

**A report on the evaluation of
the pilot public art programme
Placing Art by the Public Art
Steering Group**

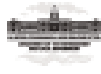
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This report is the outcome of a public art action research pilot programme, *Placing Art*, which was initiated by Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council with assistance from the Sligo Leader Partnership Company in 1997.

The background to this work is the shared view that a commitment by the local authorities to commissioning artworks results in distinctive benefits to the cultural, social and economic developments of the County. Significant opportunities exist through the Department of Environment and Local Government Per Cent for Art scheme to commission artists, thereby integrating contemporary art interventions into overall planning and development considerations.

The authors of this report were the members of the Public Art Steering Group. Formed in June 1999, as a condition of grant assistance from the Special Support Programme for Peace & Reconciliation, the role of the group was to support the Public Art Co-ordinator in her work and to oversee the implementation and delivery of the pilot programme. The Steering Group also adopted the task of evaluating the pilot programme.

The Steering Group represented a range of specialist expertise and a broad range of experience from the public, arts, community and private sectors as follows:

- **Lizzie Byrne** Artist/Lecturer Art Department
Sligo Institute of Technology
- **Vincent French** Community Representative
People's Purchase, Weighbridge
- **Mary McAuliffe** County Arts Officer
Sligo County Council/Sligo Corporation

- **Mary McDonagh** Public Art Co-ordinator
Sligo County Council/Sligo Corporation
- **Robbie McDonald** Director
Leitrim Sculpture Centre
- **John McGettrick** Community Representative
Coleman Centre, Gurteen
- **Camilla Smith** Community Development Worker
Sligo Leader Partnership Company
- **Anna Spearman** Community Arts Worker
Sligo Leader Partnership Company
- **Paul Wilson** Community Representative
Armada Commemorative Project, Streedagh

Work on evaluating the pilot programme commenced in January 2001 and concluded with this report in May 2001.

The report was initially circulated to all who participated in the pilot programme in Autumn 2001 for their consideration, and was subsequently formally submitted to the members of Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council in January/February 2002.

The work undertaken to date indicates new directions for further research and investigation that will be carried forward in a subsequent programme of commissions.

Sligo Local Authorities' Public Art Programme 1997-2001

The public art initiative embarked on by the Sligo Local Authorities was two-fold in its intention; a. to apply the Per Cent for Art scheme funded by the Department of Environment and Local Government and, b. to apply the scheme in principle from local authority funds.

During the period 1997 to 2001, twelve works were commissioned, ranging in budget from £3,000 to £50,000. The commissions

attracted artists working locally, nationally and internationally.

It was intended, through a variety of approaches to commissioning, and the diversity in scale of the commissions, to achieve a balance of quality public art works that sought to reflect excellence in contemporary visual arts practice.

In the initial phase of development, it became clear that an action research-based approach would provide the most appropriate and effective means to explore local policy in relation to public art. A pilot programme was developed, which came into operation in 1998.

The aim of the pilot programme was: To promote quality in the built and rural environment through a public art programme intended to assist and inform the adoption of a public art policy by Sligo Local Authorities.

Under the Per Cent for Art scheme, the pilot programme commissioned six small-scale projects intended to expand the range of art practices beyond those usually found in public art commissions in rural as well as urban locations.

A central element of the pilot programme was that the artists would contribute to the awareness and understanding by local audiences of their public art work through a process of engagement with various local groups.

In addition to the realisation of the commissions, several important elements were devised and promoted that would add significance to the programme and, later, policy decisions.

The production of high quality documentation was given priority in response to a widespread concern of artists about the lack of good documentation that was available on public artworks produced in Ireland. The documents produced would serve not only to raise the profile of the artists and their work, but also to raise awareness generally about the programme and its aims, and to contribute to debates on public art.

The international colloquium on public art in rural, coastal and small urban environments, organised by the Arts Office, was intended to look at models of good practice in comparable locations to Sligo in order to inform planning and policy development for the County and the Borough.

The appointment of the Public Art Co-ordinator was to be a significant element of the pilot in terms of the programme's management and delivery and of testing the capacity of the Local Authorities to utilise the Per Cent for Art scheme. The Co-ordinator's responsibilities would include artist support, audience engagement and the co-ordination of new partnerships.

A partnership-based approach was to be adopted externally with local and national agencies and internally between several local authority services. This was considered central to the development of a more informed and integrated programme.

The evaluation process was to be the concluding phase of the programme and was intended to provide the information and evidence required to achieve the overall aim, "...the adoption of a public art policy by the Sligo local authorities".

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Context

In light of the delivery of significant new capital infrastructural projects and the growth in public housing, many opportunities existed to enhance the environment by commissioning artworks. Commissioning was encouraged and supported by the Department of Environment and Local Government Per Cent for Art scheme, which at the time, provided for up to one per cent of the overall construction cost of capital projects up to a ceiling of £50,000.

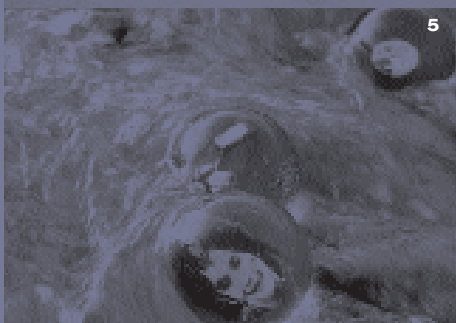
The Sligo Local Authorities had no history of commissioning art under the Per Cent for Art scheme in County Sligo prior to the establishment of the Arts Office in 1997. However, they were keen to avail of the Per Cent for Art scheme, given the ever-increasing opportunities due to a rise in investment in capital infrastructure locally.

The initiation of the first public art programme in County Sligo coincided with the adoption of the Public Art Research Project by Government. The aim of the Project, as stated in their report, was: "...to facilitate the more effective promotion of art in the public sector by developing a strategy which furthers the commissioning of art in a variety of sectors, in particular, by public authorities."

The findings of the Public Art Research Project influenced a fresh approach to commissioning artworks through the Per Cent for Art scheme by the Sligo Local Authorities. Underpinning this new approach was a long-term and strategic vision, the purpose of which was to develop an integrated approach to the inclusion of public art commissioning in the planning and delivery of capital projects.

This approach led to a pilot programme with the following objectives:

- **The development of management, administrative and support mechanisms within the Sligo Local Authorities for ongoing commissioning under the Per Cent for Art scheme.**
- **To expand the range and nature of public artworks beyond those traditionally associated with public art, for example, film, performance, purchase and temporary work.**
- **To raise awareness of public art by introducing new local audiences to the programme through six Department of Environment and Local Government Per Cent for Art scheme commissions.**



1 **The People's Purchase** Ronnie Hughes

3 **Metaphoric Portrait of Michael Coleman** Ron van der Noll

5 **Keepsakes** Ronnie Hughes

2 **Underswim** Laura Gannon

4 **Owning the Space** Imelda Peppard

6 **Regeneration** Martina Coyle, Hilary Gilligan, Pauline O'Connell

Title Keepsakes
Type of work Installation
Artist Ronnie Hughes
Location Streedagh Beach, Co. Sligo
Budget £15,000
Completion Date June 2000
Commissioning Authority
Sligo County Council
Funding Source Department of Environment
& Local Government pooled funds: Urban
and Village Renewal/Housing.

