



# Abbotswood Public Art Proposal

Prepared for: Test Valley Borough Council

Prepared by: Thrussells, Public Artists

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## THRUSSELLS PROPOSAL

**Following our successful shortlisting to interview we have prepared this revised proposal to elaborate further on the urban area of Abbotswood development.**

This project encompasses an entire experience of discovery and journey. We Thrussells feel we can provide and deliver all the project requirements backed by over twenty-five years of experience of creating public sculpture for communities across the UK and Europe. Our past experience provides us with the knowledge and understanding of how a project like Abbotswood Trail needs to be delivered to achieve a successful outcome in a timely manner and to budget.

We are pleased to be providing this final proposal and look forward to our interview with the panel on 16th September.

### **SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL**

Our proposal consists of three combined elements to create an interesting and engaging trail. We propose a comprehensive sculptural trail that guides walkers around the Abbotswood development where key points of interest are highlighted with sculptural story telling and symbology.

Our proposal begins with ten urban pointer way-markers located across Abbotswood development at key intersections. These pointer way-markers would create the main trail and directions. The second element to the trail would be the four sculptural way-markers which would be slightly bigger with additional detail and coloured glass. These sculptural way-markers would be located at the entry points to Abbotswood, the nature conservation area entries and the community facilities such as the community centre and play area etc. The third and final element to the trail would be the two feature sculptures located in the urban green spaces. These feature sculptures would create a focal point and destination for people walking around Abbotswood such as dog walkers etc.

### **POINTER WAY-MARKER**

These connecting way-markers form the backbone of the entire trail. Each pointer way-marker would have the same overall design with directional pointers customised to each location / intersection. The main difference would be the centre relief image design which would depict either a nature or heritage subject. The pointer words would be kept simple and clear such as 'Nature Area' for the nature conservation area and 'Play Area' for example. These pointers would allow anyone to enter the trail at any intersection location and navigate their way around Abbotswood development.

### **SCULPTURAL WAY-MARKERS**

Following on from the pointer way-markers would be the sculptural way-markers. These way-markers would mark main points of interest to the trail in the form of beautiful sculptured markers. Each sculptural way-marker would be unique to each location with a similar form as the pointer way-markers to continue a trail theme. The main elements would consist of three-dimensional

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sculptural forms depicting nature and heritage with integrated fused coloured glass to provide a rich and vibrant element. We have examples of using fused glass in the public realm and have successfully been able to overcome all concerns allowing our artwork to incorporate this vibrant addition to the design. Each sculptural way-marker would be a must see and piece of artwork with distinct themes that create an event when arriving at defined area or location of Abbotswood.

*This example of our work demonstrates fused glass and galvanised steel.*



## FEATURE SCULPTURE

To complement and focus the trail in Abbotswood development we propose two larger feature sculptures. These sculptures would act as main focal points for the trail located at the centre areas of the community in two of the open green spaces. The sculptures would provide a creative opportunity for two engagement groups to have design input in the creation of these feature sculptures. For example, the feature sculptures could incorporate elements of seating, story telling or a simple and striking statement to celebrate nature and heritage of the local area. We have had many successful projects where direct involvement from a passionate community group led to creating engaging public artwork that evoked pride and ownership in the community.

Below is an example of student led design. We worked with sixth-form art students to create a meaningful design. The class were asked to work in pairs to come up with the best and most comprehensive design and the winning design was created and installed as part of a trail. With all community involved designs we refine and alter where necessary to make the sculpture understandable, robust and streamlined for the public realm.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Following on from the SPUD report we propose the following engagement workshops to develop the designs of the pointer way-markers, sculptural way-markers and feature sculptures for Abbotswood trail. As mentioned in our previous proposal, we would break down the project into phases.

The following project phase format has proven to be effective in our past trail creation projects.

