



## Recruitment Pack

# Chief Executive Officer.

This is an opportunity to lead an established cultural venue through its next phase, working closely with the Board of a newly established charity, combining stability, credibility and ambition with genuine scope for strategic leadership.

### Location

The Old Courts Wigan

### Contract

Permanent Full Time

### Closing Date

Fri 17 April 2026

### Salary

TBC

**Wigan Heritage & Arts Trust** is a charity registered in England under Number 1203551 at Gerrard Winstanley House, Crawford St, Wigan, WN1 1NA

[wha-trust.org](http://wha-trust.org)

## Section 1

# About The Charity

Wigan Heritage and Arts Trust is a newly established charity created to provide a robust, transparent and future-focused governance and operating structure for The Old Courts.

The Old Courts is a long-standing cultural organisation with a significant track record of artistic delivery, community engagement and sector leadership. It is widely recognised for its contribution to cultural life, talent development and place-based impact, and has built strong relationships with artists, audiences, funders and partners over many years.

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## Our Mission

The Old Courts is all about changing perceptions. Our mission is to **CREATE, ENGAGE & INSPIRE** by supporting ideas and hard work, providing cultural opportunities and investing in Wigan and its people. Wigan is a place where world-class culture thrives.

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## Artistic Vision

We understand the incredible importance of the Arts – not simply for entertainment, but as the fundamental threads in the fabric of everyday life.

The Arts should not be exclusive to the well-travelled nor a social tool for privileged circles. The Arts are what bond communities and bridge differences with the only true global language, expression.

At The Old Courts, our work is designed to introduce the arts into the lives of the people of Wigan and beyond and to enhance the experience of those who are engaged.

We are driven to **CREATE** a vibrant, supportive, risk-taking and strategic environment for artists to **ENGAGE** new and existing audiences and disconnected communities who we will help to **INSPIRE** change with unrivalled ambition.

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The Charity's immediate priority is to operate and support The Old Courts effectively, ensuring that the organisation is legally, financially and operationally sound while continuing to deliver artistic, community and commercial activity. Alongside this, the Board of Trustees is developing a medium-term organisational framework to guide the next phase of consolidation, sustainable delivery and future development.

## Section 2

# The Strategic Moment

The immediate priority is to operate The Old Courts effectively and responsibly, ensuring programmes are delivered as planned and partnerships remain strong, and funder, stakeholder and community confidence is maintained.



This recruitment forms part of a planned leadership transition. The current Chief Executive, who has led The Old Courts for over twelve years, will step down following the appointment of a successor.

**The reopening of the Theatre and Grand Vault represents both a major operational challenge and a significant opportunity to re-engage audiences, artists and partners across the region and beyond.**

The Chief Executive Officer will work with the Board of Trustees and executive leadership team to shape organisational direction over time, ensuring it remains realistic, inclusive and aligned with the Charity's values and purpose.

## Section 3

# The Role

The CEO is the organisation's principal executive officer, accountable to the Board of Trustees for overall leadership, organisational sustainability, governance assurance and performance.

- **Strategic leadership and multi-year planning**
- **Governance, risk and compliance assurance**
- **Operational and estates oversight**
- **People leadership and executive team management**
- **Financial sustainability and medium-term planning**
- **Stakeholder and funder relationships**
- **Leading readiness for venue reopening**
- **Shaping longer-term organisational direction**

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**Reports to**  
Board of Trustees

**Direct Reports**  
Artistic Director,  
Director of Commercial

**Location**  
The Old Courts, Wigan

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This is a senior leadership role suited to an experienced executive who is comfortable operating in complex environments, leading through change and building confidence during periods of transition and development.

**We recognise that strong leaders come from a range of professional backgrounds. The Board is seeking a Chief Executive who can provide clear organisational leadership, build confidence with trustees, funders, partners and staff, and support a collaborative, inclusive leadership culture.**

# Person Specification

## Executive Experience

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- Senior executive level leadership experience
- Experience with a Board of Trustees or equivalent
- Leading organisational strategy into measurable delivery
- Accountability for financial performance and risk
- Leading organisations through transition or change

## Organisational Capability

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- Strategic thinking with disciplined execution
- Financial oversight and sustainability modelling
- Risk management and governance assurance
- Strong written and verbal communication

## Values & Commitment

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- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Understanding of arts and culture in place-making
- Ethical leadership and safeguarding responsibilities

## Leadership Approach

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- Calm, confident and values-led leadership
- Strong judgement and decision-making
- Commitment to transparency and integrity
- Respect for specialist and artistic expertise
- Ability to balance ambition with organisational realism

## Desirable Experience

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- Arts, culture or creative industries experience
- Experience with Arts Council England
- Venue-based or public-facing organisations
- Capital projects or infrastructure works oversight
- Developing external partnerships and diversified income

## Section 5

# Terms & How to Apply

**Contract**  
**Permanent**

**Hours**  
**Full time** (flexible by arrangement)

**Location**  
**The Old Courts, Wigan**

**Salary**  
**TBC**

**Closing Date**  
**Friday 17th April**

**Interviews**  
**6th/8th/11th May 2026**

Wigan Heritage and Arts Trust is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. We particularly encourage applications from disabled people, people from the Global Majority, LGBTQ+ people and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Appointments are made on merit, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

## How to Apply

Please submit your application by [clicking here](https://tinyurl.com/WHATCEO) or visiting: <https://tinyurl.com/WHATCEO>

Candidates notified by Friday 1st May if they are moving on to interview, all interviews will be in person. First round interviews will be on either 6th, 8th, or 11th May. Second stage interview date(s) TBC.

**01** Submit a current CV, including details of two references

**02** Covering letter (max 2 pages) addressing the person specification

**03** or submit a video/audio statement as an alternative to a written letter

**04** Share any access requirements or adjustment needs in confidence