

Streets Apart

The Old Courts is looking to collaborate with an artist interested in co-creating work on Wigan's famous King Street.

Who are we interested in

We are searching for a Lead Artist or Company who will work with communities in Wigan, over the course of a year, to co-create a new artwork.

Working between March 2023 and February 2024, we are looking for ideas that will include a moment of outdoor celebration and performance, as part of a community-led street festival on King Street between 7 - 9 July 2023.

This commission is part of the work of Streets Apart, a 3 year locally-rooted programme, designed by local people, to reimagine Wigan's King Street. Streets Apart is led by a consortium of Wigan & Leigh based arts and community partners.

The Old Courts (lead partner) wants to work with an exciting artist(s) over the next year to co-create work that can feature at the festival, and continue beyond this flagship moment, through to February 2024.



We're looking to work with people who are interested in and have experience of devising co-created pieces of work with communities.

We're interested in pieces of work that respond to the social and historical context of King Street and uncover untold stories of people who are typically under-heard and under-represented in arts and culture.

We're keen to hear from artists who's practice and lived experience lends itself to finding new ways of bringing people together on King Street. We want this work to celebrate the local character of the street, and to be accessible and welcoming to everyone.

This artist will be partnered with a Wigan Borough based creative practitioner with complementary skills, based on the needs of the project. They might be a DJ, a muralist, a dancer or a poet. This practitioner will be recruited in partnership with the commissioned artist(s) and paid to work throughout the duration of the project.

This commission is to be realised between March 2023 and February 2024 with a key moment of performance/physical presence in July 2023 for a street festival on King Street.



King Street

King Street is widely known in Wigan for its party-hard, 10 drinks for £10, 11pm – 6am culture. What once was a focal point for community, arts and entertainment in the early 20th century, has shifted to focus almost exclusively upon late night bars and nightclubs. But this isn't the whole story.

In 2020, older people came together on King Street to find company in the street's sports bar. Families ate together here, people visited the Job Centre, shoppers cut-through the street to catch their bus. In 1800's, the sick and poor lined up outside Wigan Dispensary for medicine and food, during the second world war, people ate at a make-shift communal kitchen in the Royal Court Theatre, whilst refugees were welcomed into a formal Wigan Baptist Church.

King Street has the potential to be a place for people from Wigan, the Borough and beyond to come together. The street is within 150 meters of Wigan Wallgate and Wigan North-Western stations. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal runs parallel, and a 267-space outdoor car park sits at its south end. Feeding the main street are small side streets and passages. King Street can be closed to traffic and pedestrianised (and will be for the July 2023 Festival weekend) whilst large open spaces including Wigan Market Place can be reached on foot in 5 minutes.



The Project

Spanning between 2020 – 24, Streets Apart is a locally rooted programme which has so far commissioned 6 artists, all partnering with local creative practitioners and community groups to co-create unique street art and performance on King Street. The aim of the project is to enable the people of Wigan to imagine a different future for King Street, through artist-and-community led projects.

Led by The Old Courts, the Streets Apart Consortium currently includes Wigan Council, SL Leisure, Wigan Youth Zone, Healthy Arts, Wigan Little Theatre, Stolen Thread Productions, Wigan Local History & Heritage Society and Wigan Building Preservation Trust.





The Budget

This commission includes artistic fees of £14,000 for the lead artist or company. Separate fees for the Wigan Borough Based Creative Practitioner total £4,720.

Additional cash budget to support the following activity is also available, to be designed in partnership with the Streets Apart Producer:

Materials: £5,500

Travel & Accommodation to support regular work in Wigan across the year: £9,750

Community Access Support: £1,800

We are open to proposals that suggest a different allocation of these fees and resources. Our aim is to best support to the ideas and working style of the artists who apply.

In-kind support will be provided in the form of:

- Workspace at The Old Courts, or similar space provided by a member of the Streets Apart Cultural Consortium
- Project development and producing support from the Streets Apart Producer
- Expertise offered by the Streets Apart Consortium (which includes a broad range of cultural, heritage, youth & business partners) '
- Marketing, photography and videography

How to find out more

We are hosting two informal online information session about this commission and the Streets Apart programme via Zoom, on

Thurs 15th Dec 2022: 12noon – 1pm

Thurs 12th Jan 2023: 3.30pm - 4.30pm

If you would like to attend one of these sessions, please contact Beth (bethane@theoldcourts.com) to sign up, or to arrange a conversation in another way.





How to apply

Deadline for applications: Mon 23rd Jan 2023 6pm

We would like you to submit an overview project summary which includes, but is not limited to, the following information:

- What is your creative idea for a new co-created piece of work based on Wigan's King Street?
- What might a outdoor public performance moment look like?
- Any examples of previous work

You can send this over to us in a few different ways:

- Written text on a document, attached to an email (500 words max)
- A maximum 5-minute video or audio recording
- You can dictate your application to a member of our Producing team. Please contact Beth (bethane@theoldcourts.com) to arrange.

If you require access support to complete the application, or if any of these approaches don't work for you, please contact Beth to arrange support and discuss a different way of applying.

Selection Process

Stage 2 will involve a short online conversation with the Producing Team at The Old Courts and members of the consortium, followed by the submission of a budget and schedule (templates will be provided) Conversations will take place during w/c 30th Jan. 2023.

Stage 2 applications will be reviewed, and a successful project selected by the consortium. The consortium is led by The Old Courts, and includes representation from local arts professionals, King Street business owners, youth workers, young people and volunteer-led local history and heritage organisations.

