

PROJECT
engaging
artists
in the
built
environment

EVALUATION REPORT



May 2006

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PROJECT - *engaging artists in the built environment* was funded by CABE and A&B

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Evaluation Report

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Introduction and acknowledgements

PROJECT - *engaging artists in the built environment* was a national funding scheme jointly supported by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and Arts & Business (A&B). Public Art South West (PASW) worked in partnership with CABE and A&B to develop the scheme and was responsible for its management and delivery. PROJECT ran as a two-year pilot scheme from April 2004 to March 2006.

This independent evaluation was planned as an integral part of the programme. It has been overseen by a Steering Group made up of representatives of the agencies involved.

Comedia became involved with PROJECT following a tendering procedure by Public Art South West to contract an independent body to evaluate the programme. We were attracted to the programme for several reasons. Comedia has a long-standing interest in the role of culture in the built environment. The basic idea of PROJECT, to engage artists at an early stage to contribute to the planning of built environment developments, rather than late in the process as artisans, seemed to us to be an interesting and potentially fruitful one. We knew and have a high regard for the work of PASW, and of Alastair Snow, the Scheme Manager, and welcomed the opportunity to work with them.

The process has been lengthy and relationships have grown and developed over the nearly two years since we first became involved. This report is the compilation of a wide range of views from people involved at the sharp end of the programme, and we are very grateful to everyone who has contributed, and put up generously with our repeated nagging for reports, questionnaires and journals, which, alongside the real business of trying to make developments happen, must often have seemed yet another layer of tedious bureaucracy.

All the information was collected on a confidential basis, and the responses are treated anonymously in this report.

I am very grateful to Jo Morland, who managed the evaluation contract on behalf of Public Art South West, Alastair Snow the PROJECT Scheme Manager, Maggie Bolt Director of PASW, my Comedia colleague Franco Bianchini, and to Maureen Mackin, Harminder Talwar, Deborah Harrison and Monica Stoppleman who assisted with the observation and evaluation of awards and the compilation of this report.

In so far as this report reflects the reality of the programme and its effectiveness in changing attitudes, it comes from the people directly involved. Errors and omissions are all my own.

Fred Brookes

Comedia

May 2006

Summary

All those professionals whose normal practice before PROJECT's intervention did not include working with artists, subsequently experienced a fairly fundamental change in mindset and working practice as a result of their involvement.

The purpose of PROJECT is to engage artists, public agencies and the private sector in a range of projects that will have a positive impact on places. PROJECT provided financial assistance to pay artists' fees in order to support collaboration between artists on one hand and design, planning and construction professionals on the other.

Comedia was commissioned to make an independent evaluation of the project, focusing on the extent to which the mindset and working practice of those involved changed as a consequence. Data was gathered on a 'before and after' basis from 36 participants in 12 projects. Several personal journals of participants and detailed case studies were included in the evaluation.

Initial expectations were high, all participants expecting a more or less positive effect of the project. Most respondents expected the project they were embarking on to be different from others they had been involved in. The artist's contribution was anticipated on all sides to be capable of bringing about an enhanced identity, distinctiveness or design awareness to projects which otherwise would lack character, or be purely functional.

The majority of participants, over 80% felt that their mindset would, or might, be changed as a result of the project. In the event, 60% considered that there had been such a change, rather more among other professionals than artists. Artists expected less change of mindset and experienced less, while other professionals expected more and experienced more change.

About 60% had anticipated a change in their working practice, but in the event 80% felt that their working practice had been affected by the experience. Most respondents reporting change in working practice described it as fairly fundamental and fairly long term. Artists expected less change of working practice than did other professionals, but experienced more.

All those professionals whose normal practice before PROJECT's intervention did not include working with artists subsequently experienced a fairly fundamental change in mindset and working practice as a result of their involvement.

There is wide appreciation among the other professionals that the engagement of artists has raised the quality and value in the project and, it is believed, in the built environment that ultimately ensues.

Conclusions

The evaluation of PROJECT asked four questions.

1. Did the people involved change their mindsets and/or working practices?

Yes, the majority of participants experienced a change in both mindset and working practice, artists somewhat less so than other professionals. All those

professionals whose normal practice before PROJECT's intervention did not include working with artists, subsequently experienced a fairly fundamental change in mindset and working practice as a result of their involvement.

2. Has there been any impact on long term practice of the project players?

The majority of those who underwent a change in their working practice described it as fairly long-term. Already, in some cases, those involved are taking forward further projects in which artists are engaged at an early stage, building on their experience with PROJECT.

3. Has the involvement of artists made any demonstrable difference to projects?

There is wide appreciation among the other professionals that the engagement of artists has raised the quality and value in the project and, it is believed, in the built environment that ultimately ensues. The range of allowable discourse between developers, architects, planners and clients has been beneficially extended by artists' intervention. The engagement of communities of residents and potential users has been facilitated by artists' work.

4. Under what conditions does artist input have a positive effect and when does it not?

To achieve a good experience and a successful outcome, some conditions have to be met.

Clarity – it works best when the artist and the other professionals involved are clear about what the artist's role is and what they are expected to do.

Timely appointment – if the artist is to contribute effectively to planning and developing a project, they have to be in place early.

Management – capacity has to be made available in a project to ensure that the artist's involvement is managed and supported.

Remuneration – if artists are expected to contribute in like manner to other professionals they should be accordingly properly paid.

Support – a facilitated peer group network of artists working in such situations would be beneficial to the success of projects. Organisations receiving the input of artists also need support, particularly when this is breaking new ground.

In conclusion, the findings of this evaluation can be summarised in two maxims:

Engagement of an artist from an early stage in a development project, in good circumstances, brings about a positive change of mindset and working practice among the other professionals involved.

When artists are working in a development milieu and expected to contribute their professional expertise and creativity, they should be engaged on the same terms as the other professionals involved.

Background of PROJECT

The purpose of PROJECT was to engage artists, public agencies and the private sector in a range of projects that would have a positive impact on places. It aimed to bring a new dimension to the development of a high quality built environment by supporting artists to work within or comment on the design, planning and construction sectors in order to influence and create a shared vision for architecture, public space, planning and high quality urban design. The scheme covered England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

PROJECT provided financial assistance to pay artists' fees in order to support collaboration between artists on one hand and design, planning and construction professionals on the other, working pro-actively with public and private sector agencies on projects in the built environment. PROJECT's aim was to facilitate the artist's role as a creative thinker and/or commentator, working within the team appointed to deliver the project.

PROJECT's aims were:

- promote the sharing of ideas and creativity within multidisciplinary practice in our built environment;
- integrate artists' creativity and skills into the design of our built and natural environment in order to enhance the quality of life;
- promote high quality design which is fit for purpose, reflects local identity, meets communities' needs and expectations, provides economic benefit;
- encourage new partnerships and ways of working, especially within the education, housing and healthcare sectors;
- invest in innovative schemes, to create new contexts and opportunities for artists, for example in regeneration schemes;
- evaluate the benefits, outcomes and influence of projects receiving awards in order to inform future working.

In this two-year pilot phase (April 2004 to March 2006), PROJECT had four rounds of applications. 141 initial proposals led to 81 full applications, from which PROJECT awards were made to 30 successful applicants in six categories:

- **Exploration:** organisations who would like to work with an artist, but wish to look at the feasibility of doing so and the relevant working practices needed in order to facilitate team working and realise shared objectives. Value £2,000 - £5,000;
- **Visionary:** artists' engagement with the design team responsible for master-planning, urban design and development frameworks. Value £5,000 - £15,000;
- **Team-Building:** for artists working within multidisciplinary teams on the design and construction of buildings and spaces. Value £5,000 - £15,000;

- **Creative Homes:** the engagement of artists in housing market renewal or housing expansion schemes. Value £5,000 - £15,000;
- **Creative Communities:** artists working with communities in regeneration, planning or urban design projects. Value £5,000 - £15,000;
- **Talking Artists:** the publication of artists' views as verbal commentators on urban conditions and solutions. Value £2,000 - £5,000.

Evaluation process

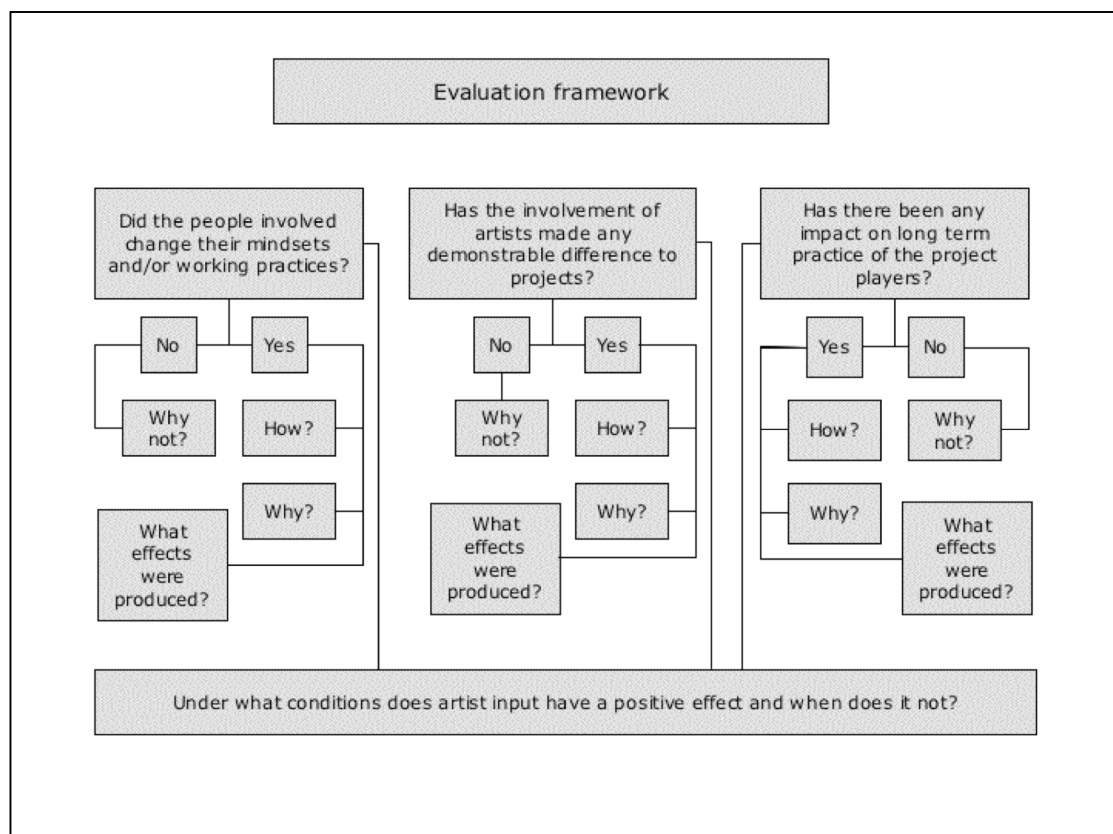
The PROJECT programme looked for assistance in devising and implementing an independent monitoring and evaluation process to provide a robust evidential base for examining the effectiveness of artist/design profession collaborations in the public realm, the additional value artists bring to the design and consultation process and the longer term impact of this experience on the practice of the professionals involved.

Following a competitive tendering process, Comedia was commissioned by PASW, together with CABE and A&B. Comedia prepared a framework for the evaluation (see the PROJECT Evaluation Toolbox published alongside this report) which set out the objectives and methodology for the evaluation process. That having been agreed by the Steering Group, we set about to implement the process, in parallel with the sequence of awards made by PROJECT in four rounds.

Evaluation framework

It was clear that the process of many, if not all, of the developments and schemes which received PROJECT awards would be quite long-term. Our brief was not to evaluate the outcomes in terms of the completed products, which in some cases would be years away. Our focus was to be 'hearts and minds', seeking to evaluate the effect of the involvement of artists on the ways of working and mindset of those engaged with the schemes, and vice versa.

Accordingly, the evaluation framework focused on four principal factors, as outlined in this diagram. A full text of the evaluation framework and questionnaires is given in the Toolbox.



Methodology

A methodology was agreed between Comedia and the Steering Group, which entailed five elements:

1. Survey by questionnaire of participants, including all the individuals directly involved in each scheme, at an early stage in their process;
2. Ditto after completion or at a late stage;
3. Personal introspective journals sought from each participant, as a record of their experience of the scheme;
4. Follow-up interviews of selected projects on or near completion;
5. Participant observation of group behaviour on selected schemes, carried out by an independent observer attending at relevant meetings.

This combination was intended to produce a mix of quantitative and qualitative information which could support analysis and evaluation of the extent to which the engagement of artists had made a difference to the project and the ways of working of those involved.

Implementation

Having been designed and agreed before any awards had been made, the evaluation framework proved in the event to have strengths and weaknesses. It soon became clear that the framework fitted some categories of PROJECT award better than others. In particular the framework was not appropriate to the Talking Artists category awards.

It is in the nature of development projects (and some which received PROJECT awards are very large scale) that they take time to achieve and that planned timescales often slip. This factor, coupled with the fact that the awards were made in four rounds over the period of a year, meant that some of the awards had hardly started before the term of the evaluation contract was coming to an end. It was agreed that Round 4 awards would not figure in the evaluation for this reason. In the event, it proved possible to obtain some evaluation information from 12 of the 20 awards made in Rounds 1 to 3 ranging across the geography, type and scale of awards as shown in Table 1 below.

As a consequence we are reasonably confident that the resulting analysis and interpretation can be treated as representative of the programme as a whole.

