



Artspace Lifespace

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Neighbourhood Partnership Proposal

Jacobs Wells Baths Building



Artspace Lifespace:

Jacobs Wells Baths Building provides a unique opportunity for Artspace Lifespace to develop the work we do as an organisation in providing Access, Space, Logistics and Support for a vibrant creative community in Bristol and beyond.

Thousands of commercial and industrial buildings are vacant and decaying in towns and cities all over the country. Many long-term empty properties stay that way for years, some even decades.

We look for longer-term spaces to provide a resource base for smaller satellite projects to flourish, mentoring and facilitating other creative groups and organisations to be able to take on sites and projects of their own.

This transforms neighbourhoods and also brings something fresh and diverse to commercial centres. Making space accessible to a wide variety of creative influences serves to enrich and develop the multi cultural identity of any community.

Our longest run and most successful project is The Island, Nelson street. The Island is based at the old Bridewell police station and operates studios, dance and circus space, a gallery and a theatre rehearsal space together with a small venue space.
www.theislandbristol.com

Artspace Lifespace Community Values:

Artspace Lifespace is at the heart of a vibrant creative community in Bristol and beyond. We believe that temporary use and re-use of abandoned land and buildings can help create dynamic and resilient places in and around our towns and cities. Through the following points we will promote such uses as an integrated part of both short and long term planning to help bring landscapes and urban areas back to life. We operate an equal opportunities and welcome to all community policy.

Our community values are:

- **Reactivate:** Stalled spaces increase decline, so vacant land and buildings should not lie passive, but be reactivated by temporary uses wherever possible.
- **Enhance:** Buildings are best maintained through use. Temporary use can bring places that have lost their former purpose back to life, protecting, rejuvenating and enhancing valuable social and cultural heritage.
- **Experiment:** Temporary intervention is an effective and engaging way to improve a place instantly responding to immediate needs, foster design experiments and explore new creative public experiences.
- **Create:** Temporary projects can act as transformative agents of stalled areas and create local ownership through involving people, institutions and businesses in common acts of place making.
- **Learn:** Temporary activities can harness local resources and foster new skills and capabilities.
- **Ripen:** Reconciling interim approaches with formal planning procedures, allowing a slow ripening of places through site specific initiatives should be an integral part of developing resilient environments.
- **Value:** Value should be defined not only in terms of finance, but also include cultural, aesthetic, entrepreneurial, environmental and social activities that can act as a significant catalyst for community development.
- **Support:** Decision makers must be encouraged to adopt a mind set that actively supports temporary use and bottom-up initiatives that can create better and more interesting urban and rural environments.
- **Enable:** Policies and procedures should be streamlined, accessible and responsive, enabling temporary use, discouraging vacancy, and minimising bureaucracy and cost.
- **Recognise:** Short term use should be recognised as valuable and inherent part of long term planning. It should not be excluded or dismissed; it is an enhancement, not a threat.

History:

Public baths. Designed 1881, opened 1887. By Josiah Thomas. Red Cattybrook brick with buff terracotta dressings, gable stacks and slate roof. Central swimming pool with lateral blocks and front cross passage. Northern Renaissance Revival style. Single storey; 12 bay front, with 3-storey 5-baypool gable behind.

The front is divided into 3 sections by brick pilasters with terracotta domed octagonal caps, the sections between articulated by octagonal terracotta pilasters with smaller domed tops. The central section has a terracotta panel with HOTWELLS PUBLIC BATHS beneath a raised panel with the City arms, and a pediment with foliate decoration. Central tripartite window, flanking doorways inscribed WOMENS WARM BATHS to the left, and MENS SWIMMING AND WARM BATHS to the right, and outer paired windows, all have shouldered architraves and segmental pediments; the central window has a raised panel between consoles to a segmental pediment. 3 left-hand bays are blind, the 4 to the right have paired windows.