## Engagement Phase One - Research

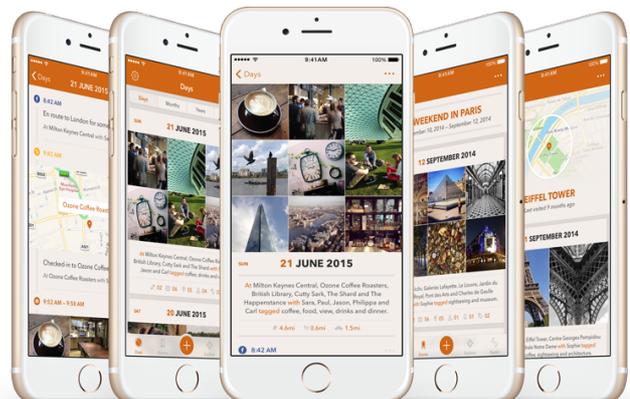
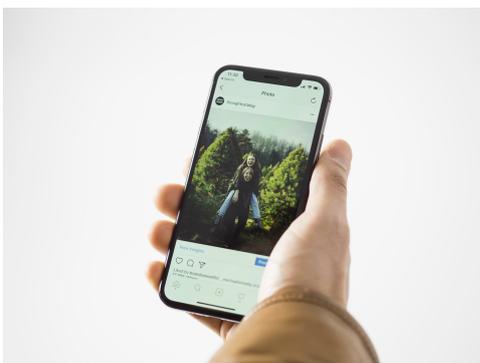
Phase One would consist of gathering information and meeting the community groups. Planning and agreeing a trail route and deciding on where and what would best suit the trail i.e. way-markers and sculptural features. This would allow us to create an engagement programme that suits the groups and stakeholders.

1. Site meeting with stakeholders to agree trail route and possible locations for artworks.
2. Community walk with historian and ecologist to gather information and agree the trail subjects compiling a list for future community engagement workshops.
3. Introduction meetings with groups i.e. who, what and how the trail will be created.

To allow us to share and engage with each group excluding the schools in an outdoor setting. We propose using a simple hands off and independent solution of using smartphone internet access to view a pre-prepared private page where we would have all the relevant images and information to facilitate the group conversation and share ideas and concepts. We are fully trained to create Wordpress webpages. These webpages would be hosted via our own website [thrusSELLS.com](http://thrusSELLS.com) and would solely be created for each consultation session.

This solution would allow us to adhere to social distancing guidelines and to mitigate possible risks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Preparing solutions like this allows us to engage the groups in a safe way while respecting that people may have reasons to maintain 2 metres or more distance. This solution would allow us to deliver and facilitate conversations with anyone that has access to a smartphone and would allow people to be included in an outdoor setting where normal presentation equipment would not be practical, for example projectors etc.



## Engagement Phase Two - Development

Phase Two is all about engagement and developing the main subject themes from our research with the local historian / ecologist. Each group would pick from the subject material to guide their design development during the workshops. With all these groups we envisage outdoor workshops or outdoor classrooms to deliver, discuss and design each artwork. We envisage a total of six design workshops to create the designs for the sculptural way-markers and feature sculptures. The ten pointer way-markers would be designed as part of the consultation with the local historian, ecologist and residents' walk.

### Example group selection:

1. Scout group
2. Care Home group i.e. STOIC (Elderly group)
3. Mountbatten School Year 9 group
4. Romsey School Year 9 group
5. Cupernham Junior School year 6 group
6. Ramsey Young Carers group

Each design development workshop would consist of one of two themes: nature or heritage. Our design workshops would be structured around the following process: 1. research of the theme using the internet; 2. reference books and 3. referring to the historian and the subject matter list compiled with the ecologist. The students will find a selection of images they will either print, trace or use images to assist them with their freehand sketching to create designs that are either an interpreted or factual representation of the chosen subject. Once all the students have created their own designs, we can discuss as a group how the artwork can be realised by incorporating their ideas as a finished artwork concept. Using a whiteboard we can incorporate the students' ideas to build a design concept.

By the end of the session we would have chosen the relevant designs and which part will become the main focus, developed the overall design layout. We will then take all these designs and bring together a design concept which will we either revisit with the group or email them so they may provide us with feedback. Once this process has been completed we will share the designs with the stakeholders for final approval and go-ahead. If for any reason the design required altering or adding to we would be happy to keep refining the design until the majority are in agreement. The final design would then be displayed as part of the public exhibition.