Some aspects of the planned methodology worked better than others in practice. In particular the personal introspective journal proved the most problematic. Comedia had taken advice from Professor Pauline Maclaran at De Montfort University, who has extensive experience of evaluation both in theory and practice, and who recommended this approach to attitude evaluation. In the event, the diversity and widespread location of schemes, together with the difficulty for participants in prioritising this request in their inevitably busy schedules, meant that few journals were completed. Those that were, however, proved to be the source of much valuable information and insight.

Participant observation was undertaken in four schemes, by the author and several experienced associates local to the projects. This aspect of the methodology was very fruitful. The process of providing survey questionnaires and chasing their completion was predictably tedious for all concerned, but a good deal of nagging, together with follow-up telephone interviews, eventually assembled a stockpile of material which could be analysed.

Table 1 – characteristics of awards represented in the evaluation

Award type	Award £	Location	Client	Design phase £	Construction phase £
Creative Communities	£12,300	Scotland	Local Authority	£25,800	TBC
Creative Communities	£4,800	London	Community Organisation	TBC	TBC
Creative Homes	£15,000	South West	Developer	£30,000	TBC
Exploration	£5,000	North East	Architect/artist	TBC	TBC
Talking Artists	£5,000	North East	Support agency	TBC	
Team-building	£10,000	South East	Developer	£20,000	TBC
Team-building	£15,000	West Midlands	Local Authority	£66,000	TBC
Team-building	£5,000	West Midlands	Regeneration Partnership	£10,000	£1.24m
Visionary	£15,000	North West	Local Authority	£38,000	TBC
Visionary	£15,000	East	Support agency / Local Authority	£25,000	TBC
Visionary	£15,000	Northern Ireland	Local Authority	£42,600	TBC
Visionary	£9,500	South West	Local Authority	TBC	£35m

Findings

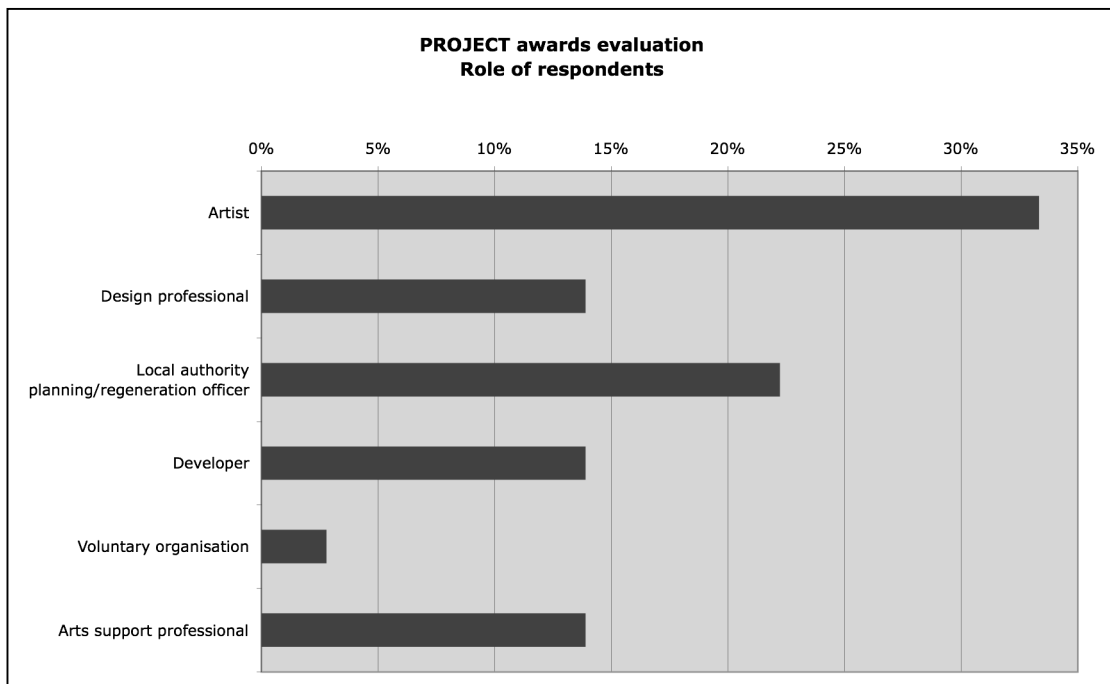
The evaluation process yielded two kinds of evaluative information. On one hand, tick-box data from survey questionnaires from which quantitative information could be analysed. On the other, the expressed views, opinions, descriptions and evaluative observations of participants and the various people involved in the evaluation process. These are complementary and together combine to build up a rounded picture of what happened. This section of the report presents analysis and review of the findings. The succeeding section offers four detailed case studies typifying aspects of the PROJECT scheme, and the next draws out a number of key themes.

Survey results and analysis

Participants were asked to identify themselves in six categories: artist, design professional, local authority planning/regeneration officer, developer, voluntary organisation, and other (most of whom were arts support professionals either with local authorities or independent agencies). In the initial survey participants were asked about their motivation, ambition and expectation for the project, and in the concluding questionnaire about their experience of change.

A total of 50 survey questionnaires (30 initial and 20 completion) were returned from 12 projects by 36 participants, 14 of whom returned both. The range of roles of the participants represented in the responses is shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1



n.b. Throughout the report charts show percentages of valid responses.

'Before'

The survey of participants made at an early stage in their project asked about their motivation for being involved, their perception of the purpose of an artist's engagement in the project, their expectations of any change in mindset or working practice.

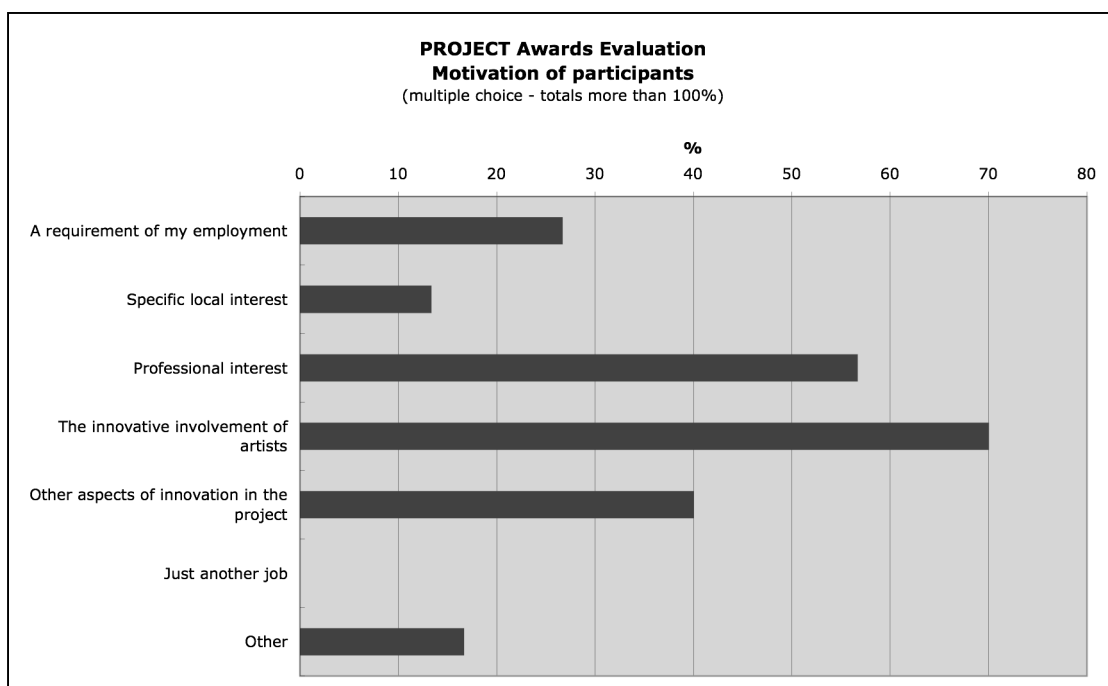
Motivating factors

Asked about what motivated them to be involved in their project in the first place, more than 70% of those responding cited the innovative involvement of an artist as a factor, and more than half were motivated by a professional interest. These were the leading factors both for artists and for other professionals involved [Chart 2]. Artists were motivated by the opportunity to bring their distinctively different creative viewpoint to the planning of a project, or to explore the possibilities of their creativity in an architectural context.

Developers were, in some cases, interested in incorporating art into their schemes as a means of adding value, and in others, seeking innovation or a creative influence. The idea that the artist would act as an alternative designer with a different approach was also evident among some of the developers. Local authority people were mostly excited by the innovative idea of working with an artist outside their usual experience. Those involved as arts support professionals, either within local government or in independent organisations, being accustomed to working with artists, saw their motivation principally as a professional interest.

No-one who responded felt that the project was 'just another job' and there was evidently considerable excitement and anticipation in the minds of participants in all categories.

Chart 2



Reason and purpose

In some cases PROJECT enabled the realisation of an approach to artists' involvement in the built environment which had been developed over some long time, where the award acted as an imprimatur. In others the PROJECT scheme was used quite opportunistically to provide some funding to help sustain a programme which was already well under way.

The purpose of the artist's engagement is interpreted differently among the various groups of respondents. In some of the major developments, residential and commercial, the role of the artists is seen by the other professions as being to engage the relevant community, both to involve their contribution to plans and proposals and, more cynically perhaps, to sweeten the pill of a scheme which might face local opposition by providing locally-based arts activity. In some instances their involvement is seen as bestowing a promotional advantage, making news and thereby raising the profile of a scheme.

Residential and commercial development is about creating monetary value, and the role of the artist in this respect is seen by some developers as bringing in to a scheme elements which give distinctiveness, character and identity, because these are indices of value and quality, and therefore add commercial value. Not all developers involved feel this way. Some see engaging an artist as likely to increase the approval rating among those responsible for planning control and permissions. In some cases the reason for engaging an artist is more explicitly cosmetic, to influence the choice of materials and finishes. Another role for the artist, seen from the developer's viewpoint, is to assist in making good relations with the local community affected by a development.

Planners themselves have diverse views. Artists are expected to be able to influence matters such that an enhanced quality of design and environment results. Engagement of 'the local community' is also a purpose recognised by the planners, though in cases of large-scale new settlement developments, there is at this stage no community to involve.

In these circumstances artists are expected to contribute innovative thinking, or best practice, or to mediate the design process, not necessarily skills within their capabilities. More positively, from an engineer's viewpoint, there is a recognition that technically correct design, which the professionals are adept at, is not all that is needed, and the artist may be able to provide a new dimension of some kind which the specialists' technical expertise can help deliver.

Among the other professional respondents there is expectation that engaging an artist may introduce, or emphasise, a dimension of humanity, or indeed spirituality, into what is conventionally a materialist or instrumentalist process. There is a realisation, dawning slowly in some cases, that art is a public good, that people want and deserve an environment infused with art, though few are ready to express this view explicitly.

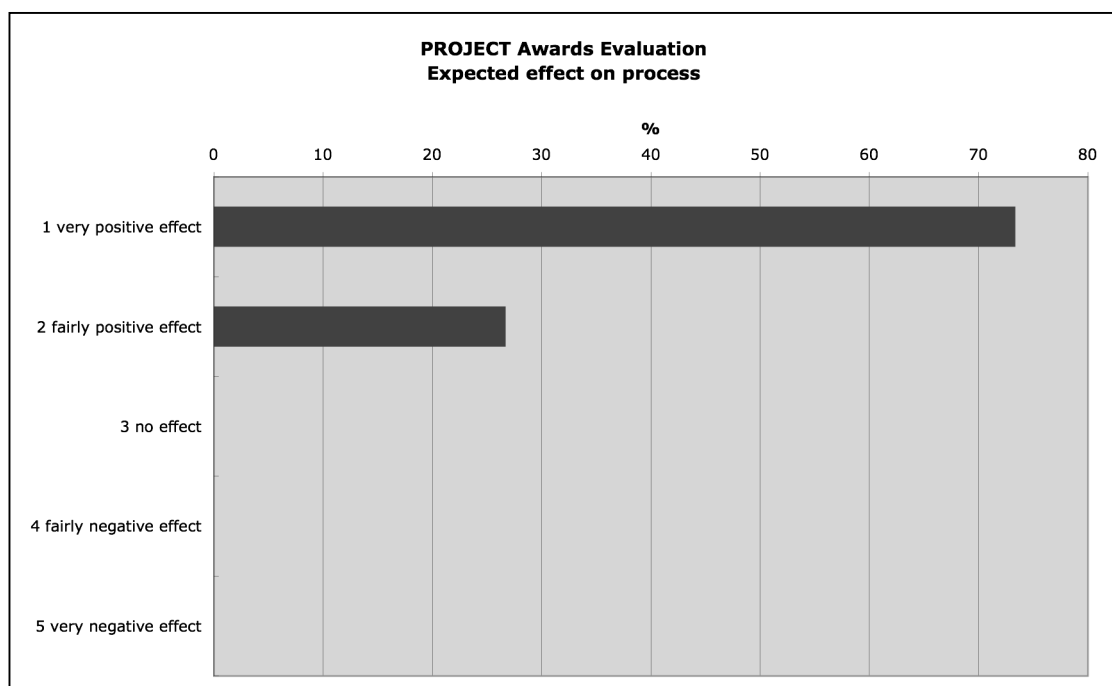
Several common themes emerge from the responses with regard to the reason and purpose of involving artists in these projects:

- To challenge the closed way of working and conservative mindset of the world of architecture and planning. To bring a different creative viewpoint to the masterplanning process. Artists take a ‘why not?’ attitude and encourage lateral thinking. Also artists are prepared to work in a committed way on projects which may appear marginal;
- To bring innovation in design, and support the development of a culture of innovation in the scheme. Artists bring artifice and creativity to architectural design and construction. The artist’s input can bring a new dimension to the technically correct work of the engineer;
- To convince stakeholders of the value of artists’ contribution to a city’s cultural development;
- To broker relationships between artists and other professional fields;
- To infuse art in a major development scheme to produce a better ambience and environment to inspire future residents;
- To add value to the scheme;
- To humanise what might otherwise be a purely materialist process;
- Artists can be mediators between architects and the public.

