

Children inspired art installation unveiled in Haddington

There is a major new art installation in Haddington – inspired by the historic streetscape of the market town and influenced by input from local children.

The five-tonne steel fixture features as an important part of the Letham Mains masterplan, a significant expansion of the East Lothian town that includes more than 800 new homes and a new primary school along with a range of other community amenities.

It forms the centerpiece of a new civic square, a landscaped communal space adjacent to the entrance of the purpose built Letham Mains Primary School. The six-metre tall, 12-metre wide artwork has been created by P Johnson & Company of Ratho Byres Forge.

The steelwork, created in close collaboration with East Lothian Council's arts service and the school, was shaped by local children through a 'Postcards from Haddington' project, where children shared their own interpretations of the town's cultural heritage.

The artwork was commissioned in 2018 and funded by the consortium of builders behind the masterplan, which includes

CALA Homes, Taylor Wimpey, Mactaggart & Mickel.

Speaking on behalf of the local community, Cllr John McMillan, Haddington Councillor and Provost said: "The reveal of the artwork and the Civic Square marks an exciting time for everyone but especially the local community and children at Letham Primary, as they get set to start their first full academic year.

"Ratho Byres Forge did a truly fantastic job at bringing together what Haddington means to members of the community and creating a landmark piece of artwork. It's fitting to see the nod to history in front of a state-of-the-art modern school."

Pete Hill, Artist Blacksmith at Ratho Byres Forge, said: "The whole project has been a really rewarding experience, from visiting the primary schools in Haddington and seeing the children's creativity in their drawings to our design process and finally the challenge of building such a large piece of public artwork!

"It has been great to be involved in such a lovely project and we hope the work will be a community asset for years to come."

Fully funded by Letham Mains developers, Letham Mains Primary School opened to pupils in February 2021.

The artwork marks a significant milestone in the completion of the Civic Square, which forms the gateway to the new school.

Bruce Murray, Letham Mains Primary School Headteacher, said: "Our pupils and staff love our new learning space. We feel truly fortunate to have such a spacious and light building and we have watched with interest as the finishing touches to our playground and the civic square progress.

"The positive impact on our school ethos is immeasurable and we are excited to see the pupils' design come to life."

Alongside the new primary school, the Letham Mains masterplan

will also bring a sports pitch with changing rooms, a linear park and a distributor road linking Pencaitland Road with West Road.

