

Bristol Legible City

From here to there





Bristol Legible City From here to there

Art and legibility

Bristol Legible City promotes the integration of art in the design of every facet of city life. This booklet outlines the approach for the integration of art and design within the Bristol Legible City concept.

It is an advisory publication whose aim is to inform and inspire developers, architects, public art commissioners, artists and design professionals working in Bristol. The City Council welcomes your comments and would be pleased to offer advice and to direct you to practical expertise.

Bristol Legible City is an initiative of Bristol City Council and its partners.

Bristol Legible City is a unique concept to improve people's understanding and experience of the city through the implementation of identity, information and transportation projects integrated with artists' work.

The following pages explain how art and design are central to the concept of creating a more legible city.

Published by Bristol City Council and its partners to accompany the first International Conference on Building Legible Cities—March 2001.

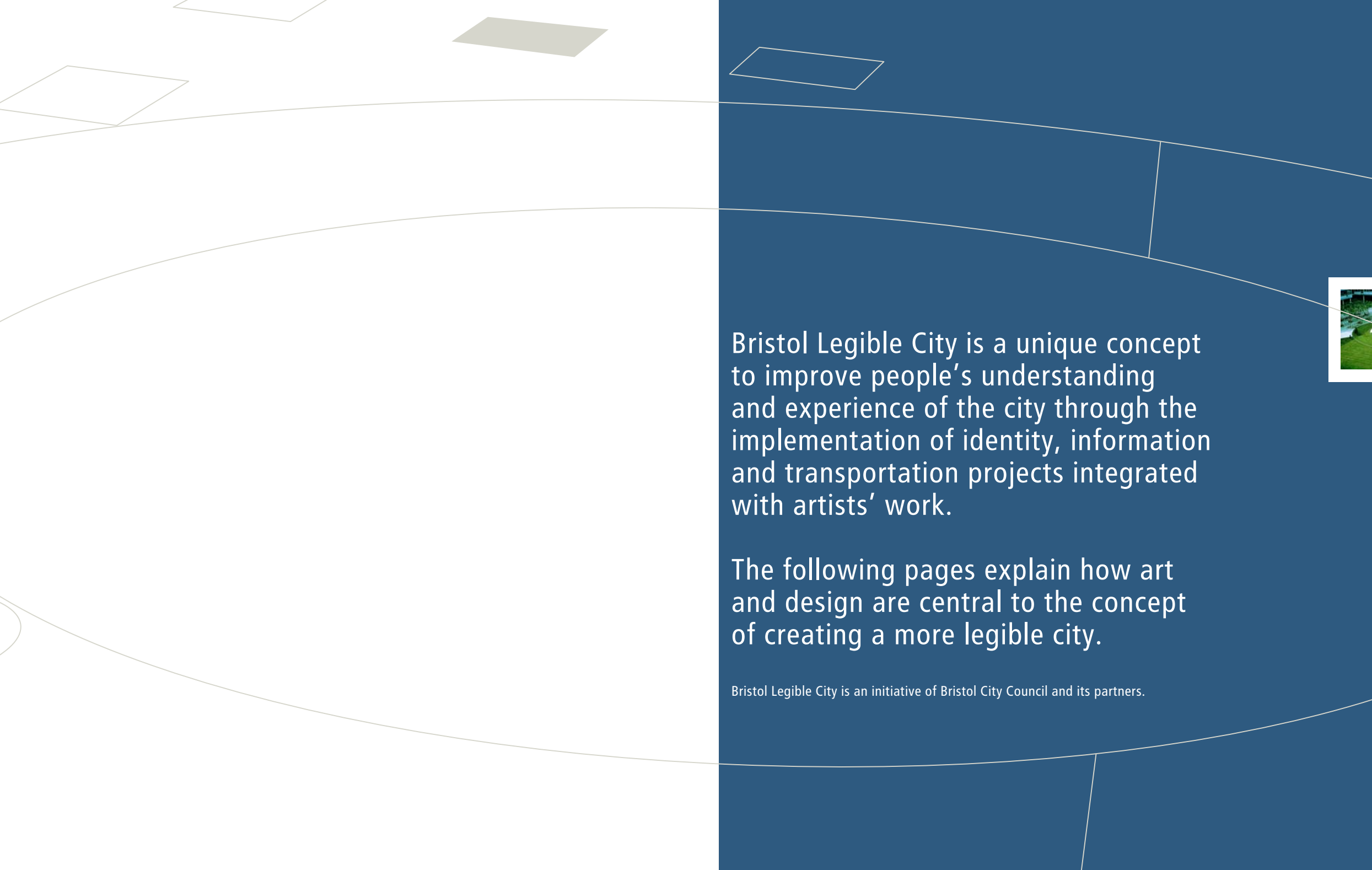
Bristol Legible City supports Bristol's bid to become European Capital of Culture 2008.