Expectations

With this range and level of apprehension of the purpose of artists’ involvement, expectations accordingly run high. Asked for their expectation of the effect on the process of their scheme, 70%, at this initial stage, anticipate a very positive effect [Chart 3], and no-one sees the artists’ engagement as negative, or even neutral, as far as the process of the scheme is concerned.

Chart 3

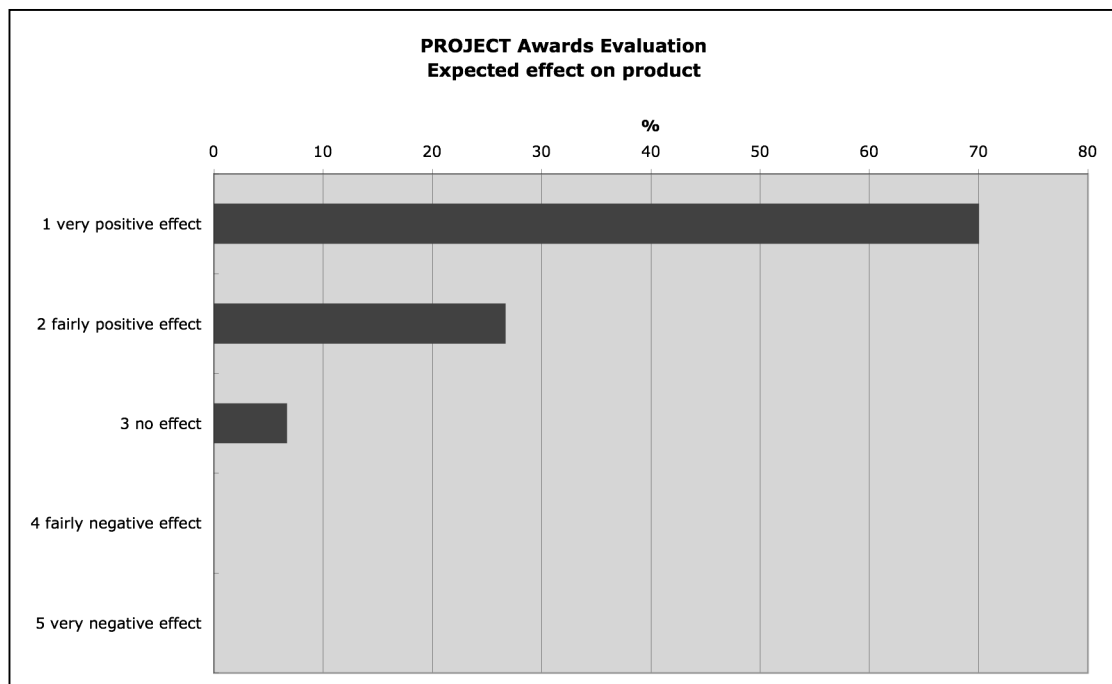


There is a wide diversity of view as to the nature of the effect of an artist's involvement on the process of a scheme. Development professionals often see the artist as a kind of 'alternative designer', who will produce a design concept or input that is not constrained by the rigour, and perhaps conservatism, of professional practice in other spheres. There is a risk here that the artist is expected to act as a design professional in the development team, but be paid less.

Another kind of effect on the process is expected where the artist is seen as a facilitator of consultation, using creative activity as a channel for the input to a scheme of the views, feelings and ambitions of local residents likely to be affected. Some of the participating artists see their role explicitly in this light, as having the skills to engage people who would otherwise likely have no access to the process of decision-making.

The survey asked about participants' expectations of the effect of artists' involvement on the product of the scheme, as distinct from its process [Chart 4]. A little more caution was evident in these responses than in those reflecting on the process. Views include highly optimistic and positive ones, that the result will be buildings as pieces of art rather than pieces of art in buildings. A little lower in ambition is the expectation that certain areas of developments such as public open spaces, play areas, surface treatments, will be enhanced, or that the artists' contribution will encourage a developer to take a more responsible attitude to the quality of the built environment generally.

Chart 4



More sceptically, some respondents express concern that the positive effect of the artist's contribution on the final outcome will progressively be squeezed out by commercial considerations as the scheme progresses, until little or nothing remains. Many respondents refer to the issue of 'sense of place'. The

artist's contribution is anticipated on all sides to be capable of bringing about an enhanced identity, distinctiveness or design awareness to projects which otherwise would lack character, or be purely functional. In some instances this effect is expected to be through an infusion of the scheme with a distinctive personal approach to design or aesthetics, in others to be the result of a more conventional 'public art' contribution of murals or sculpture or installation works of art.

There is concern among some of the architects involved that the propositions coming from the artist's input will require the intervention of architectural skills beyond the artist's knowledge base in order to make something realisable and viable. This foregrounding of architects' technical rigour as a moderator of artist's invention is in contrast to the approach of those engineers who see their part as finding the technical ways to realise an artist's vision.

Other kinds of effects are anticipated by participants. The involvement of an artist and the PROJECT scheme itself are seen in some cases as blazing a trail which others will be encouraged to follow in the area, creating a high-profile pilot which will be influential beyond its own direct achievements. From another perspective, the artist's approach is seen as radicalising, aligned with community action, a low-capital, non-hierarchical alternative to conventional structures. An increased public profile is anticipated in some cases, both as a contributor to added value, but also in a more public-spirited way, to contribute to improving the perceived image of an area of deprivation in the public mind.

Some common themes emerge from the responses with regard to the expectations of participants in these projects

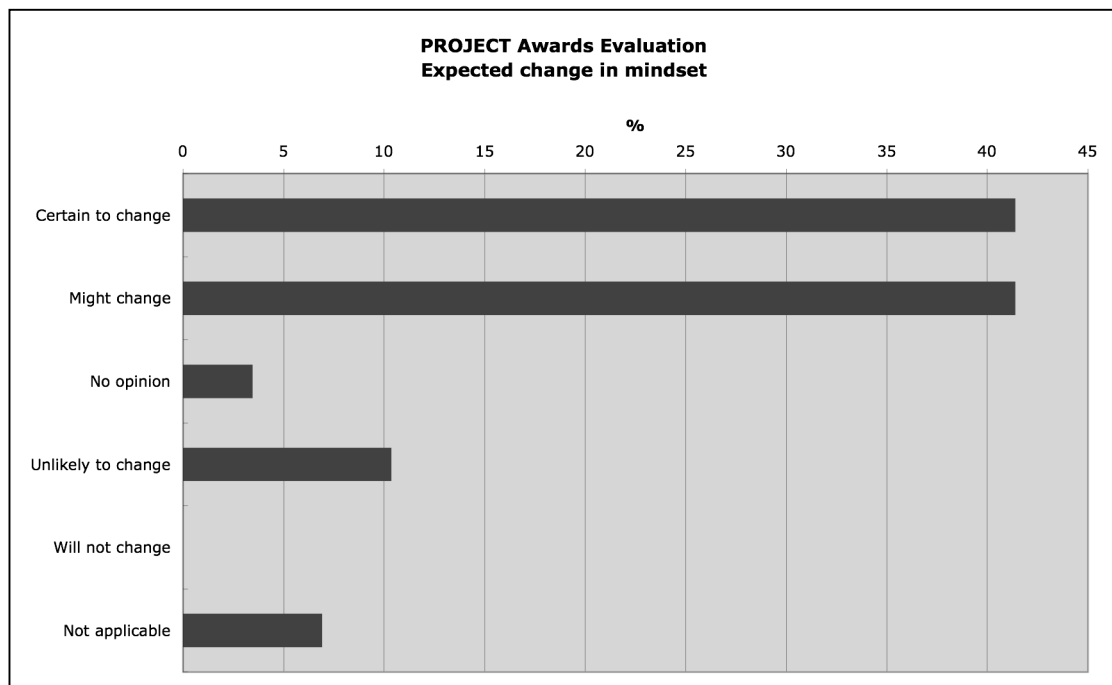
- Raising public awareness of a scheme through gaining media coverage of an artist's involvement;
- Engaging existing and new residents in the development;
- Introducing a welcome challenge to conventional ways of thinking by including the artist in the inter-disciplinary working group of a project;
- Creating meaning and expression in a building or place, not just functionality;
- Altering others' perceptions of what an artist can do;
- Bringing in, through the involvement of artists, a wide range of reference and experience from spheres which are not normally involved in development projects;
- Dealing with the complexity and sluggishness of bureaucracy requires much patience of the artist;
- Making the development team ponder decisions together;
- Helping those involved think more, and adopt a creative approach to creating new communities, rather than follow traditional or standard forms.

Change of mindset

'Mindset' was defined as 'the habitual or characteristic mental attitude that determines how you interpret and respond to situations'. At the initial stage,

just over 40% of respondents to the survey were certain that their mindset would change as a result of taking part, and as many again thought that it might do [Chart 5]. This view was shared across categories of respondent, and the few sceptics were not confined to any single category. Positions ranged from an open mind awaiting developments or reserving judgement, to hopes for exposure to subtle influences, to expectations of a full-on challenge to self-acknowledged traditional or hidebound thinking.

Chart 5



Change of working practice

There was a clear sense of innovation in the programme. 86% of respondents expected the project they were embarking on to be different from others they had been involved in [Chart 6].

In general there is a sense of excitement at the prospect of something one has never done before. The few who demurred included a developer who had previous experience of an artist’s involvement in a project, one artist and staff members of public art development agencies, who saw PROJECT as within their usual activity.

With regard to change they expect to be brought about in their working practice, views are somewhat more divided, with just over 20% of those returning a view indicating that they expect no change to result [Chart 7].

In the specific case of some of the schemes, the PROJECT award was enabling new ground to be broken. There were instances where the introduction of an artist into a project at a strategic level was a complete innovation. In consequence there was quite high expectation that ways of working would change, though often with little idea of what that change might be. There were expectations of change in working practice related to the specifics of individual projects. In one, artists expected to see work through

from concept to manufacture, rather than making one-off artefacts. In other cases, taking responsibility for working with a community where the artist has direct links was expected to lead to change.

Chart 6

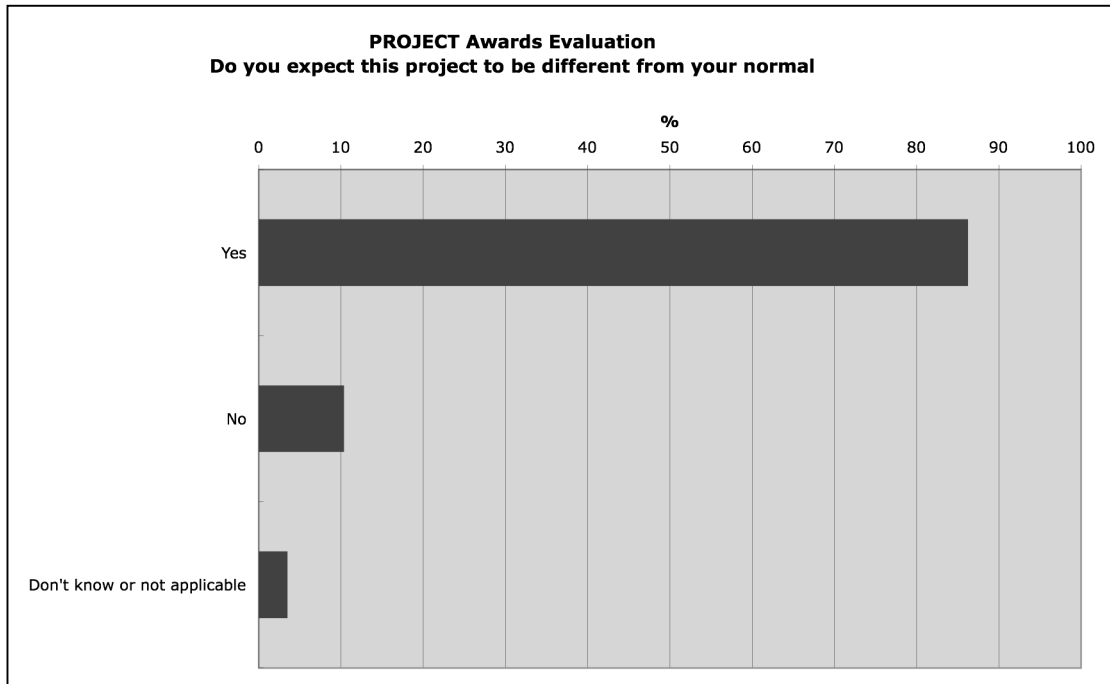
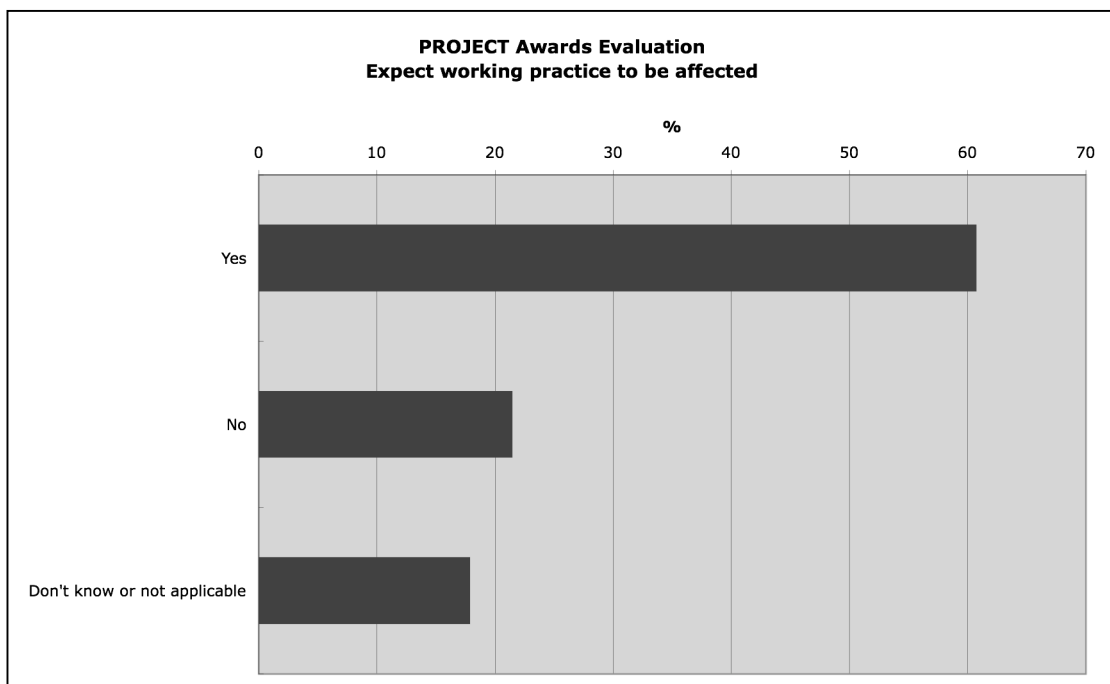