Title Metaphoric Portrait of Michael Coleman
Type of work Installation
Artist Ron van der Noll
Location Coleman Cottage, Mount Irwin,
Gurteen, Co. Sligo
Budget £8,000
Completion Date December 2000
Commissioning Authority
Sligo County Council
Funding Source Department of Environment
& Local Government pooled funds: Urban
and Village Renewal/Housing.

Title Owning the Space
Type of work Performance
Artist Imelda Peppard
Location Rockwood Centre /
Model Arts + Niland Gallery
Budget £10,000
Completion Date September 2000
Commissioning Authority
Sligo Borough Council
Funding Source Department of Environment
& Local Government pooled funds: Housing
(Ash Lane, Holborn Hill and Sea Road).

Title The People's Purchase
Type of work Painting
Artist Ronnie Hughes
Location City Hall, Sligo
Budget £5,000
Completion Date September 2000
Commissioning Authority
Corporation of Sligo
Funding Source Department of Environment
funds: Weighbridge housing scheme.

Title Regeneration
Type of work Sculptural and environmental
interventions
Artists Martina Coyle, Hilary Gilligan,
Pauline O'Connell
Location Knoxpark, Co. Sligo
Budget £25,000 (original commission) +
£17,000 extra allocated from Engineering
budgets. Total Cost: £42,000
Completion Date November 2000
Commissioning Authority
Sligo County Council
Funding Source National Roads Authority
funding from N4 Sligo–Collooney dual
carriageway.

Title Underswim
Type of work Film
Artist Laura Gannon
Location Old Jail, Sligo, North Sligo
Partnership, Fort Hill
Budget £8,000
Completion Date April 2000
Commissioning Authority
Sligo Borough Council
Funding Source Department of Environment
& Local Government pooled funds: Housing
(Ash Lane, Holborn Hill and Sea Road).

Summary of Expenditure

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Sligo County Council	£ 42,000
	£ 15,000
	£ 8,000
<i>Total</i>	£ 65,000

Corporation of Sligo	£ 5,000
	£ 10,000
	£ 8,000
<i>Total</i>	£ 23,000

The pooling of funds enabled a more imaginative use of the Per Cent for Art scheme, which resulted in more significant and quality artworks than would have been possible from one small scheme site-specific budget. Pooling funds also allowed for the adoption of a programmed approach to commissioning. This, in turn, led to more flexible commissioning processes and achieved a balance of artworks for rural and urban locations.

Section 3

Case Study 1:

The People's Purchase, Weighbridge

by the Public Art Steering Group

September 2001

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This case study sets out to illustrate an innovative approach to a small budget of £5,000. The innovation lies in the transfer of direct decision-making powers from the Local Authority to a group of citizens charged with the task of selecting an artwork for the newly-refurbished City Hall. The artwork became part of the municipal collection. The People's Purchase offers a model of a process where an audience new to contemporary art successfully navigated some of the conventions and challenges of buying works of art for a specific public site.

"This project represents one of the most significant advances in the direct empowerment of a community group in relation to contemporary art, involving information about public collections, liaison with artists, some aspects of curation, responsibility for selection to the wider community – in short, ownership", Catharine Marshall, Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA).

In 1997, Sligo Borough Council built 12 houses beside a busy junction in an old part of the town centre, where a weighbridge had been for many years. Prior to the establishment of the Creative Arts Panel, the Arts Office facilitated a routine commissioning process, whereby a small number of artists made proposals for a work to be placed in an area in front of the houses. It could be said that in preparing this area, the Local Authority expected a sculptural or decorative work of some kind to materialise. However, it was concluded by the selectors (including a representative from the residents) that the budget was insufficient to produce a quality artwork for the site.

The idea of linking the budget to the

newly-refurbished City Hall came into being through a decision to use the budget for purchasing. The Arts Officer wanted to maintain the connection between the purchase and the area where the budget had been sourced.

Residents along the Mailcoach Road and participants in the 'MCR' community centre were sent a mailshot, calling on their interest in purchasing art for the municipal collection. Around a dozen people came forward and, eventually, settled into a committed core group of eight. Apart from one art undergraduate, none of the group had formal art training or much knowledge about contemporary art. Two of the group attended evening art classes in the community centre. Their brief was to purchase or commission a work of art for City Hall from the work of eight artists on the Creative Arts Panel who had submitted their work for purchase.

Catharine Marshall, Curator of the IMMA's permanent collection, was invited to facilitate the group in making their selection. The group began by looking at the Niland Collection in Sligo and then visited the IMMA collection and artists' studios. Catharine Marshall led the tour around IMMA and the group discussed the principles, politics and practices of collecting. The work of the eight artists was introduced at this point. The Public Art Co-ordinator entered the process and began regular meetings with the group to view the work of the eight artists, using slides and written material. A considerable amount of time was given to this process. The Co-ordinator also invited a retired lecturer from the Institute of Technology, John O'Leary (since deceased), to

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discuss the works with the group.

The group was highly motivated and decisive about some aspects of the process. For instance, they did not wish to visit the artists’ studios until they had shortlisted, and they did not wish to consider commissioning until they had ruled out the possibility of purchasing. *The group was facilitated but never led.*

One of the eight artists, Alan Counihan, was resident in California at the time and had submitted very little information about his work. The Co-ordinator eventually made contact with the artist and he submitted two works. The group immediately and unanimously decided on one of the works, *The Stone Boat*. They were delighted with their choice.

There were several visits to City Hall at different stages of its transformation. *The crucial relevance of site to public art became a central issue to the process* and a salutary lesson on occasions. On each visit to City Hall, the building appeared to shrink as more ‘functions’ were included into its fabric. The group became frustrated as it became apparent that the *Stone Boat* could not be given sufficient and appropriate space. Health and safety, lack of space and vandalism were concerns voiced by Corporation officials.

The Co-ordinator kept Alan Counihan informed about the process and possible locations within the building. In response to photographs of the City Hall interior, the artist decided to withdraw the work that he had submitted.

The group returned to its shortlist and selected two paintings by Ronnie Hughes. They recommended the location for the

paintings and the process was nearly complete.

Although Ronnie met the group and presented his work to them, he commented that he did not have a significant amount of contact with the group. This was due to the time constraints on the project at that particular time. However, he was pleased that two of his older works had found an appropriate home and that the group had so readily identified the themes of the works.

The Co-ordinator asked the group for their comments about the work and the process. Quotations from all group members were included on a glass wall panel accompanying the paintings.

