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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

MEDIA INFORMATION

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FROM TUDORS TO STARGAZING, NEW PROJECTS UNVEILED FOR PORTLAND & WEYMOUTH TOWNS OF CULTURE

- Local artists, schools and community groups awarded funding for bold new projects -



Photo credit: The Other Life I Lead © Pete Millson

Portland & Weymouth Towns of Culture has awarded over £25,000 in Reveal commissions to artists and community groups, supporting bold cultural projects set to take place this autumn and winter.

The commissions are part of Reveal, a year-long programme designed to unearth and celebrate the creativity that thrives in the towns. Funded by Arts Council England through National Lottery Project Grants, and supported by Portland and Weymouth Town Councils, the scheme offered commissions of up to £10,000. The aim is to connect communities, engage new audiences, and highlight local identity through inclusive, accessible, and environmentally responsible projects. As we move into the final quarter of 2025, the teams behind Portland & Weymouth Towns of Culture are going big with its autumn/winter programme of events, exhibitions, projects and activities.

The Towns of Culture board are excited to announce the following upcoming projects that have been awarded funding:

- **‘Portland Advent(ure)’** by Destination Opera & Ed Viney with Voices Unbound - £10,000
A living advent calendar of 12 pop-up performances of theatre and opera in surprising locations across Portland this December - from cafés to sailing centres and pubs to cliff tops.
- **‘YULE BE MERRY’** by Brave Bold Drama with Dorset Abilities Group and Dorset Family Information Service - £8,300
Street theatre and a family-friendly festive show this December at Saint Nic's, Weymouth, blending improvised comedy with pay-what-you-can performances.
- **‘The Other Life I Lead’** by Diverse City and Coastland College - £1,200 contribution
A music residency (8th - 10th October) amplifying the voices of young queer and disabled people.
- **‘Bankfest’** by Bank of Dreams & Nightmares with Dorset schools - £1,000 contribution
A youth writing festival at Weymouth Pavilion (13th - 15th October) exploring literature, identity, and wellbeing.
- **‘Six Go to the Seaside’** by Saint Nics Gallery - £1,000
A photography exhibition on Weymouth’s identity (7th - 10th November).
- **‘Under the Stars’** by the Friends of Rodwell - £1,000
A community stargazing night at Sandsfoot Gardens (29th November), produced by Claudia Webb.
- **‘The Final Journey’** by Antje Rook with Weymouth Grief Café - £1,000

An exhibition and community project (November - December) exploring death, grief, and remembrance, including the installation of a "Wind Phone" on Portland.

- **'Weymouth Tudors at Christmas'** by Weymouth Area Development Trust - £2,000
A Tudor-style festive celebration in December at Tudor House Museum, with re-enactments, crafts, and music.

Jane Biscombe, Weymouth Town Clerk comments: *"These commissions show the sheer variety of creativity that Towns of Culture has been able to support in 2025, from Tudor re-enactments to contemporary theatre, from stargazing to youth writing festivals. Each project reflects a different facet of life in Portland & Weymouth, and together they will help conclude Towns of Culture with real impact. We hope the legacy of this year will be felt long after the final event, inspiring more people to see culture and art as part of everyday life in our towns."*

Rocca Holly-Nambi, Director of b-side which is coordinating Portland and Weymouth Towns of Culture 2025, comments: *"From the start, Towns of Culture has been about uncovering hidden stories and giving space to new voices. These final Reveal commissions bring that vision into sharp focus. They celebrate heritage, identity and community in fresh and inventive ways, and they set the wheels in motion for a lasting legacy. As the year draws to a close, we're excited to see how these projects create memories, forge new connections, and leave a cultural imprint that will carry forward beyond 2025."*

REVEAL - A Year of Culture, Connection and Celebration

From traditional crafts to contemporary performance, REVEAL is unearthing the talent and stories that make Portland and Weymouth special. Reveal – Portland and Weymouth Towns of Culture 2025 is a partnership between 12 cultural organisations from Portland and Weymouth and is funded by Portland Town Council, Weymouth Town Council, and Arts Council England. It aims to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in cultural life.

To see more information on Towns of Culture 2025, please see:

<https://www.portlandweymouthculture.com/>

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Issued by **In The Bag PR** on behalf of **Portland and Weymouth Towns of Culture 2025**

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About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. Our vision, set out in our strategy Let's Create, is that by 2030, we want England to be a country in which

the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. Between 2023 and 2026 we will have invested over £467 million of public money from Government, alongside an estimated £250 million each year from The National Lottery, to help ensure that people in every part of the country have access to culture and creativity in the places where they live. Until Autumn 2025, the National Lottery is celebrating its 30th anniversary of supporting good causes in the United Kingdom: since the first draw was held in 1994, it has raised £49 billion and awarded more than 690,000 individual grants. Visit our website to learn more about our work.