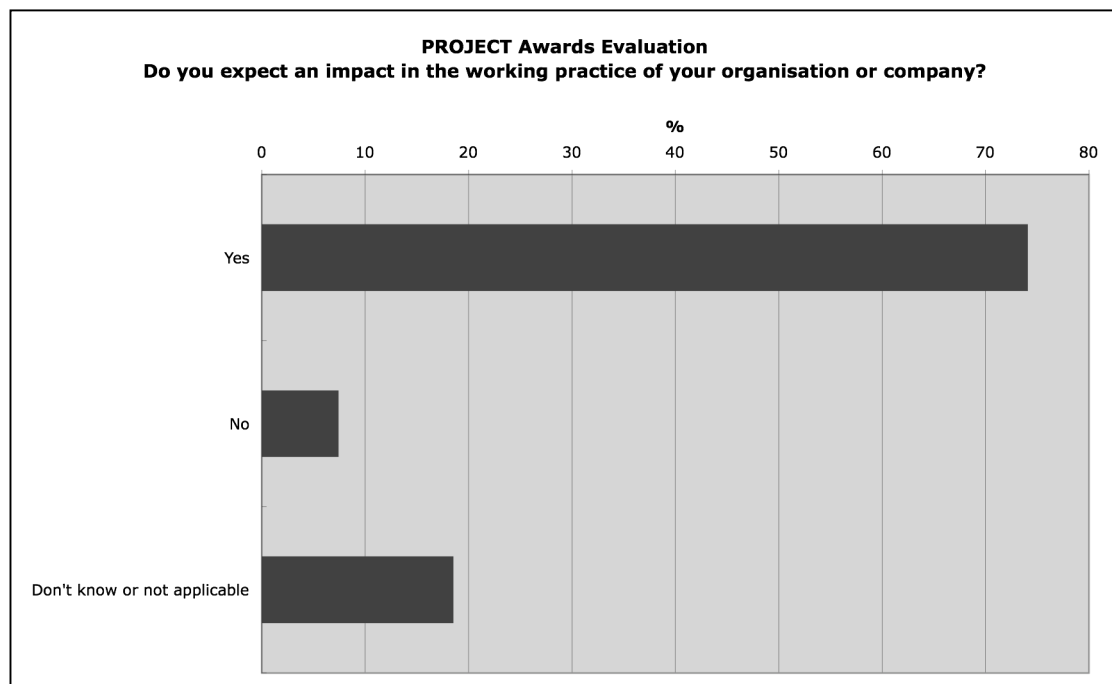
Chart 7



Participants working in companies or larger organisations, as distinct from artists who are mostly sole workers or small partnerships, were asked about their expectation of change in the working practice of their organisation,

consequent on the involvement of an artist in their project. Three-quarters of these respondents expected to see some impact [Chart 8].

Chart 8



Alongside an understandable degree of 'wait and see', the range of factors which participants thought might come into play included:

- A community organisation utilising artists as external facilitators more often in future;
- Benefit to a Regeneration Officer in undertaking Section 106 negotiations with future developers;
- Certainty that engineers will benefit from working with artists, and hope that this view is reciprocated;
- Challenge the thinking of architects and all involved in schools in a city;
- Clearer lines of management of public art projects between departments in an authority;
- Education of, and acceptance by, elected members;
- Opportunity for artists who work alone to collaborate and learn how to act as a team;
- Redress the acknowledged weakness of vision in the local authority.

Change factors

Factors which participants thought might occur which would influence their working practice included:

- The opportunity to collaborate with other creative professionals;

- PROJECT offers the first taste of working with an artist as part of the wider regeneration agenda;
- Openness to learning, both on the part of artists and other professions;
- Artist able to win support and co-operation of statutory and community bodies;
- Artist's record of achievement in achieving a sense of place;
- Some artistic ways of working parallel some kinds of social or community action, e.g. low capital cost, d-i-y approach, non-hierarchical organisation;
- Artist's involvement contributes to balancing the conflicting demands of commercial development and environmental improvement;
- More ambitious in scale and objectives than previous public art projects.

Reservations and concerns

The initial survey asked about any reservations which participants had about the prospect of an artist being involved in their project. Responses included:

- The role of the artist - artist in residence; artist as designer, or on a parallel but different track; independent perspective versus engagement in the development team;
- How to contribute effectively without becoming a substitute (and cheap) designer/architect;
- Uncertainty about the depth or persistence of change resulting from the scheme;
- Commercial aspect of development will always dictate, minimising effect of artist's involvement in the end;
- Slow pace of local authority decision-making may cause opportunities to be missed;
- Expectations are very high relative to the amount of funding available;
- Education and acceptance of artist's involvement by elected members would be a step forward, if it can be achieved;
- Hope to encourage, persuade, force developer to embrace artist's input and help improve the environment.

‘After’

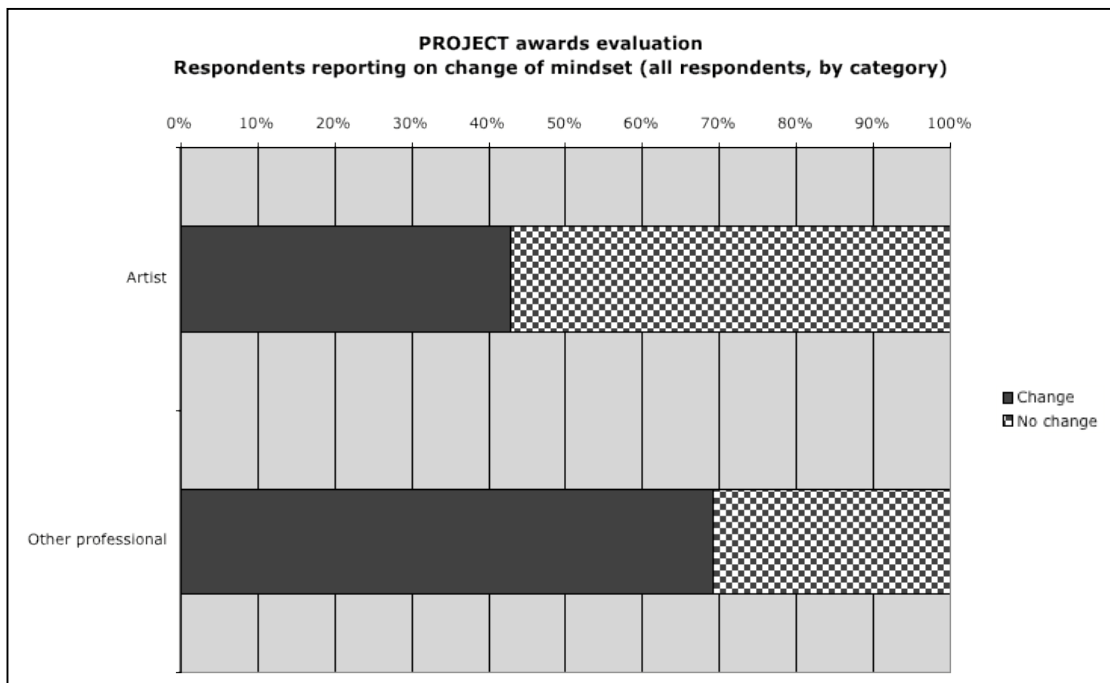
The survey of participants taken at completion or a later stage of the process asked about their experience of the project, specifically about any change of mindset or working practice they had experienced, and the extent to which the artist’s involvement had impacted on their project.

This section sets out the responses and analyses their implications, compared to the expectations discussed in the previous section.

Mindset

As in the initial survey, mindset was defined as ‘the habitual or characteristic mental attitude that determines how you interpret and respond to situations’. Asked if they considered that their mindset had changed as a result of their involvement in the scheme, 60% of respondents reported that it had. This compares with 40% at the initial stage who were certain it would and 40% who thought it might. A significantly smaller proportion, 43%, of the artists reporting felt that their mindset had changed, than those in the ‘other professionals’ group, in which 69% reported a change in mindset [Chart 9].

Chart 9



In respect of the degree of change, most of the other professionals who reported a change of mindset described it as fairly fundamental, and half the artists did so [Chart 10]. Asked how long they considered the change would endure, most of those reporting change described it as fairly long term. The reported duration of change in mindset is shown in Chart 11.

Chart 10

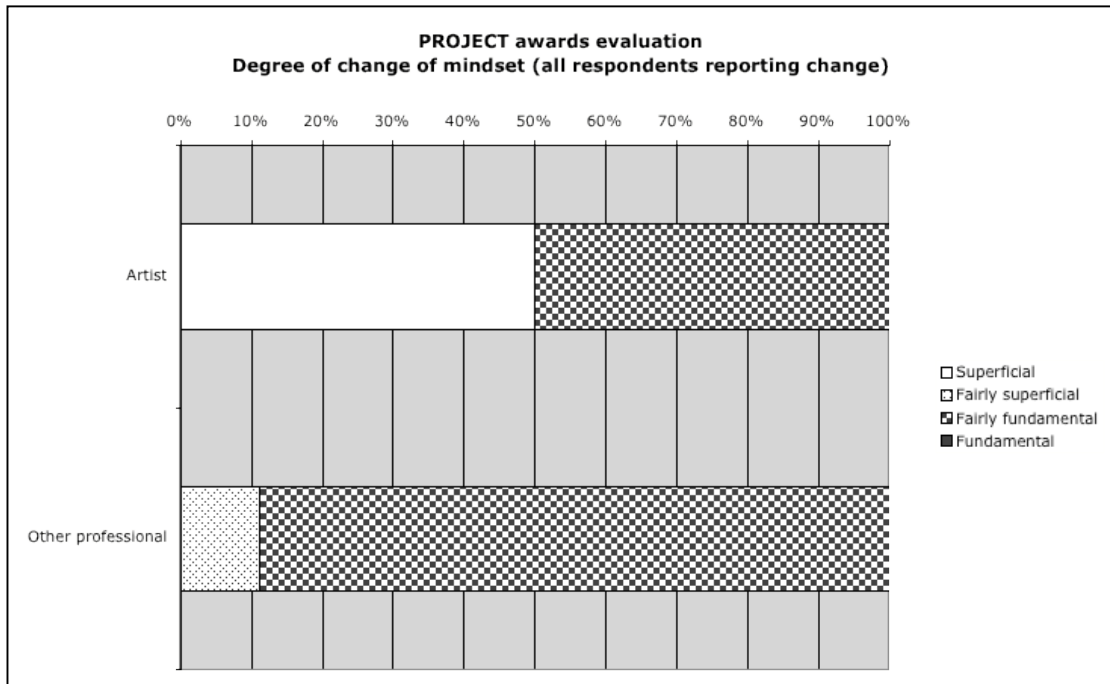
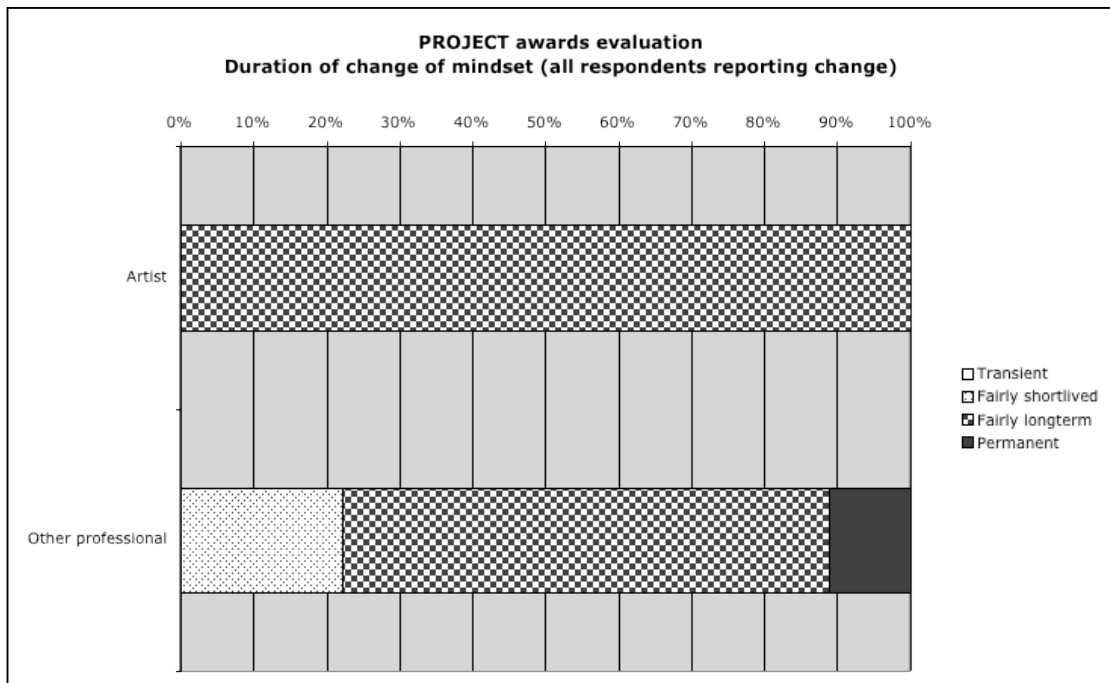
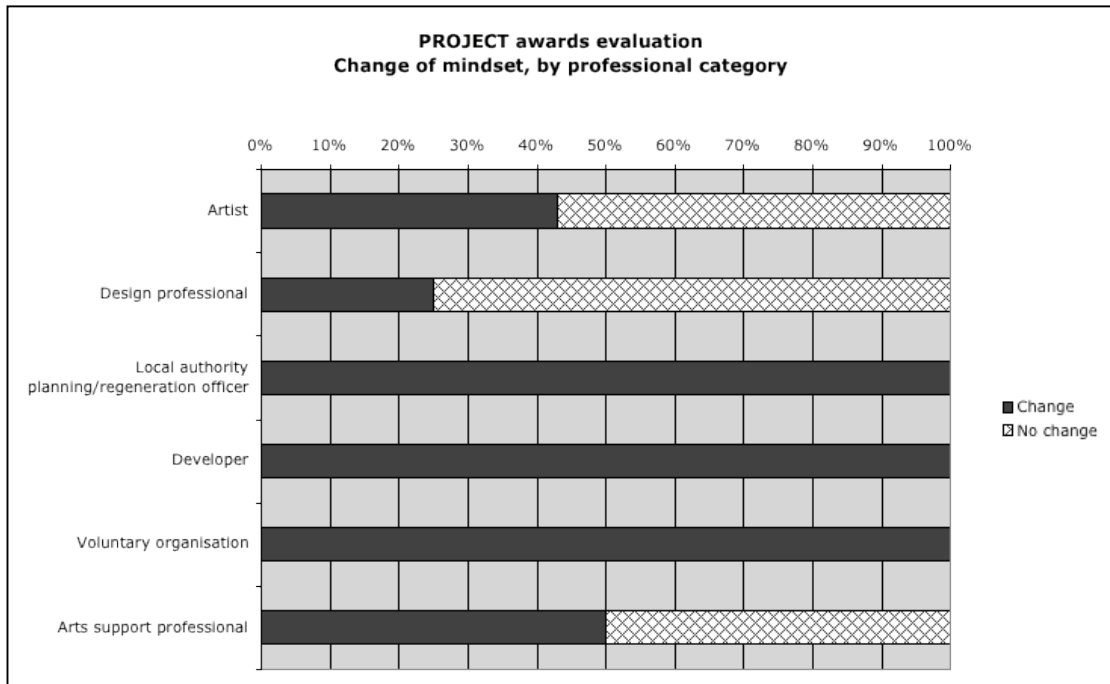


