

THE PUBLIC

Press Release

11 November 2011

The Public Awarded £600,000 Over Three Years To Support Visual Arts Programme

Sandwell Arts Trust is delighted to announce that The Public has secured funding for the next three years to support its visual arts programme.

The iconic West Bromwich venue will receive £200,000 a year for the next three years (2012 – 2015) from Arts Council England's strategic funding.

Strategic funds are used by the Arts Council to target key areas and seize opportunities. Over the next three years, the award will support the delivery of The Public's visual arts programme – increasing participation in a nationally-recognised area of low arts engagement and developing the digital content within the building.

Linda Saunders, Managing Director of The Public said,

“We are thrilled to have been awarded this grant which we will use to build on our successes over the last two years –welcoming 350,000 visitors many of whom do not traditionally visit art galleries or participate in the arts to see work by over 400 artists.

The grant will be used to grow the digital and interactive content of the building, continuing to open up new opportunities for artists – establishing The Public as a regional centre of excellence that continues to attract many new people to enjoy the arts.”

Councillor Linda Horton, Cabinet Member for Leisure Services from Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council,

“This is great news.

Everyone at The Public and Sandwell Arts Trust has worked so hard to reach this point.

This funding means more stability and the scope to develop our visual arts for the future.”

For more information about exhibitions at The Public visit www.thepublic.com or call 0121 533 7161.

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For further information contact Linda Saunders, Managing Director at The Public on 07790 782 287 or linda_saunders@sandwell.gov.uk.

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Note to Editors

The Public is a versatile public space and community arts centre, designed by architects Will Alsop and Julian Flannery and funded by contributions from: Sandwell MBC, European Regional Development Fund, Advantage West Midlands, Arts Council England, and New Deal For Communities.

Facts and figures for The Public (since fully opening in August 2009):

- Attracted over 350,000 visitors – roughly 90% from Birmingham and the Black Country but including visitors from around the world who came to West Bromwich to see The Public
- Earned over £240,000 from ticket sales, conferences and retail
- Held over 370 public events and 30 exhibitions
- Provided work placements for more than 120 people.

