

Secrets of Essex's Sculpture Town revealed in new archive

22/02/2019



This week sees the launch of Art UK's Sculpture Project: a free-to-access online treasure trove of all of the UK's publicly owned sculptures.

The first batch of sculptures are now available to view on [Art UK's website](#), thanks to National Lottery funding.

These first records are part of the largest sculpture cataloguing project ever undertaken in the UK. An estimated 150,000 more will follow by the end of 2020. It will be the first online archive of this kind in the

world.

The archive reveals the weird and wonderful places where sculptures can be found across the UK. One example you might be surprised to learn about is Harlow in Essex. The town is home to over 80 outdoor sculptures and became the world's first officially designated "Sculpture Town" in 2010.

Art on every corner

The New Town of Harlow was originally developed in the 1950s to relieve overcrowding in London. Lead architect Sir Frederick Gibberd wanted it to be a place where ordinary people could enjoy great art on every street corner .

In 1953, Gibberd founded Harlow Art Trust which still owns many of the sculptures that can be found in shopping centres, parks and housing estates around the town.

Public sculpture officer at Art UK, Tracy Jenkins, was tasked with snapping some of the sculptures in Harlow. Although she has lived in Essex for many years, working on the Sculpture Project opened her eyes.

She says: “ I had a blast exploring Essex county with my camera - discovering so many places and incredible works of art on my doorstep. It is a project that is easy to get enthused about.”

Five sculpture stars in Harlow

Eve by Auguste Rodin



Photo credit: Tracy Jenkins/Art UK

Just outside Nando's in The Water Gardens Shopping Centre stands a sculpture of the Bible's first woman by French sculptor Auguste Rodin.

Boar by Elisabeth Frink



Photo credit: Tracy Jenkins/Art UK

Standing nearby in the centre of the water feature is a bronze wild boar made by sculptor Elisabeth Frink. It was originally made from concrete, but suffered from vandalism and weathering, so was remade in bronze in 1970.

Upright Motive No. 2 by Henry Moore



Photo credit: Tracy Jenkins/Art UK

Harlow boasts works from another world-famous sculptor - Henry Moore. This particular sculpture resembles a totem.

Harlow Family Group by Henry Moore



Photo credit: Tracy Jenkins/Art UK

Harlow has not only one Henry Moore sculpture, but two. This sculpture was a public commission from Harlow Arts Trust and can be found in the Civic Centre.

Kore by Betty Rea



Photo credit: Tracy Jenkins/Art UK

Situated on the High Street in Old Harlow, this sculpture was purchased in celebration of Old Harlow winning the European Council Architectural Heritage Award in 1975.

If you'd like to discover in person all of Harlow's public sculptures, Harlow Art Trust have put together a [downloadable map](#). Or you can discover even more sculptures (and paintings!) on [Art UK's website](#).