices used:

“It was good because he (Loben) came into our school, took three people from each class and we interviewed them and he interviewed us and then we just went through the school and asked people what they wanted for the new school.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

“Loben brought in and used his drum machine and watched a video and looked at pictures. Then we recorded our voices and we asked other pupils questions and Loben recorded their voices and what they were saying they wanted in the new school.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

There has also been apparent impact on students who have been aware of the commissioning groups’ roles and have identified alternative opportunities for input into the new building as a consequence:

“It made me feel special and more involved with the school and the new building. My whole family is involved now, my brother is doing something with the archaeologist and my sister was involved in choosing the person who is in charge of the school grounds.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

Meetings with Skanska and the architects have ensured a sense of the final artwork being a physical reality. These exchanges and the site visits that have taken place have also established an important opportunity for direct exchange with the design team, as is evidenced in section 9.



BBA site visit. Photo: Kim Tilbrook

7. **‘Giving the Building a Voice’**
How can public art processes ensure the cultural identity of a school is expressed?

“I said I wanted the building to have a mouth / voice and so that was how it started.”
(New Fosseway Commissioning group student)

“What Loben has given us is a vehicle for future generations and it is an ever-changing piece of art. But the concept of it is ‘giving the building a voice’, which is key. It will be part of the building and its future use, and so part of the community. The new school is a valuable community building. Skanska is about bricks and mortar; they usually concentrate on the bricks and mortar; this is about hearts and minds and how a school is much more than bricks and mortar, and as a community building rather than just a bricks and mortar building, it is about the message that building conveys.

“One of the New Fosseway pupils, what he wanted to do, was to ‘give the building a voice’. To me, what public art has done is to have given the building a voice and ears. It has brought together five very different educational establishments and what we’ve ended up with is something that articulates this and in that way the finished work goes beyond the brief.” (Gus Grimshaw: Head teacher: Teyfant School)

In feedback gathered by on line questionnaires and through face to face interviews, at BBA, over three quarters of the respondents stated that they thought the work represented the school. For example:

Do you think the finished work represents the school?

Yes, it shows what the school is about. (Eleanor Lee: Marketing manager: BBA)

Does the finished work inspire you?

It is an inspirational piece and also a piece of work that helps people entering the building to realise that the school is about the children. It’s a place that I want to send my children. David Hyland (BSF Director)

Do you think the finished work represents the school?

Yes, because of the broad contributions, ‘it’s ours’.

Does the finished work inspire you?

Yes, because it shows who we are. (Roshella Benning: Product Coordinator: BCC)

The important aspects of the process by which the work has been developed to express the cultural identity of the schools, have been highlighted by students as:

- **Appointing the artists**
The primary role of the commissioning group in appointing the artists.
- **The brief**

The development of the brief and its connection to the wider school community and ethos.

- **Representing the whole school**

The extent to which the commissioning group's input and that of the wider school community informs or directs the work.

Appointing the artists

As has been evidenced previously the students role in appointing the artists has been pivotal to their sense of ownership. The research, which students conducted prior to artist appointment, and the transparency of the voting processes have ensured that the artists who have been appointed have been pertinent in terms of the school cultural identity.



The vote results at BEC Photo: Kim Tilbrook

The brief

Commissioning group students have developed the brief for artists on the basis of their research and input from the wider school. When the brief has been informed by the school's ethos and aims a valuable synergy has developed:

"As a model, it relates well to the schools approach, with regard to the democratic nature of student selection, and the significance of promoting students' voices, because we emphasise and believe in the promotion of the student voice, as pivotal to students developing a sense of responsibility. It is one of the 'nine pillars' that form the ethos of the school and therefore the project, and the commissioning group process, fits well with the schools approach and ethos." (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)



The brief developed by the HEC commissioning group students Photo: Kim Tilbrook

The role of the head teacher in informing this brief through reference to the school ethos was key at BBA:

"The group talked about how the new head Mr. Difinizio has wanted a focus on aspirations for the new school." (BBA commissioning group students in project evaluation diary)

"The head briefed the group; I don't know if he realised it; but he gave them a pep talk about his vision, which was what the kids plugged into. It was a verbal brief. It was very aspirational stuff about the future and looking upwards and

being positive. Their responses to that pep talk meant that it was the brief; the kids decided that. The wall and the neon is rooted in that pep talk; the kids responding to that meant that the group came up with the idea of the wishes wall through a subjective process, whereby one student was confident enough to share her 'supposings'; i.e. 'suppose we do this', 'suppose we do that'. As the artist I was interested in her 'supposings' and she sold it to enough of us for it to become the focus of the project." (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

