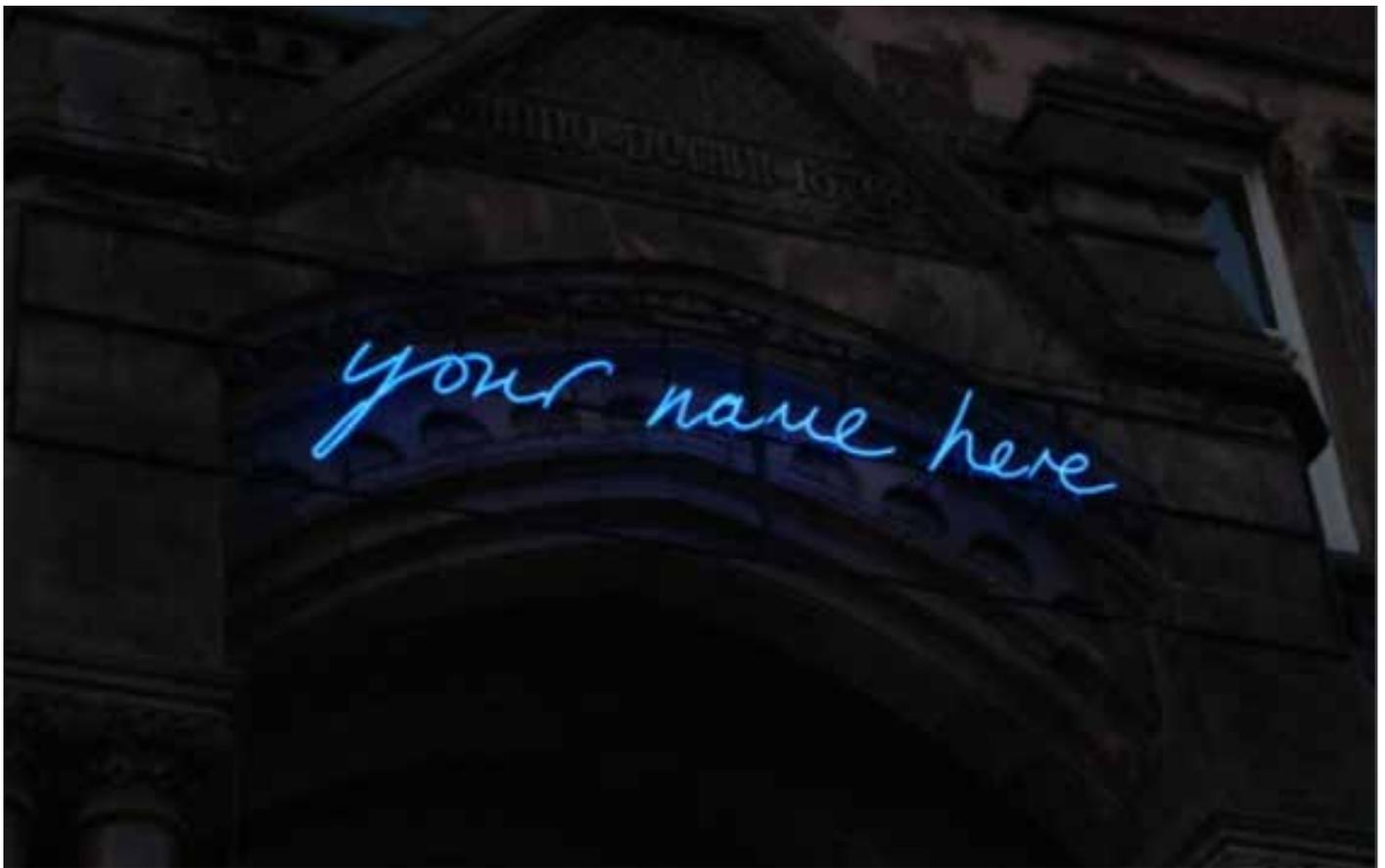


Creative People and Places Case Study

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# Heart of Glass: 'Your Name Here'



Greg Pennington, Communications Officer, Heart of Glass



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

Your Name Here was an  
interactive public art competition  
conceived by artist Joshua  
Sofaer and commissioned by  
Heart of Glass.

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**Case Study:**

Greg Pennington, Communications Officer  
Heart of Glass



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# Your Name Here

engaging a community in discussions  
of citizenship and civic pride

## Your Name Here

Your Name Here is a Heart of Glass public art commission developed in partnership with Arts Council England and St. Helens Council. The project was conceived by artist Joshua Sofaer, who encouraged the people of St. Helens to get involved in an interactive public art competition.

The competition gave the public the opportunity to nominate someone to be commemorated permanently by having a park in St. Helens named after them. Anyone from anywhere in the world could enter the competition but we were particularly interested to receive nominations that had a connection to St. Helens.

After the competition closed a panel of judges chose a winner from the names. Vera Page Park was officially revealed in late summer 2015. The name will remain permanently in place for all to see, becoming part of the fabric of the town and its maps.

## Project aims

Your Name Here was designed to initiate a conversation in St Helens about who we reward in society today and how we reward them. We wanted to begin a discussion on a range of themes including citizenship, history, family and civic pride. What does it mean to be a citizen worthy of praise? In today's celebrity culture, who do we want our role models to be? Who are the important people we have forgotten? Who among your family and friends have been most supportive and transformative in your lives?

## Target audience

Our target audience was the entire borough of St. Helens. We ran an extensive media and marketing campaign to ensure that almost everyone in the borough was aware of Your Name Here. We wanted to create a moment of mass participation across the borough to engage the entire town in a conversation through this art project and invitation.

## About Heart of Glass

Heart of Glass is a new arts commissioning project supporting work made with, for and about St. Helens people and place. It supports artists and communities to make ambitious new work.

Heart of Glass is St. Helens' response to the Creative People and Places programme, made possible by investment from Arts Council England (ACE).

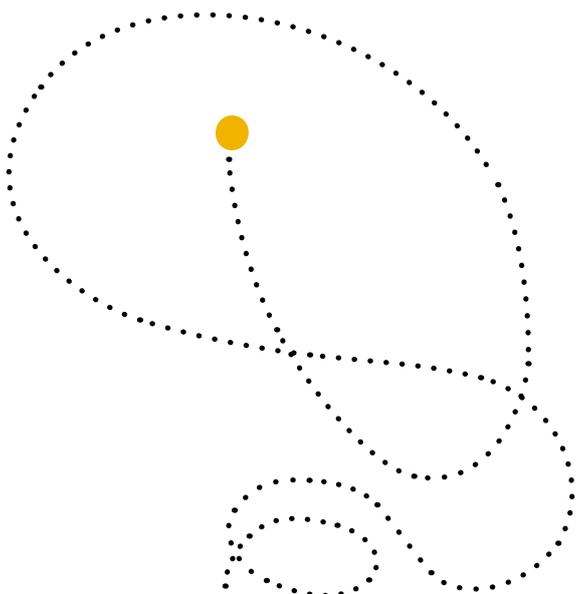
This initiative is designed to get more people involved in the arts. Heart of Glass' successful application to ACE is based upon the development of a collaborative programme of action research designed to increase arts participation in St. Helens and its surrounding communities.

Heart of Glass' plan places the town's unique cultural heritage at its core, using its passion for rugby and its industrial excellence in glass technology as its departure points for exploring how the arts can make a contribution to creating a new cultural identity for St Helens.

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[www.heartofglass.org.uk](http://www.heartofglass.org.uk)

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## The competition

In May 2015 a three metre neon sign of the words 'your name here' was placed over St. Helens Town Hall, signalling the launch of the public art project. The eye-catching illumination was above the doorway of the civic building for six weeks.

The project called on people to tell us the name of a person they wished to nominate to become the new name of the park, along with the reasons why. People were asked to explain their nomination with a story, drawing, painting, video, photo, sound recording or even an object. The named person needed to have a strong connection with St. Helens, whether historic or more recent, and could have been a friend, family member or local hero.

Applicants could enter online at [www.winyournamehere.co.uk](http://www.winyournamehere.co.uk), by post, or in person. The competition closed on 26 June 2015. A judging panel, including well-known St. Heleners James Roby, Andy Reid and Johnny Vegas then reviewed the nominations and selected the winner.

Lyons' Yard was permanently renamed after the competition winner in September 2015.

## The results

Your Name Here attracted more than 500 applicants, but reached tens of thousands more. It created a feeling of civic pride and created a discussion around who our role models are.

An 8-page pull out was delivered to 68,000 homes with the stories of the nominees.

As a legacy the park previously named Lyons' Yard has been permanently renamed Vera Page Park.