Although the process ended satisfactorily, there were difficulties and frustrations along the way, some described above. The group was disappointed at being restricted to a choice of work from eight artists. They were frustrated by the building itself and its limitations in offering space to both sculptures and paintings. The Borough Architect observed that the group were somewhat wary of the lack of progress in accommodating the piece and that this added to a sense of frustration about the building which was unable to house their first choice. There were moments of despondency but the group unanimously saw their commitment to the process as a significant achievement.

They acknowledged the Co-ordinator’s vital contribution to a happy outcome through her encouragement and motivation of the group.

There was general agreement by public officials, the Mayor and Borough Council members that this was a worthwhile project and very good value for money.

Art, to our group was like opera; some arias can send you out of this world with the sheer delight and pleasure of beautiful music and there are others that should not be heard on any world! This was the state we were in at the start of our project, no one knowing what was expected of us, and no one knowing the outcome.

All our energy and encouragement came from the Arts Officer, Mary McAuliffe. Without her, we would never have got started at all. She told us our group was the first ever to be given the chance to purchase a piece of art to be placed and displayed in City Hall as “The People’s Art Collection”. This news gave us a much-needed lift and the will to do our very best with what was at our disposal.

Our first meeting with Catharine Marshall went very well. It turned out to be a day for friendship and the enjoyment of the Niland Collection, which we viewed with her. A very down-to-earth lady she turned out to be. She put us at our ease and in no time, we were talking like we knew her for years. Our trip to IMMA came next and it was an eye-opener for us. The general layout of this beautiful building, the sheer size and shape of the place, took our breath away. But it was not all play, we had work to do as well. We had to view the slides of the eight artists on our panel and Catharine explained their work to us and pointed out the finer points of each of the works. We thanked her for her help and advice and for a wonderful day in Dublin.

It was after our visit to IMMA that we started the long hours of viewing the slides of each artist, and Mary McDonagh, the

Public Art Co-ordinator, came into our lives. To us she was a Godsend. For the next year, we relied on her for her help, guidance and most of all her light-heartedness and cheery smile. What would we have done without her? We looked at slides, hundreds of slides, trying to find something we liked. As time went on, we rejected some of the artists and put some others on a short list. Even then, we still had no idea of what we were looking for. It was after our first view of City Hall, which at the time was under repair and looked like a bomb site, and it was then we decided that what we needed was a piece of sculpture. As luck would have it, that evening we had a meeting and, after seeing Alan Counihan’s *Stone Boat*, it hit us like a brick, like a spark fanned into a flame. This was our choice. We were over the moon and we were at the end of the road.

Our stay on cloud nine did not last for long. Everything started to go downhill faster and faster as the space in City Hall got smaller and smaller. At our next meeting or two, it started to hit home to us that in the end no place would be found for our sculpture. Then with great reluctance, Alan Counihan withdrew the *Stone Boat* because of a lack of an appropriate place for it. This was a big body blow to us as a group, there was some anger and a lot of deflated egos. How did this happen to us? What were we going to do now?

Like all good groups, we picked ourselves up and got stuck into solving, what to us, was a mountain of trouble. Sometime before, we had expressed an interest in the work of artist Ronnie Hughes and asked Mary McDonagh to see if we

“The final choice was, in my view, a wonderfully appropriate choice in terms of the group’s stated aspirations at the outset – to pick a ‘quality’ artwork that would represent something of their feeling for the history of Sligo and Ireland, a piece that would communicate easily with a wider variety of audiences, irrespective of education and a contribution to the heritage of their town that they could be proud to stand over. During the process, the group got to know each other and to develop friendships which will last. They overcame feelings of shyness and inadequacy in relation to art, contemporary art, art galleries and art workers. They met artists as fellow workers and learned to respect what they do. They learned to articulate their feelings and thoughts about art and to feel comfortable and empowered in art galleries and public collections ...a really useful model for future practice.”

Catharine Marshall, Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA).

could see his paintings again. We had liked his early work and, with that in mind, we were looking forward to seeing him. Catharine Marshall was with us the night he did his showing for the second time. We viewed and discussed among ourselves what we had seen and it was the consensus to purchase two of his works. Once again as a group we had overcome an obstacle not of our making, because we were thinking and acting as a group. After so many meetings, now we had something to show, something to be proud of, and a great sense of achievement and a lot of pleasure for us.

The group saw a lot of art, learned a lot about art, but the one thing that stood out for us was the friendly and easy way we got on with each other. No one was trying to impose their will or choice on anyone else, but when a choice had to be made we were all of one mind, and that is why *Ghostworkers* and *Breathe* are hanging in City Hall. So in the future, our children and their children can say with pride, 'my grandfather or grandmother was a member of the Weighbridge purchasing art group'. That is our legacy to them, and our satisfaction for a job well done.

The commission, *Regeneration*, brought together three artists aiming to regenerate a large expanse of land divided by the N4 Sligo-Collooney dual carriageway. Knoxspark, which lies half-way between Ballisodare and Collooney, is a rugged and scenic area bounded on one side by Union Wood and the Ballisodare River. It is also a significant archaeological site.

The site for the commission was proposed by the County Engineer in the context of Knoxspark being developed as a public amenity area by Sligo County Council. The artists approached the regeneration of the site in an encompassing, holistic and sensitive way.

Regeneration is presented here as a case study for the following reasons: firstly, the project involved the collaboration of three artists on an equal basis and all the artwork was produced through a collaborative process. Artist collaborations on public artworks are unusual and, therefore, worthy of attention. Secondly, *Regeneration* demanded more co-operation between the artists and local authority officials, namely the engineering department, than any of the other pilot projects. As the relationship between artists and public officials is paramount in many public art projects, it is worth considering here.

A very positive outcome of the collaboration was the amount of skill-sharing that took place. The artists learned new practices from each other as well as new thought processes. However, they acknowledged that the nature of a collaborative process involves a certain amount of compromise as individually, they would have approached the work differently.

During the briefing weekend, artists were given the option of working collaboratively on commissions. The three artists concerned, Martina Coyle, Hilary Gilligan and Pauline O'Connell, separately expressed an interest in collaborating in principle to Jenny Haughton of Artworking. She later communicated this information to the three artists. When they subsequently met, it transpired that they each shared a desire to approach the site in a holistic manner. They agreed to develop a proposal for Knoxspark together.

The collaboration was an entirely new and untested venture for the artists concerned who, prior to the project, had never worked together. However, the artists were clearly committed to the principles of 'shared ownership' of the work, full consultation with each other on every development and committing equal time to the project.

One artist recalled that at the beginning of the project she thought the project would be completed three times faster because of the collaboration. However, all three agreed that it took three times longer because of the amount of consultation necessary. They were satisfied that they had truly made each piece of work collaboratively and shared their time equally, despite the fact that one artist lived

in Dublin. One person was nominated to be a point of contact for the Public Art Co-ordinator. Generally, this worked well and messages were passed on successfully. The Co-ordinator had to be mindful of potential communication difficulties and facilitated communication between the artists and Engineering Department.

