CultureCase

The adverse effects of art-led regeneration

This research was conducted by **Jonathan Ward** at the **University of Leeds, UK**

Summary

The seaside town of Margate, South East England, has undergone a substantial art-led regeneration, with the intention of transforming it into a creative and interactive place. This has led to greatly increased cultural activity and attracted many investors and consumers. However, this paper argues it has failed to provide enough support for local artists to flourish. Therefore the regeneration policies in Margate and elsewhere should be changed to help local artist labour.

Art-led regeneration of Margate has been successful

Margate has long been a tourist destination, however its economic and social issues have placed it in need of transformation. With the Turner Contemporary gallery opening in 2011, tourist numbers increased and new economic and cultural activities were developed.

But it has overlooked local artists

This research is based on nine interviews with artists (photographers, painters, print-makers), observing daily life in Margate and attending cultural events between 2010 and 2013. The paper argues that the rebranding of the coastal town has been primarily focused on consumerism and failed to provide local artists with adequate working conditions, such as ways to promote their work or to establish a comprehensive network for communication. The author questions how sustainable this process is and suggests that in future the

emphasis should change to make improvements to the working lives of local artists.

This summary is by **Elena Popa, King's Knowledge Exchange Associate**

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