

Taunton Brewhouse Gallery Policy



1. Purpose

Taunton Brewhouse is operated by Taunton Theatre Association Ltd, Charity Number 1156472. Our galleries exist to support artistic excellence, nurture local creative talent, and provide meaningful cultural experiences for our community.

This policy outlines how we programme exhibitions, how we prioritise artists and groups, and the principles that guide our curatorial decisions.

2. Our Aims

Through our Gallery space, we aim to:

- Champion high-quality contemporary and traditional visual arts
- Support professional artists living and working in Somerset
- Provide exhibition opportunities for emerging and developing artists
- Create meaningful opportunities for community participation
- Strengthen partnerships with local schools, colleges, and community groups
- Reflect the diversity and creative output of Taunton and the wider Somerset area
- Contribute to the cultural and economic vitality of the region

3. Curatorial Priorities

As a Somerset-based charity, we prioritise programming that aligns with our charitable objectives and community impact.

3.1 Professional Artists

We prioritise exhibitions by:

- Professional artists living and/or working in Somerset
- Artists with a demonstrable commitment to their practice
- Artists producing work of strong artistic merit and technical quality
- Artists whose work contributes to contemporary conversations in the visual arts

We aim to provide professional presentation standards and support artists in developing audiences and sales opportunities where appropriate.

3.2 Emerging Artists

We recognise the importance of nurturing talent and may programme:

- Early-career Somerset-based artists (Artists for whom exhibiting with Taunton Brewhouse is their first or second professional exhibition)
- Artists transitioning from education into professional practice (Artists exhibiting within 2-years of obtaining a relevant arts qualification (A Level / Foundation Degree / Undergraduate Degree) – proof of which will be required at booking stage).
- Artists developing a new body of work through a new style not previously explored.

Selection will be based on quality, potential, and alignment with our wider programme.

3.3 Community & Education Groups

As a charity serving our community, we are committed to offering space to:

- Local schools
- Colleges (including FE and HE institutions)
- Community arts groups
- Creative projects with strong social impact or in partnership with local organisations working in this field.

These exhibitions may be programmed as standalone shows or integrated into the wider gallery calendar. While artistic quality remains important, the primary consideration for these exhibitions is community engagement, learning and participation.

We aim to balance professional programming with accessible opportunities that celebrate creativity at all levels.

4. Programming Balance

Across each calendar year, we aim to maintain a balanced programme that includes:

- Professional solo exhibitions
- Group exhibitions
- Community and education showcases
- Themed or partnership exhibitions
- Opportunities aligned with festivals or town-wide events

While professional artists living and working in Somerset are our primary focus, we may also programme:

- Artists from outside the county where work is of exceptional quality
- Touring exhibitions
- Collaborative regional or national partnerships

These decisions will be made where they enhance the overall artistic offer and benefit local audiences.

5. Selection Process

Exhibitions may be programmed through:

- Open calls
- Direct invitation
- Partnership agreements
- Community programming initiatives

All proposals are assessed against the following criteria:

- Artistic quality
- Relevance to our charitable aims
- Engagement potential
- Feasibility within our space and resources
- Contribution to programme balance
- Community impact

Final decisions are made by the Taunton Brewhouse management team.

6. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Taunton Brewhouse is committed to:

- Fair and transparent selection processes
- Supporting artists from a wide range of backgrounds
- Removing barriers to participation where possible
- Ensuring our programme reflects the diversity of our community

We welcome applications from artists and groups of all backgrounds and lived experiences.

7. Commercial & Practical Considerations

As a charitable organisation, Taunton Theatre Association must ensure responsible financial management.

Programming decisions may also consider:

- Potential audience reach
- Sales viability (where applicable)
- Funding opportunities
- Sponsorship or partnership potential
- Installation and staffing capacity

While commercial success is not the primary driver, sustainability is essential to maintaining a vibrant and ongoing gallery programme.

8. Content & Suitability

Taunton Brewhouse is a public-facing cultural venue, welcoming a broad and diverse audience that includes families, schools and young people. As such, we programme exhibitions that are suitable for general audiences.

We do not programme exhibitions that:

- Promote party-political positions or endorse specific political campaigns
- Contain overtly partisan political messaging
- Include material that may reasonably be considered inappropriate for family audiences
- Contain explicit sexual content
- Include graphic violence or disturbing imagery
- Promote hate speech, discrimination, or harmful ideologies
- Conflict with the charitable objectives of Taunton Theatre Association

We recognise that art can explore challenging themes. Work that addresses social issues or contemporary topics may still be considered where it is presented thoughtfully, responsibly, and in a way that remains appropriate for a public gallery setting.

Final decisions regarding suitability rest with Taunton Brewhouse management.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by Taunton Theatre Association to ensure it continues to reflect:

- Our charitable objectives
- The needs of artists and community partners
- The cultural landscape of Somerset