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The location is a very scenic wild field offering much potential as a location for public art. However, this large site, covering approximately 15 acres, also presented many challenges. Gavin Murphy, author of the catalogue, described it as a battleground between the road, electricity pylons, sheep, the river and other natural features and the elements.

The expectations of the Engineering Department were that the artists would produce a work that would make an impact on the passing motorist, while at the same time making the area attractive to visitors by highlighting the archaeological significance of the site. The artists were very much opposed to the notion of ‘plonking’ one artistic feature onto the site. Their proposed treatment of Knoxspark was more ‘low impact’ and involved a long-term approach, envisaging how the site would mature with planting.

They began to work with the information from archaeological and ecological reports on Knoxspark. They also talked to key local people who were familiar with the site, such

as anglers, and consulted the landscape architect assigned to the dual carriageway development.

With the brief in mind, the artists decided to take a holistic approach to the site – encompassing the landscaping and planting of the area, designing the direction of the paths, as well as considering seating and information about the site for the visitor

The Executive Engineer was consulted often during the research phase and various options were discussed, for example, should the paths run right beside the river and should there be a fishing deck? Neither of these options was pursued because of implications concerning the County Council’s public liability.

Post commissioning, the artists presented their outline concept proposal to the County Engineer and Executive Engineer for approval. It was approved in principle with some modifications. It was suggested that more finance might be made available to the artists to cover particular items, such as furniture and signage. On the basis of that suggestion, the artists invested considerable time and effort during the research and development phase in developing a more comprehensive and extensive proposal. This proposal was presented at a subsequent meeting with the County and Executive Engineers, but was not accepted due to cost implications. The artists felt misled and were disappointed with the outcome.

The disparity between the actual budget for the Knoxspark commission and that for the extended proposal, highlighted the budget constraints that exist where money is ring-fenced in a very specific way and this produces a lack of flexibility in deploying budgets.

Much goodwill existed on the part of the artists and the Engineering Department

towards the success of the project, but differing expectations also existed and resulted in communication difficulties.

On the basis of cost, the County Engineer approved a modified version of the artists' proposal. This consisted of their integrated approach to the site as an artwork involving the following: an amenity walkway which unified the two sides of the site divided by the road; two ox-bow seats relating to the presence of the river; utilisation of archaeological information in the form of artistic elements, namely, the pillow stone; two orientation stones and planting, and the creation of a diverse ecological environment which will develop through the years. The work then entered the production phase.

There were many delays to the project that were outside the artists' control. For instance, the area was prone to flooding and landscaping and stone-cutting work could not commence until the site was dry. There were delays with suppliers and sub-contractors. However, in time, the various elements of the seating, orientation and pillow stones were put in place and the area was landscaped and planted.

The artists realised, in the course of delivery, that a site manager was required. However, at this point in the project, Sligo County Council was unable to respond as budgets were committed and expended. The artists developed a very good relationship with the site foreman and his team and, due to the goodwill and co-operation of the foreman and his team, the project was realised successfully. For example, the artists had requested the use

of a crane which was not possible for the Executive Engineer to obtain at short notice, but due to the Foreman and his team's patience and skill, the work was delivered from roadside to location successfully.

This example further illustrates the importance of artists communicating their resource requirements to the local authority following the research and development period, thereby allowing enough time for the local authority to respond.

In the course of delivery, the artists found themselves confronted with difficulties that lead to a lot of extra work which was not appropriate to their function, for example, seeking out tenders for the supply of plants and gates and spending a lot of time on site supervising work. The landscape architect was no longer available to supervise this work. The artists undertook this work in order to realise their regenerative concept fully. The task, therefore, was not equal to the budget.

To raise community awareness, the artists chose to engage with the fifth and sixth classes in St. John's National School, Ballisodare and St. Joseph's Boys NS, the Girls Primary School and St. Paul's NS, Collooney – all of the primary schools in the neighbouring villages to Knoxspark.

Following a period of research on potential target groups, the Co-ordinator initiated contact with the schools on behalf of the artists and, subsequently, carried out an evaluative exercise with the classes involved.

The artists raised the children's interest in the site through a slide-show and talk. All were fascinated with the archaeology and history of the site. The artists developed the children's drawing by introducing new materials, such as pastels on dark paper. The children enjoyed and appreciated the workshops. It was the first time that the children had worked with professional artists in the classroom and many asked if there would be other opportunities to do so again. One drawing of the promontory fort by a 12-year-old was selected by the artists to be reproduced on one of the orientation stones.

As a conclusion to the project, the artists, in collaboration with the County Council, organised an open day. Storytelling, guided walks, children's games and refreshments engaged the audience. This celebratory event shared the essence of the project with the broader community.

Background

Local Authority Context: Government's adoption of the report of the Public Art Research Project (PART) in 1997 was timely in the development of the first Arts Programme for Sligo. The key recommendations in the PART report encouraged the two local authorities to approach commissioning under the Per Cent for Art scheme in an innovative way.

The impetus for establishing a strategic approach to the Per Cent for Art scheme came from the Arts Office, which was set up in 1997.

The Department of the Environment and the Per Cent for Art Scheme: The local authorities recognised, in the investment through the national development plan, the potential opportunities of the Per Cent for Art scheme for artists.

The first step in setting up the programme was to establish the *Public Art Working Group* whose purpose was to identify construction schemes where the Per Cent for Art scheme could be applied, e.g. local authority housing schemes, urban and village renewal schemes, etc. Many schemes were very small scale (especially in rural areas), and the application of the Per Cent for Art would not yield a viable budget for the commissioning of a quality art work. Taking on board a recommendation to pool small budgets from the PART report, the Public Art Working Group agreed to pool Per Cent for Art funds from several small housing schemes.

Six planned construction projects were identified by the Working Group.

By pooling a number of small budgets and taking a flexible approach to sites and their associations with commissions, the Working Group afforded artists a greater choice of sites in some cases.

Finding

The Public Art Working Group is an effective administrative model that enables the pooling of small individual budgets to create a more substantial and realistic budget for commissioning quality art works.

The Per Cent for Art scheme funds were ring-fenced for the production of the artworks. However, the realisation of a programme of this scale required substantial additional funding that was applied for by the Arts Office and Sligo Leader Partnership and drawn down independently from different sources. A significant amount was granted by the Programme for Peace and Reconciliation that contributed to the costs of the Co-ordinator's salary and the documentation and seminar/colloquium costs. The Arts Council contributed significantly by part-funding the programme's publications and, through their Local Authority Arts Development Programme, contributed revenue funding for the fees of specialist advisors.

The costs of the programme occurred under three headings which are dealt with below: Commission: project costs and maintenance, Public Art Co-ordinator, Documentation: published information and events.

The Per Cent for Art scheme funds were sponsored by the Department of the Environment and drawn down through the Engineering and Housing Departments. This was the first occasion when Per Cent for Art scheme monies were administered by the Sligo Local Authorities and a number of difficulties and delays were encountered. The Arts Office provided a conduit where financial arrangements could be brokered for artists.

