



WIRKSWORTH FESTIVAL

Information for Host Venues

Festival Background

In 1306 Wirksworth was granted a charter by King Edward I to hold an annual three-day fair in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary (to whom the parish church is dedicated). It is this charter that still sets the dates for today's Wirksworth Festival - a celebration of arts and creativity by and for the local community.

The Festival began in 1979, with a £1000 grant from the Town Council, a small group of people doing everything, and a programme on a folded piece of blue paper. In 1994 a group of local artists decided to show work in their own homes during the Festival and invite artists from outside the town to join in - the Art Trail was born.

Since its beginnings, the Festival has evolved thanks to the hard work and commitment of many people. Come Festival time an army of over 100 volunteers help make this annual event happen. We now host over 120 artists and welcome thousands of visitors, but it still remains firmly rooted in the local community.

The Art Trail

The Art Trail began in 1984 when a group of local artists opened their own homes to display their artwork. It subsequently expanded to include visiting artists from neighbouring cities and counties. A major event of the Festival, the Art Trail now involves local people opening their homes to turn the town into a multifaceted gallery with over 100 artists & makers exhibiting and selling their work in more than 60 venues. The exhibition venues range from stone cottages to Georgian townhouses, historic and quirky buildings, gardens, courtyards, shop windows and civic buildings and churches.



For visitors the Trail is the perfect way to meet artists; talk about the work and buy affordable contemporary art. For artists it is the opportunity to meet customers face-to-face; talk about their work, get feedback, make sales and build new relationships.

The Art Trail Venues

We use two types of venues for the The Art Trail:

- 1) Private Homes
- 2) Community / Partner buildings eg: The Scout Hut, St Mary's Church, The Town Hall and The Memorial Hall.

The Art Trail is only possible thanks to the generous spirit of Wirksworth residents who open their homes to artists. We're always looking for new and interesting places where art can be shown as part of the Trail. If you're

interested in hosting an artist in your home or space for the weekend and being an integral part of this fantastic event, we'd love to hear from you.

Is my home suitable?

The homes that open their doors to artists and visitors are varied, some large, some much more intimate but they are all within easy walking distance of the centre of town (The Town Hall). Focussing the event allows visitors to visit multiple homes during the day with many enjoying a second visit the following day. If you can offer space for the artist to display their work and leave space for half a dozen visitors at once and have reasonable access you would be perfect!

Would my business premises be suitable?

We also use several retail and business premises in the town centre. If you have a secondary space or be willing to clear an office space we'd love to hear from you. Hosting an artist can bring visitors to your business who may not have visited before.

Do I need to clear my house?

Artists will need space to exhibit their work which may require some reorganisation for example, moving furniture or clearing pictures from the walls. Please discuss specifics with your allocated artist when they get in touch prior to the event. We don't expect spaces to be painted white with plinths like a gallery - it's the informality of homes that makes the event special.



We would recommend that you remove any particularly delicate or valuable items and clear any potential trip hazards. Artists are aware that our hosts volunteer their homes and their wishes and property need to be respected.

Do I need to publicise the event?

You will be provided with balloons and venue number to put up outside your house to let people know you are a part of the Trail but the Festival will undertake all the publicity.

Do I need to take out specialist Insurance?

We require all artists to have their own public liability insurance to cover all risks associated with their participation in the Art Trail. We also expect artists to minimize any risks to their own and your property. The Festival holds insurance that covers all risks, corporate liability and public liability associated with the public entering trail venues and will seek to protect hosts from risks and expenses for the duration of the Trails. It would, however, be prudent to protect any vulnerable floor coverings and so forth.

Can I pick the artist I host?

Please let us know if you have a particular preference but we can't guarantee a specific artist is placed with you. All the artists on the trail are selected by a panel of visual arts practitioners and trustees. They are allocated to venues based on the requirements of their work, eg: we look for spaces with lots of windows for artists making glass panels or venues with clear blank walls for artists with large canvases. Some artists return year after year so we make sure their venues change to ensure the trail is fresh each year for visitors.

What do I do next?

If you are interested in hosting an artist all you need to do is fill out the short form on the website at:

<https://wirksworthfestival.co.uk/join-in/host-an-artist/>

Filling out the form tells us you may be interested in hosting an artist it does not hold you to anything at this early stage. A member of the team will call you to discuss any questions you have and to find out details about your space.

We hope you will consider being involved in the Art Trail and join the town in celebrating fantastic arts.



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Website: www.wirksworthfestival.co.uk Email: admin@wirksworthfestival.co.uk