Chart 11



While caution is necessary because of the low numbers in some categories, it is nonetheless instructive to compare the extent of reported change between professions [Chart 12]. All those local authority planning or regeneration officers who reported on this factor had experienced a change of mindset. Similarly, all the developers who responded had also experienced such a change.

Chart 12



Where a direct comparison between the initial expectations and subsequent experience of individual participants is possible, the responses show some interesting features. Graded on a scale from 1 (least) to 5 (greatest), the average expectation of change of mindset was 4.0, and corresponding experience of a change of mindset was 2.5. Participants reporting on these dimensions entered the project with a higher expectation of change than actually occurred. Separating out the two principal categories, artists and other professionals, artists expected less change of mindset and experienced less, while other professionals expected more and experienced more change.

Those other professionals who did not experience a change in mindset were design professionals (local authority and private sector), and one respondent working for a public art development agency. All put this down to the fact that working with artists was already part of their regular practice.

All those other professional respondents, therefore, whose normal practice before PROJECT's intervention did not include working with artists, subsequently experienced a change in mindset as a result of their involvement.

Most of the artists reporting no change of mindset were similarly already accustomed to collaborative working with other professions, an index perhaps of the 'public artist'.

The nature of the perceived change in mindset varied very widely. For many, simply the opportunity to meet a working artist, see their working practice, extend their own ideas of what art is and can be, and recognise how what artists do is both like and unlike what they themselves do, was enough to provoke that change. More specifically, there was recognition of the value and contribution of art and artists to community regeneration projects. The realisation that art and artists can act as interlocutor, communicator and

facilitator between development projects and their users had not been part of the previous experience of some respondents.

The importance of quality and the value of specialist input in making judgements figured in developers' responses. One developer commented on a fairly fundamental change in mindset, having begun to approach urban design projects proactively seeking opportunities to include art. Another reported having developed a better balance between practical and cost factors on one hand and design and quality on the other. The very positive reaction from the public following the artist-led consultation reinforced the developer's appreciation of the importance of public consultation and involvement in the design process. The hoped-for improvement in relations with the planning system as a consequence of the artist's involvement was reported in several cases.

Compared with the other professional categories, relatively few artists reported a change in mindset. For those that did, the principal factors of change were to do with their experience of the lack of control which is implicit in collaboration with major projects. Adjustment of expectations of timescale resulted from dealing with the sometimes grindingly slow pace of development projects. Organisational and management skills on the part of the artist were severely tested. Artists who experienced challenge directly to their artistic ideas and propositions found the capacity to reconsider and revise without necessarily compromising their personal and creative integrity. There was recognition that, working in a public context, the artist has to be prepared to be answerable and accountable in ways which do not prevail in a more private sphere of personal creativity. In one complex project, the conceptual process which the artist had envisaged as their contribution had perforce to be subsumed by the need for practical help to the client in understanding the approach to a building and how to communicate effectively with the developer.

The artist's contribution was recognised both by planners and developers as broadening the scope of allowable topics for discussion within the development team, giving more consideration to what are sometimes thought of as peripheral issues. An aspect of the involvement of an artist which contributed to the change of mindset of some participants was that there was more fun, that work on the project was more enjoyable, and more productive as a consequence.

Working practice

Asked whether they would do something like this again, the majority of respondents said they would, readily or fairly readily. Artists were somewhat more reluctant than other professionals, including 29% who would hesitate to do so [Chart 13].

All but one respondent reported that their PROJECT project had been different from other projects they had been involved in. 80% felt that their working practice had been affected by the experience, 70% of artists and 85% of other professionals respectively [Chart 14].

Chart 13

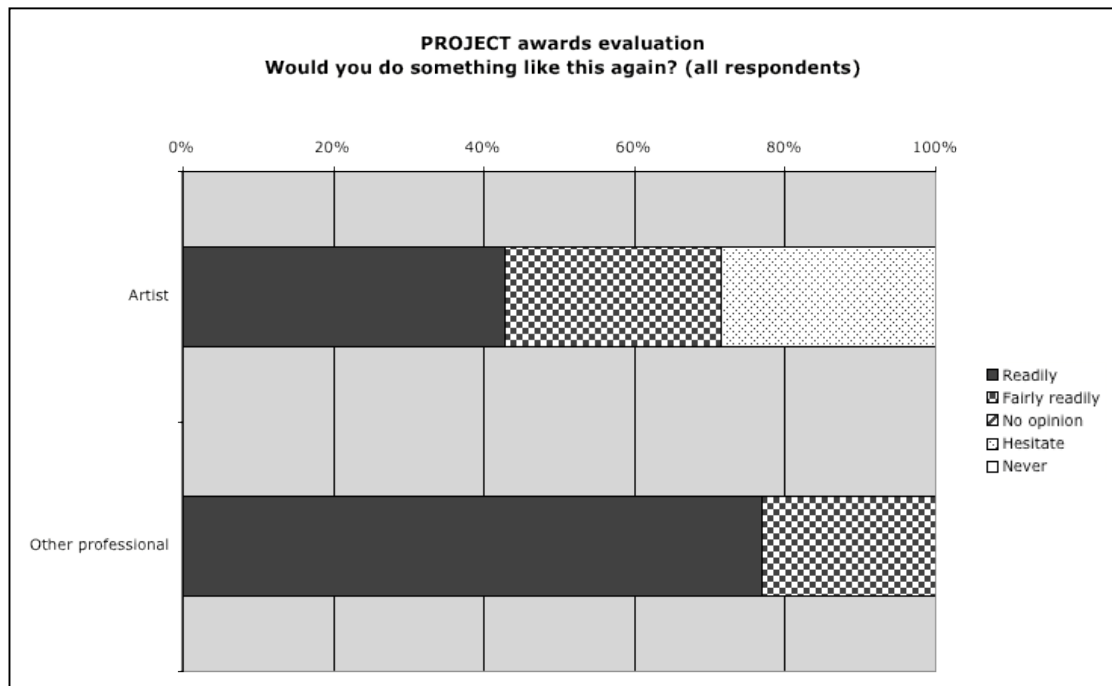
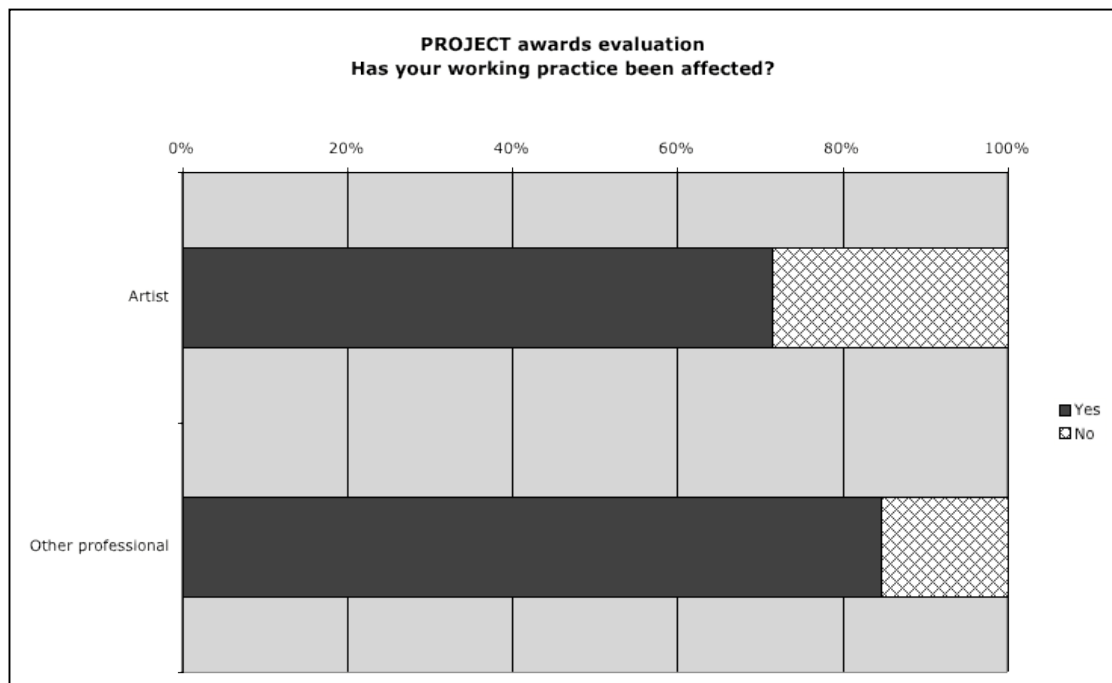


Chart 14



Most respondents reporting change in working practice described it as fairly fundamental [Chart 15], and fairly long term [Chart 16].