Finding

In looking at the budgets provided for projects and the artworks produced, the Steering Group found that the commissioners got value for money.

Finding

In some cases the works were over-ambitious for the budget. Artists aimed to produce work of the highest quality, sometimes at the expense of their own fees.

Finding

The Steering Group found that, in some cases, artists did not cost their project adequately at the proposal, research and feasibility stages. Consequently, artists encountered budgetary difficulties later in the project.

Finding

Artists found that the drawdown of three equal instalments of the budget was too rigid for some projects. Heavy investment may have been needed early in the project and more flexibility in drawdown arrangements was needed.

Recommendation 1

The local authority should be more flexible in budget drawdown arrangements with artists. These arrangements should be included in contracts between the artist and the commissioner.

Recommendation 2

That artists are made aware of the local authority's payment procedure and that it is considered when planning their work.

Recommendation 3

That the Public Art Office is given authority to certify payments to artists.

Recommendation 4

That artists assume responsibility for the financial management of their commission and that they keep financial records of their expenditure on the project.

The key partners in the realisation of the *Placing Art* pilot programme were the Department of the Environment and Local Government, the Sligo Local Authorities, County Sligo Leader Partnership Company, together with ADM/CPA Special Support Programme for Reconciliation and the Arts Council who supported the production of documentation and the international colloquium.

Sligo Leader Partnership Company was formed in 1995. In 1996, the Company was legally constituted to manage both the Leader II and the Local Development Programme. In order to facilitate its applied focus on social inclusion, the Local Development Programme represents those organisations and communities in Sligo which are most involved in working with those who have been marginalised within society for socio-economic or cultural reasons.

The Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation was set up by the European Commission to foster peace, promote reconciliation and to encourage positive growth in disadvantaged communities and those that have been most affected by the conflict.

Area Development Management Ltd. (ADM) and the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) have joint responsibility for 12 measures of the Programme for Peace and Reconciliation.

Recommendation 5

It is recommended that in planning commissions and designing briefs, local development agencies are consulted for their expertise in the areas of economic and social development.

The Poverty, Access and Participation Report, which contains data from Sligo, combined with the PART Report recommendation on the need for greater audience engagement with public artworks, gave impetus to the idea of seeking to pro-actively engage new audiences through the Per Cent for Art scheme.

The Arts Office identified Sligo Leader Partnership as an appropriate and necessary partner for the purposes of collaboration in the development strategies for cultural and social inclusion, access and participation.

A key outcome of this partnership was a joint funding application to ADM/CPA Peace and Reconciliation, which sought funding for the Co-ordinator's post, programme documentation and the international colloquium. A key criterion for the funding is the issue of social inclusion and, in this case, audience access.

Further to the success of the funding application, Sligo Leader Partnership Company continued to participate in the delivery of the pilot programme in a substantive way.

Finding

The manner in which funding was secured for the programme was problematic. For example:

- **The Co-ordinator was introduced late into the programme.**
- **The deadline set by P&R for the completion of the programme was too short.**

Recommendation 6

For similar public art initiatives that are multi-faceted, funding and resources should be confirmed at the outset.

One of the objectives of the pilot was to produce high quality documentation and publicity about the pilot projects and their context in the form of text and exhibition material. The production of this level of documentation, i.e. commissioning a critical theorist and writer, would not be common to public art commissions.

Finding

Artists were advised in their letter of offer that there would be a professionally produced catalogue covering commissioned works. They were requested to visually record and document their projects as work progressed. However, artists said that they were not properly prepared or financed to produce material of sufficient quality for the programme's documentation requirements.

Recommendation 7

Where the local authority requires documentation for publicity and promotion purposes, a separate budget should be allocated to artists for this purpose.

Recommendation 8

The Steering Group recommends that an independent documentalist should be appointed to regularly document and observe a project's development.

“Open competitions are costly and time-consuming for all parties and should be the exception rather than the rule.”

Public Art Research Project report, 1997

Finding

A call for applicants for the Creative Arts Panel was well advertised, reaching artists nationally and locally. For some artists, the purpose of the Panel could have been stated more clearly in the advertisement, while others read the advertisement as interesting and open.

Finding

Artists and local authorities alike concluded that the Creative Arts Panel was an effective structure for commissioning small-scale projects. The Panel represented a broad range of visual arts practice and, therefore, met a key objective of the pilot programme to broaden the range of practice funded through the Per Cent for Art scheme.

Artists said that they were given more incentive to develop their proposals as their chances of being awarded a commission were greater than would have been the case in full open competition.

Finding

It was found that the panel system is an effective approach to commissioning, and results in quality and wide-ranging project proposals particularly for modest budgets. However, the size of the Creative Arts Panel may have limited the range of proposals submitted.

Recommendation 9

The Steering Group recommends that the size of future panels could be increased to attract a greater diversity of proposals.

Agencies/Advisers

Further to the Public Art Working Group determining the project commissions, Artworking, an independent arts partnership services agency, was contracted by the Sligo Local Authorities as specialist advisers in the planning and development of the commissions.

Briefs and Site visits

The Arts Office, in conjunction with the public art agency, Artworking, co-designed the commission briefs and site visits. Prior to the finalisation of the briefing document, Artworking invited the artists on the Creative Arts Panel to contribute to the brief.

Finding

Artists found that the consultation with the agency resulted in a better standard of commission briefs.

The agency found this approach innovative. The consultation resulted in increased goodwill from the artists and the programme got off to a good start.

The Arts Office introduced the Creative Arts Panel to the concept of the pilot programme and the context for the six commissions by organising the briefing to take place over a weekend.

The artists' travel and accommodation expenses were met by the local authority.

The artists gave a positive reaction to the briefing process, commenting that it was a significant improvement on normal briefing practices for public art commissions. The opportunity to meet each other as the Creative Arts Panel was valued by the artists.

The commissioners were seen as transparent in their expectations, particularly about audience engagement in the projects. The local authority was viewed as open in its approach by the artists, who responded positively to the commissioning process.

Finding

Artists chose successful locations for their work where the brief did not specify an exact location.

There is a case to be made for artists to be invited to contribute to the brief and for commissioners to adopt a more flexible approach to briefs by involving artists at an earlier stage of a project's development, e.g. at the design stage rather than the construction stage in the case of building or road schemes.

Recommendation 10

The brief to artists should be comprehensive and as detailed as possible, containing information on budgets, time-scale and local information sources and resources.

Recommendation 11

Where appropriate, that artists are invited to contribute to the content of the brief.

Recommendation 12

Where appropriate, that the commissioners consider leaving the location/siting of their work at the discretion of the artist.

Recommendation 13

That the Local Authority organise a site visit and verbal briefing for artists and that, in the case of site specific projects, artists must visit the site prior to submitting their proposal.

Proposal Development

Following the briefing weekend, artists were given six weeks to develop their proposals. Artists were free to submit proposals for as many of the six commissions as they wished. Artworking was available to them for advice, which was appreciated by the artists.

