



## Derby Well Creates a Street Gallery

Derby Well is a campaign to support and promote cultural and arts activities in and around Derby city centre and will launch with **Derby Well Re-Dressed** on Friday 25, Saturday 26 and Sunday 27.

This should have been the annual Derby Festé outdoor entertainment festival. However, the Government guidance around mass gatherings due to the pandemic has forced organisers to reinvent this year's entertainment.

The Derby Well Re-Dressed weekend will see the city centre and surrounding area transformed into a street gallery with artwork, performances and contemporary well dressings.

Artists and members of the public are being invited to submit their ideas digitally or by post and these will be curated into a trail for visitors to enjoy.

Derby Well organiser Steve Slater is director of lead organisation Déda.

He said: "Derby Well Re-Dressed is inspired by Derbyshire's unique and ancient Well Dressing festivals which originated as indicators of clean water during the Plague in the 17th century.

"We are currently finalising commissions with local and regional artists to create the contemporary well dressings for the city centre but are keen to reach out to the local community in the meantime to accelerate the Street Gallery which will be an important part of the weekend.

"Contributions could be poems, paintings, graffiti, artwork, puppets, stories, photographs or dances – basically anything that can be exhibited in shop windows, on lampposts on the the pavements.



“They can also be on any theme that matters to individuals from lockdown and the NHS to community spirit, Black Lives Matter and to mark the loss of a loved one as well of course the traditional well dressings.

“We want help from local people to transform the city and keep the Festé street festival vibe alive by celebrating Derby’s amazing creative communities.

“Our aim is to make our city colourful again, to reconnect our communities with our city and bring a new vibrancy to Derby following a very challenging and tough part of our lives.”

Some of the street artwork generated for Melbourne Festival (which is the weekend before Derby Well Re-Dressed) will feature on the city centre streets, including work created by 40 Art & Design students from Derby College’s Joseph Wright Centre in the Cathedral Quarter.

The students, who will return to their studies in early September, are already formulating their ideas for creative artwork and teacher Phillip Taylor said that involvement in Derby Well Re-Dressed would be valuable work experience for his students.

“We plan to install guerrilla art in both Melbourne and Derby city centre – with pieces appearing overnight.

“We are very much looking forward to being part of Derby Well Re-Dressed which is a great opportunity to show students the value of community art – embracing a brief and project managing the creation and installation of artwork.

“We hope that people across the city will follow our lead and create their own artwork for the Street Gallery which is just what we all need to enjoy in a safe and socially distanced way after so many weeks of limited access to cultural activities.”

Moving forwards, **Derby Well** aims to be an important driver in the social, cultural and economic re-development and growth in the city. It will bring together key partners to showcase the city’s arts, cultural calibre and vibrancy through a virtual and physical performance and events programme.



The programme will support artists back into work, encourage people back into the city centre in a safe and socially distanced way and contribute to the wellbeing of city communities by engaging with wider audiences.

Steve Slater continued: “Since 2007, Derby Festé has existed to bring surprise, enlightenment, entertainment and amusement to local communities and visitors alike.

“We obviously have to think differently this year and the idea behind **Festé/Derby Well** is to create a series of events that will celebrate our city and reunite our communities.

“The idea was originally born from a conversation about traditional Derbyshire Well Dressing festivals and our goal is for this to be the launch of the long-term programme which is very appropriate considering the county’s links to the Plague all those centuries ago.

“This will be the perfect way to proclaim the city’s strength and ability to overcome the pandemic with care and kindness, human, creative and love.

“Moving forwards, we hope to broaden the Derby Well theme to showcase, celebrate and mark a wide range of milestones and landmarks in the city – working in partnership with partners from all walks of life from culture to business.

“Therefore, although it is disappointing that Derby Festé is not able to happen in its usual way this September, Derby Well gives us the opportunity to re-invent the way that we can come together to celebrate and enjoy our city in a positive and proactive way.

Anyone interested in forwarding their creative ideas or work for inclusion in the Derby Well Re-Dressed Street Gallery should visit Derby Festé at <https://www.derbyfeste.com/get-involved/>

Ends

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## **Note to Editors**

Derby Well is a long-term programme devised by Déda which is the lead partner behind Derby Festé.

The initiative brings together key partners across the city to re-imagine and showcase Derby's cultural calibre and vibrancy through a diverse performance and events programme – both virtual and physical (when permitted).

As the city works together post-lockdown, Derby Well will be an important driver in the economic re-development and growth of the city. The programme will support artists back into work; encourage people back into the city centre in a safe and social distanced way; and contribute to the wellbeing of city communities by engaging with wider audiences.

<https://www.derbyfeste.com/> and follow on social media #DerbyWell