

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

**MARKETPLACE ARTS RETURNS WITH *LIGHT UP THE TOWN 2026* IN WHITTLESEY WITH DAZZLING LIGHT ART EXPERIENCES**



*Free, two-night light art event featuring immersive artwork by Suffolk artist Henry Driver and a community light walk featuring local folklore*

**MarketPlace Arts** is delighted to return to Whittlesey with **Light Up The Town 2026**, a free public arts event taking place over **Friday 6 and Saturday 7 February 2026** in Whittlesey town centre. This year's programme invites residents and visitors alike to experience **Water Portals**, a striking light installation by internationally recognised artist Henry Driver, alongside an engaging community light walk on the Friday evening.

Join us inside **St Mary's Church** on **Friday and Saturday night from 5:00 - 8:00pm** to be immersed in this striking visual journey into the hidden world of water. Water Portals is an interactive video artwork by Suffolk artist Henry Driver, inspired by the microbes that live in our rivers, lakes and sea. Explore how these microbes are at risk from climate change, and what simple things we can do to make a difference. Inside the churches, Henry will be leading projection art workshops for people of all ages to get hands on.

Much of Henry's work is inspired by coming from a farming family and witnessing the effects of climate change on the industry. Water Portals was created through discussion and collaboration with leading scientists Dr Pinnegar, Dr Kroeger, Dr Mayes & Dr Jenni Rant from the Centre for Environment Fisheries & Aquaculture Science, at the University of East Anglia. Solar energy powered the production of it.

At **6.00pm on Friday evening**, residents and visitors are invited to take part in a guided **Community Light Walk along Whittlesey's Heritage Trail**. Led by **Ashley Dolling**, the walk will feature tales of local folklore shared along the route, creating a unique blend of light, story and community spirit.

Participants are encouraged to **come dressed in illuminated or glowing attire**, whether that means fairy lights, fluorescent clothing, light-up accessories, or even a dog adorned in lights. The walk is open to all ages and abilities, and no special equipment is required beyond enthusiasm.

Ashley Dolling, researcher of the community light walk:

*"I'm excited to support Marketplace Arts in illuminating some of the things which makes Whittlesey special, its community, history and landscape. This event literally shines a light on what we all love about the town"*

Designed to bring people together in the blue months after the festive season, when community members might feel isolated, this programme is part of **MarketPlace Arts'** ongoing commitment to co-creating cultural experiences that bring people together. At this time of year, when much of the landscape is dark and dormant, we bring artworks that celebrate the local environment and the oncoming spring.

The two-night event delivers an accessible and vibrant visual arts experience that is open to all without the need for advance booking or tickets.

**Maddie Exton**, Creative Producer of **Light Up The Town** at MarketPlace Arts, said:

*"We're thrilled to be back in Whittlesey and reconnect with the hundreds of locals who joined us for our pilot year in 2025. Last year we brought international projection artists to animate artworks by local people onto local landmarks. This year we are creating immersive experiences inside churches and expanding the programme."*

## Notes to Editors

### Approved Images for Press

High-resolution images of previous Water Portals installations are available [here](#).

All photo credits: Henry Driver

### About MarketPlace Arts

At MarketPlace Arts our mission is to ensure everyone has the opportunity to create and enjoy high-quality, ambitious creative experiences where they live. We create exciting projects in West Suffolk and Fenland from all day festivals, to art installations, creative workshops, theatre or storytelling. There's something for everyone. Every project is co-created with the communities they're happening in, ensuring authentic and meaningful experiences for all. We are proud to be a part of Arts Council England's Creative People and Places programme, continuing its mission to make creativity accessible to everyone.

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

Instagram: [@marketplacearts](https://www.instagram.com/@marketplacearts)

Facebook: [@marketplacearts](https://www.facebook.com/@marketplacearts)

### About Henry Driver

Henry Driver is an artist based in Suffolk. He has shown artwork across the world in; Japan, Canada, Australia and beyond. Henry's artworks, videogames and installations aim to connect people to the environment. His work explores how to combat the climate crisis by presenting achievable responses to this. Much of Henry's work is inspired by coming from a farming family and witnessing the effects of climate change on the industry.

[www.henrydriverartist.com](http://www.henrydriverartist.com)

Instagram: [@HenryDriver](https://www.instagram.com/@HenryDriver)

For Further Information contact [maddie@marketplacearts.org.uk](mailto:maddie@marketplacearts.org.uk)