

Written by Luke Jerram – April 2020.

Back in January 2020, I was asked to create an artwork on the beach of Weston-super-Mare for the NHS and Culture Weston. Aware of the cuts in services to the NHS, I read in the British Medical Journal that between 2010-2017 there have been an estimated 120,000 excess deaths in the UK due to the conservative policy of austerity. See BMJ [article 1](#) and [summary 2](#).

To remember the people we've lost, my plan was to create an installation for the beach made of flags from 120 bedsheets.

Because of the pandemic, the exhibition was cancelled. But the image of the artwork stuck with me and during lockdown, as our appreciation for open spaces grew, I felt the installation would resonate and still have value if presented as a temporary memorial to those we've lost from this pandemic.

As a consequence of our governments [incompetence and negligence](#) there have been more than 60,000 excess deaths in the UK from the pandemic so far. So perhaps the artwork should have 180 flags to remember the 180,000 people we've lost?