Representing the whole school

The extent to which students' input and that of the wider school community informs or directs the work has been essential to ensure the whole school identity is reflected in the final artwork. The mechanisms for engaging with the wider school community and the commissioning group's role in communicating with the wider school have been key to this aspect of the project. As has also been previously outlined and evidenced, wider school communities have thereby had meaningful input into the work, which has acted to ensure that the work is reflective of the school's identity.

Furthermore, the sense of responsibility that commissioning group students have had about their role has ensured that they have represented the concerns of their fellow students:

"I said we wanted it down lower than it was first of all so that the really little children can reach it and so it will be lower down." (New Fosseway Commissioning group student)

- 8. 'You Can Do Anything You Like'**
How can public art processes help to build expectations and aspirations for the school of the new building?

What do you think is important about the finished work?
That you can do anything you like.
(Non-commissioning group student: BBA)

The outcomes of this evaluation have indicated that expectations and aspirations for the school of the new building have been heightened through the project in several ways:

- Raising aspirations through the final artwork and through plans for final artwork.
- Developing expectations through familiarity and ownership of the new Building.
- Developing Students' own sense of potential role in school community and their potential to influence and inform school processes.
- Developing students' sense of responsibility for the new school and its development.

8.1 Raising aspirations through the final artwork and through the plans for final artwork

What do you think is important about the finished work?
Looks good for the school. (Non-commissioning group student: BBA)

"One thing about the wall of wishes that was great was that it cut through any negativity, so you get people using a certain part of their brain, that's not about problems but solutions and so the student who came up with that, whether she realised it or not, she managed to find a way of getting people to think positively." (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

Does the finished work inspire you?
"Yes it does inspire. It's very interesting." (Eleanor Lee: Marketing manager: BBA)

Does the finished work inspire you?
"Yes, we're very inspired by it." (Student and mother: BBA)

What do you think is important about the finished work?
"That it is the thoughts and aspirations of our pupils." (Mark Giltsoff: Skanska Project Director)

What do you think of the finished Public Art work?
"I think the art of the school now looks much better than Speedwell so it's a good thing for everyone." (Non commissioning group Student at BBA)

What do you think is important about the finished work?

“That it inspires the pupils inside school.” (Non commissioning group Student at BBA)

“When we had the bench mock up, that Walter made, in reception, we collected students’ comments, and used a fresh sheet of flip chart paper every day because it would always be full of comments by the end of a day. The comments were overwhelmingly positive and were ‘wow’ and so I think it will be very well received and I think it will be good for a very long time.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)



The ‘bunchedupbench’ design

8.2 Developing Expectations through Familiarity and Ownership of the New Buildings

“I’m looking forward to seeing the installation and seeing our ideas in the new school.” (Whitefield commissioning group student)

“The school council and the head students went to the new building for the topping out ceremony and me and Shannon went too and saw how it’s going up and the glass going in and where the classrooms will be. A few people spoke at the event and said what was happening and so me and Shannon were able to tell more people about it, and the school council could go back and tell their classes about it too. Dawn Primarolo and Helen Holland from the council were there and Mr Davis, the new school principle. So I’ve met him now and wouldn’t have known who he was otherwise.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

“Our pupils have been working with some intense special needs children during the project and our pupils are now far more compassionate and understanding because the experience has given them far more understanding. It’s given our pupils a greater understanding of what inclusion is about, which is one of the aims of the new campus, and the schools coming together, and this is the first indication of how that might be successful.” (Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant School)

The commissioning groups have also had opportunities to become familiar with the new building through site visits and the architects sharing of designs and models:



Viewing the architects' model at HEC Photo: Kim Tilbrook

Familiarity with a new building is especially significant given the sense of nostalgia many students will have for their old school:

“It will be quite sad when Teyfant gets knocked down because I’ve been here since nursery. It’s old but it’s our school and a few months after we leave it will be knocked down and we will have to get used to the new school, which will be quite complicated.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

8.3 Developing Students’ own sense of potential role in school community and their potential to influence and inform school processes.