Chart 15

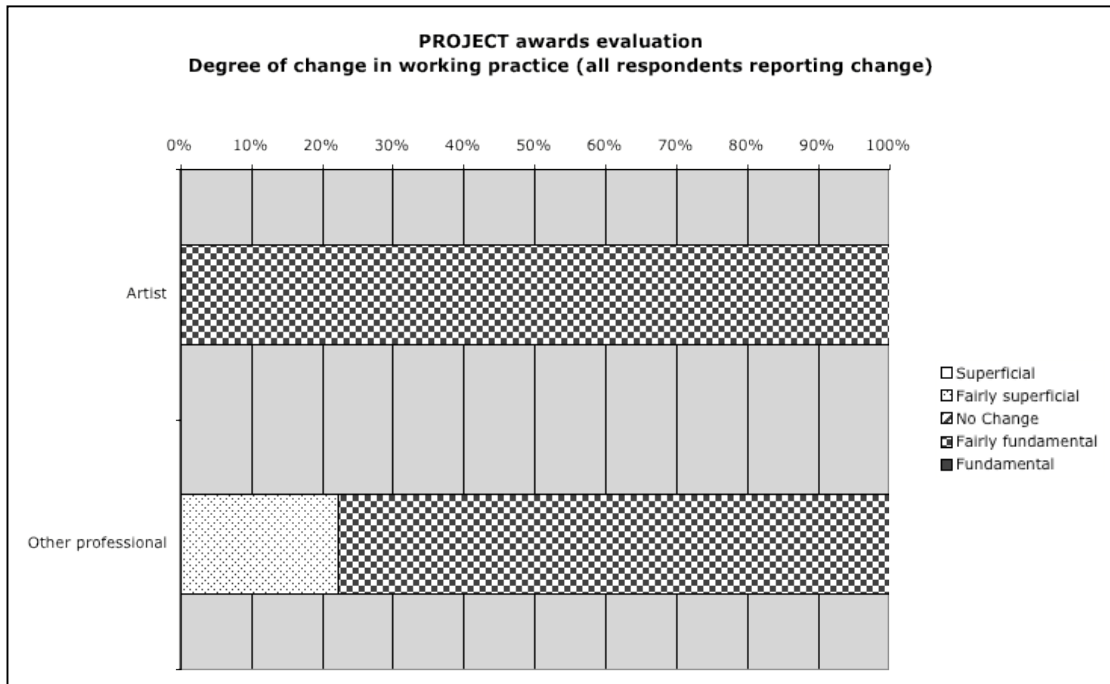
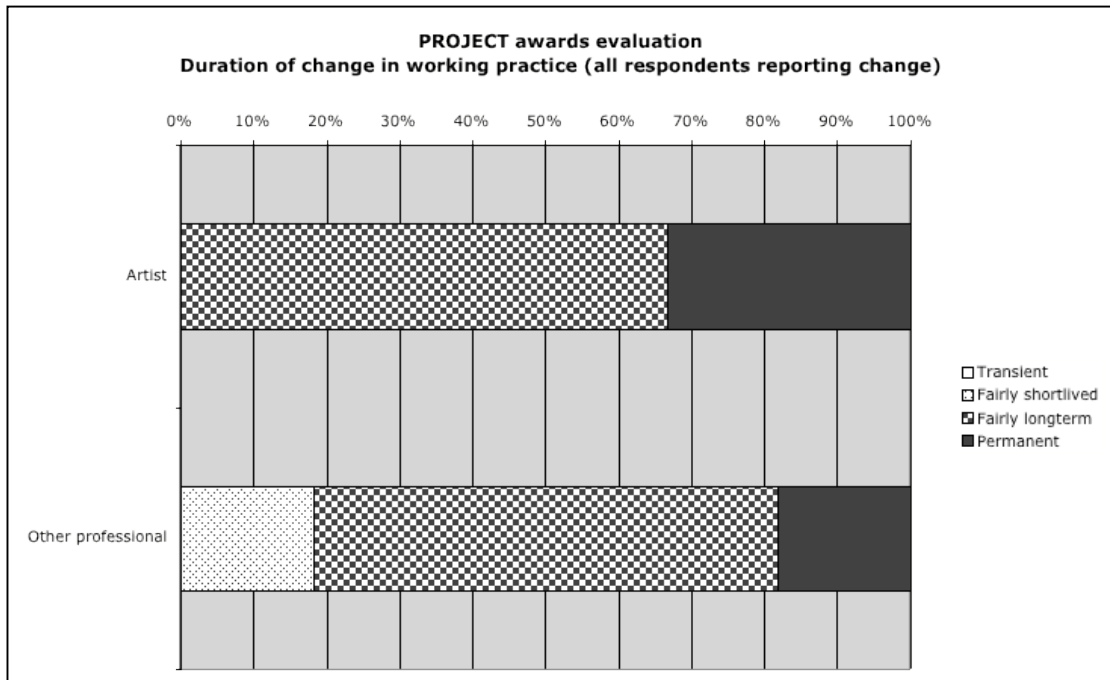


Chart 16



Regarding change of working practice, the situation is reversed compared to that of mindset change. Initial expectation of change was an average of 3.0 on a 1-5 scale, and actual experience of change was 3.2. Artists expected less change of working practice than other professionals, but experienced more.

As with mindset, all those other professional respondents whose normal practice before PROJECT's intervention did not include working with artists,

subsequently experienced a change in working practice as a result of their involvement.

Several artists felt their working practice had been changed by their encounter with local government bureaucracy, both negatively and positively. The strictures and impersonality of bureaucracy, the lack of relationship with the outside world, the length of time taken to achieve anything, all required change on the part of the artist to adapt and make their contribution effective. The involvement of an artist at an early stage, involved in planning, rather than delivering a prescribed product in a self-contained way to occupy a spot on the plans, was taxing for both sides. It was in some cases a struggle for the project team to learn how to integrate the artist's views meaningfully. On the other hand the artist sometimes had to learn to rely less on the architects and evolve patience and sensitivity to the pressures others were working under in order to enable the implementation of their ideas. One artist who would hesitate to undertake a similar project again concluded that their personal contribution is more effective in smaller-scale projects and teams than in a large and complex one.

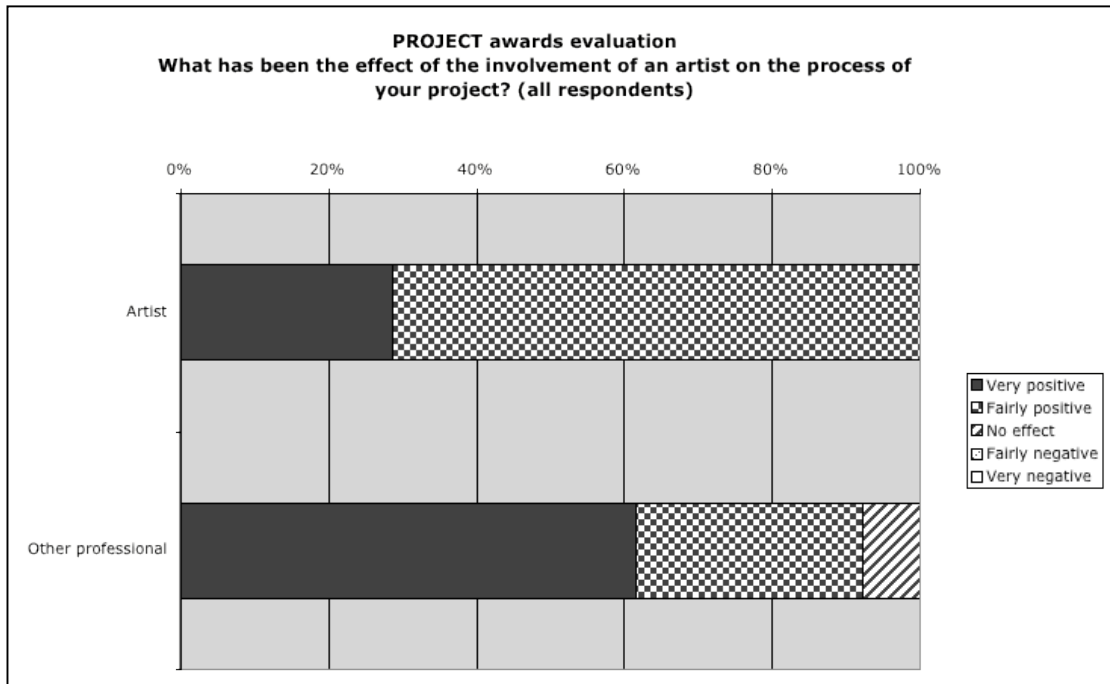
Developers' expectations of innovative design input and a new response to design challenges were fulfilled in several cases. Similarly, the looked-for benefit to the developer's relationship with the planners was achieved in several cases. Where the artist was well integrated into the development team, their input had a cross-fertilising effect, enabling fresh thinking, ideas and approaches to be generated and explored between the other professionals involved. Significantly, in one project, the artist helped the developer to understand the aims and objectives of the client more clearly. One developer for whom the process was very valuable, also found it time-intensive, and would only use an artist again to contribute to design and to facilitate the involvement of residents in circumstances where particularly challenging problems exist.

Among planners and project team members there is a general recognition that they have learned from their involvement with the artist. Factors include understanding how to manage and facilitate what an artist can bring to a project, improving skills in writing briefs and techniques of how to engage with other kinds of practice. Some effects are quite indirect, such as the way the need to undertake advocacy on the part of the project, in order to convince others (such as elected members and other departments in an authority) of the value of the artist's input, has pushed the development of the skills necessary to do so. Negotiation skills and diplomacy have been learning factors in many projects, on all sides.

Effect on project

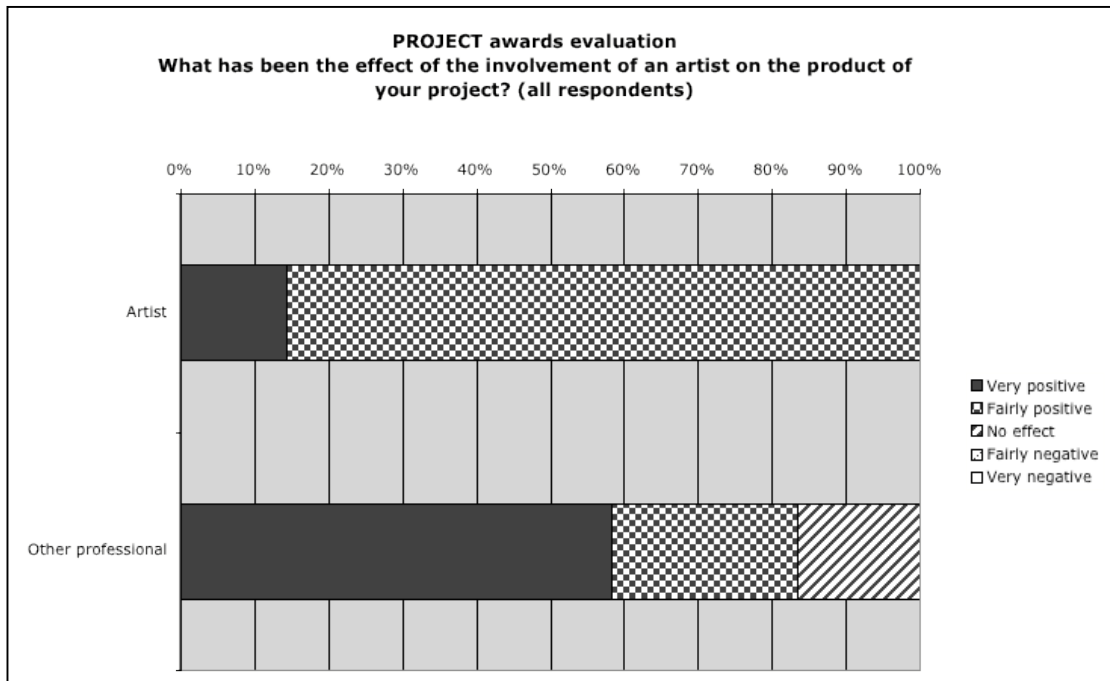
The impact of the involvement of an artist on the process of a project is assessed as positive by the majority of respondents, more emphatically by other professionals than by artists [Chart 17]. No artist thought their contribution has been anything less than positive, but 60% other professionals assessed the impact as very positive, compared to a quarter of artists.

Chart 17



In relation to their impact on the product in which they were involved, artists are still more tentative, with 15% assessing impact as very positive, compared with about 60% of other professionals [Chart 18].

Chart 18



In several instances the success of the scheme supported by PROJECT, coupled in some cases with the powerful advocacy of the project's leader within the local authority, has resulted in further work already being carried out based on the experience enabled by PROJECT. The use of artists in the role of intermediary between the worlds of local government on one hand and design and architecture on the other has been successful in facilitating engagement. Where the PROJECT intervention has brought together a team of artists working with architects and designers, listening skills have been a factor of change, as people from different practice backgrounds learn to understand one another's viewpoint in order to achieve a common objective.

Artists and bureaucracies evidently do not always make comfortable bedfellows. For an artist working somewhere in the hinterland between the planning department and the community, the bureaucracy was restrictive and outcomes were limited. On the other hand, those within that bureaucracy were impressed by the artist's skills in working with the community.

There is wide appreciation among the other professionals that the engagement of artists has raised the quality and value in the project and, it is believed, in the built environment that ultimately ensues. Even in cases where the artist has misgivings about the extent to which their input has been able to be valuable, there is a positive view on the part of the other professionals involved. One artist in a large-scale complex project felt that strengthened arguments for creative consultation with stakeholders, 'soft' design issues and the place for culture as an essential element in the development had resulted, though with difficulty, and only to a fragmentary extent. Both the client and developer in the project saw the artist's input as extremely positive in these terms, much more so than the artist did.

Handholding project team members through the process of working with an artist, which in some instances has been much more like the conventional commissioning of artwork for public sites than perhaps PROJECT intended, has nonetheless been a valued learning opportunity for people who have no experience of doing so. It is not as difficult as might be feared.

Those projects which are linked to capital developments are in the main at too early a stage for any assessment to be made, either by participants, or an independent evaluator, of the effect which involving an artist has had on the final product, place or building.

How could it have been better

Definition of roles is a frequently-cited factor in considering how the project might have been better able to achieve a positive outcome or an improved process.

Timing, and the desirability of bringing in the artist at an earlier stage is often cited, even in projects where the artist was appointed relatively early in the process.

Several projects see the need for human and financial resources specifically to promote the benefits of the scheme to a wider audience, to encourage other projects or related developments to take up the baton.

Where a lead developer is responsible for master-planning and infrastructure of a site which is then divided into parcels and developed by separate builders, there is a need to ensure continuity. The factors stemming from the artist's contribution need to be embedded securely in the requirements and guidance which govern the development, such as the Supplementary Planning Document. Similarly where a local authority is developing a project which will be implemented by a private sector developer under an agreement, the means of embedding the artist's input into the terms of contract is something which needs attention and support. A suggestion was that, in the process of novation (substitution of a new contract in place of the existing one), the artist should become part of the contractor's design team to ensure the original vision is fully delivered.

In one case, the scheme which was offered a PROJECT award was cancelled. The proposal, by a landfill company, was to engage an artist in the landscaping of completed landfill sites, on the face of it an ambitious and innovative proposition. The problem was not with the proposal, but with the planning authority which refused to consider any design that would attract attention rather than seamlessly blending with the landscape.