© Bristol Legible City 2001
All rights reserved

Bristol Legible City

From here to there





Bristol Legible City is a unique concept to improve people's understanding and experience of the city through the implementation of identity, information and transportation projects integrated with artists' work.

The following pages explain how art and design are central to the concept of creating a more legible city.

Bristol Legible City is an initiative of Bristol City Council and its partners.





Bristol Legible City is a blueprint for making the city a better place to live, work and visit; a means of giving the city the strong identity that is vital for its long-term prosperity.



Landscape In The Wind
Vito Acconci. Munich. 1997
 The Acconci Studios demonstrate the potential of combining the skills of artists, architects and engineers to form public places.



Storefront Gallery Renovation
Acconci / Holl. New York. 1993
 A collaborative project with the Architect Stephen Holl, Storefront introduces the elements of play and surprise to an otherwise conventional urban backdrop.

Bristol Legible City is one of the main priorities of Bristol City Council and its partners over the next ten years. It seeks to integrate a comprehensive programme of transportation, information and identity projects to improve people's understanding, experience and enjoyment of the city. It is a unique connecting concept that takes into account the needs of the user at every step; a tourist trying to find a hotel, someone with a business appointment, a film-goer on their way to the cinema, a cyclist going to the shops, or an occasional ferry user.

Over the next ten years Bristol Legible City will help make Bristol an internationally recognised centre for design excellence, the arts and culture. The transformation of the city is already underway. Major regeneration and development schemes – Harbourside, Broadmead and Temple Quay – and high profile city centre spaces – College Green, Centre Promenade, @Bristol and Queen Square – are encouraging both inward investment and a thriving visitor and leisure industry. They provide the catalyst for Bristol to take its place as a creative city, leading the way in the region and making a unique contribution in Britain and Europe.

Bristol Legible City promotes the use of artists and artworks in an integrated way to reinforce place and neighbourhood identity, assist orientation, wayfinding and fully integrated movement across all modes of transport. This is a radically different approach to traditional art commissioning, one that will make a very real difference to the way the city is perceived. More importantly, it functions for the benefit of business, transport, culture, tourism and most of all for its people.

Bicycloid
Robert Rauschenburg. Tachikawa. 1994
 Landmark artworks can transform the city by day and night, aiding wayfinding and place recognition.





A city's image and the quality of its built environment are vital to its local economy.

Park Up A Building
Vito Acconci

A characteristic of Acconci's work is blurring the traditional boundaries of art, architecture and public space.

Towards an integrated approach

The purpose of *From here to there* is to outline and promote principles for the integration of artists within the design process. It introduces and demonstrates the benefits of involving artists as thinkers, from the earliest stages of projects, within key public realm, development and transportation projects in the City of Bristol.

This document offers guidance, not only to the benefits that commissioning artists will bring, but also to the process that the City Council wants to see across a whole range of private and public sector developments and initiatives.

The aim is to highlight the potential contribution that art can make in its widest sense, and to demonstrate that it can be a practical tool for creating a humane and efficient public realm. It also promotes the economic and cultural wellbeing of the city and the 'experience' of simply being in Bristol.



