

Creative Commons continues...

Detailed Project Description

Creative Commons is an eighteen month long programme of outdoor arts commissions and participatory activity set in the unique natural landscape of Greenham Common that follows on from a highly successful pilot event in 2025. We will deliver four major outdoor arts projects, created through collaboration between professional artists, local residents and environmental specialists. The programme will bring high-quality, free cultural experiences directly into the landscape, using the Common as both inspiration and stage.

The project responds to two connected needs: the desire for more relevant, accessible cultural activity for local communities, and the need to deepen public understanding of the natural environment at a time of ecological precarity. Greenham Common is a nationally significant site—ecologically, historically and emotionally—but many local residents, particularly those living on the Nightingales estate, do not currently visit or feel connected to it. By combining outdoor arts with environmental engagement, we aim to open up the site to a wider range of people and create shared experiences that strengthen local identity and sense of place.

The programme will be delivered through a partnership between 101 Outdoor Arts (national centre for outdoor arts creation) - part of Corn Exchange Newbury and BBOWT (the site managers and conservation charity). We will work in partnership with wider stakeholders across the Common and surrounding area including Greenham Trust, Greenham & Crookham Commons Commission, Greenham Control Tower, Greenham Parish Council and Berkshire Youth. Together we will commission diverse artists whose practices span performance, installation, movement, storytelling and cross-disciplinary work. Each commission will be developed through residencies at 101, co-creation with local people, and structured input from conservation experts to ensure the work is environmentally responsible and rooted in the ecology of the Common. The artists we plan to commission are those that produced particularly strong project ideas and methodologies from seed funding awarded in 2025 to successful applicants from over 200 applications. In this process the artists initiated processes with local communities and individuals that will form the basis of our commissions but will be further developed through workshops, community design sessions, and participation opportunities that allow residents to shape the work and develop new creative skills. Public events will be free, family-friendly and designed to welcome audiences who may not normally engage with arts activity. The programme will also strengthen our partnership model, creating a blueprint for how arts and environmental organisations can collaborate to deliver ambitious, inclusive outdoor work.

What do you hope will be the result of your project?

We aim to create four high-quality outdoor arts events that attract substantial public audiences, deepen local connection to Greenham Common, and embed community involvement at every stage. We expect increased cultural participation from residents who do not typically access arts activity, stronger local pride and sense of place, and a measurable rise in nature connectedness among participants and audiences. The project will also support artists to develop new work inspired by the landscape and strengthen the long-term partnership between 101, Corn Exchange and BBOWT.

What's the creative and/or cultural idea behind it?

At the heart of the project is the belief that outdoor arts can create powerful, shared experiences that connect people to place and to the natural world around them. By bringing artists and communities together on the Common, we aim to explore the relationship between humans and the environment through creative forms that are accessible, playful and emotionally resonant. The programme uses the landscape as both material and collaborator—inviting artists to respond to its ecology, history and atmosphere, and inviting audiences to encounter the site in new ways.

Is there a difference you want to make by doing the project?

Artistic:

- Support artists to create ambitious new outdoor work rooted in the landscape.
- Expand the creative language of outdoor arts through cross-disciplinary and environmentally informed practice.

Community:

- Increase cultural participation among local residents, especially those who do not currently visit the Common.
- Strengthen local identity and sense of belonging through shared creative experiences.

Environmental:

- Increase nature connectedness and understanding of the Common's fragile ecosystems.
- Encourage long-term stewardship and care for the site.

Organisational/sectoral:

- Develop a replicable model for collaboration between arts and conservation organisations.
- Strengthen partnership working and embed environmental responsibility in creative practice.

What steps will you take to achieve this?

- Develop a programming and participation framework informed by local needs and existing data.
- Commission artists whose practices align with the project's creative and environmental aims.

- Provide residencies, technical support and conservation expertise through 101 and BBOWT.
- Deliver co-creation workshops, community design sessions and targeted outreach to engage under-represented groups.
- Work closely with land managers and specialist production teams to ensure safe, environmentally sensitive delivery of public events.
- Implement ongoing monitoring and evaluation to shape the programme in real time and inform future partnership work.

What's led you or your organisation to do this project now?

This project emerges at a moment when national cultural and environmental priorities are converging. 101's 2021 national strategy report *Outside the Conventional and Into the Mainstream* and the newly published National Outdoor Arts Strategy both highlight the need for new models of engagement, cross-sector partnerships and work that connects diverse publics with place. At the same time, the Wildlife Trusts' national agenda places increasing emphasis on broadening access to natural landscapes and strengthening nature connectedness—particularly among communities who are currently under-represented in green-space use, as evidenced by datasets such as MENE and the Index of Nature Connectedness. The alignment between these national priorities creates a timely opportunity for arts and conservation organisations to work together in new ways.