## Permission to rename a park

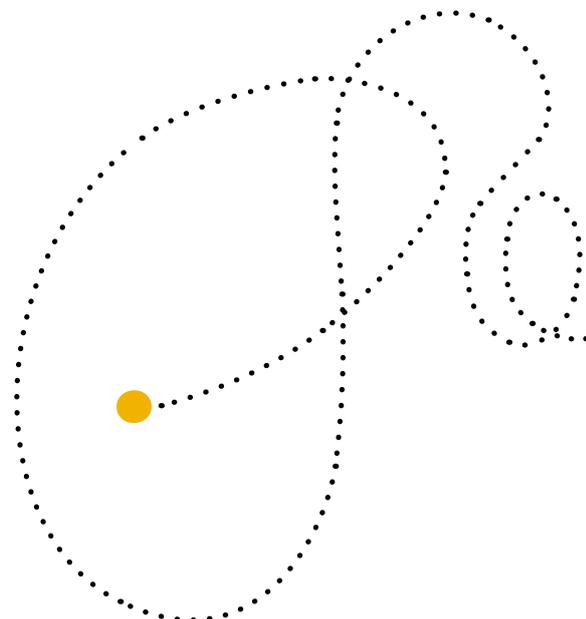
We have a really strong relationship with St. Helens Council, from the Leader and Chief Executive to the various Heads of Service. Although it was early days for us, they understood the ambition of what we were trying to do and were supportive of the idea from the outset.

We made our initial approach through the Head of Regeneration. We outlined the project and our desire to rename something in the borough. The artist met with him and very quickly the park emerged as the preferred location. We then made the formal request to the Leader of Council and we were granted permission.

## Competition website

[www.winyournamehere.co.uk](http://www.winyournamehere.co.uk)

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## Gaining celebrity support

Johnny Vegas has been a supporter of the project from day one. As an artist himself and local champion we had been in conversation with him about Heart of Glass more broadly and when we asked him to get behind this project he said yes immediately. Similarly, through our partnership with the Rugby Club we were able to secure the support of players and local personalities. St. Helens is a relatively small place and I think everyone appreciated the opportunity to celebrate the community and so were happy to be on board.

## Promoting the competition

We launched an extensive media and marketing campaign, costing £6,000, to ensure that everyone in the borough knew something about the project.

We worked closely with the St. Helens Star newspaper, which is a popular and well-read publication delivered free to 65,000 homes. With six weeks of press coverage, a leaflet inside and an eight-page pull out we were able to deliver Your Name Here to the majority of homes in the borough.

Media coverage combined with the neon sign above the town hall, leaflets through doors, beer mats in local pubs, billboards and workshops ensured the project had a high profile.

The beer mats were affordable and simple but delivered a huge impact. We produced 3,000 of them for £69 with the message 'who would you name a park after in St Helens?' along with the competition information and space to enter a name or doodle. We offered the mats to pubs via St. Helens Pub Facebook groups and 23 pubs took them.

The use of local contacts and networks was really important. Colleges, town centre managers and library managers opened many doors for us and identified groups to communicate with. They also helped us with advertising sites and brokering cost-effective promotional opportunities. By working with St. Helens College we were able to book a six-week slot on a prime sight billboard and only pay for production costs.

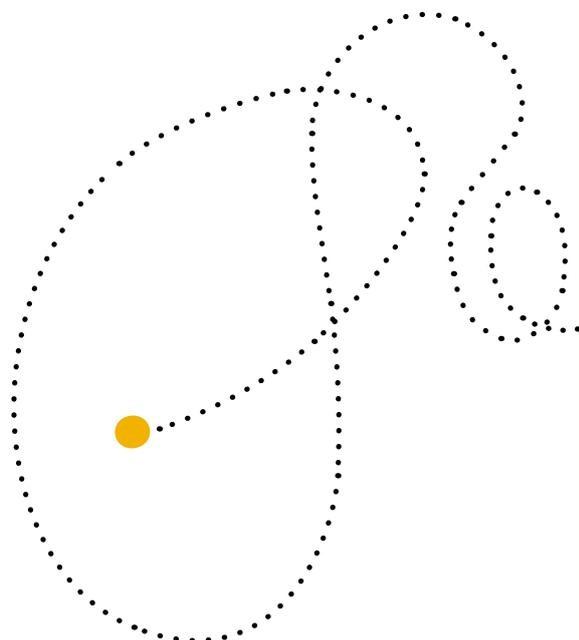
We also promoted the project through council wage slips, traffic management signs and an animation, which we worked with Merseyside partners to get onto big screens in the region.

The social media support of celebrities including St. Helens Rugby players, Jonny Vegas and Frank Cottrell Boyce helped us reach a new audience.

Watch the animation:

[www.winyournamehere.co.uk](http://www.winyournamehere.co.uk)

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## Community workshops

As well as the marketing campaign, we arranged workshops at community centres and in the town and park to encourage nominations. The workshops were set up through our network of local artists who scheduled drop in events and created Your Name Here themed workshops. They each proposed activities that would encourage people to submit a nomination.

## Recommendations

Meet local media and map out how and why they should support you. We chose St. Helens Star and BBC Radio Merseyside as Media Partners for Your Name Here. The radio presenter became a judge on the decision making panel and also did the voiceover for our animation. The newspaper followed Your Name Here from the launch to re-naming the park.