- “Working with the artist meant that we could see it coming to life; it made it a real experience, with a very real outcome
- We had to think about it as something that really would be made and installed so we had to think about something that would actually be do-able and had to realise what we could and couldn't do” (BBA Commissioning group students)

“Jordan wanted one of the corner type spaces to be a place where people could sit down quietly, like a quiet area, but we thought that people could be bullied there. So now there will be a quiet space inside the new building.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

“My hopes were that we were able to produce an interesting piece of public art the people would appreciate. I think we have accomplished this so far.” (BEC commissioning group student)

“I've felt that I'm included in choices about the new building. That's important because no one else really knows and so they look to me and expect me to have ideas for the new school.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

8.4 Developing students' sense of responsibility for the new school and its community.

Students in commissioning groups have indicated their commitment to ensuring the relevance of the public art to the whole school community; nurturing a sense of responsibility:

“One concern had been:

If it would be what other people wanted (Students and staff, although there was a consensus that it was most important that other students liked it.)” (BBA commissioning group students)

“For example, the group that have been fully involved, their relationship with me and with other adults has developed along with their sense of responsibility, so they communicate with adults in a different way and I realise that I now expect other students to rise to that level.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

“It's been great for Jordan too, but in different ways. They have also come back and relayed what they have found out and what they have done to the rest of the school, which has also been very positive.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

9. Conclusions

“I'm interested in what happens when the boxes crumble, so that people in different roles collaborate creatively;

when you increase the definition of creatives, the boxes crumble a lot.... I'm interested in what happens when those boxes crumble because people bring different things to the process that I wouldn't be able to bring; things they can do that I can't." (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

One pivotal aspect of the process, which has not been considered previously here in depth, is partnership working. The following extracts indicate the way in which partnership working, through collaboration and 'learning together', has useful outcomes for all involved. What is also highlighted in the extracts below is the way in which the different roles within the partnership are all crucial to realising a successful process and the important function of all partners meeting together with the commissioning group regularly:

Skanska / Architects / Construction team roles

What has working with Skanska and the architects been like?

"They have gone out of their way to try to involve the students and it doesn't stop at public art, they've invited students to meetings and have been very open and human in their approach. They can see the benefit of engaging with the students and want to listen to the client rather than just feeling that they have to... Skanska have offered so many opportunities, like work experience and organizing and running the construction day. They've participated fully in events such as 'dragon's den' and 'fair trade' and it ticks boxes for them, but it has gone further than that, they've committed an enormous number of days to it.... I fully support, congratulate and thank Skanska for their involvement." (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

What has working with Skanska and the architects been like?

"I think it has been quite good. When they have come to the school, the people who have come have worked with the children quite well; they've interacted with the children brilliantly. They've explained it and re explained it and checked that the children understand, especially with the pupils at New Fosseway; I can't fault Skanska." (Marie Weaver: Parent Governor and Ambassador Parent Volunteer: Teyfant School)

"My experience of working with personal from both Skanska and Wilkinson Eyre Architects has so far been good. They have been welcoming and helpful when ever they can. This relationship is obviously key to how the concept practically and technically engages with the building." (Loben Tatlow: Artist: HEC)

"It was an incredibly tight timeframe and what has been achieved is outstanding. The construction team has been good in terms of realising that too." (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

RiO /Creative Partnerships role

"Kim involved us and made sure she had our opinion of it. If there was a problem they would work on it, so the problem at the moment is how it

connects the whole school together, which we raised as a problem and now Loben will solve the problem.” (Teyfant primary commissioning group student)

“Kim is great for that, as an advocate for listening to people’s voices and opinions and for making the case for the importance of young people’s involvement in the process.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

‘Kim’s been like the glue that’s held it all together.’ (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

“I think that Kim was an additional factor in dealing with the builders, which I was grateful for and which the builders and the school should be grateful for. So I think in that relationship her role is invaluable. The head was great too.” (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

“I think we had a nice group and Kim and Amy did really well and they did leave it to the children to make decisions, like picking the artist. Their roles were essential to make it all work. It wouldn’t have worked without them, they could make children and adults feel comfortable with each other.” (Marie Weaver: Parent Governor and Ambassador Parent Volunteer: Teyfant School)

“I think it worked because of the determination of Kim and Amy from the Architecture centre, they work well together and are a good team.” (Marie Weaver: Parent Governor and Ambassador Parent Volunteer: Teyfant School)

“What has been good has been that CP has acted like a conduit between the pupils and us, whereby Kim has acted as a leader, because she is experienced in work with young people so she is better armed at dealing with pupils than we are, so that’s worked well. For example, we ran a ‘National Construction Day’ at BBA, when we gave a presentation to the pupils and we weren’t used to working with young people so Kim took a lot of the pressure out of that day as she knew what to do and say to get across to the pupils.” (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

“Kim’s commitment has been tremendous, she’s given it 120% and worked in a very positive way, especially with young people, to build relationships and organise everyone.” (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

The artists’ roles.

