

**Wednesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ)**

**Background to Digital, Community Engaged Arts Programme**

Multistory is developing a digital, community engaged arts programme as part of the Wednesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ), funded by Sandwell Council and Historic England, to take place between January 2021 and March 2021. To do this, we will co-produce a creative programme that explores Wednesbury’s past, present and future with local partners, groups and artists. The ambition of the project is to inspire people to engage with the heritage of Wednesbury High Street and conservation area and to encourage more people to use the High Street as a social and cultural space.

The programme, ‘Digital High Street Stories’, is designed to harness and develop local people’s talents and creativity and some of the project outcomes and outputs will be curated and produced into an online, interactive map of the Wednesbury HSHAZ conservation area.

We will work with 12 artists with a background in community engagement /socially engaged practice and a range of local groups to co-create 9 digital art projects that explore the historic past and future of Wednesbury High Street.  By ‘digital’ we mean the projects and workshops will need to take place online and the outcomes will also need to be digital as some of these will be included in the interactive map (e.g. photographs, audio, film, moving images, etc).

Multistory will provide introductions to local groups and organisations and we have a Cultural Consortium made up of local people and organisations who will also help to make connections with local groups. A Creative Producer will work with all of the artists to curate and support the production of the content and the interactive map. Further information about the projects can be found below on pages 3 and 4.

**1 x Illustrator / Project 1 - Illustrating Wednesbury**

**No of Freelance Days: 11**

The illustrator will engage local community groups and artists via 4 online workshops in order to guide participants towards producing illustrations of historical buildings and objects that are manufactured locally or that are culturally significant. They will also produce some of their own illustrations inspired by these workshops and liaise with the Creative Producer to format the drawings so they can be used digitally.

**1 x Artist Researcher / Project 2– Wednesbury Photographic Archives**

**No of Freelance Days: 15**

The artist researcher will research, select and work with archival and historic photographs which will feature in the interactive map and also in the public realm as printed images displayed in shop fronts. They will undertake a period of research, followed by delivery of 4 online workshops with local community groups. They will compile a database of historic and contemporary images from the conservation area, liaising with the Creative Producer in order to format these for the website.

**1 x Oral Historian / Project 2 – Wednesbury Photographic Archives**

**No of Freelance Days: 17**

The oral historian will undertake a research period where they will contact local history groups to identify moments of historical and social significance and then they will identify and interview at least 8 local people. They will produce 8 x high quality edited interviews / MP3 audio recordings, liaising with the Creative Producer and Designer in order to incorporate these onto the interactive map.

**1x Artist / Project 3 - History of Manufacturing in Wednesbury**

**No of Freelance Days: 15**

The visual artist will lead on the research around manufactured goods made in Wednesbury. They will host 2 workshops with community members from local groups to present their findings and record their memories and stories of working in local factories. They will liaise with the Creative Producer and Designer in order to incorporate these onto the map.

**1x Writer + 1x Poet / Project 4 - Wednesbury in Words, Poetry & Song**

**No of Freelance Days: 9 days each role**

The writer and poet will each lead 2 creative writing workshops with local community groups to produce new pieces of creative writing that respond to Wednesbury’s past, present and future. The writer and poet will each compile the writing material and liaise with the Creative Producer and Designer in order to incorporate a selection of these as audio recordings (or text) onto the map.

**1x Photographer / Project 5 - Wednesbury Through the Lens**

**No of Freelance Days: 11**

The photographer will document shop fronts and take portraits of shop keepers in Wednesbury conservation area locations. They will reach out to shopkeepers and co-ordinate times to shoot their portraits, creating 50 x photographic images. (We will explore ways to make the portraits whilst meeting social distancing guidelines or use Zoom.) They will organise 2 socially distanced photo walks around the Wednesbury conservation area with local people.

**2 x Young Artists (under 25) / Project 6 – video / photography project**

**No of Freelance Days: 15 days each artist**

Two young artists will engage with participants from the local community, in order to create a moving image or visual art project that explores how young people engage with the High Street. They will each produce digital events as part of a public engagement programme for young people, using social media platforms. The artists will liaise with the Creative Producer and the Designer in order to incorporate their work on the interactive map.

**1 x visual artist and workshop facilitator / Project 7 - Digital postcards past and future. No of Freelance Days: 12**

The artist will work with a local history group and a school or youth group to facilitate a project around the past, present and future of Wednesbury High Street. This will result in photographs, drawings and stories produced as digital postcards. The artist

will need to find ways to engage young people remotely which could be via an art pack (with extra budget available to produce this) or via systems the school or youth group have in place or online workshops. The artist will find creative ways for the two groups to have a conversation and will work with producer to make the outcomes digital i.e. scanning images and turning them into jpgs or making a short film.

**1 x photographer/ videographer/ storyteller / Project 8 - Grow Your High Street? No of Freelance Days: 9**

The artist will collaborate with a local allotment and market stall traders to explore stories about what grows well and what they make with their produce; and the products sold by the market traders and their stories of what sells well and why. If the allotment holders and essential market traders are still working the artist will be required to meet with them in person to photograph/ video or collect stories. The artist will incorporate their ideas, images and stories and include in final multimedia pieces.

**1 x community engagement artist and workshop facilitator / Project 9 - At Yower Wum. No of Freelance Days: 9**

The community engagement artist will run a participatory project and find creative ways to invite local poets, local groups and the general public to write their memories / stories or poems of Wednesbury which will then be turned into audio or multimedia pieces that can be shared online. The artist might, for instance, partner with Wednesbury Library or the local newspaper to encourage people to submit stories and participate.

Multistory

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