

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: Loughborough University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: D34 Art and Design, History, Practice and Theory</p>
<p>Title of case study: Improving the understanding of arts function for social benefit through the development and delivery of public art projects in the public domain</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The impact of this case study is the evidence that public art can function for social benefit. Significant research projects were completed for Ashford, commissioned by Kent County Council (2010), New Art Gallery Walsall (2005 - 2009), Collective Gallery Edinburgh, UK (2008), Liverpool Biennale (2010). This research claims three types of impact: 1. Public Service: a public artwork as part of a shared traffic scheme, which demonstrates a reduction in traffic accidents, 2. Civil Society: participatory artworks that enable public engagement in the design of a place (Ashford & the Black Country) , and 3. Influencing Policy – making: a contribution to policy debates concerning public art’s function for social and economic regeneration.</p> <div data-bbox="148 696 1356 963" data-label="Image">  </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notaroundabout, Project Atkin, J 2. Futurology Project artist meeting Borough Council planning office, Jordan, M 3. How to be Collective, Project participants talking back to artworks, Jordan, M
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Researchers: John Atkin, Reader in Fine Art, Loughborough University, 1992-..; Mel Jordan, Reader in Fine Art, Loughborough University, 2007-..;</p> <p>This research is developed from the long-term preoccupation of Atkin and Jordan with regard to the relevance and importance of public art for cultural life and civil society. The underpinning research addresses arts function for social and cultural benefit, examining arts role in public engagement and its purpose in urban regeneration.</p> <p>The outcomes of practice-based research are artworks, exhibitions and projects in the public realm that are funded by UK Government’s Sustainable Communities Plan, Kent County Council, Arts Council England, Black Country Consortium, Scottish Art Council, AHRC and Creative Partnerships. These provide significant examples of the way art can be developed for public spaces and enable public dialogues, more recent work is on the evaluation of art projects for social and cultural benefit.</p> <p>Atkin’s research (with Landscape Architects Whitelaw and Turkington) is the first in the UK to implement a shared space scheme with both an extensive consultation and integrated design team. The <i>Notaroundabout</i> artwork addresses art’s use and function in the planning and development of public space as well as putting the users of the space at the centre of the design process [3.1]. Jordan’s research [3.2] proposes new models of participatory art practice with the aim of engendering more democratic exchange between artists, volunteers, curators, commissioners and audiences (Civil Society).</p> <p>The <i>Notaroundabout</i> project was unique in that it employed two methods of integration; shared space (between traffic and pedestrians) and extensive user consultation (between users and planners). The public art enabled a dialogue between numbers of different constituents. Atkin tested materials in specialist Kent County Council KCC /Jacobs laboratories to examine the suitability of Highway’s materials for set purposes, i.e. slip testing of slabs for the <i>Notaroundabout</i> paving design. The research explored how the use of bespoke materials used in the fabrication of <i>Notaroundabout</i> could address the desired aims of reducing street furniture clutter for the new</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

development and negate the use of unnecessary signage, associated with common practice in Highway Design protocols [3.3].

Jordan's research (with co-investigators Dave Beech, Chelsea College of Art and Dr. Andy Hewitt University of Wolverhampton) has fore fronted the application of public sphere theory to the practice of participatory arts in order to investigate the relationship between art and its publics [3.4]. As a result, it has enabled a new articulation and understanding of public art's impact upon community cohesion, in particular via processes of participation (AHRC award to Jordan detailed in section 3) and has therefore embraced arts role as part of civil society. The outcome of the research is an original way to consider the relationship between art and its audiences. Exhibitions include, How to be Hospitable, Futurology The Black Country: 2024, Every Shop Window is a Soap-box.

The research has been commissioned by leading organisations and reviewed by foremost critics and mentioned by Arts Council England as part of the reflection upon arts social function. A wide range of publics has engaged with these projects, which were carried out, in the public realm.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- 3.1. **Atkin, J. Notaroundabout.** 2010. Public Art commission commissioned by Kent County Council. Lead Artist in the Interdisciplinary Design Team (IDT)' Breaking Boundaries', Ashford £15M multi-award winning Ring Road Highways regeneration project. Media of output: one large-scale interactive public sculpture/highway/plaza space
- 3.2. **Jordan, M., Beech, D. and Hewitt, A., (2008a). How to be Hospitable.** Solo exhibition for Freee art collective (Jordan *et al.*), commissioned by Kate Gray for the Collective Gallery, Edinburgh. 4 April–17 May 2008. Media of output: five billboard posters
- 3.3. **Atkin, J.** Public Space. Breaking Boundaries. The Ashford Ring Road. Kent. For the conference **Understanding the Post Industrial City: Metropolis**, Urban Renewal and Public Space, a joint research exchange programme on post-industrial urbanism between the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar and the Technical University Lisbon, Portugal 2009
<http://gaudi.fa.utl.pt/~metropolis/seminar.htm>. Media of output: conference paper
- 3.4. **Jordan, M.,** (Principal Editor), Art and the Public Sphere. Intellect, ISSN 2042-793X. Volume 1(1) published 1 January 2011.

Quality indicators: Jordan's research outcomes (artworks) have been commissioned by leading arts organisations, including the Collective Gallery, The New Art Gallery Walsall and the Liverpool Biennial. In 2009 Jordan was approached by Intellect to develop a new journal, Art & the Public Sphere. Atkin has received a number of invitations to speak about the *Notaroundabout* project; such as Distinguished Guest: 3rd World Sculpture Conference. Venue: Jilin College of the Arts. Changchun. PRP China and as a keynote speaker for the conference Understanding the Post Industrial City: Metropolis, Urban Renewal and Public Space, a joint research exchange programme on post-industrial urbanism between the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar and the Technical University Lisbon, Portugal 2009.