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**Engagement Phase Three - Creation**

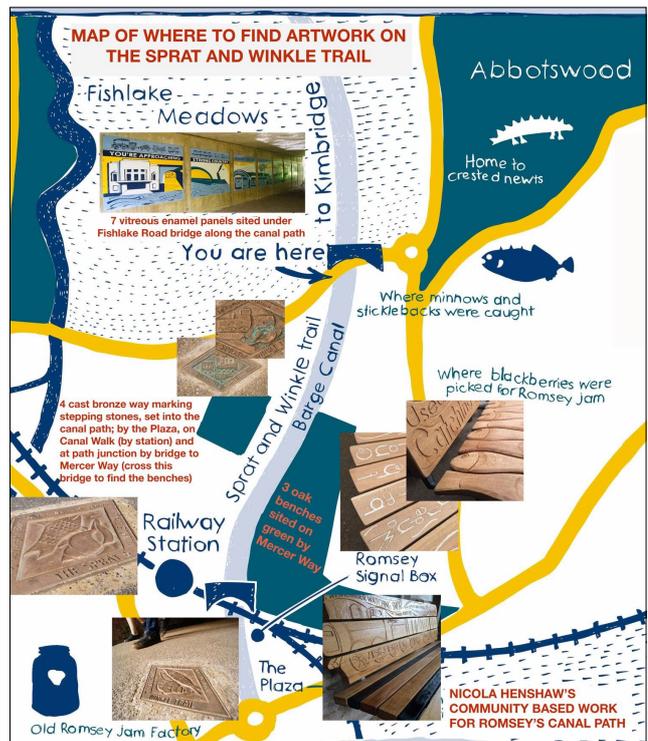
Following the entire design process and once we have refined each design with agreement from TVBC we would propose creating a simple public exhibition showcasing the group's designs and the final design of each artwork. This exhibition could be an entire outdoor exhibition of simple printed PVC banners of 3 x 1m. Each banner could be displayed either at the community centre or on railings around Abbotswood. For examples of various banners types, please visit > [link](#) <



To allow the groups and residents to follow in the creation of the Abbotswood Trail we could create and run a simple Facebook Page or Instagram Page created especially for following our making process. This would provide updates for residents and groups of what, when and where artwork will be installed. We did this with a previous project: [@PlymValleyHeritageTrail](#) Facebook Page.

To promote and bring together the entire Abbotswood project and in collaboration with TVBC we would produce and illustrate a trail map much like the Sprat and Winkle map. This map would complement the existing Sprat and Winkle Trail map which is accessible on the TVBC website.

We have had previous experience of creating this type of map on our project called Devonport Heritage Trail - [Devonport Heritage Trail.pdf](#)



## CLOSING SUMMARY

We feel our proposal brings together and provides design opportunities satisfying many of the Wordall themes of nature, wildlife, history, colour, play (funny), recycle, sign-posts, eye-catching, journey and trail etc.



Wordall diagram of themes from the SPUD project

Abbotswood art commission would provide a great opportunity to create something new for Romsey with a clear, bold and consistent theme which would make the trail distinctive for Abbotswood development. We would enjoy the opportunity to work with this new community to form an exciting community lead experience. We have created several other public sculptures in the wider area of Basingstoke and Wokingham. Romsey is a beautiful old town which has a rich history for us to draw inspiration.

### Linking with TVBC Public Art Strategy

We envisage a trail that carries the themes of Abbotswood area with hints to the wider Romsey town history. Our hope would be to encourage the residents of the town to visit and explore Abbotswood trail and nature conservation area and in turn remind residents of Abbotswood of the wider context of Romsey town history outside of Abbotswood development.

Our style of public artwork brings story telling and symbology to every part of our design. We believe in high quality public artwork that is accessible and tactile. We are passionate believers that public art should be three things: **robust**, **relevant** and **relationship building**.

Robust artwork is durable and long-lasting for future generations to enjoy and be inspired by.

Relevant artwork is about creating stories and themes that tell people about the local area and what has been and what could be.

Relationship building is about creating a sense of pride and ownership for the people living in and around the area for the public artwork which creates a sense of caring and actively looking after the artwork and the area in which they live.

## SPECIFICATION

### **POINTER WAY-MARKERS:**

- Estimated size: 2 - 2.5 metres tall.
- Materials: Galvanised mild steel.
- Position and Permissions: Each way-marker would be part of a larger trail plan and would be agreed with the relevant stakeholders to ensure no services or obstructions would affect the installation.
- Installation: Each way-marker would be mounted on square or round posts and would be designed for a simple installation of hand dug holes which would reach an approximate depth of 1000mm. By hand digging the holes we avoid significantly disturbing the surrounding ground and area.

### **SCULPTURAL WAY-MARKERS:**

- Estimated size: 2 - 2.5 metres tall.
- Materials: Galvanised mild steel and fused glass.
- Position and Permissions: Each way-marker would be part of a larger trail plan and would be agreed with the relevant stakeholders to ensure no services or obstructions would affect the installation.
- Installation: Each way-marker would be mounted on square or round posts and would be designed for a simple installation of hand dug holes which would reach an approximate depth of 1000mm. By hand digging the holes we avoid significantly disturbing the surrounding ground and area.

