



Wirksworth Festival is now seeking expressions of interest from creative practitioners to work with local people to create new work inspired by local wildlife sites and funded by DerwentWISE.

### THE COMMISSION

We want to work with an artist that has the skills and experience to manage and co-ordinate the production of a participatory artwork that reflects the habitats of wildlife sites around Wirksworth for display at Wirksworth Festival in September 2018.

We have identified local groups to work with, and each will be paired with a wildlife site to explore and interpret visually. We are excited to be working in partnership with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust who are offering their time and expertise to support the research and lead a community walk and for each site.

We invite expressions of interest from artists working in a range of visual art forms with proven experience of working in a genuinely participatory way.

### SCOPE OF THE WORK

#### June – July 18

**To deliver 1 x open access community session** - to kick start the project and gather local people's stories about the landscape. This could be fact, fable, history or personal memories to begin sharing the project and gathering information about the 3 sites, and taking on board community members' views on the final pieces.

#### **To work with 3 x community groups over 3 sessions to create interpretation for 3 wildlife sites.**

Each group will be matched with one of the 3 sites. They will be invited to work with the artist for 3 sessions to help shape and create a piece of interpretation that celebrates the local wildlife and landscape history of one of these specific Wirksworth sites. These groups may include children, and older adults.

**To attend and contribute to 3 x wildlife walks** In addition to the workshops, there will be a visit to each site led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT): Gang Mine Nature Reserve, the Ecclesbourne River and Stony Wood Quarry. These walks will provide opportunities for the artist and each participating group to research their selected site along-side wildlife experts. The walks will share the wildlife and rare species of these very different habitat sites, as well as explain about their cultural significance in the history of the area, and how these two aspects are linked.



## September 2018

### **3 x interpretation artworks created and shared with the community at Wirksworth Festival initially, and subsequently beyond**

Each group would help create a 'panel' with a specific habitat theme in response to the site they're assigned to. Each will be distinct from the others but relate visually together and be able to be displayed together as a triptych.

## **PRESENTING THE WORK**

The artwork will need to be easy to install and easy to transport and display in a variety of indoor contexts.

It will first be displayed at Wirksworth Festival in September 2018, in a suitable public space to ensure good footfall. After the Festival, the piece will go on tour managed by the project partners, to a variety of community spaces which could include:

- spaces linked to the community groups that made it
- sharing at DerwentWISE's celebration event at Cromford Mill in 2019
- display at Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's public spaces such as The Whistlestop Centre at Matlock Bath.

After the tour we will seek a more permanent home for it in Wirksworth – potentially in the new Wirksworth Heritage Centre, opening 2019.

## **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

This commission will be a contract managed by Phil Searle, Wirksworth Festival Manager, working to the board of trustees of the Festival. It is intended that the Artist will be self-reliant in managing the commission, organising its delivery and ensuring good communication with Wirksworth Festival to share ideas and updates as the project develops. Wirksworth Festival will offer introductions to key people, sites and information and support where necessary.

## **BUDGET**

The total fee available will be **£3,000 (including VAT)** including all costs such as materials, fabrication, expenses and travel.

## **WE'RE LOOKING FOR AN ARTIST WHO MEETS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

- has an arts practice of quality and distinction
- has a track record of preparing and delivering innovative projects that successfully engage with people and place
- has an understanding of and commitment to great community



engagement; encouraging and valuing contributions from others to help shape and make work

- has demonstrable experience of managing and delivering participatory art projects
- has Public Liability Insurance at a minimum value of £5M for the period of work outlined above and a recent DBS check.

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Expressions of interest, subject line 'Artist for project: Celebrating Wildlife through community art' should be returned to Carol Taylor, Wirksworth Festival Chair, to the following email [office@wirksworthfestival.co.uk](mailto:office@wirksworthfestival.co.uk) by **midday Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May**
- Informal interviews will be held on **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May** in Wirksworth. Interviews will take place at the Festival Office, The Maltings (formerly The Parish Room), Church Walk.

### Your expression of interest should include:

- A covering letter outlining relevant examples of previous work and how you would approach this project. Examples should clearly demonstrate how you meet the above criteria. No more than two sides of A4
- Up to six images of previous work (JPEG or PDF files no larger than 1MB each)
- Links to relevant websites
- A copy of your recent CV
- Two references

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT BRIEF, PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Phil Searle, Wirksworth Festival Manager - [office@wirksworthfestival.co.uk](mailto:office@wirksworthfestival.co.uk)**

## BACKGROUND

### **About Wirksworth Festival**

This contemporary art festival, set up as a charity, is well established and one of the largest of its kind in the country. It begins with an Art & Architecture Trail, attracting over 4000 visitors to the Town, where the art is displayed in over 100 public spaces and residents' houses. This is followed by a two-week programme of performance and activity, culminating in a Community Celebration. We've undergone recent changes in our funding and structure and are seeking to develop local partnerships and a more sustainable model of working to ensure a healthy future. Making new partnerships with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT) fits with this new strategy. We're keen to see this project as the start of more collaborations with DWT. It feels wholly appropriate for us to use the Arts Festival to link with Wirksworth's local landscape and its wildlife. Please go to [www.wirksworthfestival.co.uk](http://www.wirksworthfestival.co.uk) for information about the Festival, including archive material.



## About DerwentWISE

This project is grant funded by the DerwentWISE Landscape Partnership scheme (a 5-year Heritage Lottery funded programme) inspiring people to learn about and care for the special natural and industrial heritage of the Lower Derwent Valley. Ancient woodlands, rivers, canals, pre-industrial archaeology and a UNESCO World Heritage Site all rub shoulders to create a unique landscape. DerwentWISE has initiated over 60 projects across this area that stretches from Matlock Bath in the north to Derby Silk Mill in the south. Projects include landscape management and conservation; education and access and related arts projects. Hosted by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust the partnership is made up of 15 organisations that are aiming to inspire and engage people to care about the Lower Derwent Valley. For more details about DerwentWISE please visit [www.derwentwise.com](http://www.derwentwise.com).

The Lower Derwent Valley has an outstanding diversity of landscape, geology and wildlife with internationally important ash and oak woodlands, an abundance of wildflower-rich meadows and pastures and rivers and streams that provide breeding and wintering habitat for many birds and other species. In contrast, early industrialists harnessed the power of the River Derwent to create the first factories in the world, stamping their authority on the landscape and leaving behind a legacy of historic mills dotted throughout the valley. For more details about the landscape's history please visit [www.derwentvalleymills.org](http://www.derwentvalleymills.org)



**Derbyshire**  
Wildlife Trust