Bar Code Bridge
Hirotochi Sakaguchi / Curator Fram Kitigawa. Tachikawa. 1994

Art can be a practical tool for humanising the pedestrian environment.

Roadworks

FAT. London. 1996

FAT are a multi-disciplinary art and architecture practice. Their work deliberately questions and challenges the everyday experience of using the city.



Ideas for Lighting Fixtures

FAT. London. 1996

The *Year Of The Artist* program has provided resources for the City Council to appoint a lead artist, Sean Griffiths of FAT. The role of the lead artist is to develop projects that exemplify the principals of Legible City.

Think of great cities and what makes them so distinctive, impressive and attractive. Without exception, the experience of the public realm – the quality of public spaces and the aesthetics of buildings and design – plays a huge part in shaping positive perceptions of a city.

The city resonates with its past, the present and its vision of the future. To photograph it inspires, amuses and surprises.

Nick Smith. Photographer

exp

Changing Bristol

As we enter the 21st Century, the quality of cities and places is being questioned. Efficient and sustainable use of urban land is being promoted, and consequently, issues of regeneration, mixed use and integrated transportation are at the forefront of current thinking.

Bristol has been particularly successful in attracting significant investment across a wide range of new developments, together with improvements to many of its streets and spaces. The city centre is now home to a greater mix and density of land uses; achieving not only new offices, but homes, shops, bars and restaurants, leisure facilities, hotels, colleges and hospital facilities.

The day and night time activity of the city is also changing. City centre living is providing a twenty-four hour residential presence, and in addition, flexible working hours, late night shopping, evening and night time leisure and lifestyle changes are extending activity well beyond the traditional working hours.

This process of change is set to continue over the next ten years, with the regeneration of Broadmead, Temple and Harbourside areas, together with unparalleled improvements to the city's transport infrastructure.

erience

Key themes

Art can contribute in a number of ways to creative regeneration, helping to make Bristol a more legible city. Specifically the approach can be of benefit in the following areas:

Place identity and wayfinding

Helping to create a stronger identity for places and neighbourhoods and aiding orientation, navigation and wayfinding.

Choice of transport

Encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport to ease congestion.

Exploration

Encouraging exploration of the city, and increasing its attractiveness to visitors.

The city by night

Creating a recognisable and exciting city by night as well as day.

reger



nerate

Place identity and wayfinding

How easy it is to move around a city, plays a vital role in maintaining economic health and efficiency. People who are confident in the knowledge of their routes and destinations are more comfortable, waste less time and develop a rapport with the city much more quickly.

Bristol Legible City aims to engender a better understanding of Bristol, so that moving about the city people are offered reassurance and information about their location and the routes available to them. This information is given both formally, by signs, guides and maps, and informally by the townscape and activities of the city itself.

The informal system is established by the relationship between recognisable places, routes, junctions, landmarks and activities. Bristol Legible City has been established partly because the informal system in Bristol is not working well enough. As a result the lasting impression of much of the city is of a fragmented, undefined and unmemorable collection of places.

It is in this area that the work of artists can offer a significant contribution. Within new development the integration of art can be used to enhance landmark and public buildings or make new public spaces more memorable. Art can also be used to add or reveal interest, where such interventions would help to orientate people or reassure them on their journey.

One of the clear advantages to a city that promotes the use of art in this way, is that it helps to create unique and recognisable places that can express and reinforce the different identities, uses and qualities of distinct parts of the city, and thus aid orientation. Public art becomes an integral part and vital component of a healthy, working, legible city.



ident

Choice of transport

Like many other major cities, Bristol is beset by problems of traffic and pollution, cited as two of the worst aspects of life in the city.

A key part of Bristol Legible City is improving the way that people move around the city. The physical impact of transport and in particular traffic congestion can work against many of the principles of legibility. In short, choices of how people move around the city can influence the quality of life for all.

Better transport options can reduce dependence on the private car, which in turn can help cut traffic congestion, particularly in the city centre where land uses and movement patterns are more intensive.

