

ABOUT YEOVIL ART SPACE

Registered Charity 1189660

Yeovil Art Space (YAS) generates arts and cultural activities that are authentic and relevant to Yeovil and its people. It is an artist-led organisation, and since it was established in 2020, the venue has become a place for creatives and wider audiences to gather. It is now strategically important to the town's regeneration, facilitating connection and collaboration between communities and artists to support wellbeing and motivate social change.

We bring Yeovil residents and visitors accessible and innovative activities through a contemporary visual arts lens. We support artists, young people and communities to develop creative practice through learning and sharing. In partnership with local authorities, organisations and businesses, we bring collaboration and co-creation to the heart of what we do, responding to the needs of our community. We bring people together to support the local economy and the cultural regeneration of Yeovil.

OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

The advancement of education in the arts in Yeovil and surrounding areas for the public benefit, through the provision of visual arts, including, but not limited to digital, moving image, 2D and 3D contemporary art and design.



OUR HISTORY

We started out in 2016 as the **Yeovil Creatives**, a networking group for artists living in and around Yeovil. At that time, we were based in **Eastville Project Space**. Between 2018 and 20, the group of 20 artists worked collectively to deliver a series of pop-up exhibitions and events in Yeovil Town Centre. In May 2020, six members founded Yeovil Art Space (YAS) and became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Since May 2023, we have occupied our own space – two units in Quedam Shopping Centre.

OUR VENUES

Strategically positioned on the high street, we want to welcome everyone, removing any physical and social barriers to attending cultural activities in formal spaces. The Quedam Shopping Centre where we're located attracts an average of 3000 visitors per day, and has a mobility service, accessible parking and toilet facilities. Our exhibitions by local and national artists were visited by an average of 50 people per day, with a peak of 300 daily visits during the Christmas period.

Main space: Ground floor (approx 100 sqm) for our main artistic programme, exhibitions and events, cafe and shop, with learning space (approx 72 sqm) at the upper level.

Member space: Ground floor (approx 72 sqm) offers hire opportunities for pop-up exhibition, creative business and events, with a communal studio space at Upper level (approx 36 sqm)



OUR STORY

Yeovil Art Space was established in May 2020 at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. Its work was critical to local communities during national lockdowns, contributing to the community's recovery from the pandemic. By combining online and in-person delivery enabled us to connect with the community, increasing our reach and diversity of participants.

Together We Are Stronger Project (Oct 2020 - June 2021)

500+ people through online workshops, exhibitions, a publication and a public art display in Middle Street, Yeovil. **Yeovil Window Wanderland** (Feb 2021) 200+ households across the town created window artworks.

Front Yard Fest and **Community Garden** project (June/July 2021) 500+ people co-create art installations in Town Centre. **Creativity for Wellbeing** (2022) engaged 50+ young people to create digital projection, along with distribution of 1000 activity booklet and large scale window display. We developed **Lantern Parade** in February 2023 & 2024 with Yeovil Country Park with 500+ people took part.

OUR MISSION

MAKE YEOVIL CREATIVE

We lead social change in Yeovil through creativity

Bringing the community together through co-creation

Creating genuine partnerships for art and culture

Raising aspiration, encouraging learning and sharing to develop a sense of pride across generations

Yeovil Art Space
AGM, December 2024



OUR IMPACT

We measure our impact using an outcome framework through the 'Theory of Change' model.

CREATIVE COMMUNITY

Our membership **Yeovil Creatives** includes more than 80 artists of different experience/career levels from within a 10-mile radius of Yeovil. 50% are from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds. Together, we have:

- Delivered exhibitions & events across our two venues, generating £20K/per year.
- Provided an artistic workforce to deliver our creative learning programme for 300+ adults, 100+ families and 500+ children and young people.
- Contributed skills to our schools & community engagement programme, delivering more than 30 workshops for 1,500 school aged children.



YOUR ENTHUSIASM FOR THINGS MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND.

BE TOLERANT OF OTHER PEOPLE. DO NOT JUDGE THEM BY YOURSELF.