Both 101 and BBOWT have been developing practice in this area over recent years and over the past decade, 101, BBOWT and the Greenham & Crookham Commons Commission have collaborated around outdoor events on the Common, but recent years have brought a stronger shared commitment to long-term joint working. 101 has explored how outdoor arts can deepen public connection to landscape through initiatives such as Theatre in the Landscape with Wildworks and its involvement in the DEFRA-funded Nature Calling programme with National Landscapes and Activate Performing Arts. BBOWT has expanded its community engagement work across both urban and rural contexts, recognising the role that creativity can play in supporting environmental understanding and stewardship. This project represents a natural next step: a chance to consolidate learning, scale up ambition and embed creative–environmental collaboration within a shared public programme.

The 25th anniversary of Greenham Common's return to public ownership last year presented an opportunity for partnership working, a sense of the potential for future co-operation and an identification of shared challenges in terms of access and inclusion such as low engagement from nearby communities such as the IMD-2 Nightingales estate. This project has responded by developing new approaches to participation, relevance and access that can build on these local partnerships - reflecting the wide variety of stakeholders in the common.

Taken together, these national strategies, organisational developments and local conditions make this the right moment to launch a programme that brings outdoor arts, environmental engagement and community participation together on Greenham Common.

The project builds on over a decade of individual work on the Greenham site by BBOWT and 101 through the lens of its precious natural landscape and unique heritage respond directly to wider urgent contemporary needs around cultural access, environmental responsibility and nature-connectedness.

Who will get to experience your project?

The communities around Greenham Common, Newbury and wider West Berkshire . We will particularly target those living on the IMD decile 2 neighbourhood of Nightingales estate and others who are less engaged with culture and the environment.

How will people experience your project?

Approx 1800 live audiences over the four events/commissions and attendant participatory activity

What information have you used to work out how many people will experience your project?

We are basing our assessment of numbers of people likely to experience the project on our organisation's experience of creating and delivering events programmes in West Berkshire. 101 in particular has staged creative events on Greenham Common previously. Some of the numbers reflect audiences for timed performances, others will experience durational and installation pieces which will be located on site for a period.

What steps are you taking to make sure your project reaches these people?

We will combine large-scale public communications with targeted, relationship-based outreach to ensure the programme reaches both broad audiences and communities who are traditionally under-represented in arts and environmental activity.

For broad reach, we will use the established communications channels of 101 Outdoor Arts and the Corn Exchange, which have a proven track record of attracting audiences of up to 10,000 to free outdoor events. This includes regional press and media, social media campaigns, and promotion through The Base gallery and studios at Greenham Business Park. We will also reach existing users of the Common through onsite signage and partnership with the Greenham Control Tower.

For targeted engagement, we will work directly with schools, community groups and residents in areas where participation in arts and environmental programmes is historically low. Corn

Exchange's experience on the Nightingales and Bishops Green estates provides a strong foundation for this work, supported by community connectors and trusted local partners.

We will also activate BBOWT's extensive networks, including 55,000 members, 1,700 volunteers and community groups across Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Promotion through the Thatcham Nature Discovery Centre will reach families and nature-engaged audiences.

Finally, we will collaborate with organisations involved in wider Greenham Common activity – including to ensure maximum reach.

Inclusivity and Relevance

How have you embraced a wide range of diverse influences and practices in bringing your project together?

Creative Commons is intentionally shaped by a broad mix of artistic influences, cultural perspectives and creative methods. The programme brings together South Asian dance, sculpture and installation, music, storytelling and theatre, alongside both traditional and contemporary outdoor arts practice. Our creative processes draw on co-creation, cross-cultural collaboration, oral history, durational performance and the integration of live and digital elements.

This range of influences is embedded from the outset: artists have been selected for the distinct cultural and socio-economic perspectives they bring, and for their ability to work collaboratively with local communities. 101's long-standing commitment to artform innovation and inclusive practice underpins this approach, informed by a decade of working with diverse practitioners and partners such as Upswing and Certain Blacks. Outdoor arts provides a naturally inclusive framework, enabling artists from different backgrounds and disciplines to contribute meaningfully to a shared creative language.

How will you make sure the communities you want to reach are able to access your project, and feel included and welcomed?

What things might stop people experiencing or accessing your project, and how will you address them?*

We are focusing on three key areas where local communities experience barriers: relevance, communication, and physical/economic access.

Relevance:

Our programme design is informed by our long-term presence in the area and by partners with deep local knowledge. Outdoor arts is a form that resonates strongly with a wide demographic,

and we are shaping content around themes and formats that local residents have identified as meaningful through workshops, surveys and pilot activity.

Communication:

We will use clear, accessible language and work with trusted local organisations to ensure messaging reaches communities who may not normally engage with arts activity.

Communications will be tailored to avoid jargon, build positive perceptions and use channels that residents already rely on.

Physical and economic barriers:

All activity will be free at the point of access. We will cover participant expenses where appropriate, provide transport support when needed, and design processes and performances that are inclusive of different abilities, needs and levels of confidence.

How have you involved the people you want to reach in the design and planning of your project?

