

Kendal Flood Risk Management Scheme



Art integration for the community and the environment - Mintsfeet footpath and Beeson Fields

The Environment Agency is delivering a Flood Risk Management Scheme to better protect homes and businesses from flooding in the Kent Catchment, and improve the local environment and community amenities. Kendal is the first area being delivered, followed by proposed schemes in Burneside, Staveley and Ings, and upstream measures including flood storage and complimentary Natural Flood Management.

The aim of the Kendal Flood Risk Management Scheme is to not only protect people and properties from flooding, but to create a lasting benefit for the community and the local environment. We plan to enhance the river corridor throughout the extent of the scheme through extensive landscaping, planting, and integrating a number of art features.

Our art focus will be to deliver art that is inspired by both Kendal's heritage and Kendal's future as a sustainable, vibrant, thriving town. We want to capture Kendal's history and memories of old to ensure this is never lost, whilst providing elements of new discovery, play and adventure through improved educational and recreational spaces.

The flood scheme will incorporate a number of art and public realm benefits which will define improved community access areas, respect and capture the local history, and provide opportunity for new features such as signposting, seating and community led art integration. This briefing will provide an introduction to two key art projects which are in development for the integration in the North end of Kendal at Beeson Fields and along Minsfeet footpath.

Introducing Lana - The Environment Agency's community artist

Lana Grindley has been commissioned to develop community art opportunities as part of the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Scheme. Lana is a community artist and founder of Love Art Workshops based in Kendal. With over ten years of experience, she delivers creative workshops with her team as a means of providing community cohesion, social engagement, and platforms for people to develop their own creative practice.

Lana is passionate and committed to working with charities and third sector organisations, providing vulnerable members of the community with art inspired opportunities to build independence and wellbeing. To find out more visit loveartworkshops.com.



Our approach to community art

Our aim is to provide opportunities for local people to come together and to have access to the arts to help shape their town. We value local people's voices, the town's heritage, and the culture of Kendal. By engaging different communities in Kendal and providing artistic opportunities, the hope is to help this influence and form the artistic outcomes within the flood scheme. Additionally, working alongside local professional artists will in turn produce some thought provoking, engaging and meaningful art for the Kendal community. As part of this project we are engaging local schools, colleges, charities, older residents, care homes and community groups.

Keeping it local

Taking an inclusive approach to community art, the Environment Agency are involving older residents of the town to capture the riverside history, and working with younger people to capture ways to build understanding and awareness of the importance of creating a sustainable future. Documenting the history, and the future of the river environment through art, will leave a positive legacy, telling the story of how the river and the climate have influenced adaptation and change over time, whilst looking forward to creating a more sustainable riverside corridor for the future.

Our aim in delivering the art project is to use materials that are sustainable, natural, reclaimed and locally sourced to be as environmentally friendly as possible.

Kendal's history - Sound to stone project - Mintsfeet footpath

To capture Kendal's history we are engaging with the town's older residents by creating a memoir soundscape with Wayne Scurrah, a local musician. Interviews have captured their stories and childhood experiences of the river, touching on memories from the World War, industry and past flooding. The information collected during these interviews will inspire artistic outcomes that captures and represents the memories and experiences of local people. This will be developed by working with Kendal College foundation art students and Space2Create, a local charity organisation, to create visuals and prints supported by a small team of local artists including Annie Luke Turner – a contemporary print artist.

All the visuals and prints developed during a number of workshops will be showcased at Kendal College Art Gallery in February 2022.

Six visuals will be selected and these will be used by Danny Clahane, a local stone artist, who will produce engraved slate plaques that will be inlaid into the floodwall along Mintsfeet riverside footpath.



Mintsfeet riverside footpath



Kendal's future - Awakening the senses project - Beeson Fields

Our second project we would like to introduce is the educational art development for Beeson Fields. This area of land located to the north within the suburban fringe of Kendal, will be landscaped to become a new community nature area. The aim is to create a sustainable and thriving nature highway, supplemented by art, that conserves and improves the area for wildlife and creates an educational, discovery, and play environment for local people and visitors.

Beeson Fields site plan



We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to reconnect with nature and its amazing qualities. The **sensory path** will be a key feature offering a wide array of textures and sensations perfect for the discovery of wildlife. The pathway will guide you through the landscape along with an interactive nature trail. Carefully positioned art and planting will provide opportunities to stop and be in nature, with activities along the way to encourage the awakening of the senses through listening, looking, smelling, and touch.

Another feature of the sensory path are the **tactile mosaic tiles**. These pieces of art have been made with local students from the town's Sandgate and Castle Park Schools during sessions run by local ceramic artist Rosie Meredith. Promoting the sense of touch and vision, these colourful tiles will engage children with their local natural surroundings. The plant species used in designing these tiles have been found local to Kendal and some will be found in the Beeson Fields planting scheme.



Other educational and sensory features like the interactive "**rainwheel**" will encourage people of all ages to foster meaningful experiences with nature, developing a deeper understanding and appreciation of the natural world. We hope that skills gained here will be taken away by visitors and used in the greater outdoors and further along the beautiful river Kent corridor.



Awareness is growing of the importance to sustain declining insect species by creating more habitats where they can thrive. **Bug houses** will be designed and positioned in key locations to help shelter insects that are key to pollinating the ecosystems. To celebrate the importance of our beloved humble bumble bee we will be commissioning a **living bee sculpture**, which will provide food and habitat for our precious species. **Living willow sculptures** will create a diverse habitat, designed and planted by local children through workshops run by local willow artists (Willowpool Designs). Willow structures absorb carbon dioxide, enrich the soil and provide new habitats whilst framing, dividing and creating spaces of interest for children to hide, seek, and uncover their inner imaginations.

Overall, we aim to create a riverside place to explore and educate through art, embracing the wildlife and nature around it.