IT'S UP TO YOU HOW TO GET THERE.

MAKE THE MOST OF WHAT YOU'VE GOT.

Together We Are Stronger
Public Artwork, 2022

"A wonderful session where I learnt lots of new skills that I couldn't have done elsewhere. A fantastic space to take time away from life pressures" - Workshop participant 2024

CULTURAL REGENERATION

We have embedded a creative enterprise model to ensure that art and culture will be supported and sustained by financial investment. Cultural renewal will support the regeneration of Yeovil, bringing renewed pride to the town. With our members and partners, we have raised more than £550K for arts and culture since.

1960

community members took part in co-creation

550K

UK£ has raised for arts & culture in Yeovil with our partners

97

Creative workshops across 9 schools in Yeovil

784

days of paid opportunities for artists

104

Creative learning workshops for adults

8

New art commissions co-created with communities

35K

UK£ average each year from our trading activities & donations

15K

Attended our community events & activities each year

15

Work placements & paid Interns for ages 16-25

1.5K

Average visits to our gallery each month



Young Artist Yeovil Project with Tom Goddard, 2022

CO-CREATION

Our bespoke activities are gaining a reputation for supporting creative education and contributing to cultural and economic regeneration. Over the the cause of 5 years, we work with local, regional and national artists, including **Tom Goddard, Lisa Cheung, Richard Tomlinson, LOW PROFILE, Deman & Gould, Rachel Akerman** and **Harris Lam**, to create new commissions that co-created with communities across Yeovil.

Somerset Diverse Communities - Global majority in Yeovil, including Yeovil Indian Association & Friends, Somerset African Caribbean Network, Hong Kong Friends, Polonia & Friends, Italian Community & Friends.

Abri Housing, Birchfield & Westfield community associations - those living in the most deprived wards in Yeovil.

Yeovil4Family & Roost at The Gateway - isolated and low income families, refugees, marginalised communities homeless people & people with substance abuse problems.

Able2Achieve - learning disabled young adults and **Yeovil Environmental Forum** lead by **Able2Archive**

Yeovil Diversity Project - LGBTQi+, disabled & neurodiverse community

Yeovil District Hospital (NHS) - elderly people & those suffering health issues

Connect Somerset - Schools & early intervention, families with young children

Yeovil College - FE & HE students in art and media subjects

YMCA - young people from deprived neighbourhoods

Mind Yeovil - people seeking mental health support

VISUAL ART ECOLOGY

Our gallery features contemporary art exhibitions and projects by regional and national artists, accompanied by a bespoke event programme. We are regular contributor to **Somerset Open Studios** and **Somerset Art Weeks** event, supporting the local and regional visual arts ecology and building diverse audiences.



I've noticed every group I'm involved with, they know Yeovil Art Space! YAS brought people together and has brightened up the town immensely. - Former Yeovil Mayor, Councillor Evie Potts-Jones.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

We have positioned ourselves strategically, reaching across diverse communities and the infrastructure of Yeovil. We make quality accessible work through co-creation and a hyper-local approach. We currently lead the following two strategic initiatives, ensuring our relevance to the community we serve and strengthening our accountability by sharing ownership and success. The intelligence and perspectives gathered through these groups improve our reach, access, and the quality of our work.

CONNECT SOMERSET

We have been commissioned by the Somerset Council since 2023 to deliver the Connect Somerset initiative by appointing our Engagement Director, Natasha Rand, as the **Connect Somerset Champion**. This upscaling of our capacity and ability to connect with the wider sector and communities across Somerset, anchoring our work in a broader framework to support 'Early Help' and being an integral part of local community networks.

TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Talking the Walk

<https://yeovilartspace.uk/gloverswalk>

Over 500 shared their vision of future town centre through the creative consultation commissioned by Somerset Council about the interim use of Glovers Walk once it is demolished.