Artists who submitted proposals were paid a fee for doing so. The Arts Office was available to answer questions while artists researched their proposals.

Finding

However, the proposals tended to be under-developed, which caused problems in the selection process.

Finding

The support and expertise of an independent public art agency to the artists during the development of their proposals was valued by commissioners and artists alike.

Finding

Views expressed from the Creative Arts Panel indicated that when proposals were unsuccessful, the selector should provide feedback to the artists concerned.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that a fee be paid to artists for proposals submitted.

Recommendation 15

We recommend that commissioners set criteria for proposals. For example, proposals must include a budget break-down, material and technical requirements, etc. (See Appendix 2 for a Checklist for Public Art Commissions).

The criteria for selection were:

- Artistic merit of the proposals in relation to contemporary art practice.
- Engagement between the artists and local audiences.

Proposals were submitted to an independent art specialist selector appointed by the Local Authorities. Where clarification was necessary or where several proposals were received for the same commission, artists were interviewed by the selector. The final selection was endorsed by the County Manager.

Finding

The appointment of a sole selector led to a satisfactory outcome and achieved a primary objective of the pilot in the selection of artists representing a broad range of quality art projects.

Recommendation 16

Where there is one selector, s/he must be a specialist in a contemporary art form relevant to the brief. Where there is more than one selector, at least one selector must be a specialist in a contemporary art form relevant to the brief.

Recommendation 17

Feedback should be given to all artists who submitted proposals.

Letters of Offer

Following selection, the Arts Office consulted Artworking on the procedure for formally commissioning artists. Instead of contracts, letters of offer were issued to artists detailing the timescale, budget and draw-down periods for payment.

Artists expressed mixed opinions on the desirability of having a contract in place from the outset. Some considered that the letter of offer allowed them greater flexibility.

The Steering Group unanimously agreed that it would have been desirable to issue contracts at the outset.

Recommendation 18

That contracts be negotiated between the commissioners and the artist on a project-by-project basis. All contracts should include a number of standard clauses dealing with, for example:

- project timescale
 - budget draw-down
 - life-span of the work
 - materials and special treatments
 - maintenance
 - documentation requirements
 - copyright
 - procedures for agreeing changes to the proposal/design concept
- * For an extensive list, please see Appendix 2

Recommendation 19

That, in their contracts, artists are made aware of Section 195 of the Taxes Consolidation Act of 1997, that empowers the Revenue Commissioners to exempt artists' income from tax.

Recommendation 20

That, in their contracts, artists are made aware of the local authority's obligations under the Prompt Payments Act and other relevant statutory information.

Research and Development Period

The original proposals were, in effect, concept outlines. The Research and Development phase allowed the artists to develop these outlines into realisable projects. For example, in one project, it took six months to develop a prototype, test materials for safety, and obtain clearance from the relevant government agencies. All artists found the research and development period crucial to the success of their projects.

The letters of offer to artists specified a research and development period within the timescale of the commission. Artists found that the research and or development phase was insufficient where obstacles or delays beyond their control presented.

The following are examples of delays experienced on different projects:

- Obtaining permission from Government agencies concerned with ancient monuments and the environment.
- Suppliers late quotations/supply and demand factors.
- Permission to use local authority property and insurance requirements.
- Weather.
- Collaborators' or team members' availability.

Recommendation 21

That a degree of flexibility is built into the project's time-scale for research and development.

Administrative Structures

The Public Art Co-ordinator assumed responsibility for the administration and co-ordination of the programme in July 1999. The Programme for Peace and Reconciliation had confirmed funding for the post in April 1999. Prior to the appointment in July 1999 of the Public Art Co-ordinator, the programme was managed by the Arts Office.

The Co-ordinator was supported in the implementation and delivery of the programme by the Public Art Steering Group (see Recommendation 24 and 25, page 36)

The Local Authority: The pilot programme was jointly managed and administered by the Arts Office and the Co-ordinator on behalf of the commissioners, Sligo County Council and Sligo Corporation.

Relevant local authority staff provided advice and support to artists and the Co-ordinator during the delivery of the programme. This primarily involved the Engineering Department and the Borough Architect.

The Steering Group noted that the programme was delivered despite considerable difficulties experienced by the Co-ordinator in accessing in-house resources, for example, office accommodation, together with administrative support services.

The implementation and delivery of the pilot public art programme was pioneering work for both the local authorities and its newly-established Arts Office. The Public Art Co-ordinator position was the first of its kind in the country. It was, therefore, not possible for any of the key players to

From the evidence gathered through the evaluation process, it is clear that the aims and objectives of the pilot process were successfully realised by delivering a wide range of quality artworks to new audiences through new management and partnership structures and mechanisms.

anticipate the level of detail involved and the difficulties that had to be overcome in the delivery of the programme.

Thus, the successful completion of the programme necessitated considerable extra investment of time from its key administrators and was achieved through their goodwill.

Midway through the programme, the Co-ordinator provided a progress report on the public art programme to the members of the County Council and the Corporation of Sligo.

The Arts Office, in particular, supported, assisted and managed the delivery of the programme in co-operation with the Co-ordinator. The Arts Officer acted as line manager to the Co-ordinator and gave guidance on local authority procedures and protocol.

The Co-ordinator

The role of the Co-ordinator was to support artists and communities in the delivery of the projects. The Co-ordinator facilitated communication between artist, community and local authority/commissioners. The Co-ordinator was also responsible for overseeing the delivery of information about the programme, i.e. documentation in the form of a launch booklet and catalogue, and the organisation of the international colloquium.

Finding

It was found by all parties that the position of the Co-ordinator was essential to the delivery of the pilot programme. The programme was co-

ordinated with a high level of initiative and the Co-ordinator's ability to respond to changes that naturally occur as part of a pilot, ensured the success of the programme. However, due to funding constraints, it was noted that the Co-ordinator was appointed midway into the programme after the artists had been commissioned, and this was problematic. On occasion, the size of the brief impacted on the level of support and information that the Co-ordinator could offer to artist and participant groups in the time-scale allotted to her.

If the opportunities presented by the Per Cent for Art scheme through future investment in the County's infrastructure are to be properly and strategically taken up, it will be necessary to create a post and resources commensurate with this task.

Recommendation 22

It is recommended that the post of Public Art Co-ordinator be re-defined to that of Public Art Officer with responsibility for the application of Per Cent for Art scheme funding and the management and administration of commissions.

Recommendation 23

The Public Art Officer would be allocated appropriate resources within the local authority in order to fully administer the scheme.

Recommendation 24

The Public Art Officer would assist and support the Steering Group in appointing selectors. Similarly, the Public Art Officer would assist and support the selectors and the artist recruitment process.

Recommendation 25

The Public Art Officer would work closely with the Steering Group and the Arts Office in identifying opportunities for events and information for the public in general, and for specific audiences.

Recommendation 26

The role of the Arts Office would complement the role of the Public Art Officer by focusing in particular on the delivery of the public information and education elements of the programme.