The PROJECT scheme has had its own bureaucracy, which has been a problem for some awards. Smaller, community-orientated projects have found the demands of the paperwork a burden, though they have fulfilled it better than many better-resourced schemes, perhaps because of having more experience of grant schemes and voluntary sector practice.

Talking Artists

Among the six categories of PROJECT awards, the evaluation framework turned out to be least appropriate to those in the Talking Artists category. The evaluation approach was based on the concept of an artist becoming a member of a development team at an early stage, working with other professionals at the planning stage of a project or development. The Talking Artists awards took a different direction, supporting the publication of artists' works or views as commentators on urban conditions and solutions. These awards produced actual or projected artworks, print or web-based publications, and in most cases the artist worked with an art-based agency or organisation as the lead and applicant to PROJECT. In one case the award supported the engagement by an architect of an artist in the design of a house.

Only one of the Talking Artists awards had completed their project at the time of writing up the evaluation and little information was available about the interaction between commissioner and artists. Other projects were at various stages of completion and some had not started at that point.

The evaluation of the Talking Artists awards would best be focused on the outcome, rather than the process, and so falls outside the scope of this report.

Case studies

1 *Planning and developing a new neighbourhood*

This project arose from the opportunity of a lead developer being appointed to masterplan a new neighbourhood on the edge of a small city, on a site which was formerly a horticultural area. The location is on the boundary of the city and lies just within the adjacent district area. The regional architecture centre became involved and made a successful application to PROJECT to engage an artist in the planning process. The regional visual arts development agency also became a partner. The steering group for the project included planning officers from the district and county local authorities, arts officers from all three authorities (District, City and County), the design director of the lead developer, the architecture centre and visual arts agency, and the artist. The group was chaired by the arts officer of the district in which the new neighbourhood is located. Several meetings were attended by the PROJECT evaluator as a participant observer, with the aim of understanding the group interaction.

Group interaction

It was not clear in the event where authority lay regarding the artist's role between members of the steering group. A lot of different bodies and agencies were represented on the group, and members were often not clear about their role or purpose in being involved, and at meetings there was little direction or clarity about decisions. The group did not get beyond the 'forming' stage of development. Considerable power was exercised by the developer, who in this case was strongly supportive of the artist's involvement and gained from the experience. On the other hand the artist found that their role was not clear, that there was no one in the role of project manager from whom support could be drawn, and felt quite isolated and 'out of the loop'.

Role of the artist

While the artist was appointed as soon as possible, there was some feeling that an earlier involvement would have been more effective, both on the part of the artist and other professionals involved. By the time the artist was involved, masterplanning of the site had been completed and decisions about landscaping and the division of plots had been settled.

The artist's approach was to seek ways to link the new neighbourhood to its history, by researching in detail previous uses and users of the site and developing artworks and a naming scheme which embodied that history. Three particular features were the link with a fruit-growing and jam-making company, a testing ground for the development of varieties of sweet pea, and a long historical link with the travelling community.

A specific instance where the artist felt their integrity was challenged was in the proposal to link the travellers' history to the development through temporary artworks displayed on the site and a naming scheme. While the horticultural references were warmly accepted, this proposal was a cause of some disagreement, and in the end was dropped, essentially because an explicit linkage with travellers was felt not to add value.

Role of the developer

The developer's view was initially perceived by the lead arts officer to be that the artist's involvement would make the development more saleable. This seems to have been seen in a different way by the developer, whose formulation was that the artist's work would 'add value' to the development by creating distinctiveness and giving a special identity to the scheme. The artist shared this view but subsequently found that their ideas and proposals were progressively watered down for reasons of cost, to the extent where the artist believes that the difference made by their engagement may in the end be very small.

Further complications arose because the system of development has a long chain of command. The lead developer undertakes the masterplanning and manages the process of site preparation and infrastructure development, in compliance with planning requirements. In this instance, the lead developer also undertook to work with the artist and embody their contributions into the scheme.

The developer contracted a company to undertake the site preparation and infrastructure works, and there were instances where the artist's interventions, while agreed by the developer, were not acceptable to the contractor on site, and so did not take place as planned.

The designated residential areas of the site are subsequently sold in lots to house builders, who undertake the construction of the dwellings themselves, within the terms of the masterplan, and governed by planning approvals in each case. By the time the actual construction takes place, the artist is long gone and their input is some way back in history from the detailed implementation of building programme. All parties were aware, sooner or later, of the implications of this and it was a matter of concern to try to find ways of ensuring that the artist's intentions carried through to the final implementation of the scheme.

Experience of the project

The artist found the project frustrating because of the lack of clarity of roles and the time delays in achieving decisions and getting things done, to the point where they would hesitate to undertake a similar project again. By the time the artist became involved, the landscape architects working on the planning had already formed quite fixed ideas. The artist found that, rather than evolving ideas together as a member of the team as they had expected, it was a case of fitting in artistic interventions around what was already effectively fixed. There was evidently some initial tension in the relationship, though this relaxed once the architects were confident that the artist was not going to interfere with their designs.

Nonetheless, other people involved were able to take a more positive experience from the project. While the steering group members who are in one way or another arts professionals were more or less familiar with the engagement of artists in projects, those less familiar seem to have got more out of the project. The developer in particular felt that the artist's involvement had added a dimension to the design process. The fact that the artist did not know 'the rules' meant that their interventions produced a degree of fun and

an exploration of routes which would normally be closed to the team. The artist had the resilience not to be deterred by the usual negativity of decision-making. The inclusion of art and the artist in the project widened the area of discussion between the development team and the planning authorities, leading to a freer and more inclusive dialogue than usually obtains. Being exposed to the unfamiliar way of looking at the environment which the artist brought to the project has influenced the developer to take a proactive approach, seeking opportunities to include artists' input in developments.

A further impact of the PROJECT award in this case has been to stimulate the agencies involved to build on this experience and seek further opportunities to involve artists in larger-scale developments of new settlements taking place in the area.

2 *Housing regeneration in a New Deal for Communities area*

This was a high profile housing regeneration initiative in a New Deal for Communities area seeking to develop around 60 new homes in the context of Victorian terraces and modern tower blocks. The site is a large complex inner city housing estate featuring 'islands' of low and high rise housing blocks, health centre and school, all inter-connected by a network of roads, paths, green spaces and a public park.

The development project was managed and delivered by a Housing Association in the role of developer, in partnership with a City Council and a local community organisation. PROJECT enabled the partners to select an artist capable of working creatively with the architects.

The team was a very positive and dynamic group of professionals. They knew this was a complex process that required team working, trust and collaboration, open communication and effective problem solving to achieve success. They were aware that this was an expensive, high profile, pioneering project with major public investment that could help to set a precedent for greater investment, integrated planning and higher quality design for future housing and regeneration schemes.

The partners regarded the project as 'unique' and 'not run of the mill', the project was one of the most expensive in the area with high build costs per unit. The partners intend to commission research to document good practice resulting from the project for application to other housing schemes. The project was seen by the participants as an opportunity to promote innovation and public investment in community housing projects that include cultural and creative aspects.

Group Dynamic

The working group displayed active team working and collaboration, enabled by effective facilitation and clear focus from the project co-ordinator. Every member was highly engaged in the project development process, exchanging ideas and sharing information to help shape the project vision and plan. From day one, this was a very positive team displaying a high degree of mutual

support and consensus. The team was skilful in resolving problems through being open to expert advice, addressing barriers as a group and agreeing optimum solutions. As the project progressed, all the team members were encouraged to voice their ideas.

The group evolved collaborative pairings within the team between the artist and architect, team leader and housing developer, public and community arts officers. These pairings were supportive of each other in presenting ideas and issues to the rest of the group. They represented and championed different aspects of the project (design and construction, investment and planning, local community and culture). The group welcomed and adopted the artist and architect's approach of 'integrated development' and 'removing barriers' in the design and planning process. This pair encouraged the team to develop an integrated design to overcome the modular nature of the site, reintegrate the private and public realm areas and challenge area boundaries imposed by the security fencing and roadways. Professional collaboration resulted in a more creative and innovative design and planning process.

Collaboration and Commitment

There was a strong sense of social responsibility within the group, they were aware the project has the potential to develop precedents for future high quality social housing schemes. They were aware that collaboration and co-ordination were vital to achieve success. Their commitment was captured in the masterplans for the site, an integrated series of overlaid plans featuring architectural design, construction, public spaces and artworks. These plans sought to:

- create a sense of local identity;
- re-integrate the private and public realms;
- incorporate unused pockets of land within the design to improve community amenity, migration and security;
- reduce the impact of block security fencing and roadways.

The working group meetings provided a 'safe space' for each member to bring ideas, information and problems for group discussion and action planning. The working group meetings demonstrated the value and benefit of being able to share knowledge, ideas and expertise with a range of other professionals inside and outside their own organisations or networks - the added value of synergy and networking offered by the PROJECT process. PROJECT brought creative thinking and collaboration back into the development process, which partners felt had been lost during the early funding and planning phase.

Role of the Artist

The scale of the design and planning process challenged all the members to achieve a large number of complex and linked tasks against a tight schedule. As the fulcrum or keystone in this process, the artist experienced the greatest challenges in developing design proposals because by necessity they grow out of, build upon and interpret the architectural designs, site masterplan, construction plan, community consultation, funding and investment streams. To complete the artist's design proposals the following were needed:

- final architectural designs for the proposed new buildings to identify opportunities for creative interventions in the form, surfacing, colour and detail of the buildings;
- clarification of budgets available for embedded design interventions in the new building managed by the housing developer;
- clarification of budget available for legacy, embedded and temporary design interventions in the park and green spaces managed by the local community organisation;
- masterplans for the roadways, paths, security fencing and lighting to identify opportunities for integrated design opportunities;
- results of ground investigations to inform revised boundaries;
- results of 'land swaps' between partners to inform revised site plans;
- community consultation to identify local needs and preferences for legacy, embedded and temporary design interventions.

The artist was asked to work with the architect to develop a creative proposal and design framework for the site, as an overlay for the masterplan, that reflected all the opportunities for embedded design within the buildings plus legacy and temporary artworks in the public realm. The artist and architect sought opportunities to pool design budgets and work collaboratively with other partners in the area e.g. £20k for public art within the landscaping budget for the park managed by the local community organisation.

The artist identified three themes for investing in creative intervention:

- embedded design features;
- legacy public artworks;
- temporary arts projects.

The group invited the artist to continue to be part of the design process, to oversee creative development through to establishing commissions for the public space and to consider designing some of the public artworks. Valuing the integrated planning approach, the housing developer has also commissioned the artist to undertake additional creative planning around the surrounding park. The local community organisation commissioned the architects to undertake design planning for the wider estate area.

After initial delays due to accessing final development plans and identifying available budgets, the artist worked intensively with the architect to develop a design framework and masterplan for the creative and public art aspects of the project that achieves a range of objectives.

The team requested clear documentation in place at the end of the PROJECT design phase providing a coherent design framework for the site, proposals for embedded design features in the block construction, plus guidance for future commissioning of public artworks. In response the artist developed a creative statement and masterplan based on the three main themes offering broad parameters for design and development but with enough flexibility to accommodate other artists' creative ideas. The masterplan identified creative opportunities and key sites for public artworks across the whole site. It

provided an overall vision enabling other agencies including Parks and Planning Departments to align their plans. The document also signposted key contacts and sources of guidance.

The artist recommended commissioning a mixture of local and invited artists to develop temporary and embedded artworks to achieve a more pluralistic view. The artist also identified the need for a co-ordinating body to implement the design plan, consult with the local community, select and commission artists, collaborate with the architects and raise funding.

Role of the Architect

The architect worked with the artist to develop an integrated design and identity for the estate that overcame the modular nature of the site and reconnected it with the wider area to create one environment. During this process they reclaimed isolated pockets and strips of land to increase amenity and security for the local community. The architect was the main driver for:

- influencing partners' expectations to ensure the creative interventions in the housing scheme happen, rather than be cut out later during construction because they are seen as too expensive;
- influencing the contractor to rethink the building process away from 'just putting up brick boxes' towards a higher quality design specification that reflects the artist's and architect's designs;
- pushing the boundaries of what is achievable in public housing projects by encouraging the developers to consider well designed housing models against the standard easy to build 'brick box lego house' so that high quality housing design becomes affordable v. profitable;
- promoting sustainable housing design with the inclusion of optimum insulation specification within the budget to an eco-homes rating of 'very good' featuring high levels of insulation and specialist glazing and doors to reduce energy consumption;
- promoting environmental housing design with consideration of green roofs and walls to help the domestic scale buildings merge into the park area and public spaces as seen from the street and high rise blocks;
- negotiating with the building contractor at an early stage to reach acceptance of the higher quality design specification by addressing concerns on the cost of materials and long term maintenance.

To protect the design intent and creative aspects of the housing and public realm designs from cost cutting by the building contractor, the architect and partners intend to include detailed specifications of design features and materials in the planning and development application.

3 Local Community Planning Project

A local voluntary sector community organisation on a 1960's estate in an inner-city area with a high index of deprivation ran a community planning project. The programme had been in progress for some time before a

PROJECT award enabled the further involvement of an artist who was already involved. The longer term aim was to raise funds for the long-overdue refurbishment of a large number of dwellings and associated facilities, but first it was necessary to re-engage the residents.

A pilot project had been run in 2004 involving residents, particularly young people and children, and the lead artist for the PROJECT award had been involved. The programme supported by PROJECT took the form of two weekend consultation events in which a team of artists and architects worked with local residents to help document current experiences of living on the estate and to profile their views on regeneration and development of the estate. A large number of local organisations including youth groups was involved together with public health and police authorities, and elected members.