Anything You Can Think Of / Everything You Can Imagine

Public artwork created by LOW PROFILE inspires imagination of a future Yeovil town centre. commissioned by Yeovil Art Space with funding from Somerset Council



ART & HERITAGE WORKING GROUP

A working group was established in May 2021 to look at ways of creating designated cultural and heritage facilities and activities in Yeovil. It was awarded £14K from the **Architectural Heritage Fund** to conduct a viability study for a capital development project at the town centre, and received £97K from **National Lottery Heritage Fund** to deliver **Story of Yeovil**, a creative-led project between October 2022 - August 2024.

Story of Yeovil celebrates Yeovil's heritage at the heart of the community to develop a sense of pride and place. In partnership with **University of the West of England, South Somerset Heritage Collection, Yeovil's Virtual Museum, EPS Yeovil** and **Yeovil Press**, it explored stories of Yeovil's past, present and future through creativity, including community heritage forums, young ambassadors programme, creative writing and visual arts workshops. We worked with more than 15 partners and 20 volunteers to engage with over 800 Yeovil residents across different generations and in underrepresented communities to co-create three exhibitions and events programmes in multiple locations across the town, attracting more than 7,000 recorded visits.

Story of DIY in Conversation
Sound of Yeovil,
2023



Heritage display
at the Library,
Community Curatorial Group

STORY
OF
YEovil

Scan the
QR code
to
find out
more!



Yeovil Art Space operates under a clear governance and management structure as a charity. We are committed to equal opportunities and promoting diversity to support organisational resilience, and maintaining our quality through collaboration. A collective of committed creative and professional practitioners who live locally and bring extensive knowledge, skills and experience as well as national and international networks. We empower individuals to upskill and exchange knowledge through fostering culture of collaboration.

OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Tamsin Mendelsohn (Chair) is an independent consultant, artist facilitator and certified coach. She brings relationship management experience of Arts Council England portfolio organisations, understands public funding requirements & accountability, & recent experience in artist development, mentoring & organisational development. Tamsin is our lead for governance & HR.

Carolyn Lefley is a Founding Trustee, a practising artist & qualified lecturer for FE and HE levels, currently photography tutor at Exeter College. Carolyn is our lead on learning and young people.

Sara Dudman is a practising artist, curator & art educator with experience in delivering Arts Council funded projects. She provides evaluation & training consultancy for Somerset Art Works, Spaeda and other national art education agencies. Sara leads on environmental sustainability and school engagement.

Mark Pender is a practising artist and former Finance Director of an insurance company with 150 employees. He is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales (ICAEW) Mark leads on finance and policy.

OUR TEAM

Our Team members bring diverse skills and experience to deliver our outcomes and impact. We make best use of our capacity and work with a talented and agile team that maintains our quality and financial sustainability. Our **Leadership Team** shares management responsibility, including line-managing a team of freelancers, work placement students and volunteer.

Zoe Li

Founder / Executive & Artistic Director

Zoe has established curatorial expertise in contemporary arts, with a specialism in public realm and heritage settings. She is a certified Coach and experienced artist development facilitator. Zoe brings skills and experience in fundraising, project management, commissioning, partnerships, business development and strategic planning from her roles at Arts Council England, Somerset Art Works, Visual Arts South West and Take A Part.

Natasha Rand

Engagement Director / Connect Somerset Champion

Natasha has overall management responsibility of our engagement activities with communities and education organisations. She has held Senior Management roles in schools, was Head of Art and Design in Secondary education, and has led on community, charity, and business partnerships. Natasha is an Art & Design teacher training facilitator, ASD tutor and Arts Award moderator. Between 2023 and 2026, she is a Connect Somerset Champion, part of a Somerset Council strategic commission to join up public services and connect to the Voluntary, Community, Faith, Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector.

Jess Egan

Founder / Communication & Operations Manager

Jess has over ten years' experience in finance management and working in communications. She established and manages the marketing platforms and audience development strategy for YAS, including data collecting to support evaluation, monitoring of impact; as well as managing the Yeovil Creatives membership networks.



YAS Team at Taste of Yeovil Exhibition