



# BLUNDEN PRIZE 2024





Image of Elm Fields Farm scheme in Coventry

# Introduction

In 2021, Stonewater launched the Blunden Prize, named after its founding Chairman George Blunden, to source talented artists from across the country that could produce public artwork for its housing developments.

The competition was created in 2021 and ran successfully for a second year in 2022, being relaunched for the third time in 2024. Stonewater invited artists of all levels to submit their original ideas for the the Elm Fields Farm scheme in Coventry for a chance to win a £75,000 prize and secure three Stonewater commissions.

Public art allows us to communicate a specific sense of place, showcasing local history and nuances of the area, whilst encouraging people to visit, meet and socialise. This is a creative way to shape a community for new and existing residents.



Existing public art across Stonewater's schemes



# Vision

To evoke a sense of pride and inclusion within the communities our customers live in.

# Mission

Supply fascinating and original public art across our schemes that transmit a sense of pride and place that encourages building relationships within communities, for new and existing residents.



# Previous winners

## 2021

Coda Workshop is an architecture, sculpture and design studio specialising in an exploratory and experimental approach to deliver creative, high quality and low-energy projects.

Both qualified architects, directors Bryn and Mark pride themselves on the studio's focus on sustainability, collaboration and a sensitive approach to heritage.

They work together with clients to create meaningful interventions within public spaces, combining architecture and sculpture while focusing on people and the environment.



## 2022/23

Pat specialises in creating stone sculptures and public art installations that explore the relationship between people and places.

Using local sandstone and project-specific stone, his artwork is intimately connected to its surroundings and often includes benches, entrance sculptures, and visual markers, which form a trail in larger schemes like Calverley Lane.

Community interaction is central to Pat's work, involving consultation, workshops, and ongoing engagement.



# Blunden Prize 2024



## Launch

**March 2024**

The Blunden Prize 2024 was launched in March 2024 and invited artists from across the UK of all disciplines to submit their original and innovative ideas for the chance to win a £75,000 prize and three Stonewater commissions.



## Entries close

**April 2024**

Entries closed in April 2024 and a record-breaking 106 artists submitted ideas for the Elm Fields Farm scheme. The submissions ranged from floral walkways to acoustic horns.



## Judging - Round 1

**May 2024**

The first round of judging took place at Whittle Court – a Stonewater independent retirement living scheme in Leamington Spa, where a group of residents, scheme managers and Stonewater colleagues reviewed each and every entry to shortlist submissions down to a group of six.



## Judging - Round 2

**June 2024**

These six artists were then invited to present their ideas to our judging panel - Laurence Sillars, Head of Henry Moore Institute; Jonathan Layzell, Director of Development; Isabel Varey, Director of Housing Service Development; Sophie Clempson, Change and Transformation Communications Partner; and Evans McBruce, Development Manager (East). Following the presentations, the judges selected three finalists.



## Final

**11 July 2024**

Our three finalists were invited to attend the winner's announcement event, which took place at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds on July 11. In attendance was our finalists, along with Laurence Sillars, Head of Henry Moore Institute, as well as guests from the wider Stonewater development team. As the Institute was due to re-open the day after the event following a refurbishment, attendees received an exclusive guided tour around the Institute.



Judging session with Stonewater customers at Whittle Court, in Leamington Spa

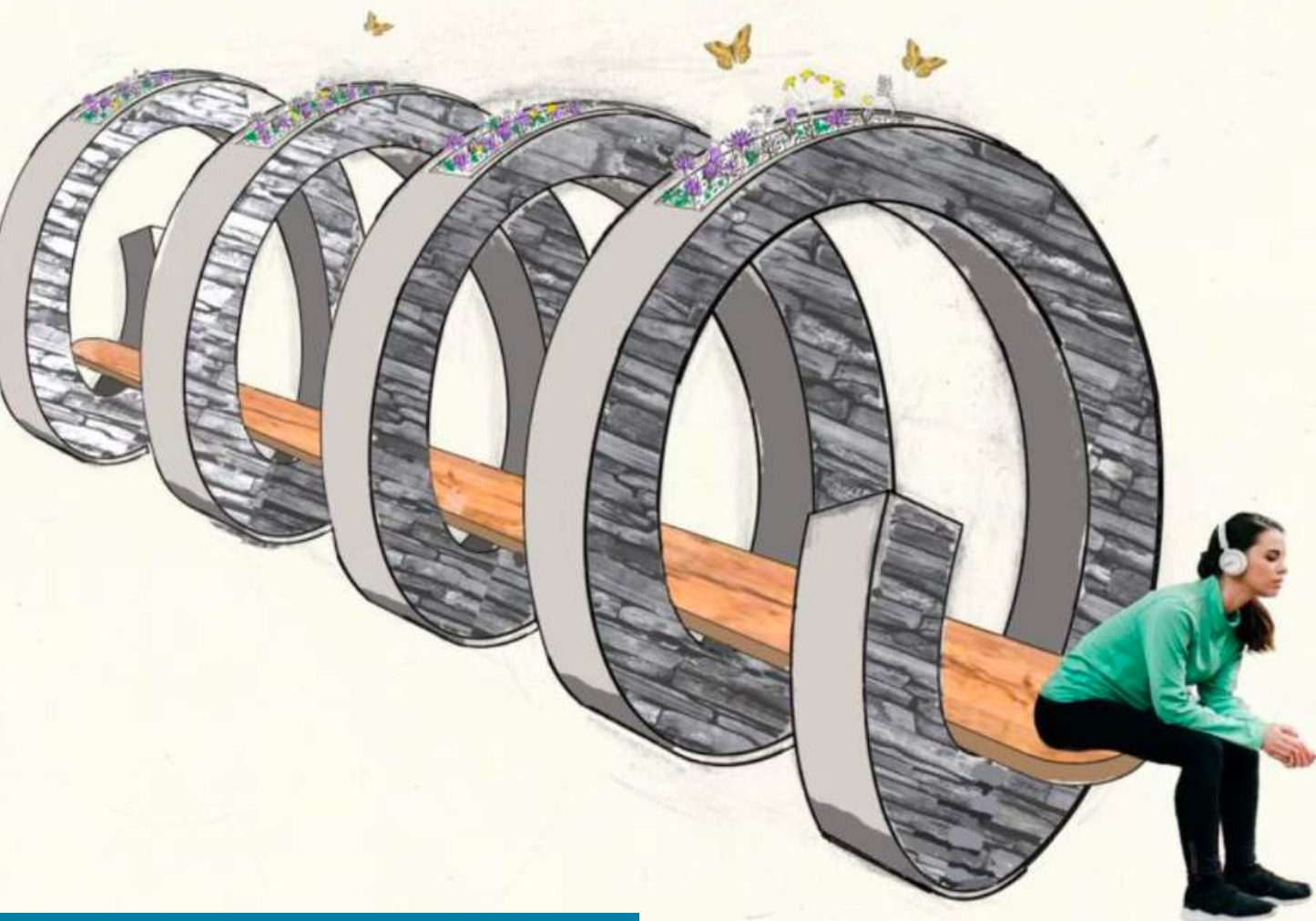


# About Elm Fields Farm

This year's winner will receive a commission to deliver a piece of public art at Elm Fields Farm in Coventry. The new development will provide 148 much-needed affordable homes on the former farmland, which was until recently, owned by Coventry Council.

The latest update from the scheme in September 2024 shared that the 148 homes are expected to be completed before April 2025. All 148 homes at Elm Fields will be low carbon homes and have access to enhanced public open space that will benefit from ecological biodiversity.





Concepts from the shortlisted artists



# Finalists



## Imogen Webb

Imogen's idea for Elm Fields Farm was to use glass panels, emblazoned with colour inspired by the local environment, positioned across the landscape to create an interactive, multi-dimensional piece of artwork.



## Jim Bond

Jim's proposal was to create an eight-metre-long structure and bench, which represents a helical tube, found in bicycle brake cables, as the first bicycle was designed and built in Coventry.



## Joanna Dewfall

Joanna's concept was to create a walkway inlaid with mosaic portraits of flora and fauna found locally to the scheme, connecting customers to the environment and encouraging conservation.

# Henry Moore partnership



This year saw the creation of a formal partnership between Stonewater and the Henry Moore Institute. Representatives from Henry Moore took part in the judging of the prize and hosted the final judging session at Henry Moore Studios & Gardens in Hertfordshire, with the final event and winner's announcement being hosted at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds.

The partnership between the two organisations showcases Stonewater's commitment to producing public art and how it prioritises providing artists with the chance to showcase their skills and artforms.

# Winner 2024



## Jim Bond

Jim is a mechanical sculptor based in Yorkshire and has experience in creating public art that tells a story, while conjuring a sense of community and providing a focal point for locals.

His design incorporates a local connection to the Coventry-based scheme, with the piece being themed on the structure of a bicycle, as bike break cables were first invented in Coventry by The Starley Company. Jim has his own family link to the theme, as his great-grandfather worked for Starley to export bicycles to Russia in 1898.

Jim is planning to run a series of community consultation workshops to help him decide on the design detailing, materials and possible inclusion of laser cut text for the sculpture. This will allow residents to be able to fully involved in the construction of the art piece.





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