

Milton Keynes West - Public Art

Creative Digital Platform and Archive Brief

1. Project Summary

Milton Keynes Council is seeking to appoint a digital artist/creative practice to develop an online platform that will be a creative digital resource for Milton Keynes West – the largest development site in Milton Keynes. The digital platform will connect with existing websites and social media platforms in the area and offer opportunities for engagement and a point of information for residents and artists undertaking commissions. Crucially it will create a lasting archive of the delivery of the area's public art plan and wider developments such as the open space, community facilities and allotments as projects evolve and different elements are delivered.

Our aspiration is that this project will encourage the local community to engage with their area and the public art process. It will be a living archive, with the ability to be added to as things progress, and then to be a legacy - a timeline with the archives of each project embedded within it. Creating this resource offers opportunities for the local schools as they explore their area and its story, it is key that they can connect with the platform.

We are looking to appoint a digital artist/creative practice. The appointed practitioner will demonstrate a commitment to and understanding of co-creation and experience of using digital platforms in creative and innovative. They will present recommendations for design, site map and long-term hosting. It is envisaged that it will capture elements of the heritage of the site, current context, future scenarios and overall masterplan, in order to deliver an engaging and original experience, that can make connections across the site and with neighbouring areas.

2. Project Background & Context

Bordering existing communities, Milton Keynes West is the largest development site in Milton Keynes and will comprise c6550 new homes and substantial spatial allocations for community facilities, including five schools and green space. It has been designed to have a quality living environment for its residents, with a strong identity and a sense of place. A network of green open space and quality landscaping provides an attractive and safe environment in which to live and work. The site is referred to as two developments; Fairfields and Whitehouse.

The development is growing, there are currently c.2000 houses occupied across the area and residents are becoming more established and wanting to connect. Having met with the local parish councils, there is a desire to bring people together to strengthen this emerging community and encourage social cohesion.

Art/Architectural practice Dallas-Pierce-Quintero developed an overarching concept for the delivery of a public art scheme, which considers the nature of the site and its connection with urban and rural. The Milton Keynes West Public Art Plan (Appendix 1) offers a delivery framework, with a proposal to deliver a series of commissions.

With the limitations placed on people as a result of Covid-19 it has been decided to focus on the digital opportunity in the public art plan and when the timing is right to proceed with engagement and one of the 'furniture' commission.

3. Opportunities and inspirations

The site has significant historic connections including being located on the Roman road - Watling Street, archaeology reports and significant finds and connections with Bletchley Park (WWII codebreaking) through a historic radio transmitting and receiving station.

The Parish Councils have websites and there are active Facebook groups in the area, during Covid-19 there has been a lot of discussion and community spirit on these platforms. This project would like to harness this spirit and engage the community in a virtual way in the long-term aspirations of the public art scheme for the area. Making connections with existing platforms is required.

The development is not yet complete and there are other deliverables such as play areas, allotments and community facilities to be built, this platform could support these ambitions.

4. Public Art in Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes has a historic and ongoing commitment to commissioning art in the public realm. We consider public art to be any work of visual art, craft or design produced by an artist, designer, maker or creative practitioner and sited in a location that is freely accessible to the public. Most importantly we are committed to ensuring that any new public realm commissions respond to place, time and people through interactions with creative practitioners.

5. Artist/Creative Practitioner Role

The digital artist/creative practitioner will be required to undertake the following:

- Undertake a period of research and development in order to understand the site, context, aspirations and identified aims and objectives.
- Develop proposals for a creative digital platform that can be easily updated and added to.
- Deliver a long-term platform and archive of change that has wide interest and appeal
- Design and deliver a creative, innovative and engaging digital project
- Enable interaction through a digital platform which supports resident's exploration of their area and engages them in the future of where they live and the public art process.
- Work closely with the Milton Keynes Culture Team, DPQ and stakeholders

6. Budgets and Fees

A budget of £15,000 ex VAT has been ring fenced to deliver the digital platform and archive. The budget includes design fees and development. Additional costs for ongoing updates and hosting should be advised

7. Management

The commissioner is Milton Keynes Council working in collaboration with local stakeholders.

8. Timescale

Action	Dates ..
Commission Brief Circulated	16 Nov 2020
Closing date for submissions	Wed 2 Dec 2020 – 12 noon
Clarification interviews	Wk 7 Dec 2020
Start of contract and delivery	Jan 2021

This is for guidance only and some dates may change.

The digital artist/creative practitioner will need to demonstrate flexibility in relation to this contract.

9. Insurance

Appropriate insurances will need to be in place including professional indemnity

10. Assessment Criteria

Applications for this opportunity will be assessed in reference to the following criteria:

1. Proven track record of developing creative digital platforms.
2. Approach to developing interactive platforms.
3. Delivery of similar commissions which digitally engage with place making and community development.
4. Creative and innovative approach

11. How to Apply

If you would like to apply for this commission, please supply the following information by the 2 December – 12 noon. Please submit (preferably merged as one pdf document) the following information via email to culture@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

- Up to 3 examples of previous projects (pdf or jpg file types only) with basic information about each project – max 2 sides of A4. Where appropriate please include a URL for digital projects that are viewable online.
- An outline of your approach and your response to this commission brief - max 1 side of A4.
- A proposed breakdown of the £15,000 budget, including fees, research and development days, design and development, set up costs.
- Proposed timeline for delivery through to completion following contracting
- Current Curriculum Vitae.
- Contact details (email and telephone) for 2 referees, preferably from recent commissioners.

To discuss this brief or for further clarification please contact: culture@milton-keynes.gov.uk