

## **Holly House Artist Commission Brief**



Responsible to: Curator, Theresa Bergne, Field Art Projects  
Client: Curo Places Limited  
Contracted to: Curo Enterprise Ltd  
Term: Project Completion, Spring 2028  
Site Address: Holly House, Long Cross/Corbet Close, Bristol BS11 OTA  
Artist Fee: £10,000  
Production Budget: £25,500

### **1. Project Overview**

Curo Group, working with Field Art Projects, is commissioning an artist to create a public artwork for Holly House, the final phase of The Willows housing development in Lawrence Weston, Bristol.

The commission marks a significant moment in the development and seeks a creative response shaped by local identity, resident experience and the specific qualities of the site.

The project will unfold in two phases:

1. Research and engagement
2. Design development, fabrication and installation

The appointed artist will be supported by Field Art Projects and will work closely with Curo, residents and local partners throughout.

## 2. Background and Context

### 2.1 The Willows Development

The Willows is a multi-phase housing development delivered by Curo. Holly House forms the final phase and comprises 38 affordable homes, including housing for residents over 55 and homes built to enhanced accessibility and environmental standards.

The development strengthens pedestrian connections, linking the Oasis Primary School situated adjacent to the site, to surrounding streets and a new zebra crossing. These improvements create an opportunity for public art to contribute to wayfinding, welcome and identity within the public realm.

### 2.2 Curo's Vision

Curo prioritises pride, safety, belonging and resident involvement in shaping neighbourhoods. Well-designed environments are understood as fundamental to social wellbeing. The Holly House public art commission supports this vision, offering an opportunity to reinforce local identity, contribute to distinctive character and reflect the aspirations and experiences of residents.

### 2.3 Lawrence Weston: The Community Context

Lawrence Weston has a long and rich history shaped by post-war development, demographic change and regeneration. It retains a strong sense of community connection and resilience.

In recent years, this has been further strengthened by the work of **Ambition Lawrence Weston**, a resident-led organisation whose achievements include major community energy projects, neighbourhood planning, skills development and improvements to local services.

A full account of the history, community context and local policy background is included in **Appendix A**.

## 3. Themes for the Commission

Artists responding to this brief are encouraged to engage with one or more of the themes outlined below.

### 3.1 Pride in Place – welcome, belonging, visibility

Lawrence Weston's history of marginalisation sits alongside a deeply felt pride in place and neighbourliness. Public art at Holly House has the potential to support a strong sense of welcome, identity and recognition for residents and visitors alike. Artworks could explore what it means to feel at home, valued and visible within the public realm, particularly at key thresholds, entrances and shared spaces.

### **3.1 Community Voice and Collective Action – resident led change and shared responsibility**

A defining feature of contemporary Lawrence Weston is the strength of resident-led change, particularly through Ambition Lawrence Weston. This shift from dependency to agency offers a powerful thematic foundation for public art that reflects collective effort, resilience and shared responsibility.

### **3.2 Everyday Routes and Shared Spaces – pedestrian experience, movement and encounter**

Holly House sits within a network of daily movement, including school routes, pedestrian connections and informal meeting points. Public art can respond to this lived pattern of use, integrating into moments of movement, pause and encounter rather than existing as a singular destination artwork.

### **3.3 Layers of Time and Place – deep local history and evolving identity**

The area is shaped by multiple layers of history, from ancient landscapes and designed parkland to post-war housing and contemporary regeneration. Public art can acknowledge this depth without nostalgia, reflecting continuity, adaptation and change over time.

### **3.4 Care for People and the Environment – sustainability, stewardship, shared care**

Both Curo Group's ambitions and Ambition Lawrence Weston's Community and Climate Plan emphasise care — for people, homes and the environment. Public art can make visible ideas of sustainability, responsibility and shared guardianship in accessible and human ways.

### **3.5 Legacy, Stewardship and Longevity – durability, relevance and maintenance pathways**

The public art commission is expected to deliver long-term value beyond initial installation. This includes careful consideration of durability, maintenance, stewardship and the potential for ongoing community relevance to residents and the wider community.

## **4 Scope of the Commission**

### **4.1 Phase One: Research and Engagement**

The first phase focuses on site research and community engagement. The artist is expected to:

- Visit The Willows and surrounding neighbourhood
- Spend time with residents and local groups
- Develop an understanding of local culture and context
- Explore potential themes and approaches

Engagement may include conversations, workshops or participatory activities and should be documented. The artist may work independently or collaborate with others as appropriate. Research and engagement will inform the final proposal.

## 4.2 Phase Two: Design, Fabrication and Installation

The second phase involves developing and delivering the final artwork. This may include technical development, planning considerations and collaboration with fabricators or engineers.