What has working with the artist been like?

“He is brilliant with children and that is my main concern. He’s proved that he likes working with children and children like him, which is proof of that. I think we picked the right person for the job.” (Marie Weaver: Parent Governor and Ambassador Parent Volunteer: Teyfant School)

What has working with the artist been like?

“Brilliant, he’s lovely. All the pupils like him, he’s approachable and understanding. Staff and pupils were all impressed because we invited him to

the school panto and he came. That showed his commitment and interest, to give up time in the evening like that, which was great. If he came into the school now all the children would say 'hello Loben'. I would like to think that we will have an ongoing relationship with Loben and do more work with him." (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

The schools' roles.

"The liaison with the school has all been really positive and good. They are well organised and the students have been organised well by Sue and Helen. The young people have kept their interest and have kept on coming." (Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce: Artists: Whitefield)

"The commissioning group and the work with the school has worked better than we thought it would, which was down to continuity." (Ralph Hoyte and Steve Joyce: Artists: Whitefield)

Partnership working: the function of meetings

Meetings where all involved have come together have been indicated to be an essential element of partnership working:

"At the meeting we developed the idea so that the bench would travel around the building, going in one wall and out the other side or into the floor and then curving back out again. Everyone had input at that meeting, so, for example, the architect said 'perhaps it could form a canopy here' and the young people suggested it could be the seating in the outdoor eating space." (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)



Meeting at BBA, understanding the architectural drawings. Photo: Kim Tilbrook

10. Recommendations

10.1 Expanding on the model

The approach that has been utilised and developed, through this programme of work, is one that has been identified by a range of partners and participants as a process that could be used as a model:

“Yes, I do think it works as a model.” (Abigail Bush: Art Teacher at HEC)

“Yes, I think it does work as a model.” (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

Feedback has also suggested that such a model could be expanded on in the following ways:

- **The model could be used in other BSF schools:**

“It’s been a really positive experience and one that could be replicated across the country. Students will take ownership if they can see the results of their work.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

- **The Model could be used for the development of bsf school designs:**

“...we could have pupils more engaged in the planning and consultation process. We can learn from the way that Kim has worked to negotiate a relationship with the pupils in our wider consultation processes about the design and planning of the new school buildings.” (Derren Masters: Senior Design Manager: Skanska)

“The process could be usefully extended into the design of the whole building.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

“The complexity of everything has worked against us collaborating and the building itself was actually designed before we started. Sometimes, in other work we do, we’re involved in things at an earlier stage and can have input. It would have been good if this had been the case with this project as we would have had a ‘bigger canvas’.” (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

“(The artists have) brought a very positive energy and strand of work to the project. It would be even better if they had a stronger role, to be more integrated into the design from the outset, rather than just in relation to an applied item. In this way their work could inform the wider plans for the building as well. This would of course demand additional money to fund their longer term and more integrated involvement, but it would be well worth doing, as it would have so much more impact.” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

“One big lesson, which is characteristic of the whole BSF approach, is that there needs to be time for reflection at the start of a project. Public Art needs to be in the profile of the wider rebuilding plans early on.” (Theresa Thorne Head Teacher: Bristol Metropolitan College (Previously Whitefield))

What has working with the pupils been like?