Each side block has an end gable with a stack with terracotta panelled and gabled top. The large pool gable has outer brick pilasters to domed caps, and a raised central section to a stepped pedimented gable. 2 lower strings, and a frieze and dentil cornice between the pilasters; the middle section is divided by terracotta strips, with 5 shell-head niches above the cornice, a cornice above them, and a terracotta pediment with foliate decoration and the date of opening, under a ball finial.

The sides of the pool have 6 deep semicircular arches under a corbel table. Full length ridge lantern. To the rear right-hand side is a decapitated square chimney with chamfered sides and terracotta bands. INTERIOR: a covered pool with a semicircular steel truss roof carried on steel corbels, side blocks, and boiler house to the left, with cast-iron columns with octagonal bases and moulded capitals.

The baths were converted into a dance centre c1980 and comprise a very fine example of their type. HISTORICAL NOTE: the water for the pool came from Jacob's Well on Brandon Hill. (Gomme A, Jenner M and Little B: Bristol, An Architectural History: Bristol: 1979-: 393).

Source: Historic England

Listing NGR: ST5781272690



**The Craft Hub running a Clay Workshop at the Baths*

Our progress so far:

Our involvement with The Baths started back in Sept 2016 when we were approached by BCC to take on a short 6-month lease of the premises. Our priorities with the space were:

- To keep the space safe and clean
- To work closely with the local community and engage with the local residents
- To create an exciting programme of events and support creativity in Bristol
- To complete any minor repairs and maintenance
- To run together with Vivid Regeneration, the Consultation Days
- To buy more time to the building while bigger decisions were going ahead with BCC and the feasibility study was completed.

From Oct 16 to Jan 17 we completed:

- A number of Maintenance works
- A deep clean of the premises
- Created webpages and social media pages and organised publicity to gather further support and interest
- Created a long mailing list of interested groups, organisations, individuals and artists
- We worked closely with JCHub to understand better the needs and preferences of the local community on what activities they wish to see in the space
- We worked with Helen on the Consultation Days which became more of Community and Arts Open Days.
- Worked closely with BCC and local Councillors to gather information needed on this project

- In general, we always had someone at the end of the email or phone to be able to take any enquiries and facilitate access to the space.

In the same period Oct 2016 to Jan 2017 we organised around 42 events:

- 12 community focus
- 2 family days
- 15 dance activities
- 2 circus & 6 theatre events
- 2 architecture focus days with UWE
- 2 media based events
- 3 artists residencies.



Partnerships:

We have worked closely with Jacobs Wells Community hub to make sure we offer them a 'home' on the premises to allow for the local community to have a space where they can meet weekly and organise art activities, social events, training opportunities, health and well being classes.

We also worked closely with BCC and local Councillors to promote awareness around the project, make sure the space is open for the local community and collect all information needed for the CAT process ahead.



**Family day open to all organised with Short Stuff and Kid Carpet*

Challenges:

- poor state of the building which makes it feel unwelcoming and not safe for the local community,
- endless minor repairs and unexpected maintenance issues,
- the effect those had on the access for local residents and community groups when having to close the building at few occasions due to the poor conditions and having to cancel activities,
- cold temperatures and rain & leaks caused especially the winter days made it hard to operate as a full time centre under those conditions,
- lack of accessible ramp so we can make sure that everyone is welcomed and able to access the premises and take part of the activities,



**The Craft Hub currently meets at the Hope and Anchor due to the poor conditions cold building. We are really hoping to bring them back to their home at Jacobs Wells Baths Centre.*

Current Sources of Finances:

So far the project been running as a self funded project. Since we took on the short term lease (Sept 2016) any income generated from booking the space has been invested back into the project.

Jacobs Wells Hub are using the Hub space as their home in kind supoprt of Artspace Lifespace and they are now key holders in order for them to be able to access the space as much as possible and organise their activities with our support.

We have raised so far:

- £5K Architectural Heritage Fund for a Survey of the building
- £2K Quartet for staffing and training
- £3K from BCC grant to repair electriccs and make safe and Asbestos report



**Tea Party with the local over 60s in the chilly Jacobs Wells Hub, still great turn out!*

What are we asking for?