Whilst transport infrastructure and facilities can be introduced it is often the experience of using the alternatives to the car that are as important as the availability of the service. Art can be used to entertain, inform and educate. As such, it humanises the experience of travel, whether parking a car, waiting for a bus, travelling by train, taking a ferry or even walking down the street.

Dynamic and temporary art can be particularly effective at adding interest to daily or routine journeys, making movement through the city more enjoyable.

tify

integr

Exploration

A benefit of a legible and attractive city is that it encourages visitors, which adds to the economic well being of the area. Not only specific tourist attractions but the city itself becomes a place to enjoy and explore.

Art can add value to the experience of exploring the city, and Bristol Legible City recognises the needs of the visitor who may wish to meander and explore the city as well as the business user who needs to get from A-to-B as quickly as possible.

Bristol's quaysides, for example, can provide a pleasant alternative to using the main pedestrian routes in the city centre. Art can be particularly effective in bringing a richness of detail that reveals and informs, and thereby encourages greater public use of such routes in a more subtle way than conventional directional signs. Art can legitimise these routes and give people the confidence to explore and discover them for themselves, adding a different but important dimension to wayfinding.

rate

distinct



tive

The city at night

Promoting the night time economy is vital to the continued regeneration of the city centre.

With greater use of the city at night, principles related to orientation, wayfinding and movement become equally important after dark. Much of the distinctiveness that is recognisably Bristol is currently lost at night, and the city is visually dominated by street lights and illuminated signage related to road traffic.

Arts projects using light can be used to inform the development of an overall lighting strategy, to animate active public spaces, and to create new night time landmarks to aid movement and wayfinding. In addition, artworks integrating light can be used to enhance specific places along routes that have a strong night time character as destinations in their own right, attracting people away from more sensitive residential locations.

Bristol Legible City will help make Bristol more welcoming and more readable for its visitors, more successful for its businesses and more enjoyable for all its users.

Zenith
David Ward. Bristol. 1999

Art which employs the use of light can be used to animate public spaces and create new night time landmarks to aid movement and wayfinding.



Your role

Developers, architects and other professionals who have responsibility for shaping the city around us need to get fully involved. You are invited to work alongside the City Council and its partners to realise this vital part of Bristol Legible City.

Commissioning art can make sound economic sense, even to the most cost-conscious business, by:

- _helping to establish a unique image
- _improving the environment for visitors and employees
- _creating a good initial and lasting impression of the city
- _providing marketing symbols for businesses within the city
- _providing a shared means of engendering pride

Trapped Light, Templer House, Caves, Performance (see right)
WorkPlace. Various Artists. Bristol. 2000
A multi-disciplinary arts event, organised by the Independent Artists Network, showcasing over one hundred artists in Bristol and the South West Region.



Jasmine
Cathie Pilkington. Bristol. 2000
Art works can be effective marketing tools and recognisable landmarks regardless of the scale of a project.

Successful integration

Before commissioning an artist you should discuss the issues in your area of development with the City Council and Bristol Legible City team. It is inadvisable to commission an artist or any design work before discussion has taken place.

There will be a number of mechanisms available for fulfilling the aspirations of Bristol Legible City.

One Commissioning an artist to join the project design team and ensuring that the principles of Bristol Legible City are integrated throughout the scheme. In the majority of cases, the most effective and cost-efficient way of integrating art is to bring an artist into the design team at the very beginning of the design process. This can introduce ideas and design proposals that influence the whole project often harnessing existing expenditure.

Two Commissioning an artist to generate freestanding work that contributes to the aims of Legible City.

Three By contributing to a larger fund for commissioning artists across the City – an independent charitable trust (The Bristol Legible City Trust) has been established which aims to encourage and develop public art and design within Bristol. The Trust has the capacity to receive developer contributions for the fulfilment of Legible City aims.

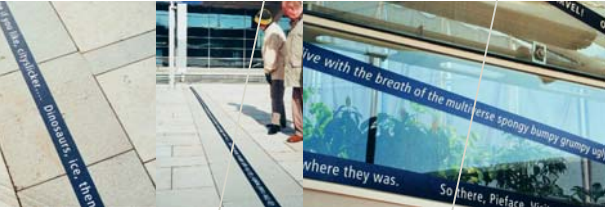


As it progresses, Bristol Legible City will integrate regional, national and international artists' and designers' work through a long-term arts programme.

