



## **FAQs & GUIDELINES FOR TRAIL VENUE HOSTS**

Wirksworth Festival's Art & Architecture Trail has been taking place every September for over twenty years. On the Trail Weekend, thousands of people visit the town, visiting over 70 houses, shops, shop windows, businesses and public buildings, discovering quirky architecture, alleys and walkways, meeting and chatting to artists, viewing and buying work and enjoying the buzz of one of the region's leading arts festivals.

The Trail Weekend is timed to coincide with the "Clypping" of the Church, an ancient service in which members of the church congregation join hands to encircle St Mary's Church in the heart of the town. The Trail Weekend marks the start of Wirksworth Festival, a 2-week arts and cultural event featuring curated artwork, performance, street music and lots of opportunities to get involved. The Art & Architecture Trail takes place on the first weekend of the Festival, see the website for the current year's dates.

### **HOW DID IT BEGIN?**

The Trail began in 1984 when a group of local artists opened their own homes to display their artwork. It subsequently expanded to include artists from neighbouring cities and counties and now invites artists from all over the UK and abroad - including some from as far afield as Australia – in addition to attracting over 4,000 visitors to the town.

### **I LIVE OR WORK IN WIRKSWORTH, CAN MY HOUSE OR GARDEN BE PART OF THE TRAIL?**

If you're thinking about offering your home as a venue, we'd love to hear from you! We are always looking for new and interesting places where art can be exhibited as part of the Trail. Do get in touch with us even if you are only thinking about it at this point. We can give you more information and answer any questions you have.

### **HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?**

At the end of February / early March, artists make applications to be part of the Trail. In May, a panel of practising artists, designer-makers, curators and academics look at all the applications and make decisions on which work is selected for the Trail. The panel are keen to show a mix of artforms and to showcase some artists who are new to the Trail each year.



At the same time as artist applications are coming in, the Festival put a **call out for venues** around town – houses, homes, businesses and public buildings – that might want to host artwork as part of the Trail. Some artists that live in Wirksworth exhibit in their own homes. All the other artists who apply for the Trail are allocated venues in which to exhibit their work, they are not guaranteed a specific venue, size of space or joint exhibitor. The mix and match process of connecting selected artists with venues takes place throughout June and July.

### **HOW DO I BECOME A TRAIL VENUE?**

If you are interested in offering your home or venue, fill in the form on our website or a paper form is also available from the Festival Office. The Festival likes to hear from venues who are considering being part of the Trail **as early as possible** each year, as this helps to inform the planning of selection of artists. The ultimate selection doesn't happen until later in the year, but the more information the Festival office has earlier, the better!

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

The Festival is keen to make the Trail as accessible as possible and to this end encourages venue hosts to provide as much information about their venue as they can so we can provide visitors with as much accurate information as possible. We would really appreciate you filling in as much detail on the form as you can about the access to and within your venue. Thank you.

### **CAN I CHOOSE THE ARTWORK WHICH IS SHOWN IN MY HOME/VENUE?**

The mix and match of artists and venues is quite complex, therefore we are unfortunately not able to give hosts a choice over the work which is displayed. If you know someone whose work you think could be part of the Trail, please encourage them to make an application through the Festival website. If you have been part of the Trail before and would like to request an artist comes back to your house, you can record that information on your form so that it can be considered.

We aim to keep the Trail fresh and exciting and therefore try not to place the same artists in the same venues in consecutive years. Please note that in order to be fair to registered, paying artists, and to comply with our insurance, all artists who exhibit at your venue will need to be registered with the Festival (even if for just a few works in inside or outdoor spaces). The Festival relies on artists' registration fees to run the Festival.

### **CAN I DISPLAY MY FRIEND'S ARTWORK IN MY HOME/VENUE?**

All work on display must be that of the artist advertised. A non-registered artist may not exhibit in another artist's venue. All participating artists must, therefore, submit a separate application and be allocated a specific venue. This is crucial to our



insurance policy and may affect the cover provided for venue hosts. It is also important for the sustainability of the festival that artists pay a registration fee and that the festival is aware of exact numbers of exhibitors.

**WHEN DO I FIND OUT ABOUT THE ARTIST(S) SHOWING IN MY HOUSE?**

The Festival office will be in touch with you in July to let you know if we have been able to match a suitable artist for the space you have offered and which artist we have chosen. The artist will be given details of your venue and advised to contact you well in advance to find out what the space looks like and plan how they will show their work. You will also be able to contact the artist to arrange suitable times for them to visit and discuss the installation of their work.

**DO I HAVE TO MOVE THINGS IN MY HOUSE OR MAKE ANY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS?**

Artists will need space to exhibit their work and so there will need to be a discussion with the artist about how best to show their work, for example, moving furniture to create space. Please discuss this with your allocated artist when they get in touch. Artists have been made aware that most of our venue hosts volunteer their homes and the host's wishes and property should be respected. 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.

**DO I GET A FREE TICKET FOR THE TRAIL?**

Yes, all venues participating in the Trail receive two free badges and Trail Guides to explore the Trail at your leisure over the weekend.

**WILL I HAVE TO TALK TO THE PUBLIC AS THEY COME ROUND?**

All artists must stay with their work (or ensure adequate cover) and take the lead in speaking to visitors about the artwork throughout the weekend, as meeting artists and talking about their work is one of the highlights for our visitors. You would not be expected to invigilate or interact with visitors unless you wish to do so.

**CAN I SELL MY OWN PRODUCTS AT THE SAME TIME AS HOSTING AN ARTIST?**

There shouldn't be any other trading happening in your venue apart from the work which is being sold by the artist over the weekend. If you want to sell food or refreshments we recommend you take advice from Derbyshire Dales District Council Environmental Health especially if you do not hold a current Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.



### **DO I NEED TO TAKE OUT SPECIAL INSURANCE?**

The Festival accepts no liability for damage to, or loss of artwork and other equipment either on display or in transit. We advise and require artists to have their own insurance to cover all risks associated with their participation in the Trails and they must satisfy themselves that adequate insurance is in place. 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.

### **WILL MY VENUE BE SHOWN IN PUBLICITY?**

If selected for the Trail, your venue will be listed in the Trail Guide and on the Festival's website. Your name will not be associated with your venue's listing.

### **WHEN WILL THE PUBLIC ARRIVE?**

The Trail is open from 10am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday of the Trail Weekend, your venue will need to be open throughout this period. Trail Visitors pay a fee for an all-weekend pass. Under 18s go free. A free bus is available to take visitors into town from Park & Ride car parks on the outskirts of town and the town is busy all weekend with activities which take place around the Trail.

If you have any questions about being a Trail venue, please contact the Festival Office at [office@wirksworthfestival.co.uk](mailto:office@wirksworthfestival.co.uk) and we will be pleased to help. The office is staffed part-time, so the best way to contact us is by email and we will respond as soon as possible.

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trail Venue. We really appreciate all hosts who let the Festival and exhibiting artists use their homes during the weekend. Without this kind generosity, the Trail Weekend would not happen!