We are writing to ask for financial support from the Neighbourhood Partnership towards the capital costs of improving the facilities at Jacobs Wells Baths.

Please see below Table:

Cost	Amount	When	Who	Result	Improvement
Repair Boiler	£2050	1 week's work	Qualified contractor	Warm space, radiators working	Less use of portable heaters which are energy consuming and unsafe
Re-paint Hub space and main hall	£3000	2 week's work	Contracted company and group of volunteers from the local community for the easy to reach areas	Clean, welcoming space	Local residents would feel more safe and would enjoy spending time in the space more.
Portable Accessible ramp x 2	£1000	We can order and collect asap	http://accessible.co.uk/	All local residents will be able to access the space	All activities and the Centre will now be fully accessible
Furniture	£300	We can order and collect asap	http://www.ikea.com/gb/en/	Make the space nicer and more user friendly	Being able to host more activities and having chairs and tables for those
Labour	£500	As per above	Joel Ashley – ASLS Duty Manager	Joel will be able to action and coordinate the above asap £1000, 50hours over 5 weeks to complete all above	Make sure the list above is being completed timely and within budget
TOTAL	£6,850				

How those improvements fit with NP targets:

With the above improvements we are working towards the NP targets below:

- We will encourage the development of community centres in the area that are accessible and affordable to local community groups

Jacobs Wells Bath would become a centre for the local community to meet and run activities. All groups and everyone is welcomed!

- We will support efforts to reduce the isolation of older people in the area. Improving the facilities would make the space more accessible, safe and welcoming for our over 60s groups to meet and run activities. Also, the consistency of having one home for all activities rather than having to move around all the time would encourage over 60s more to come back to the same place.

- We want an area that is planned, designed and developed with regard to the wishes of local residents.

Once we have the right facilities in place we can start organising and hosting all the events we have designed for the local community: family events in a warm and clean space, over 60s events in the Baths, dance, art, health and well being activities in the main hall, community meet and

- Provision for older and younger residents, as well as making grants to support many local voluntary groups.

We operate with an all welcome policy and particularly wish to support local voluntary groups. We offer subsidised rates for those groups for them to use the facilities and offer those activities to the local residents. Our last family event hosted about 50 families and we offered a discounted rate so we are able to offer subsidised rates to local residents.

- Anyone from the neighbourhood can come and raise ideas and concerns about local services and community issues.

All members of the local community can make contact with ASLS and suggest ideas, wishes and concerns about the building. We always have someone at the end of the phone and email to make sure everyone is heard and all ideas are fed back into the project. We regularly update our local Councillors and have worked closely with Jerome Thomas to make sure the local representatives are always informed of our plans.

How would this fund affect the CAT process?

Bristol City Council is inviting expressions of interest from voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations that have the necessary expertise and imaginative proposals to take over the management of this historic central Bristol building.

The building has been used on a temporary basis by Artspace Lifespace for dance, music, art and community activities.

Local partners have been:

- [Artspace Lifespace](#)
- [Jacobs Wells Community Hub](#)

The work we have completed since Sept 2016 in the Jacobs Wells Baths together with the future activities we will be hosting for the next round of our lease will support BCC in the following areas:

- improving the current facilities and using the space as the heart of the local community would help BCC to attract the right bidders for this process, organisations individuals and groups who truly understand and embrace the importance of continuing the use of the premises as a community and creative space,
- improving the current facilities would also result in increased participation and engagement of the local community and with careful and methodical data collection we could offer the necessary information to potentially attract further funding, sponsors and even philanthropist to support the work and the continuation of this project,
- improving the current facilities would also result in increased participation and engagement of the local community would also support NP and BCC public image on the great work they support in the community,
- once the CAT process has started and completed and the ideal bidder is appointed there will be a process of raising the necessary funds and that would allow more time when the premises need to be used for the community so improved facilities and a welcoming environment is necessary,
- the space improvements requested on this application can enhance the future plans of the potential bidder, and bring us all a step closer to the brilliant space the Baths could be for the creative and local community in Bristol.

