

Artist's Brief: To design an art installation for the rest garden in the town centre, Wallingford, Oxfordshire to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III.

1. Aims and Objectives

Wallingford is a quintessentially English market town in South Oxfordshire steeped in over a thousand years of history.

This Saxon fortified town, built by King Alfred in the 9th century to withstand Viking attack and sought out by the army of William the Conqueror in 1066, was chosen as the site for one England's strongest medieval castles. With a population of over 2,000 people in 1085 when Domesday Book was drawn up, Wallingford played a pivotal role in medieval England, one of only four towns mentioned in Magna Carta. Coins were minted here for three hundred years and its castle was the seat of the heirs to the throne, witnessing royal councils, civil wars and grand regal festivities. The castle's stone remains and dramatic earthworks are now set in beautiful gardens, as a popular tourist destination on the banks of the Thames.

It is Historic England's view that Wallingford stands out as a focus of nationally significant heritage assets. There are 4 Scheduled Monuments, 143 Listed buildings and many others designated as Buildings of Local Interest. The C17th Town Hall, St Mary's Church and the War Memorial form an iconic architectural set piece in the Market Place and the whole of the old town, laid out on a Saxon grid, is a Conservation Area. More recently, a statue of Dame Agatha Christie who lived in the town and is buried nearby has been erected in the Kine Croft.

Near to the town centre market place is a small rest garden. Wallingford Town Council wishes to enhance the garden with a 3-dimensional art installation to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III and his love of the environment, particularly trees. The work will need to demonstrate contemporary artist flare but should also reflect the historic environment of the town and. An installation with the ability to support other features, such as hanging baskets, would be welcome.



Figure 1. Current rest garden (image slightly distorted by use of the camera's panoramic function)

2. Commission Process and Schedule

We are inviting local artists to submit an expression of interest to design and build the art installation. The deadline for submissions is **5 pm on the 5th April 2024.**

Short-listed designs will be considered by a panel of representatives from the Wallingford Public Arts Working Group. The successful artist will be notified by **19 April 2024**. Artists must be able to complete and install the work by **30 September 2024**. Artists will liaise closely with the Town Council and the local community to deliver the completed work. The selected artist will also be required to liaise with Town Council office staff to support the publicising of the artwork.

The Rest Garden is within a conservation area of Wallingford and the work will require planning permission from the Town Council and South Oxfordshire District Council, which will include consideration of neighbouring properties. Installation is likely to require input from an archaeologist.

3. Budget

£50,000 is available. This is inclusive of:

- artist's fee and production costs including materials
- artist's travel costs and related expenses for site visits and installation
- transport of completed work to site
- installation costs
- health & safety requirements
- any required repairs to the artwork in the first 24 months of installation
- VAT

4. Site

The garden measures approximately 15 x 5 metres and is adjacent to the town centre immediately accessible from and in full view of a busy road. The purpose of the garden is to provide residents and visitors with place to pause and rest or chat to friends. At ground level the garden is currently dominated by a raised flower bed. The tree on the left and shrub on the right, two benches, black cylindrical waste bin and the Town Council information board will be retained. The garden will also feature sustainable planting. The wheelie bin belongs to the coffee shop behind and will be hidden behind slatted fencing. The door provides access to the rear of the coffee shop. The selected artist is welcome to consider and make recommendations on the wider re-design of the garden, which could include alteration of the raised bed, to enhance synergy with the art installation.



Figure 2. View from northern end



Figure 3. View from southern end

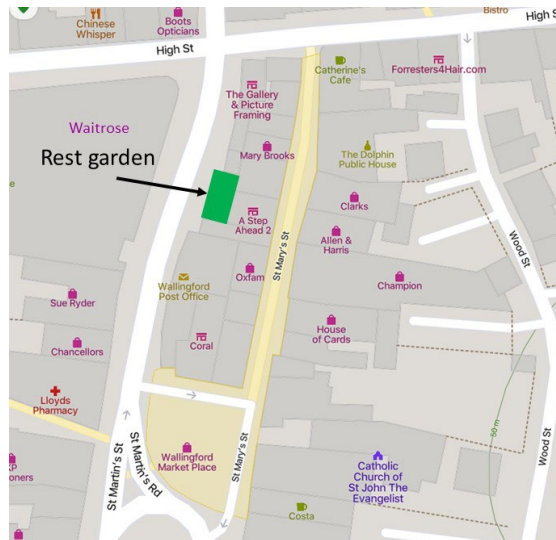


Figure 4. Location map

5. Essential Experience/skills

We anticipate that the artist will possess the following attributes:

- proven experience of executing commissions of a similar scale and permanent nature in public spaces;
- high quality of conceptual realisation;
- understanding of technical requirements in the creation, installation and long-term maintenance of the work;
- ability to work with different partners including town residents;
- willingness to support and respond to internal marketing and communications requests and to external media and press enquiries as necessary;
- strong communication and interpersonal skills.

6. Maintenance and Durability

The artwork should be designed to last in good condition for a minimum of 20 years. The artist will be responsible to repair the artwork should it fall into disrepair in the first 24 months. Wallingford Town Council will be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the artwork once the contract is signed off and both parties are satisfied that all works have been completed successfully. The artist will provide detailed advice and guidance on the long-term maintenance and any specialist cleaning of the artwork required and will be available to answer questions when appropriate on maintenance issues. The artist will also be expected to provide the Town Council with a detailed risk assessment relating to the installation and viability of the artwork.

7. Artist's copyright and ownership of the work

Wallingford Town Council shall own the work in its entirety including Intellectual Property rights and the physical materials of the work. Moral Rights (Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988) remain vested in the artist.

8. Decommissioning

If Wallingford Town Council wishes to decommission or move the artwork in the future, the artist will be notified in writing.

9. Application

Artists are required to submit:

- an application by means of an expression of interest by email. This should include initial ideas, proposed approach to the commission and materials to be used. You should also confirm that you are able to meet the schedule and deadlines detailed above in section 2 if your application is successful. Maximum one side of A4 text;
- visual examples of previous work (6-12 good quality images) relevant to the commission including, importantly, examples of previously commissioned works of a similar scale;
- CV and Artist Statement

10. Application deadline

The deadline for applications is **5pm Friday 5 April 2024.**

Applications and further information can be obtained by calling the Council Offices on 01491 835373 or E-mailing queries@wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk