

# SaferMK Street Art & Graffiti Policy Revised May 2016



## Street art and graffiti – Policy

**Purpose:** Milton Keynes Council will do everything it reasonably can to eliminate graffiti. Conversely it supports street art as a creative and attractive addition to the urban scene, provided the relevant criteria are met within this policy

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<b>For use in ( service area)</b>	All service areas across MKC
<b>For use by (staff/public/partner organisations)</b>	SaferMK Partnership organisations
<b>Distribution:</b>	As agreed during development process

Change History / Cancellations (Title / Date)	Reason for obsolescence
Original strategy approved by Cabinet lead (delegated decision) April 2005	review
Review April 2008	Review
Review 1 April 2012	Review
Review February 2016	Review
Review May 2016	Review Version 2

## Street art and graffiti – Policy statement

Milton Keynes Council will do everything it reasonably can to eliminate graffiti. Conversely it supports street art as a creative and attractive addition to the urban scene, provided the relevant criteria are met (listed below).

### Definitions

**Street art:** *“Any work of art that complements the public space in which it is situated” .Such a work will not detract, defame or depreciate the area. It could be a painting, land art, sculpture, etc. When the land is owned by the Council, prior permission from the Council will be required in writing.*

**Graffiti:** *“Defacement of an object without permission by use of paint or another form of marker. This is always a form of criminal damage.”*

**Tag:** *“A graffiti signature.” These are often highly stylised and are created without permission. As examples of criminal damage, they are also an offence.*

- (a) **If Milton Keynes Council owns the land on which the street art is to be completed, application should be made to the Bridges Team Leader who will nominate a contact officer for the project.** The application should state the proposed location of the work, the nature and duration of the project and the persons or body responsible for carrying it out. The contact officer will also offer advice on the policy as required.

**You can contact the Bridges team on 01908 252353 or  
email [customerservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk)**

- (b) **The contact officer will notify the following:**
- The department that owns the space on which the work is to be carried out.
  - The Business & Liaison team who will in turn notify the local parish or town council and the relevant Milton Keynes Council Ward Members.
  - The Arts Service, Community Facilities
  - The Senior Planning Officer
  - The Head of Community Safety
- (c) **In the case of land owned privately or by other agencies, Milton Keynes Council cannot insist upon compliance with this policy statement, although such compliance will be encouraged.** In this case the owner of the land would be invited to co-operate with the contact officer throughout the process.
- (d) **The local community, Ward Members, Parish or Town Council and the Milton Keynes Council of Voluntary Organisations must be consulted prior to any work being done under this policy.** Consultation need not be laborious. It is designed to ensure that the community has an opportunity to “own” the project as far as possible. At a minimum, residents in the immediate vicinity or within sight of the proposed project should be contacted, and as far as possible their opinions should be taken on board. **It will be the responsibility of the applicant to carry out the consultation**, although assistance may be given by the contact officer in conjunction with Business & Liaison team and the Town or Parish Council. Evidence of the consultation and its resulted must be provided at the request of the contact officer.

- (e) **Local people should be engaged as fully as possible in the street art project.** This could, for instance, involve them working in a group with a specific artist in order to design and complete the project. It will be the responsibility of the applicant to involve local people in the project, although the contact officer may offer advice and assistance when appropriate.
- (f) **The work of art should be designed by a professional artist, to be attractive and a positive addition to the locality. Its design should minimise the risk of attracting offensive material, and must not glorify or promote tagging.** Experience has shown that some pictures have been obscenely decorated in a way that the artist certainly did not intend! Equally, it is important to make a clear distinction between tagging and street art. The work may be signed by the artists.
- (g) **Before the work can be carried out, the design should be approved by the contact officer in conjunction with other stakeholders.** These stakeholders will be the head of the department that owns the land, the local town or parish council, the, Business & Liaison Manager the Arts Development Officer and the Head of Community Safety or those delegated to act on their behalf. Again this is not intended to be a laborious process and nor should it stifle creativity. The purpose is to ensure that the policy works well.
- (h) **The Applicant may prepare the surface in advance and may treat the completed art work with an anti-graffiti coating.**
- (i) **The work is unlikely to be permanent.** In time it may be painted over or renewed according to the needs of the next generation of young people or local residents and businesses. Requests for decommissioning should be handled in the same way as applications for producing works of art. Initial referrals should be made to the Business & Liaison Manager who will follow this policy document.
- (j) **Milton Keynes Council is opposed to the use of graffiti walls.** Since these are structures that are erected solely for the purpose of attracting graffiti, the Council does not consider that they make a positive contribution to the areas in which they are located.

To ascertain who owns a particular area of land, you can contact the Land Registry by following this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/land-registry>

Or via the Milton Keynes Council Interactive mapping site

<http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/council-information-and-accounts/milton-keynes-interactive-mapping-website>



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Available in audio, large print,  
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