### **FEATURE SCULPTURES:**

- Estimated size: 1 - 1.5 metres tall.
  - Materials: Galvanised mild steel.
  - Position and Permissions: Each feature sculpture would be part of a larger trail plan and would be agreed with the relevant stakeholders to ensure no services or obstructions would affect the installation.
  - Installation: Each feature sculpture would be designed to be installed with a simple method of 500mm deep plug holes to anchor the sculpture much like a public bench. We envisage the feature sculptures would not exceed 1 - 1.5 metres high. We would design these feature sculptures to be installed with minimal interruption to the green space. The
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exact installation requirement would need further discussion. We would prefer to hand dig the holes to avoid any significant disturbance to the surrounding ground and area.

## MATERIALS AND MAINTENANCE

We design with durability and longevity in mind with all of our public sculpture. With over twenty-five years of creating public sculpture we understand what is required to create long lasting and vandal resistant sculpture. We believe that great public art should last for generations and become public treasures of the future that inspire storytelling. We work in galvanised mild steel, cor-ten steel, stainless steel, and copper to create our public works. All our public sculpture is designed to be safe, taking into consideration climbing, finger traps and sharp or protruding edges.

With the proposed pointer way-markers, sculptural way-markers and features sculpture we propose working in our preferred metal of hot dipped zinc galvanised mild steel. This metal and finish provides longevity and durability. With our proposal of using fused glass in the sculptural way-markers, we have had great success with this mixed media with our Plym Valley Heritage Trail way-markers. These way-markers have been installed in the community for nearly a decade with no deterioration or vandalism. This success was achieved by working with a Devon based glass artist to create a unique and proven thickness and finish which provides incredible glass strength. This special fused glass technique brings a vibrant and fluid element to our artwork.



With all our public artwork and with our proposal for Abbotswood trail we would design the artworks to be nearly maintenance free with only a clean and freshen up needed every five years.

With both metal and glass these are fully recyclable if in the future the artwork were to be decommissioned. On completion of the project a long term maintenance plan with a decommissioning guide would be provided.

## INSTALLATION

We are experienced metal engineers and fabricators by trade. We have applied this trade in our public sculpture and have experience to demonstrate our competence in delivering an entire public art project including all aspects of installation requirements.

We have experience working closely with local authorities, developers and contractors to plan all stages of installation including liaising with clients and providing technical drawings, designs, planning permission requirements, meeting site health and safety requirements and working with site teams during the installation process.

We have significant experience putting together installation plans, planning permission designs, installation method statements, risk assessments and managing the installation process.

Where possible we like to involve the community to help bring the artwork to life either by inviting people to observe the installation or to help in some safe way. An example of this is with the residents of Teats Hill who helped plant their new sculptural community planter and bench in November 2020.



**Health and Safety and COVID-19**

With the ongoing pandemic we understand that preparation, consideration, diligence and care will need to be taken to safeguard everyone involved in this project from stakeholders, residents and schools etc. We would adhere to all TVBC rules and guidelines including when going in to schools and group meetings. We have suggested all workshops planned as part of our proposal would be held outdoors in either outdoor classroom settings or outdoor community spaces.

**BUDGET AND COST BREAKDOWN**

Breakdown of how we would allocate the budget to successfully deliver the entire project:

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
<b>Urban Pointer Way-markers</b> Each sign includes community design process, design development of each sign, relevant pointers with simple direction words, fabrication, materials and installation.	10	£ 2,400	£ 24,000
<b>Sculptural Way-markers</b> Each sculptural waymarker includes community design process, design development of each sculptural way-marker, fabrication, materials and installation.	4	£ 4,500	£ 18,000
<b>Feature Sculptures - Green Space</b> Each sculpture includes community design process, design development, fabrication, materials and installation.	2	£ 7,000	£ 14,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>£ 56,000</b>

We feel we have a lot to offer for the Abbotswood Project and are able to provide the entire package of community engagement, full production of the artworks including installation. This allows us to bring together the project to meet the timeline requirements in a way that is visually stunning, engaging and will age gracefully to maintain its quality and engagement in a way that will be enjoyed for generations to come.

**CONTACT****THRUSSELLS**

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