The artists' role was to draw this range of participants into consultation in a stimulating and rewarding way. To do so the creation of a large scale model of the estate was undertaken, with everyone participating.

The lead artist felt that their way of working in artistic terms paralleled the way in which children's enquiring minds approached the project. Using video and modelmaking enabled the revitalisation of a defaulted process, bridging the gap between residents and the political process.

Not having been involved in this kind of community development before, the project brought about a marked change of mindset and working practice on the part of the lead artist, who now sees this kind of work as an important part of future practice, moving in to ways of working which parallel styles of community and social action operating outside conventional economies.

The team of artists and an architect had not worked together before. Under the pressure of the tight timescale, the constraints of the budget, adverse conditions and the short-term availability of artists with specific skills, group cohesion had to evolve rapidly.

Extracts from the artist's journal give the flavour and intensity of the work involved:

- *"We were meant to be working in a semi-derelict hut, the caretaker never showed up, someone else was meant to be using it, we retreated to the Children's Centre (as always)..."*
- *Laying out the OS maps on the porch, lots of kids about...*
- *The model is taking shape, people are beginning to gravitate in, it's becoming credible...*
- *Some more money came through, we can print the fliers after all*
- *Two days to go, we have a marquee!*
- *The team have settled into pairs, working fast and effectively...*
- *Up at 4.30 to record birds and traffic noise which will play with the display of the model...*
- *Very very busy week, sorting out consultation, exhibition, childcare etc. All came together fine ... OK."*

Response to the event and the artists' involvement was very positive. As the project materialised, residents were increasingly keen to participate in meaningful consultation, planning and delivery. More than 300 took part. The project, through the artists' involvement, was successful in its immediate aim of countering consultation fatigue and scepticism among residents consequent on a stalled planning and building process which had spanned well over a decade. The positive change of mindset was clearly visible. A massive increase in confidence both in the residents and in the community organisation which undertook the project ensued, and the foundations have been laid for other projects and fundraising.

This was one of the PROJECT awards in which there was direct engagement by elected members. Letters written by residents as part of the consultation process secured the support of the local MP. In this case the local Council's portfolio holder for housing was invited to visit the project, and was 'blown away' by the event and the results. The Councillor is having the model displayed in the Town hall and in schools, to help stimulate further action both at the political and the local level.

The only negative aspect of the project was the bureaucracy attached to the award. The scale of demands made by the final completion information required by PASW and the evaluation procedure seemed excessively onerous to a small voluntary organisation working on tight budgets in difficult circumstances.

4 Strategic regeneration programme in a group of inner-city areas

The opportunity was made for an artist to join a large-scale collaborative visioning process and contribute to development planning for a series of areas in a city, aiming to address economic, social and environmental decline. Project partners were many, including city council departments dealing with regeneration, arts and culture, economic development, community development, parks and tourism, the highway authority and a range of locally-based community groups. There was no private sector involvement. The arts council and built environment centre acted in an advisory capacity.

The circumstances of this project were very particular to the political and cultural situation in a city characterised by deep divisions between communities. It was also unusual in that there was an ample budget available, with relatively little time to spend it. Nonetheless there are lessons to be learned which are of general application.

Role of the artist

The artist worked over a year, on a part-time basis, with a very large number of projects, 30-40 across the areas of the city which were involved, spreading the input very thinly and lacking focus. The artist was very involved with a large number of groups in the community, acting as a facilitator and advisor, assisting projects to recruit artists and engaging directly in hands-on arts work with people. Results were better when working with community representatives and other artists, than with the bureaucracy. The artist's own

integrity (sanity perhaps) was preserved by going outside, communicating and working with other artists involved in projects in the locality, and making links with PROJECT artists elsewhere.

Role of the bureaucracy

The artist's involvement was managed by the local authority, between two departments which had different organisational cultures. From the artist's perspective, the bureaucracy appeared impersonal, formal and detached from the social and political reality outside. It took a long time to achieve anything. The artist needed to learn to be accountable in an unfamiliar way, and had less control over the work than in normal artistic practice. Contact was made quite successfully with lower tier officers in the authority, helping raise their interest and awareness of arts in the regeneration context. Deadlines of projects were controlled elsewhere, and major decisions, including cancellation or suspension of projects, were made from above without warning. It was necessary to modify projects and practices to fit this very unfamiliar situation. The artist's response was to become less personally involved and precious, to wind down the ambitions of the project and to work largely outside the bureaucracy. A consequence was to further reduce access to decision-making meetings and structures, and the artist's view is that much less was achieved as a result than could or should have been.

Within the bureaucracy the artist's involvement was ultimately recognised as a positive contribution to the programme. It was in some ways difficult to sustain the strategic role which the artist was intended to have in the overall approach to regeneration. An artist who does not produce art can seem an anomaly with no tangible definition within a council structure where job roles are very explicitly defined. Awareness of the place for an artist in a regeneration programme was initially limited since the officers involved had no previous experience of involvement with artists. While at first it was not clear why an artist should be acting in an essentially administrative or strategic role, with time the value of this approach was understood and appreciated. Both artist and officers recognise a shared learning experience. It might have been valuable for the bureaucracy, when trying to grasp the role of art in regeneration, to look outside more actively to other examples of successful projects, rather than relying on one artist to inform the whole enterprise.

Key themes

A great diversity of views and experiences emerge from the evaluation process. This section of the report highlights themes which occur in several different contexts.

Changing mindset and working practice

This evaluation of PROJECT was asked to focus on the extent to which the engagement of an artist in a development scheme changes the mindsets and working practices of those involved. 60% changed their mindset and 80% changed their working practice.

It is reasonable to say that if that was the intention of the programme, then it worked. In general the changes were positive, particularly so for those other professionals into whose milieu PROJECT brought an artist. All those professionals whose normal practice before PROJECT's intervention did not include working with artists, subsequently experienced a positive change in mindset and working practice as a result of their involvement.

Timeliness

For the engagement of an artist in the process of a development to be effective in the way envisaged by PROJECT, it is necessary that they be appointed early. Despite that PROJECT had earnestly sought to ensure early engagement, it was a frequent reflection by people involved, in all capacities, that earlier involvement of the artist would have enabled the project to work better. Applications fell in to two kinds, those where the artist was already selected and their input planned, which might well have taken place in any case, and those which were essentially speculative, and would engage an artist if the funding were to be forthcoming. In the latter cases it is more likely that the artist's involvement would come late to the process. In any case, it is worth considering whether the conventional grant-making approach is maximally effective in this kind of programme. PROJECT took steps to work pro-actively, identifying potential opportunities and offering artist input at the earliest stage, though the application process inevitably slowed things down. To determine more specifically how early is early enough, a further piece of research might be required.

Management

It should scarcely need saying (but it does) that the process of engaging an artist in a project needs to be attentively managed. It has to be borne in mind that, while planners, developers and architects have routine ways of operating together, artists step into this milieu often from a very different tradition of practice, and may well find it taxing to find the right way to relate to the process of a development.

Willingness

At key gateways somebody has to be ready to countenance the kind of experimental approach PROJECT has promulgated. The landfill example quoted above is an example of how much of an obstacle the planning system can be. In other cases, for example the lack of agreement between a

developer and their contractor over implementing an artist's proposal, revealed the kinds of places bottlenecks occur.

Artists

Some artists were able to contribute as 'creative thinkers', either by talent or by good management (or both). Others undertook public art projects more or less in the conventional way which PROJECT was set up to challenge, either by desire or by default. In some cases there was an agreed changeover between the two roles. In others it seems that the projects, or the artists, did not fully understand what they were there for. There is often a long chain of command between PROJECT and artist. In some cases where the artist was not appointed until after the PROJECT award was made, the terms of the original proposal and in some cases the conditions of grant were not made known to the artist. In some cases mission creep set in between application and implementation, through changes of personnel or simply circumstances and passage of time.

Artists are unprotected by the kinds of professional bodies that characterise most of the other professions that are engaged in developments. While artists' attitudes tend to be antithetical to that kind of professionalisation, those responsible for projects of this kind should keep in mind that the artist involved is generally in a much more vulnerable situation than the rest of the development team. This extends to the relative level of fees. Artists typically were less well remunerated than other professionals for their contribution to these projects.

The artists' contribution and achievement in these projects is valued less by the artists themselves than by the other professionals.

Artists working in these circumstances need support to enable their contribution to be as effective as possible. More, and more structured, contact between PROJECT artists working in different locations would have been appreciated, and would help to provide peer support.

Is it surprising that on the whole, artists are much better able to describe their experiences in meaningful terms than many of the other professions involved? Even artists who profess to be ill at ease writing down their experiences or responses are much better at doing so than the others.

Clients

Engaging artists in the built environment in the way PROJECT has is in many cases new territory for the clients as well as the artists. Organisations also need guidance and support in making a success of the enterprise, particularly small and voluntary ones. Organisations receiving PROJECT awards have benefited from the experienced support of the Scheme Manager, whose advice and handholding has been much appreciated.

Design professionals

Design professionals involved in awards were in two categories, architects and engineers. Their respective responses to the engagement of an artist showed diverging tendencies. By and large, engineers are very interested in assisting artists' vision to be realised, and welcome the introduction of some

'soul' or spirituality into their technical and functional work. Architects more often seem to see artists as rivals or competitors, and as (potentially dangerous) practitioners who know less than themselves and need to be controlled.

Planners

The response of local government planners who were drawn in to the involvement of an artist was without exception positive. It is in the nature of regulatory system that one of its major functions is to say no, to prevent things from happening. The routine dialogue between developers and architects (wanting to do things) and planners (wanting to stop them, or wanting them to do something else) is conducted mostly on the very limited ground defined by the legislation and what is a fairly traditional practice. The introduction of an artist into this otherwise routine dialogue created fresh areas of discourse. The planners found this stimulating and exciting.

Artists as interlocutors

Artists found an important function in PROJECT as creators of channels of communication between different interests involved.

Internally, within a development team, the artist helped to illuminate the objectives of clients and communities of users to themselves, to understand them, and to convey them to developers and architects.

Externally, the artist facilitated community consultation and input into projects, and had a role in defusing potential objections.

Artists as a resource

Artists bring a wide range of skills, knowledge and techniques to the milieu of development. PROJECT has demonstrated what a valuable resource artists can be in this context. Artists are all different, and it is important to work out how to use artists for what they are best at in particular circumstances. PROJECT was specifically designed to ensure that applicants had the benefit of a skilled and experienced Scheme Manager who has played an important role in assisting schemes to recruit the right artist for the job. While PROJECT has established the evidence for the benefits to be gained by engaging artists in this way, it is not enough simply to launch the concept on the wider world. As the scheme has shown, there are many professionals in the development field, and allied areas, who have no experience of using the resource of artists, but who discover its value when they have the opportunity to do so. To ensure that the evident benefits of engaging artists in planning for the built environment are delivered to best effect, some continuing guiding hand will be necessary in the future. While CABE is probably the agency best placed at the national level to champion the PROJECT concept and encourage its wider implementation, it is also vital to ensure that there is knowledgeable arts-specific support available throughout the process to projects embarking on engaging an artist.

Conclusions

The knowledge which has been gained from the evaluation process provides a basis for answering the four questions which the evaluation of PROJECT asked.

1. Did the people involved change their mindsets and/or working practices?

Yes, the majority of participants experienced a change in both mindset and working practice, artists somewhat less so than other professionals. Of particular significance is the finding that all those professionals whose normal practice before PROJECT's intervention did not include working with artists, subsequently experienced a fairly fundamental change in mindset and working practice as a result of their involvement.

2. Has there been any impact on long term practice of the project players?

Only time will tell, but within the scope of this evaluation, the majority of those who underwent a change in their working practice described it as fairly long-term. Already, in some cases, those involved are taking forward further projects in which artists are engaged at an early stage, building on their experience with PROJECT.

3. Has the involvement of artists made any demonstrable difference to projects?

The effect of the engagement of artists in the process of development projects has been manifest in three distinct ways. There is wide appreciation among the other professionals that the engagement of artists has raised the quality and value in the project and, it is believed, in the built environment that ultimately ensues. The range of allowable discourse between developers, architects, planners and clients has been beneficially extended by artists' intervention. The engagement of communities of residents and potential users has been facilitated by artists' work.

4. Under what conditions does artist input have a positive effect and when does it not?

It is a big demand to step in to a professional milieu which is unaccustomed to working with artists, take up an ill-defined role and do work which is outside one's training and practice. To achieve a good experience and a successful outcome, some conditions evidently have to be met.

Clarity – it works best when the artist and the other professionals involved are clear about what the artist's role is and what they are expected to do. Early assistance for intending projects in drawing up a clear description of what part an artist will play would help ensure success.

Timely appointment – if the artist is to contribute effectively to planning and developing a project, they have to be in place early.

Management – capacity has to be made available in a project to ensure that the artist's involvement is managed and supported. Artists are vulnerable in this situation, all the more so if they are not well connected to the project's lines of communication, authority and co-ordination.

Remuneration – respect and remuneration go hand-in-hand. If artists are expected to contribute in like manner to other professionals they should be accordingly properly paid.

Support – artists in general lack professional support networks, and artists in this unusual situation all the more so. The fact that artists tend to value their input into such projects less than the other professionals involved is an index of the need for support, assistance and validation. A facilitated peer group network of artists working in such situations would be beneficial to the success of projects. Organisations receiving the input of artists also need support, particularly when this is breaking new ground.

In conclusion, the findings of this evaluation can be summarised in two maxims:

Engagement of an artist from an early stage in a development project, in good circumstances, brings about a positive change of mindset and working practice among the other professionals involved.

When artists are working in a development milieu and expected to contribute their professional expertise and creativity, they should be engaged on the same terms as the other professionals involved.