The artist will work closely with Curo and Field Art Projects to ensure the work meets requirements for durability, safety and maintenance.

Where temporary or process-based outcomes are proposed, these must include a clearly defined permanent legacy in line with planning expectations.

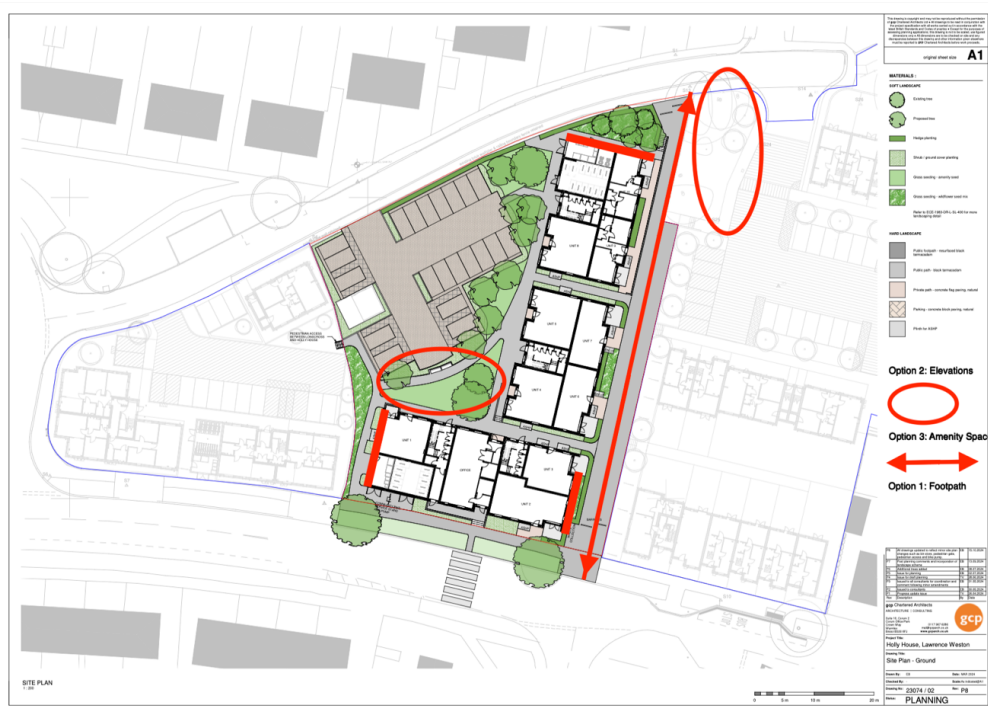
### Site Opportunities for Artwork

Holly House is one of three residential buildings arranged around landscaped courtyards with improved pedestrian connections.

Potential locations include:

- The main footpath through the development
- The corner of Building Block 2 (wayfinding or signage potential)
- Gable ends facing Long Cross and Corbet Close
- Shared green spaces between buildings

Maintenance responsibilities vary. Some areas will remain under Curo's care; the adopted footpath may transfer to Bristol City Council. Final location decisions must consider long-term stewardship and safety.



Holly House Potential Locations (indicative)

## 6 Community Engagement

Engagement is central to this commission. The artist will focus primarily on the residents of The Willows, but may also involve a range of local groups and organisations including:

- Oasis Primary School
- Ambition Lawrence Weston groups (Men in Sheds, Book Club, Craft Club, Dementia and Ageing Well Hub, Everyone Active, Tea & Tech)
- Lawrence Weston in Bloom
- Local allotments and City Farm
- Forest School Club
- Church communities
- Ambition Community Energy

The specific mix of engagement will depend on the artist's approach and the emerging direction of the work.

## 7 Budget

Total budget: **£35,500**

- Artist Fee: £10,000
- Production Budget: £25,500

The production budget must cover engagement, materials, fabrication, installation, technical support and contingency.

VAT is additional.

The artist will be contracted directly by Curo Group.

## 8 Programme

2026

May Artist Interviews and Appointment

June to Dec Research and Engagement – Proposal Development

2027

Jan Deadline for Proposal submission and approval

March - May Design Development and Permissions

May - on Procurement and Fabrication

2028

Feb Risk Assessments and Method Statements

March Installation

## 9 Submission Requirements

The commission will be appointed through a hybrid process of invited artists and open call.

Artists are invited to submit an Expression of Interest including:

- A short statement outlining current practice and a preliminary response (maximum one side of A4)
- CV or biography (maximum two sides of A4)
- Up to ten images of relevant work (individual digital files; captions in a separate document)
- DBS certificate (or confirmation of willingness to obtain one)

Appointment will be based on the strength of previous work and initial approach to the commission.

