

Cement Fields

New Art North Kent

PRESS RELEASE



Sally O'Reilly & James M'Kay, *I Hear Horses*, 2018, Cement Fields. Photo: Rosie Lonsdale

Cement Fields announces *Future Ebbsfleet*, a pioneering three-year placemaking programme of research, artists' residencies and co-commissions, created collaboratively with young people from Ebbsfleet Garden City.

Cement Fields, working in partnership with Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, has been awarded public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England for *Future Ebbsfleet*, a three-year programme of research, artists' residencies and co-commissions, created collaboratively with young people from Ebbsfleet Garden City.

As the first new Garden City for 100 years, the plans for Ebbsfleet Garden City are formidable, including creating up to 15,000 new homes, 30,000 jobs, nine new schools, and seven new city-scale parks, by 2035. *Future Ebbsfleet* aims to explore the opportunities and challenges presented by this new town, and how these can be re-examined and countered through radical, youth and art-led creative placemaking.

Hedley Swain, Area Director, South East, Arts Council England, says: "*We're excited to support Cement Fields' ambitious community focused project supported by National*

Lottery funding. It will put public art at the centre of the Ebbsfleet Garden City development and allow young people to add their creative vision, not just for themselves, but also for subsequent generations.”

Working in collaboration with artists and a wide range of partners, young people aged 16-25 will co-lead the programme, exploring and shaping Ebbsfleet Garden City as it is built. Together they will research what has worked locally, nationally and internationally, and will consider innovative and radical placemaking ideas with partners including architects, designers, philosophers and policy makers. This process will feed into a series of new and experimental artists’ residencies and commissions embedded in the city and community that will connect the histories and potential futures of the social, political, geographical and civic landscapes they live in.

Kevin McGeough, Head of Strategy and Placemaking at Ebbsfleet Development Corporation says: *“We are excited to partner with Cement Fields on this innovative new programme, to genuinely embed young people and artists in shaping Ebbsfleet Garden City, empowering new and existing young residents to take a leadership role in shaping their future place with a focus on arts and culture development, to ensure they develop a sense of ownership of their community.”*

At this pivotal moment in time, *Future Ebbsfleet* continues Cement Fields’ commitment to supporting artists and young people to build creative, inclusive and empowered communities in North Kent. Given the increase in economic uncertainty experienced by young people and the artistic community in the region due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the impacts of which will be felt long into the future, this programme gives people a continued stake in the development of the new Garden City and creates tangible opportunities for them to develop as their own cultural and civic leaders.

More details on the *Future Ebbsfleet* programme and how to get involved will be announced in Autumn 2020.

Future Ebbsfleet is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England, and by Ebbsfleet Development Corporation.

ENDS



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



NOTES TO EDITORS

About Cement Fields

Cement Fields is a distinctive visual arts organisation based in North Kent. We work collaboratively with artists and communities to create ambitious new art along the Thames Estuary, from Dartford to Whitstable.

We believe artists are essential to social and cultural life, and our programme often has an emphasis on supporting the practice of early-career artists. Working with partners, our projects invite people and communities to collaborate with artists to encounter, research, make, and exchange views on contemporary art. We also broaden access to art by creating learning opportunities for young people to develop imagination, skills and find meaningful pathways into creative careers.

Cement Fields has grown out of Whitstable Biennale, a visual art festival founded in 2002 with an international reputation for developing experimental new work, often giving artists their first commission, and attracting over 70,000 visitors to each edition.

Cement Fields is supported using public funding by Arts Council England, and the University of Kent.

www.cementfields.org
@cementfields

Cement Fields New Art North Kent

About Ebbsfleet Development Corporation

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) was established by the Department of Communities and Local Government in April 2015 to drive delivery of a 21st Century Garden City in Ebbsfleet, North Kent. The administrative boundary covers an area of 1026 hectares, within which EDC are seeking to bring forward the vision of a new connected and vibrant city. This includes the creation of up to 15,000 new homes across 4 urban districts; a vibrant mixed-use city centre providing up to 30,000 jobs, community and cultural facilities, and a world class Health, Education and Innovation Quarter (HEiQ). 2 new secondary schools, 8 primaries and 7 new city parks are planned, along with significant investment in utilities, highways, public transport, cycle and walking routes. The Garden City site represents a complex and challenging area with significant potential, not least because of the existing road and international rail connectivity, strategic location in the South East and unique landscape character created by former quarrying industries and the River Thames.

The first new Garden City in a hundred years and the first New Town in 50 years, Ebbsfleet is building on the legacy of Ebenezer Howard's original Garden Cities, and

learning from the challenges of existing New Towns, to create a place founded on quality placemaking developed with stakeholders. Extensive local consultation and best practice research is informing how to create a great place to live and work. Engaging existing and new communities in the development journey is fundamental to how Ebbsfleet Garden City is evolving. Quality of civic life and place are considered equally important factors. More than just building the built environment, EDC wishes to develop new approaches to the design of public buildings and spaces through collaborative co-production processes with communities, stakeholders and specialist professionals. EDC believes that if buildings and spaces are collectively imagined and designed it will result in more accessible and well-connected places that attract people to regularly participate, interact, work and play. This will contribute to community wellbeing, cohesion, shared values and identities.

www.ebbsfleetdc.org.uk



CONTACTS

For images, interview requests and further information, please contact:

Samuel Taylor
samuel@cementfields.org
+44 (0) 7850 150 928