We have already undertaken a series of early engagement activities to shape the project. These include workshops with young women at Greenham Community Centre on the Nightingales estate, consultations with community leaders and local organisations, and focus groups with artists exploring themes connected to Greenham Common. Corn Exchange has run an online survey to understand local perceptions of the Common and interest in creative activity, and we have evaluated our pilot Creative Commons event to understand what resonated and what needs strengthening. This feedback has directly informed programme themes, formats and participation pathways. Further co-design sessions and workshops will continue to shape the final programme.

What information or data do you have on the place or community your project involves? How have you used this to shape your project?

Our approach is informed by organisational audience data, local demographic insight and publicly available datasets. The Nightingales estate, a key focus area, is in IMD decile 2, which has shaped our emphasis on free access, local recruitment and doorstep engagement. Nature Connection Index data supports our decision to foreground outdoor, place-based creative activity. Ongoing dialogue with local councillors provides historical and contextual understanding that has informed both programming and community engagement strategies.

If relevant, how will the project team reflect the people and communities your project will reach?

We have selected artists whose diverse cultural heritage and socio-economic backgrounds reflect those of the communities we aim to engage. Local people will be involved throughout—via recruitment, co-creation, volunteering and participation—ensuring lived experience informs

both process and delivery. 101's existing community contacts and BBOWT's established volunteer base will support meaningful involvement at every stage.

Proposed artist projects:

Beth Walker

Wildlight is a site-specific installation combining projected light, ambient sound, and the natural environment of Greenham Common. The piece invites visitors into a unique, nighttime experience, where animated visuals are projection mapped onto natural features of the site. The visuals and audio will be designed in direct response to the ecology and history of the location, following an initial period of on-site R&D. Drawing on my research into the 'transformative potential of projection art in natural environments', the piece aims to illuminate the unseen or hidden aspects of the environment, evoking the complexity of species, life processes and symbioses that we cannot normally perceive. Working closely with BBOWT Beth will ensure the piece causes minimal disturbance to the environment and wildlife, whilst maximising its positive potential for renewing a sense of curiosity, connection and care between the site and its visitors

RAWZ:

Rawz is a Multidisciplinary Artist from Oxford. His practice centres around words and music, and is rooted in social justice and the exploration and understanding of our interconnected worlds. Rawz started out as an MC and Poet. Growing up in one of the UK's most under-served areas, Greater Leys in Oxford, he first discovered lyric writing in his early teens. Since then, Rawz has performed his craft all over Europe. Rawz has also returned to other means of expression he had explored in his youth; experimenting with a range of mediums including collage, videography, photography and more, bringing them together with his poetry and music to create projects which combine a range of media.

An experienced Youth Worker and Teacher, his work has led him to become expert in the fields of Decolonisation and Public Engagement within a range of academic disciplines..

Rawz' work on the programme will focus on the celebration of a 'mother earth' figure in many cultures and combining this with traditions of small roadside shrines. He will also run a number of workshops which feed into a co-design process exploring how the intersection of comic book superheroes can be explored in a way that adapts and co-opts this for young people to lead them to become environmental defenders and weave a new fabric of mythology for the site which can engage them with the natural world.

Hamshya Rajkumar

Hamshya is a Bharanatyam trained dancer and visual and performance artists working with reclaimed natural sites. They are interested in the way that Bharanatyam choreography traditionally draws on the animals of the south Asia and how this can be adapted for a UK habitat and its bird life. They are also developing ideas for how the tradition of Kolam (Rangoli-style designs) can be created within the landscapes of Greenham and how this can be explored in the context of larger-scale ritual.

Beccy McCray

Growing up on a council estate in Andover, closely mirroring that of Nightingales near greenham Beccy's intersectional climate and nature-focused practice seeks to playfully break down boundaries between art, activism and everyday life. She has extensive experience in workshopping and outreach and is experienced in partnering with both grassroots communities, science experts and world-leading cultural institutions. Beccy has been working with the Museum of English Rural Life as part of her early development on the project to explore radical folkloric traditions celebrating nature and how ecology and feminism can combine to engage young women with the natural world. She has already conducted a series of workshops with teenage girls on the Nightingales Estate to inform this work and intends to create a participatory performance project based on a female equivalent to the traditional Green Man which combines participatory sculpture, music and processional imagery.

Timeline	
April 2026	
May 2026	Application submitted
June 2026	
July 2026	
August 2026	Application decision
September 2026	Community consultation/co-design, artist project development sessions
October 2026	Beth Walker 'Wildlight' presentation - invitation to community representatives
November 2026	Community consultation/co-design sessions
December 2026	Community consultation/co-design sessions
January 2027	Marketing of workshop programme
February 2027	Marketing of workshop programme
March 2027	Easter workshop programme
April 2027	Marketing workshop programme
May 2027	Summer onsite workshop programme - Rawz & Beccy
June 2027	Summer onsite workshop programme - Rawz & Beccy
July 2027	Summer onsite workshop programme - Rawz & Beccy
August 2027	
September 2027	Beccy McCray - Participatory programme presentation
October 2027	Winter finale event
November 2027	