“That’s been very good, it’s great to see it from their perspective; their engagement with the building and them understanding the plans has been really important and has also meant that they have been able to feed their ideas, which have been practical and useful, into the plans.” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

“Involving the commissioning body and artist at an earlier date would mean the concept of linking up the campus physically, symbolically, visually, as outlined in the artist brief, would give the public art element of the build an earlier input in the overall design. Making it more of the fabric of the building.” (Loben Tatlow: Artist: HEC)

- **The students from commissioning groups could develop a role as experts to inform other bsf processes:**

“The commissioning group was fully involved and yes, I think it works as a model. The commissioning group made decisions and had a voice in every step of the way / process. It was good involvement and a good experience because they could see that their voice was being listened to and believed in it as something worthwhile. That is so empowering as a process that it needs to be extended and reflected upon further and articulated more widely. It was a superb experience and now needs extending upon and firming up as a process that can be spelt out and articulated clearly to students, parents and others involved.” (Dave Schofield: Assistant Head Teacher: BEC)

- **The Model could be extended in terms of timing, to involve the commissioning group and artists earlier in the process and post installation:**

“...the artist will need to be involved at an earlier point in time so that there’s still a blank canvas when they start their work.” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

“Our involvement did start a bit late in the day, which was the first learning point.” (Matt Little: Director: RiO)

“Another common hope from the team was for the work to be built upon in the future through the addition of more wishes, from new students and in other areas of the school, so that you come across the wishes throughout the building. However the financial implications of realising this means that it would be difficult. We talked about alternatives such as having a page on the school website where pupils can submit their wishes.” (BBA Commissioning group students)

“There needs to be a big celebration of it when it’s installed so that people are aware of its potential and its capabilities. We need to make sure that everyone understands how it can work, across the schools and how what you do in one school will be heard in the other schools and that we realise and utilise the potential of that. It will be important to see what happens in the long term, how it gets used and if it pays off, which I’m sure it will.” (Abigail Bush: Art Teacher: HEC)

‘It’s just been a complete success in my view and I just hope that something else comes along that we can work with CP on, involving more young people, ideally. It would be great to have large numbers of young people involved and for students to be in an active decision making role, for example, regarding the opening of the new school.’ (Abigail Bush: Art Teacher: HEC)

“It won’t ever be finished, as then it would lose its purpose, it will keep on changing as long as there is a building and pupils.” (Gus Grimshaw: Head Teacher: Teyfant School)

“I like it, it’s good. I think we should have other bits around the rest of the school, odd bits, such as on the stairs, so that it would be a recurring theme throughout the school and there are a lot of empty spaces that it could go in, because at the moment it is just in between the bridges, it doesn’t go into the other clusters.” (Whitefield commissioning group student)

“The decision for the lower school to also move to the new site was only made a month ago and so we didn’t know in time to involve them. We now need to let the pupils in the lower school know what has happened and so Sam and Jordan could do a presentation to the lower school.” (Lorraine Bessex: Learning Support: New Fosseway)

“The issues there have been recently with the light have been perhaps because of Kim’s role no longer being present.” (Gordon Young: Artist: BBA)

“I think it’s important to make sure this happens at HEC too, so, for example, the pupils could be involved in more hands on ways in the design of the casings which house the sound recording/emitting equipment.” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

▪ **Communication between all partners could be extended upon:**

“...apart from contact with Michelle the landscape architect, there hasn’t really been much collaboration with the architects and the ideal project would have seen this aspect being much more collaborative.” (Walter Jack and Paul Channing: Artists: BEC)

“With other projects with a public art element then one of the things I will try to do is to contribute or facilitate is very clear understanding between the ‘public art’ people, who ever they are, and the construction team and to make sure everyone knows what needs to be done when and by whom. It’s a complicated process and PFI projects are very commercial; if they don’t hit the deadline the

penalties are extreme...” (Dick Hibdige: BSF construction advisor, Bristol City Council)

- **PR opportunities presented through the work could be extended upon:**

“The other key thing about the plaques is the amount of publicity and press they have attracted. It has been used in publicity and press releases, pushing the positive spin of the school. Journalists have picked up on young people’s involvement in the work, partly because their involvement is so evident in the words that are on the plaques. The plaques are also a great example of how the process can develop a relevant piece of work because most of the plaques are the actual words of some pupils and you can’t have a much more direct and positive impact than that.” (Chris Donoghue: Project Architect (at BBA and HEC): Wilkinson Eyre)

10.2 This section presents recommendations, based on issues and successes, for the refinement of the process as a model.

Summary Recommendations informed by the issues in section 5:

- Money for artists’ fees should be released by Skanska to Rio at the outset in order to make the payment process easier for all involved.
- A key person with an overview at Skanska should be identified as a central point of contact for all involved, so that all involved know ‘who to ask’, thereby avoiding ‘red herrings’, clarifying scope and feasibility and ensuring clear and consistent communication.
- Direct lines of communication between architects, design and landscape design teams and the artists would make the process smoother in terms of practicalities of installation, etc.
- Architects and landscape architects need to have time written in to the fee structure for exchange and work with artists and commissioning groups and to ensure that site visits take place.
- To extend the timescales of the process and the duration of artists’ and RiO’s involvement, to ensure follow up work can take place beyond installation. (E.g. launch celebration events and extending upon and / or ‘using’ the artwork.)
- To extend the timescale of the process to ensure earlier involvement of the artists (although this should not precede engagement with students and the wider school community) and to increase the artists fee accordingly.
- To develop more embedded evaluation processes that can help to make all aspects of the process explicit; for example through an artists blog, which would articulate the decision making process that takes place outside of contact time and thus ‘mind the gaps’ and ensure a common sense of everyone’s expectations.
- To ensure that the recruitment of students to the commissioning group happens in a transparent and democratic way, through the wider school voting for students to represent the school within the commissioning

group. This also acts to strengthen the wider sense of ownership of the project amongst the school community.

- To allocate part of the budget for teacher supply time to ensure the attendance of teachers and that students are supported to work off timetable on the project.

Summary Recommendations based on the success of the model and the potential to expand it:

- To utilise the model in other contexts.
- To extend the process to incorporate the design of the building itself.
- To continue to ensure that students and the wider school community are involved in the process of appointing an artist.
- To continue to ensure that the 'commissioning group' has opportunity for research into public art prior to appointing an artist.
- To maintain a fluid and flexible process needs in terms of the final artwork and the form it will take.
- To build upon the PR success of work to date through a 'joined up' approach to PR involving all partners and through budgeting for PR.
- To sustain and expend RiO's role, as it has been shown to be pivotal in ensuring cohesion between all partners and therefore in ensuring meaningful partnership working.
- To build upon the roles of the existing commissioning groups as experts in new BSF contexts.
- To extend project timelines to allow for post installation work.
- To build on the potential for students to use the work they do through this process to qualify for a Young People's Arts Award or to be used in other as course work such as GCSE PSHE etc.

10.3 Outline of 'the model' process

- Dissemination across whole school about the opportunity to engage in public art process
- Identification of key teaching staff to support process and arrangements made for cover
- Recruitment of the commissioning group through school voting process
- Research carried out by the commissioning group re Public art and design, including trips to relevant locations
- Skanska identify main personnel as points of contact for project
- Commissioning group develop brief for the artist
- Commissioning group appoint a relevant artist
- Commissioning group and other stakeholders engage with architects and landscape architects through creative activities to input into designs of inside and outside spaces
- Skanska provides RiO with artists' fees and project manager fees, etc. and retains the identified fabrication and installation costs for direct contracting purposes
- Commissioning group and other stakeholders engage with architects and landscape architects through CABE's DQI and Spaceshaper tools

and other creative activities to input into designs of inside and outside spaces

- Skanska provides RiO with artists' fees and project manager fees, etc. and retains the identified fabrication and installation costs for direct contracting purposes
- Commissioning group and artist meet regularly with construction team, architects and Bristol City Council representatives
- Commissioning group devise ways of ensuring input from wider school community with support from RiO representative and the artist
- Commissioning group develop plans for evaluation of project with support from RiO representative and external evaluator
- Commissioning group guide the artists to develop relevant artwork
- Artist develops work that reflect culture of school through input from commissioning group and wider school community
- Artist and commissioning group keep diaries or blogs of the process to make it explicit to all others involved
- Commissioning group students write and develop presentations about the process and its outcomes, to communicate with wider school
- Students use diaries, blogs and other evidence of involvement to qualify for an Arts Award
- The work is celebrated upon installation and the opportunity utilised to gather feedback from the whole school community
- Partners work together to utilise and extend upon PR opportunities such as the one above
- The artist facilitates post installation workshops to use the work in ways related to the curriculum and to expand upon the work (e.g. producing more wishes plaques / adding new sounds to the sound installations)
- All involved engage in dialogue about process to inform evaluation report
- Partners work together to disseminate the evaluation report and other outcomes of the work



The BBA Commissioning group and the 'Wall of Wishes.' Photo: Kim Tilbrook