

Artist Commission for the Granville Underpass in Southcote

Reading Borough Council Culture Development Team & Streetscene Team

The Reading Borough Council Streetscene Team is responsible for regular cleaning of public spaces, graffiti removal, fly-tipping clearance and support for crime prevention initiatives. Our aim is to ensure that public spaces across Reading can be enjoyed by all the community, and that these spaces are places where everyone can feel safe.

The Culture Development Team is a small team that is part of the wider cultural services, which include libraries, Reading Arts, What's On Reading, the Museum, Reading Venues, Berkshire Record Office and Leisure. The team manage and create projects that deliver social and economic impacts through culture and heritage. These projects are delivered in partnership with our local cultural sector, business sector and other RBC services.

Our aim is to demonstrate the power of culture to transform lives, create community, underpin economic growth, and sustain mental wellbeing.

Granville Road Underpass

The Granville Road Underpass is located beneath the A4 Bath Road and provides a key pedestrian, cycle and vehicle crossing between neighbourhoods in Southcote and Prospect Park on the north.

Please click [here](#) to see the link to the google map image and location of the underpass.



The underpass was built in 1968 to offer local residents safe passage under the Bath Road. A small budget has been allocated to facilitate some improvements to look and feel of the underpass. As part of these improvements, a piece of street art will be commissioned.

Street art and murals turn underpasses from dark, avoided spaces into safer, legible, and valued connections that reflect local identity and encourage movement.

The underpass is owned and maintained by Reading Borough Council in partnership with relevant stakeholders. Any necessary permissions connected to the delivery of this commission will be managed by the Council.

The underpass is in daily use by local residents and forms an important connection route across the busy A4 Bath Road.

Site Specifications

The mural will be installed on selected wall sections within the Granville Road Underpass.

- **Wall material:** (brick / concrete)
- **Surface condition:** generally sound with areas of existing paint and graffiti
- **Dimensions:**
 - Length = 23m; Clear Width = 3.6m; Clear Height = 2.4m.

Streetscene will ensure the space is clean and accessible prior to installation. Highways will arrange for wall preparation works in advance to take the public art. Artists should assume that any additional surface preparation, priming or sealing required for the artwork forms part of their budget.

It is not expected that the full wall area is covered with the available budget. Artists are encouraged to propose a focused intervention that works thoughtfully with the site.

Artist Role

We are looking for an Artist or a group of artists to create a mural for the Granville Underpass with a theme that is inspired by the community that surrounds it.

There will be three stages to the commission:

1. Artists will be invited to bid for the commission.
2. The commissioning team will be accepting proposals from artists. (more details on the proposal format below)
3. On selection of the successful artist or group of artists, the applicant will then be asked to develop their proposal for approval from the Streetscene Team.

Part of the process must include community engagement, which in this context means the following:

Engagement should:

- Inform and inspire the final design
- Involve people who live, work, or regularly use the area surrounding Granville Road
- Be appropriate to the scale of the project and budget

This could include (but is not limited to):

- A workshop or drop-in session
- Conversations or creative activities with local residents or young people
- Online or offline consultation shaping the design

The Reading Borough Council can support introductions to local contacts where appropriate.

Available Budget

The total budget available for this commission is between £10k and a maximum **£15k (not inclusive of VAT where applicable)**.

The budget must cover:

- Artist fees
- Design development
- Community engagement activity
- Materials and consumables
- Installation costs

- Access equipment (if required)- if the council are unable to provide
- Travel and expenses
- Anti-graffiti coating (if proposed)

The Council can advise on permitted working hours and access arrangements.

Payment will be made in two instalments:

- 50% on approval of final design
- 50% on completion of installation

Timeline

Indicative timeline (subject to change):

- Commission advertised: 30 May 2026
- Proposal deadline: 1 July 2026
- Artist selected: July 2026
- Design development & engagement: August 2026
- Installation period: September to November 2026

Artists should note that installation will need to take place during agreed hours and may be subject to weather conditions.

Proposal Content

To apply for this commission the team will be accepting proposals from individual artists and groups of artists.

We will be looking for the following information in your proposal:

- Name
- Organisation affiliation (if any)
- Contact Details
- Up to 1000 words on
 - How you propose developing your design
 - How it will incorporate the community
 - Previous experience of creating artwork
- Examples of previous work
- Budget breakdown
- Any access needs

Please send your proposal or any questions to streetartpanel@reading.gov.uk by 1 July 2026.

Practical Requirements

The successful artist or artist team will be required to:

- Hold appropriate Public Liability Insurance with a minimum £2M cover
- Provide a risk assessment and method statement
- Comply with Reading Borough Council health and safety procedures
- Obtain DBS clearance if working directly with children or young people

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be assessed by a selection panel using the following criteria:

- Quality and creativity of the artistic proposal
- Relevance of the proposed work to Granville Road Underpass and its surrounding community
- Approach to community engagement
- Evidence of experience delivering work in public or street-based settings
- Value for money and deliverability within the budget

Maintenance and Longevity

The artwork should be designed with durability in mind. Artists are encouraged to:

- Use materials suitable for an outdoor, high-traffic environment
- Consider the long-term appearance of the work
- Include an anti-graffiti coating where appropriate

Reading Borough Council Streetscene will be responsible for routine maintenance following completion.