Strategic Policy Committee

The completion of the programme, together with the establishment of the Strategic Policy Committee on Housing Policy – Social and Cultural, creates a timely opportunity to achieve a long-term strategy for ongoing commissioning through the Per Cent for Art scheme.

Recommendation 27

It is recommended that the Strategic Policy Committee on Housing Policy/Social and Cultural Development should play a key part in the future development of public art programmes for the County.

Better Local Government**Recommendation 28**

In the context of the programme for Better Local Government and the implementation of an improved corporate environment, it is recommended that appropriate resources and support are allocated to the inter-departmental planning and delivery of public art programmes, for example, in terms of staffing and office accommodation.

Public Art Programme Steering Group

A supervisory group representing the public, arts, community and private sectors (see Authors' section above) advised on the direction and implementation of the programme. The group was formed to fulfil a condition of grant assistance from the Peace & Reconciliation Fund, that the project should have a management committee. The members saw a steering and advisory role as a more appropriate way of overseeing the pilot, evaluating the programme's outcomes, and recommending future directions for commissioning, delivery and informing audiences.

Finding

The diverse composition of an independent and voluntary Steering Group was found to be important in supporting the programme, not only in artistic terms but through a variety of viewpoints and expertise. The contribution of the voluntary members was found to be critical to the success of the programme and is fully endorsed by the Steering Group.

Finding

The existence of both the Public Art Working Group and the Steering Group raised questions about their respective remits.

Steering Group
Recommendation 29

That for future public art programmes, one advisory group is established. It should be composed of local authority staff, elected councillors and voluntary members reflecting a range of expertise, including representatives from the community fora, education sector, business sectors and contemporary visual arts and local development fields.

Finding

All parties found the services of an independent agency, such as Artworking, invaluable and strongly recommended access to similar advisory support in a future programme.

Finding

All the above support staff and structures were found to be necessary and made a valuable contribution to the programme.

Recommendation 30

That future programmes of public art in the county continue to benefit from a range of support structures, as outlined above.

The programme had the following key objectives in relation to audience:

- To raise awareness of public art by introducing new local audiences to the programme through six Per Cent for Art scheme commissions.
- To challenge targeted audiences' perceptions of public art by adopting an expansive approach to the range and nature of public artworks commissioned, beyond those traditionally associated with public art. For example, film, performance, purchase and temporary work.

The Public Art Research Project report that was adopted by Government in 1997 also noted that information for the public was generally lacking and that works of public art were an under-utilised educational resource.

- To provide information on the Sligo Public Art Per Cent scheme commissions to the general public through a series of publications, and to provide an opportunity for audience development through the organisation of an international public art colloquium.

The pilot programme was designed with these recommendations in mind.

Prior to the programme, Sligo audiences would have been familiar with the statuary and commemorative sculptures of Sligo town, and some more recently commissioned works.

In the six Placing Art pilot programme commissions two distinct processes took

place in relation to audience interaction with the programme.

Firstly, a small number of local groups were approached by the Arts Office at the pre-commissioning stage in order to elicit historical/local information that would be of benefit to artists in developing their concept proposals.

Finding

The contact with the groups at the pre-commissioning stage caused confusion and led to misunderstanding about the group's role in commissioning artists.

The second process was initiated at the post-commissioning stage when the commission brief set out the expectation that the artists would engage with a local audience during the lifetime of the commission. The artists would decide how best to achieve this expectation in a manner that was harmonious with their proposal and would not jeopardise the integrity of their work.

Consequently, the pilot projects addressed specific and target groups of people rather than a general audience. By engaging target groups initially, sections of the public would be introduced to hitherto unfamiliar artistic practices.

The range of participant groups represented a diversity of activities and interests and were located in rural and urban areas.

Finding

Many groups responded positively to the direct invitation from the artists to become involved and also reacted positively to their proposals.

The third objective was realised through the production of press releases, a launch brochure, radio interviews, conference presentation, artist lecture, programme catalogue and an international seminar.

Participant groups suggested that the programme deserved a bigger information campaign and celebration with a wider local audience, and that future projects might aim to engage with a broader local audience.

Commissioner/Audience Relationship

A particular aspect of this programme was to focus on audience engagement. At times, when groups become involved in a commission with a local authority, issues can arise around the concept, nature and ownership of work. However, it is important that the local authority, as commissioners, protect the artist's concept and freedom of practice in the creation of their work.

It was important, for the process of engagement, that participants and groups placed their confidence and trust in the commissioners and the creative process.

For example, some who were sceptical at the outset about the merits of the proposed artworks, displayed a greater acceptance that art cannot be universally pleasing and has had a long and distinguished history in engendering controversy and challenging orthodoxy.

Finding

While audiences were challenged initially in their expectations of what art should be, the process of engagement in all cases ended with greater understanding of creative processes and the challenging nature of art.

Finding

The ambitious objective of the pilot programme in commissioning challenging and 'untraditional' artworks provided valuable insights into how to engage audiences in the future.

Finding

It was found that audiences were not aware of the existence of the Department of Environment Per Cent for Art scheme prior to the programme.

Finding

The majority of artists found that their interaction with their chosen local audiences or participant group worked well. In some cases their work with audiences was integral to the development of their process. For some artists the experience of involving an audience in their process was a difficult and new experience and required more mediation or better communication.

Finding

The Steering Group found that, where artists engaged directly with the audience at the post-commissioning stage, engagement worked well.

Finding

The groups concerned enjoyed their interaction with the artists and their work and demonstrated an increased confidence in articulating their views about contemporary and public art work.

Finding

Audiences were satisfied that the commissions expressed a sense of the distinctive features of their locality, thereby adding to the value and identity of their area. The range in nature of the projects demonstrated that this articulation of place could take a multitude of forms. All of the projects were successful in creating a connection between artistic endeavour and local identity.

Finding

In some cases the groups felt that the work or the process could be used as an educational resource. For example, the video documentation of *Owning the Space* could be used in local schools as a learning resource about local and social history, architecture, etc.

Finding

The evaluation found that a more extensive local information campaign about each of the six projects would have been necessary to raise awareness of them throughout the County generally.

Recommendation 31

That the local authorities take a proactive approach to informing the public and promoting audience awareness of public art and that the public art office and the Arts Office be given the responsibility and resources necessary for an information campaign.

Recommendation 32

Once the Steering Group has identified the programme, any potential participant groups should be given specific guidelines about their prospective role and participation.

Recommendation 33

The Steering Group recognised that the pilot process of formal engagement on the part of the artist with a distinct audience as an integral part of the project is a valuable model and it, therefore, recommends that where this model is used:

- Ideally, the artist as creator, is best placed to propose how, with whom and at what level this engagement will take place
- This process of engagement is included as one of the criteria for proposals along with budget breakdown, material requirements, etc. (Recommendation 15)
- Guidelines for the Per Cent for Art scheme and its application, and an outline of the brief be clearly communicated to the specified audience in order to prevent unrealistic expectations

Recommendation 34

That the Public Art Office offers a level of direct support and helps to facilitate access to local expertise for those artists wishing to engage with a distinct audience in their work. The artist should be made aware of this support at the briefing stage.