Expressions of Interest must be submitted by 10am, Tuesday 28 April to:

Theresa Bergne

Field Art Projects

[info@fieldartprojects.com](mailto:info@fieldartprojects.com), Subject Line: Holly House

Tel: 0791 2208 791

There will be an opportunity to ask questions and clarify the brief on:

- 10 April (2–4pm)
- 16 April (9–11am)

To book a 20-minute slot for this purpose email: [info@fieldartprojects.com](mailto:info@fieldartprojects.com)

Interviews will be held online on Wednesday 6 May, times tbc

## 10 Governance and key staff

The commission is guided by an Art Advisory Group comprising representatives from Curo Group and Field Art Projects.

The group will oversee artist selection, proposal approval and delivery.

During the research phase, the artist may establish a small commissioning group to support resident involvement.

Theresa Bergne, independent curator and founder of Field Art Projects, will manage the process on behalf of Curo. Her experience includes public art programmes for Bristol Beacon and the award-winning Barts Breast Care Centre, and commissions involving community engagement for Future Perfect, Hengrove and Sovereign Housing in Barton Hill.

## **11 Marketing and Communications**

The artist may be invited to contribute to talks, podcasts or community programmes. Curo and Field Art Projects will support appropriate publicity and documentation throughout the project.

### **11 Intellectual Property Rights (copyright)**

Copyright of the work, including preliminary designs, remains with the artist.

Ownership of submitted research and design material rests with the commissioner.

The commissioner may photograph and reproduce the work for promotional or documentary purposes without further payment.

## **12 Ownership of works**

Upon completion, permanent works will become the property of Curo Group or, where appropriate, Bristol City Council.

The anticipated lifespan of the work should be a minimum of five to ten years unless otherwise agreed.

The artist must provide a maintenance manual detailing long-term care requirements.

For film or media-based works, a copy will be provided to Bristol Museum Service. Where further editions are produced for sale, a percentage of sales will be returned to the commissioner as agreed.

## APPENDIX A: Full Background and History

### History of the Area

Lawrence Weston lies in north-west Bristol between Henbury and Shirehampton, an area that remained largely rural until the mid-20th century. The modern estate was developed in the late 1940s and 1950s on former parkland and agricultural fields following compulsory purchase after the Second World War, absorbing earlier hamlets associated with the parish of Henbury. Although originally council-owned, much of the housing is now privately held.

Beneath this recent history sits a far older landscape: nearby scheduled monuments at Blaise Castle and Kings Weston Hill Camp reveal Iron Age, Roman and medieval occupation, while the rediscovered Kings Weston Roman Villa (excavated after its discovery during road works in 1947) points to a wealthy agricultural estate whose influence may have shaped land boundaries for centuries.

The surrounding historic parks and estates — including Blaise Castle, Blaise Hamlet and Kings Weston House — reflect significant phases of 18th- and 19th-century landscape design by figures such as Humphry Repton, John Nash and Sir John Vanbrugh, blending architecture, picturesque parkland and woodland.

Holly House itself was constructed in the 1960s as part of the estate's post-war expansion, with the current site also shaped by later community uses, including the Long Cross pub and Rockwell Elderly People's Home, both vacated in 2014.

### Living in Lawrence Weston — Community Perspectives



Residents describe Lawrence Weston as a place shaped by both long-standing challenges and a strong sense of community. Some commentary reflects frustration linked to the estate's early post-war development and historic under-investment, while everyday accounts highlight affordability, green space and neighbourliness.

A defining feature of contemporary Lawrence Weston is the growth of community-led action. Organisations such as Ambition Lawrence Weston have supported residents to shape development, deliver community energy projects and build confidence and pride. This shift from marginalisation to agency forms a key context for the public art approach at Holly House.

## **Policy Context**

Bristol City Council's planning policy places increasing emphasis on community benefit, cultural integration, and social value within new development. Public art is recognised as a mechanism for strengthening identity, participation and trust.

Lawrence Weston's Neighbourhood Development Plan (2017) updated through the Lawrence Weston Community Plan (2018)<sup>1</sup> identifies priorities including housing provision, connectivity, employment environmental quality and community facilities. Central to the plan is resident involvement in decision-making and long-term sustainability.

Ambition Lawrence Weston's Community and Climate Plan<sup>2</sup> sets out their ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030 and a just transition that delivers local health, skills and economic benefits. These ambitions provide a relevant framework for a public art programme rooted in care, stewardship and collective responsibility.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ambitionlw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ALW-Community-Plan.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ambitionlw.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Amb-LW-community-and-Climate-Plan-22-30.pdf>