Prizes: Atkin, J. - Design 1-5 hectares Award: Highly Commended, Landscape Institute. Atkin, J. Prime Minister's Award for best building - Finalist 2009

When	What	Collaborators	Researchers	Funder/Value of project
2004 - 2009	Futurology: The Black Country 2024	New Art Gallery Walsall Schools x 5 Creative Partnerships	Jordan, + (A.Hewitt)	£100,000 Arts Council England, Creative Partnerships & Black Country Consortium
2005 - 2010	Notaroundabout (Breaking Boundaries project)	Architects	Atkin	£120000
2008-	How to be hospitable	Collective Gallery	Jordan	£6,000, Scottish

Impact case study (REF3b)

2011			(A.Hewitt & D, Beech	Art Council
2010	Every Shop Window is a soapbox	Liverpool Biennale	Jordan (A.Hewitt & D, Beech	Liverpool Biennial £5,000 Commission
2011	The Resilience & Regeneration potential of Creative Arts communities in an Age of Austerity’.	Lees,L Pratt, A Miles, M	Jordan	AHRC £16,000 for developmental research

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

(Impact 1 Public Service: Public artwork reduction in traffic accidents)

In May 2012, Kent County Council published a statistical report on the ‘Breaking Boundaries’ shared space scheme. The report provides statistical analysis on safety for the three years prior to the project (2004 to 2006) and three years after project completion (2008 to 2011). In this document, safety is statistically defined by: personal injury crashes, casualties (involving pedestrians, cycles), and the number of vehicles involved.

“The Ashford ring road scheme... has achieved a 41% reduction in crashes involving personal injuries overall, and a 63% reduction in those involving pedestrians. Within the Shared Space itself, the reductions are 50% and 83% respectively.” White, Bob (2012) **[5.1]**

Statistical evidence supports the view that vehicular and pedestrian traffic benefit from the implementation of this shared space scheme in Ashford. The neighbourhoods either side of what was the ring road now have a shared space allowing them access to the town rather than a dual carriageway separating them from the town. The community is now rid of railings, subways and limited designated spaces for crossing a busy highway, for a 20 mph shared space, allowing them to access the town from a variety of vantage points.

(Impact 2: Civil Society: Participatory public artworks that enable critical public engagement and demonstrates arts role in the creation of civil society)

Jordan, (with Beech and Hewitt) developed a solo exhibition commissioned by the Collective Gallery Edinburgh, UK. The exhibition, titled *How to be Hospitable*, included five new artworks and a documentary video of the participants who had participated in its creation. The exhibition was one of five off-site projects that sought to engage new audiences and communities within a one-mile radius of the gallery. In evaluating its achievements The Scottish Arts Council concluded that, “*The Free art collective’s (Jordan, Beech and Hewitt) exhibition, under the aegis of the One Mile programme, is a laudable attempt to engage new audiences and communities via innovative and experimental projects*” Stephen Beddoe (ACS Report, 2008) **[5.2]**.

Futurology: The Black Country 2024 makes a material contribution to public awareness and participatory practice, as its creation was a participatory art project, in which artists, theorists and young people collaborated to examine the current social, economic and political conditions in the Black Country in order to imagine their futures. The premise of the research was to create a new relationship between leaders of the regeneration project in the Black Country and those affected by this planning scheme; the project operated as a forum in which all stakeholders contributed. Five schools took part in the project, and each school was allocated an artist to work with. Together with New Art Gallery, Walsall, the project was funded by Creative Partnerships, whose evaluation report stated:

“*The influence of the artist changed the way the students thought about their area and the potential for change. It had also clearly led them to identify and reflect upon others’ complacency, not as a fault, but as being born out of having not had such stimulus.*” (Hall, 2005). **[5.3]**

(Impact 3. Influencing Policy – making: a contribution to policy debates concerning public art’s function for social and economic regeneration.).

Futurology: The Black Country 2024 achieved influence on public policy debates, as Jordan spoke

Impact case study (REF3b)

about the methods that were devised in the project at the symposium '*Space to think - Does every child matter in socially engaged practice? What does true collaboration with young people look like?*'. This Creative Partnerships seminar was promoted as a 'space to think' and a forum for representatives from the creative, cultural, education sectors and business to discuss a broad range of issues concerning creativity and learning [5.4], [5.5].

Atkin as one of the Integrated Design Team (IDT) defined process and research through meetings and workshops, (2005 – 2010), including community consultation and mentoring schemes. The level of impact was achieved by establishing an Integrated Design Team (IDT) at the point of project ignition. Artists, highway engineers, landscape architects, lighting designers, traffic planners and urban designers all worked together to deliver the artistic, pragmatic, legal and functional aspects of the project. Thus ensuring delivery of a cohesive series of public realm spaces, following the principles of sharing space equally between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

Atkin (et al) established a Champions Group (CG) comprising IDT members as well as representatives from Ashford's Future to look at the commercial and business component of the project. The CG also comprised members of Ashford Borough Council (ABC): Disability Groups: Community representation: Sustainability representation: Emergency Service representation. The CG met once a month with agenda items evaluating progress of the scheme and forward planning actions.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

The following sources of corroboration can be made available at request.

- 5.1. Ashford Ring Road Three-Year Report. 2012. Kent County Council.
<http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/908.html> website accessed 19-6-2012,
- 5.2. Arts Council Scotland Report (2008)
- 5.3. *Futurology Project Evaluation Report*. Commissioned by Creative Partnerships
- 5.4. Holding the Reins: Equality, Meaning and Cultural Capital' Roz Hall, Engage Journal 27 Exchange.
- 5.5. Letter from Senior Arts Council Officer, Arts Council England