

Press Release

For Immediate Release



Margate Creative Land Trust acquires former St George's Garage site for *new creative workspace* on Harold Road

12th February 2025

Margate Creative Land Trust (MCLT) is delighted to announce its acquisition of the former St George's Garage on Harold Road, marking a significant step in its mission to provide affordable and accessible workspace for the creative industry in Margate. The Trust's vision for the site is to transform the large, well located building into a vibrant hub of mixed-use studio space, further cementing Margate's reputation as a flourishing creative destination. This is the first site for the Trust, which was set up as a charity to provide new, fit-for-purpose space in the town, to complement existing provision.

Located just a short distance from the town centre and seafront, the Harold Road site, with a footprint over 30,000 square feet, includes three industrial units and forecourt, with a two-storey street facing building. After inviting several practices to bid for the opportunity, Architects IF DO have been commissioned to lead the design for the first phase of work and meanwhile uses, having delivered similarly complex and ambitious schemes in Hastings, Manchester and London.

Al Scott from If DO said "We are so pleased to have been selected to carry out the transformation of Harold Road into a creative workspace for the people of Margate. Our practice specialises in exactly this type of work – the adaptive re-use of buildings for common good. We cannot wait to get started, to get to know the community, and work together to breathe life into these forgotten buildings, bringing a new patch of creative space to this brilliant town."

The project to convert St George's Garage into studios is part the Trust's broader strategy to address the challenges posed by gentrification and rising property prices. By securing and redeveloping spaces like this, MCLT aims to help safeguard the future of the town's vibrant creative economy. This will ensure that Margate remains a place where creativity and culture are not only celebrated but accessible to all, regardless of socioeconomic background.

The Trust are in talks with several of the towns lynchpin creative organisations to explore providing them with space at Harold Road, promoting collaboration and cross pollination on a wider scale.

"This acquisition is a tremendous opportunity for Margate's creative community, and an exciting stage in the development of the Trust" said Paula Hirst, Chair of MCLT. "We are thrilled to be transforming this characterful space into new studios that will allow local artists, creatives and businesses to experiment, grow, and promote their work here in Margate. This is not just about providing workspaces—it's about investing in the future of Margate's creative sector, and ensuring that the opportunities within it are accessible and inclusive for all."

Highlights:

- Located on Harold Road, within walking distance of Margate town centre and seafront
- Close proximity to existing creative activity at Northdown Studios, Margate Arts Club, Tom Thumb Theatre, Ark Cliftonville
- Programme of community engagement and participation to include local residents in the evolution of the site
- Development of complementary professional and business support activities to benefit the creative community within
- Showcase and event space which will enable occupiers to spotlight their work, engage people in their practise, and encourage residents to visit and participate

Next steps for the development:

MCLT's design and community engagement teams will work with local partners, residents and the creative community to develop spaces that foster innovation and inclusivity. The Trust will begin consultation to ensure that the converted spaces and wrap around support meet the needs of Margate's diverse creative workforce, holding events in person and online.

For more information about the project or to register your interest in supplying to the Trust, providing services or taking space in the building, please contact info@margatecreativelandtrust.org



About Margate Creative Land Trust:

Margate Creative Land Trust was co-created by the community and creative organisations, established as an independent charity on behalf of the Margate Town Deal Board. The mission of the Trust is to acquire space for creative businesses and practitioners; and deliver community programmes to support inclusive and sustainable practice in the creative industries.

[Margate Creative Land Trust](http://www.margatecreativelandtrust.org)

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