Recommendation 35

That artists responding to commissioning briefs be requested to consider issues of public awareness and information regarding their art work. Issues raised would be discussed and negotiated with the commissioners.

Recommendation 36

That the 'People's Purchase' project be recognised as a valuable model for audience development and engagement.

Placing Art was conceived as a new approach to commissioning public art under the Department of Environment and Local Government's Per Cent for Art scheme. The result was high quality and original responses by artists. The innovative nature of the commissioning process was reflected in the diversity of the work that was produced.

Placing Art was conceived as a new approach to commissioning public art under the Department of Environment and Local Government's Per Cent for Art scheme. The result was high quality and original responses by artists. The innovative nature of the commissioning process was reflected in the diversity of the work that was produced.

In delivering a more expansive range of work, the local authority was found to have achieved its objective: *"To expand the range and nature of public artworks beyond those traditionally associated with public art."* For example, film, performance, purchase and temporary work.

The objective, *"to raise awareness of public art by introducing new local audiences to the programme through six per cent scheme commissions"*, was successfully met.

In the main, responses from participant groups and audiences indicated a high level of enjoyment and excitement about the art. The relationship between participant groups and artists was mutually appreciated. Complex issues surrounding commissioning were explored and successfully negotiated. During the realisation of the projects, many participants expressed their appreciation of being involved in new, and often moving, cultural encounters. High quality documentation was produced and widely disseminated, and it is hoped that these documents will contribute to the ongoing debates about the nature and substance of public art.

Similarly, the colloquium, as an international art event, was very successful in presenting models of good practice for consideration by the Local Authority when it

comes to look at policy development for the Per Cent for Art scheme.

However, the Steering Group found that the programme was very ambitious considering the resources that had been put in place to support it. The substantial elements of the colloquium and documentation, as well as the necessary fundraising efforts, demanded considerable extra time and attention from the Co-ordinator and the Arts Office. In spite of the limitations, these elements succeeded in their objective of raising awareness and debate concerning the public art work produced under the Per Cent for Art scheme.

The pilot programme involved setting up and testing new mechanisms, which resulted in the effective management and co-ordination of the programme. In particular, the appointment of the Public Art Co-ordinator was found to be essential to the management and delivery of *Placing Art*. The external and internal partnerships established to deliver the programme worked well and provided a model for future practice. There is now much greater clarity within the local authority about the appropriate roles, responsibilities and functions necessary to support ongoing commissioning under the Per Cent for Art scheme.

From the evidence gathered through the evaluation process, it is clear that the aims and objectives of the pilot process were successfully realised by delivering a wide range of quality artworks to new audiences through new management and partnership structures and mechanisms.

It is envisaged that these new support structures will enhance the relationship between artists, commissioners and audiences.

Finally, the evaluation process, of which this report is a part, was devised from first principles and was a genuinely collective effort that was considered and thorough. From the evidence gathered through the evaluation process, it is clear that the aims and objectives of the pilot process were successfully realised by delivering a wide range of quality artworks to new audiences through new management and partnership structures and mechanisms.

It is, therefore, the opinion of the Steering Group that *Placing Art* has been a highly successful pilot scheme that has made a significant contribution to the development of public art in County Sligo. It has laid the foundation for the development of local authority policy for the Per Cent for Art scheme in the future.

It is hoped that the findings of this report will act as a catalyst for the ongoing research and development of public art in County Sligo that will significantly extend the commissioning capacity of the Local Authorities.

The four key areas for consideration emerging from the evaluation were:

- Finance
- Commissioning
- Implementation and Delivery
- Audience

The main recommendations from this report are summarised under these areas:

Finance

Greater clarity is required from artists at proposal and research stages in order that the true costs and requirements of a project are known in advance and can be planned for.

It is recommended that the post of Public Art Officer be created with responsibility for the application of the Per Cent for Art scheme funding and the management and administration of commissions.

Commissioning

Contracts should, in every case, be negotiated between the commissioners and the artist on a project-by project-basis.

The brief to artists would be improved by allowing increased support for the creative process. Where appropriate, that commissioners consider the location of the work in consultation with the artist.

Implementation & Delivery

In the context of the programme for Better Local Government and the implementation of an improved corporate environment, it is recommended that appropriate resources and support are allocated to the inter-departmental planning and delivery of public art commissions.

Audience

That a proactive approach is taken by the local authority to informing and promoting audience awareness of public art. Such a commitment by the local authority needs to be resourced and could be guided by a public art steering group.

- To explore and pilot new models of commissioning and purchasing through:
 - The establishment of the Creative Arts Panel
 - The Weighbridge Purchasing Group.
 - A joint commission with the Michael Coleman Centre.
- To establish a broad range of contemporary visual art practice, including temporary and ephemeral work across the six commissions.
- To encourage the commissioned artists to collaborate with local authority professionals to develop public spaces of quality and character.
- To promote community engagement with each project through specific audiences and appropriate local target groups, either through direct participation or the provision of an educational element and information about each project.
- To appoint a Public Art Co-ordinator to the programme who will provide management and co-ordination of the programme; ensure the integrity of the art practice and process for each commission; provide liaison between community audiences and artists and local authority officials, architects etc; oversee publicity, documentation and seminar arrangements for the programme.
- To provide information about each commission in order to promote access by the public to the work, through an information bulletin, providing text adjacent to permanent work, exhibiting documentation about the commissions, producing a publication about the programme, and hosting a seminar featuring the programme.
- To appoint a visual arts theorist and critical writer to provide a case study of each commission and a critical essay on the overall programme.
- To publicise the programme locally and nationally to a range of audiences, including artists, communities and local and central government officials with responsibility for public art commissioning.
- To disseminate the results of the programme and findings of the evaluation and make recommendations arising from programme outcomes and endorsed by the Programme's Management Committee to local and national audiences by the end of January 2001.

-
- Client's letter of offer and value of work.
 - Briefing meeting, response from selection process and consideration of heads of agreement.
 - Support group/key people.
 - Provision of a tax certificate.
 - Description of the commission, client, site.
 - Permissions, requirements.
 - Feasibility/research period.
 - Work schedule for production including source material, key suppliers, timescale and related payments.
 - Contract signing.
 - Documentation.
 - Completion date and method of notification.
 - Feasibility, development, production and completion reviewing.
 - Health and safety.
 - Life of work and requirements to sustain and maintain.
 - Originality.
 - Responsibility for site/preparatory work, sourcing and costs.
 - Delivery.
 - Installation requirements, schedule.
 - 'Warranty' period and after.
 - Fees, payments, VAT and rights; invoicing methods and time factors.
 - Transfer of ownership.
 - Maintenance.
 - Copyright.
 - Reproduction rights.
 - Accreditation of work.
 - Terminations of agreement.
 - Delays.
 - Public involvement.

(This checklist is not definitive or exhaustive.)

