

## **OPEN INVITATION TO CONTRIBUTE TO PUBLIC ART PROJECT**

**For the attention of Exeter residents, specifically those living in St. James,**

This is an open invitation to contribute to a new piece of public art which has been commissioned by and for Art Week Exeter (22-28 May).

**Art Week Exeter** is the annual city-wide art festival in Exeter which works with artists, producers, organisations, venues and local government to produce a programme that showcases the best Exeter has to offer, alongside the work of nationally- and internationally-renowned artists. More information about my work can also be found at [hugh-mccann.com/about](http://hugh-mccann.com/about).

I was fortunate to be commissioned by Art Week Exeter to produce a piece of public art. My initial pitch was to create a piece of art that revolved around subject of ‘advice’. This topic was chosen, through considering how public art can be a conversation between artist and viewer, and how in my experience, the most memorable and useful conversations are usually ones in which advice is given. At a time of increasing social fragmentation, tapping into and sharing local wisdom has the potential to build community and allow people to teach and learn from their neighbours. Given that the work will be presented in a soon-to-be developed, and much needed community hub, it will be encouraged that the advice reflects ways of building stronger communities. The advice may be small, or large, prophetic, or funny, but ultimately, to someone, it will one day be of use.

After receiving the commission, I looked at possible sites and through discussion with members of the St. James forum, decided Queen’s Crescent Garden (QCG) would be an ideal site as;

- The site is going through a great change, having been somewhat abandoned and now receiving grants for redevelopment by the community.
- The St. James community is highly varied, and contains a great variety of life experiences and wisdom.
- This is a lesser frequented public space, highly accessible from the city centre, and offers a chance for the public to reinhabit an overlooked part of their city.

How will this advice be translated into art? Residents of St. James will be invited to share a piece of advice that they have either given or received, that they feel may benefit other members of the community. The gathering of advice may be done through meeting myself and recording a conversation, or by writing a letter or email. These recordings/writings will then be made available online (anonymity at discretion), and all

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or a sample will be incorporated into a public piece of visual art, the physicality of which will relate to the space of the QCG. There will also be appropriate measures in place to discourage and omit contributions that may be potentially offensive. I will be looking to collect advice between January and March, and in order to be involved, please e-mail me at **[hughmccann94@gmail.com](mailto:hughmccann94@gmail.com)**. All you need to include in your e-mail is whether you would like to have your advice recorded, or if you would prefer to send it over as an e-mail or letter. Once you have I e-mailed I will respond with a little more info about how the advice will be used and dates/locations for recording and dates for sending in.

If you would like to see how the piece may be realised, and share any ideas or concerns, please see [HERE](#) (link)

Yours sincerely,

Hugh McCann

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hugh McCann', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**[hughmccann94@gmail.com](mailto:hughmccann94@gmail.com)**

[hugh-mccann.com](http://hugh-mccann.com)