Walkie Talkie

Colin Pearce / Ralph Hoyte. Bristol. 2001

Colin Pearce and Ralph Hoyte were appointed, with help from the private sector. They developed Walkie Talkie, an alternative view of the city and an informal play with the formal Legible City sign system.



Approval process

Bristol Legible City proposals will be considered within the normal planning process.

What happens next?

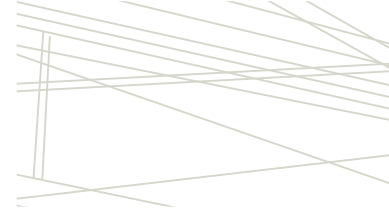
The status of this publication is advisory, being an expression of Bristol City Council's intent, as the local authority, to assist the promotion of Bristol Legible City through appropriate alterations to the Bristol Local Plan and the development of formal supplementary planning guidance. It is aligned to Bristol City Council's Public Arts Policy, endorsed October 2000.

This approach will help to raise the profile of the initiative and enable the effective implementation of its aims and objectives. The City Council would welcome your comments on this approach.

The Edible Playscape

Nils Norman. Bristol. 2000

Nils Norman seeks to offer alternative perspective on the use and function of public space.



Ideas for Bus Stops / Park and Ride
FAT. Bristol. 2000

Art can be particularly effective at adding interest to daily or routine journeys making movement through the city a more enjoyable experience.

For further guidance in the first instance you should contact:

Major Projects, Development and Urban Design

Mark Luck

City Centre Projects and Urban Design
Bristol City Council
Brunel House
St. George's Road
Bristol BS1 5UY

Telephone 0117 922 2969

This should be done as early as possible in the development process as delay may impact on your projects' development and consideration of any planning application.

Should you need advice or expertise in meeting the aims of the Bristol Legible City Programme you will be offered guidance.

Bristol City Council has a dedicated team of officers and professionals developing the Bristol Legible City Public Art Programme and they will either work directly with you or assist you in appointing independent advisors.

If you are considering a development in the city, or are a designer commissioned for a proposal within the built environment of Bristol, you will be expected to respond to the aims of Bristol Legible City.

Other points of contact

Bristol Legible City, Public Art

Jonathan Banks
City Centre Projects and Urban Design
Bristol City Council
Brunel House
St. George's Road
Bristol BS1 5UY

Telephone 0117 922 3064

Bristol Legible City, Project Program and Coordination

Mike Rawlinson
City ID Ltd.
23 Trenchard Street
Bristol BS1 5AN

Telephone 0117 917 7000

Acknowledgments

Vito Acconci
Maggie Bolt
Alastair Brook
Susannah Brooks
Duncan Cameron
Kay Campbell
Hester Cockcroft
Caroline Collier
Hazel Colquhon
Justine Ennion
Andrew Gibbins
Sean Griffiths
Ralph Hoyte
Andrew Kelly
Mary O'Malley
Nils Norman
Colin Pearce
Dick Penny
Phil Power
Neil Purcell
Jane Tanner
Helen Tobias
Rohan Torkildsen
David Ward

Contributors

Mark Luck at Bristol City Council, Geoff Wood at pArts, Sally Shaw and Mike Rawlinson at City ID

Colophon

Designed by Thirteen

Photographic essay
by Nick Smith

Printed by Park Lane Press
using the waterless process
on PhoeniXmotion
and Accent Eco white

Typography

Bristol Transit

Partners

Bristol Legible City is a partnership between: Bristol City Council, Bristol Chamber of Commerce & Initiative, Bristol Harbourside Sponsors Group, Bristol Tourism & Conference Bureau, The Broadmead Board Limited, Public Art South West, and South West Regional Development

Copies of this text are available
in large print, Braille, and on tape,
and in other languages.

Please call City ID on 0117 917 7000
for more information.