What would the local community see in the Jacobs Wells Baths?

4. What COMMUNITY activities and services would work in the spaces? What would you like to see?

All mixed activities for all ages from children upwards	Orchestral and choral rehearsals	Temporary exhibition space for art installation and exhibitions
Work with people who have physical/mental/health/problems/learning disabilities	Dance Centric future	Arts and theatre space
Children's dance & dance that brings the community together	Theatre	Dance
Other performing arts.	Professional dance centre	Integrate different uses
Live music	Swimming baths	Live music
Dance academy	Dance degree course	Great space for immersive performance
Physical theatre performance	Performance space	Exhibition space
Café	Rock music	Artists' studios
Swimming baths again	Dance centre	Performance space
Accessible dance/performance		
Dance for all. Performance workshops. The arts.	Jumble sales. Charity Fetes. Free shops (swapping items).	Café/Drop in social centre with no obligation to spend money (or very cheap prices)
Art Exhibitions. Healthy Food. Café.	I would like to see exactly what that guy said (Lucas age 9).	Dance, café and the arts (Anwen 10)
I would like to see the space turned into a café and fully functioning dance studio and community space (Lily13)	Open workshops	Have multi use space. Feels like dance space = can share e.g. With theatre, meeting space etc.
Community classes	Get the Japanese centre to do pop up workshops	Folk dance = community e.g. Ceilidh, Morris etc.
Swing dance	Connect with: Bristol Folk House, Silver Frame Rapper, Rag Morris, Shooting Roots, Bristol Uni Folk Ceilidh Society	Youth workshops, community groups (Karate, Gymnastics, Yoga etc.)
Affordable rehearsal space. Regular classes. Meeting space. Good quality rig/lighting. Capacity as a studio performance space.	Language workshops. Sign and so on	Small scale theatre. Theatre schools. Dance. Café. Meeting rooms. Rehearsal space.
Yoga for us oldies	Dance classes and workshops for all abilities	
A robot please!	Theatre	Dance
Performance	Community	Meetings
Banquet	Community arts for all ages and all capabilities.	Classes = creative and health
Dance	Bingo	Choir
Pre-school workshops	Bowling	Indoor sports
Mixed use swimming pool (Clifton Lido Model?)	Community facilities	Health Centre
Restaurant/café	Cinema	Theatre/acting
Museum	Children's games	Ice skating
Quiz	Balls	Indoor sports
Swimming pool and wellbeing	Swimming pool	Café

**Appendix from Jacobs Wells Baths Feasibility Study by Helen Bone, Vivid Regeneration*

Quotes from local residents and space users:

Some teething problems of when the heating broke and the workmen coming in and out, the rain and the cold caused some bemusements to our audience but I was totally happy to work around them. It was a great space to work in and I am very grateful for the focus, and the time and space it gave me to work without distraction. I am really glad that this space will continue to be a great resource for artists and performers. **Sarah Resident artist**

A welcoming Community Centre well known and well used by all sections of the Community. It would mean so much to us to improve the facilities to be more welcoming and comfortable so we can use it as frequently as we wish to! **Sally Jacobs Wells Hub**

The craft hub has helped me get back, those couple of hours were just enough for my long term illness, since then I have gone from strength to strength and I attribute this to the Craft Hub at the Baths **local resident**

All Communities deserve a Community Centre. Jacobs Wells Baths is unique in that it is very close to central Bristol and also very close to a variety housing types. Local residents are extremely diverse and there is evidence of social isolation and loneliness amongst people of all ages. The building is the only central building that offers a creative space that could be used for both community and the arts. The building is unique. It is part of the social history of the area and we value the hub space that Artspace Lifespace has set aside for our community activities. **Heather – Jacobs Wells Hub**

The huge building was full of colour and happy faces: a vision of how things could be if some serious ambition was matched by some serious money. **Family event Short Stuff with Kid Carpet**

For any further information or any clarification on the above information please email Dina Ntziora, ASLS Company Manager

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