

# Getting set to make a pig's year of city

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Moving to a new city is always tough. It can take time to settle in and make new friends.

But one family hoping to find its feet in Bath has already made a big impression.

This summer more than 100 fibre glass pigs are due to find new homes in streets and parks around the city as part of a pioneering public arts project – and now the first one has rolled off the production line.

Organisers of the King Bladud's Pigs scheme are still waiting for planning permission, but Bath and North East Somerset Council has already received more than 50 letters of support for the project.

The porcine proposal was cooked up to pay homage to the legendary king and founder of Bath who discovered the healing properties of the hot springs at the heart of the city.

This week, after months of planning, the first pig arrived, straight into the hands of project director Gitta Dawson.

Mrs Dawson, a former Bath and North East Somerset Council member for Freshford, said she was thrilled with the new arrival.

"It looked better than we expected and it was very smooth," she said. "We are very pleased with the final result."

She said the pigs had been designed as blank, three-dimensional canvases for artists to customise.

The basic design was created by sculptor and former robotics specialist Alan Dun, who began working on ideas for the pigs in October.

He said: "I got involved because it is a community initiative and it sounded like a nice thing to do.



**HAMMING IT UP:** sculptor and former robotics specialist Alan Dun and project director Gitta Dawson mark the arrival of one of King Bladud's Pigs, dozens of which will be placed around the city

"Being on my doorstep, I decided to give it a go and hopefully it will be good for the summer and for attracting tourists to Bath."

Each pig will be around 5ft long and available for businesses and individuals to sponsor with a price tag of £1,000.

Every pig will feature a plaque showing the name of the pig, the artist who customised it and the sponsor.

If the project is given the green light, the animals would stay in place for about six months.

Each pig will be adapted to suit its environment and the majority of on-street models will be fixed on a base to deter vandals.

Organisers expect their piggy products to be ready at a rate of two

per day.

Mrs Dawson said: "I'm hoping it will open the door for many more such attractions.

"The secret is in the temporary nature of this project, but we are hoping that at the end of the project we might end up with a statue of King Bladud and his pigs as a permanent reminder of the attraction."

After six months the pigs will be auctioned off with a reserve price of £1,250.

Sponsors will get £750 back and every artist involved will receive 25 per cent of the sale price.

Remaining funds will be donated to the Two Tunnels project which recently secured £1.1 million of lottery cash to open up a cycle path to the south of Bath.



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