TUXFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Tuxford Town Council Statement Regarding the Tuxford Mural

Tuxford Town Council recognises that the mural has generated considerable discussion and strong, differing views within the community. We understand residents' concerns, both about the mural itself and whether it was the right priority for Tuxford.

We believe it is important to clarify the facts surrounding the project, particularly the respective responsibilities of Tuxford Town Council and Bassetlaw District Council.

Funding and the decision to proceed

The funding for Tuxford's Streetscape projects originated from central government through the Levelling Up Fund and was allocated to Bassetlaw District Council. Of the wider funding allocation of approximately £20 million, £1 million was designated for projects in Tuxford.

This funding was not held or controlled by Tuxford Town Council.

Bassetlaw District Council was responsible for selecting and delivering projects within the funding requirements, with opportunities for consultation with the Town Council and the public.
The funding was intended to support improvements to local places and communities, including signage and communication, crime reduction, youth activities and facilities, public realm improvements, accessibility, increased footfall and shopfront enhancements. The mural falls within the public realm category. The funding was subject to specific eligibility criteria and could not simply be redirected to unrelated responsibilities of other authorities, such as Nottinghamshire County Council's responsibility for routine pothole repairs.

At the same time, a community survey was undertaken as part of the Tuxford Neighbourhood Plan process. Approximately 214 responses were received. The results placed the A1 underpass project fifth out of six proposed projects, with parking and youth and outdoor sports facilities among the priorities most frequently identified by respondents. These findings were shared with both councils by the Neighbourhood Plan group.

The design and the Town Council's involvement

Tuxford Town Council did not commission the mural, appoint the artist, select the artistic style or take part in the original consultation and design development. It did not control the funding.

The Town Council first received the proposed designs late in the afternoon of 18 February 2026, the day before its Full Council meeting on 19 February 2026. This provided councillors with very limited time to consider them.

Councillors discussed the proposals and passed comments to a Bassetlaw District Council officer for the artist's consideration. These comments did not constitute approval or formal sign-off.

When subsequently asked for a final go-ahead, the Town Clerk made clear that the Town Council could not approve the commission. Responsibility for approving the final design and deciding to proceed remained with Bassetlaw District Council. The Town Council's involvement was limited to commenting on the proposals presented to it.

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The inspiration behind the mural designs

The artist's designs brought together different aspects of Tuxford's history, heritage, community and contemporary life. The imagery included local references such as the Newcastle Arms and windmill, alongside farming and rural life represented by tractors, horses, wheat, livestock and dairy products. Railway themes, test tracks and hydrogen motifs were combined with childhood imagery, reflecting both the town's heritage and more modern influences.

The second design incorporated further references to local history and community contributions, including horseshoes and blacksmithing, the Fire of Tuxford, the Tuxford stitch motif and items associated with the Walks of Life Museum. It also included references to the story of the Rebel, including his capture in 1746 and the local tale of him hiding in a well. A contemporary female blacksmith was included to challenge the traditionally male representation of the trade, while a magpie collecting keys symbolised the town's culture of collecting and preserving its heritage.

According to the artist, the designs were intended to bring together historical references, local stories and contemporary themes, combining different moments in Tuxford's history within a single composition. These descriptions explain the artist's intended meaning behind the imagery; residents will naturally have their own interpretations and views on the finished mural.

Working together and moving forward

We recognise that residents have legitimate concerns about the mural and whether the funding could have been directed towards other local priorities. We remain committed to ensuring that Tuxford's needs and residents' views are properly represented in future decisions.

We welcome continued engagement with Bassetlaw District Council and its consideration of further community feedback and additional proposals, including improvements to Gilbert Avenue Playing Field. Maintaining a constructive working relationship between our councils is important to securing positive outcomes for Tuxford.

Our councillors are volunteers who give their time to represent the community. We welcome questions, constructive criticism and public scrutiny. Residents who have concerns about the Council or its decisions are encouraged to raise them through the appropriate channels, including contacting the Town Clerk (by emailing clerk@tuxfordtowncouncil.gov.uk or visiting the office during opening hours) or attending a Council meeting, where matters can be discussed openly and concerns addressed appropriately.

Meetings are open to the public and normally take place on the third Thursday of each month, with any changes advertised on the Town Council's website (www.tuxfordtowncouncil.gov.uk) Residents are warmly encouraged to attend and take part.

While everyone is entitled to express their views, we ask that criticism is fair, respectful and constructive, rather than based on personal attacks or speculation on social media, and encourage residents to raise concerns directly with the Town Council.

Clare Fox (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer) October 2026