



Applying for a studio – Updated 2025

Applications are submitted through an online form on the [Rent a Studio](#) page of our website. Please read the following information carefully before applying.

Please complete each section of the online form fully, this is your opportunity to tell us about what you do, how you work and how you hope to develop your business and creative practice. We ask applicants to supply a business plan to support their application. This doesn't need to be an exhaustive professional document but should illustrate that you've considered how you will sustain yourself in terms of costs and income, and how you hope to develop during your time at Hotwalls Studios.

We open applications when the studios become vacant and assess submissions between the opening and closing dates for applications only.

As and when a studio becomes available, we will advertise the space, review the submissions and invite appropriate candidates for interview. It is important to us that we have the right mix of tenants representing a range of backgrounds, creative disciplines and levels of experience – and all these factors will come into the decision process for selecting a new artist. You must have an up-to-date portfolio for your interview, and we may ask to see examples of your work if you are shortlisted for interview.

If you require any further information, please contact us and we will be happy to help.

The Hotwalls Studios Selection Panel
hotwallsstudios@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Hotwalls Studios
Point Battery and Barracks
Broad Street
Old Portsmouth
PO1 2FS

Our background

Hotwalls Studios is a landmark cultural development in the city of Portsmouth. The complex aims to provide an environment in which artists and makers can start and grow their businesses.

Our studios are set within unique and important heritage buildings - known collectively as Point Battery. Parts of the site date back to the 15th century and it is recognised nationally as a scheduled monument and Grade I listed building. The Hotwalls has been associated with art since the 1960s/70s when artists began selling paintings from the open arches at Point Battery. This has provided inspiration for the Hotwalls Studios project.

In 2014, Portsmouth City Council was successful in securing government funding, via the Coastal Communities Fund, to refurbish the buildings at Point Battery and to re-use them as working artist/maker studios. The Coastal Communities Fund is awarded to coastal towns and cities that want to 'diversify and grow' areas of their economies and support new start-up businesses in these sectors. We know that we have a flourishing creative sector in Portsmouth and that there are many creative businesses looking for premises.

Our Aims

- Meet the need for affordable studio space for artists and makers to start and grow their creative ventures within the city of Portsmouth.
- Provide a flexible and supported environment for creatives starting or developing their business.
- Work with like-minded organisations to create further opportunities for our artists and makers.
- Develop a cultural hub for the creative community locally and regionally by showcasing a wide range of diverse, high quality and professional artists and makers and through a wide and varied cultural and creative events programme.

Who is Hotwalls Studios for?

The studios are workspaces for artists and makers. They are not office spaces for other types of creative businesses such as graphic designers or architects, nor are they retail spaces.

To qualify for one of our studios, you must be:

1. Working and creating physical 'pieces' in your studio.
2. Starting or developing a 'commercial' enterprise from your practice.

The area in which Hotwalls Studios is located has substantial footfall and a potential customer base for your business. You do not have to sell directly from your studio, but you can do so if you wish.

Hotwalls Studios has a secondary function as an attraction where visitors can see artists and makers at work. If you prefer your privacy and do not want to be on show when you are working, then these spaces are probably not for you.

Your lease agreement will require that you work in your studio space for a minimum of 30 hours per week and take part in the Hotwalls Open Studios events every first Sunday of the month 10am - 3pm. Tenants are also expected to participate in group exhibitions and other collaborative projects.

Who are we looking for?

- Artists and makers that are sole traders or small businesses that are creating skilled, high-quality work.
- A commitment to developing your practice into a professional career.
- A willingness to enter the community spirit of Hotwalls Studios as a place where creative enterprises can flourish in a supported environment.
- Individuals that will respect and understand the historic nature of the building and the close locality to other tenants and local residents.
- A commitment to work in the studio for a minimum of 30 hours per week.

What is the cost of renting a studio?

Studios range in size from 18m² to 24m². Rents are calculated based on square meterage and are currently priced from £325 to £432 per month +VAT. Rents rise annually in line with inflation.

You will be expected to pay one month's rent as a deposit which will be returned to you when you move out of your studio.

You can use your studio between 7am and 11pm, seven days a week.

You are required to give us three month's written notice if you wish to terminate your lease agreement and leave your studio.

What if I can't commit to 30 hours per week?

We understand that some artists and makers will need to support themselves with part-time employment while they grow their creative business. If you can't commit to working in a studio for the minimum 30 hours per week then a shared studio might be right for you.

We have currently allocated one studio to be a shared workspace. Our shared studios will be split 50/50 between a pair of artists/makers. This halves the cost and reduces the time commitment to a minimum of 15 hours per week. We will do our best to match up individuals who we think will work well together. We hope that as these artists and makers develop, and their businesses grow, they will eventually take on studios on their own (subject to availability). Please indicate in your applications if you would like to be considered for a shared studio.

How long can I rent a studio for?

Tenancies are for a maximum term of five years.

What does my rent include?

The studios are ready to occupy. Rent includes:

- Heating, lighting and power points
- Broadband and landline telephone
- A sink with hot and cold running water
- A small fitted worktop with storage area against one wall
- One free use of the Round Tower for a creative event linked to your practice/business
- Inclusion in events, projects and on the Hotwalls Studios website and social media
- Support from the Hotwalls Studios team

An intruder alarm is fitted to each unit, you will be provided with a user code and expected to unset and set the alarm upon entering and leaving your studio. All utility bills, business rates, waste collection are included. There is no gas power on the site, only an electrical supply and your lease will ask you to abide by our 'fair use policy' which will take account of the necessary equipment you tell us you will be using. You will be expected to clean your own studios. There is no other storage available on site. All your equipment must be stored in your studio.

You will be expected to have your own contents insurance and your own public liability insurance and if appropriate employers' insurance.

Can I make alterations to my studio space?

We want you to make best use of your studio but they are located in a very important historic structure that is protected as a scheduled monument /Grade I listed building. We have taken great care during the refurbishment works not to damage historic stonework or brickwork.

The interior surfaces of the studios are as they were and we have not treated them. While the environments in the studios should not be damp they may not provide an appropriate environment within which to store very delicate materials. You may also inherit some graffiti on the walls of your studio space!

Will I be able to place signs outside my studio?

Restrictions around being a heritage site prevent us from fixing external signage to the walls of the structure. We have thought carefully about the marketing and advertising of the

Hotwalls Studios and its tenants. There is a lockable display cabinet/signpost on site which the businesses in residence can use. In addition to this one of your windows in your studio should be dedicated to your opening times and/or workshop details.

The keys points in summary

- The studios are to be used as workspaces/'making spaces'. You must be producing physical pieces/products from your studios. You must only use your studio space for the purposes specified in your application for studio space. The sale of any items that you create will be allowed/encouraged as ancillary to the use of your studio as a workspace and to help you to develop the potential of your business.
- Tenants must be engaged in making art/craft in their studios for a minimum of 30 hours per week. Where studios are shared - these 'active hours' can be split between tenants e.g. where there are two tenants - a minimum of 15 hours of activity a week per week.
- Attendance at the monthly Open Studios is contractual and is a great opportunity to engage with public.
- Activity inside your studios should be visible to the public/visitors to the area who are also potential customers for your business.
- You will be expected to pay your rent on time each calendar month, one month in advance and will be expected to abide by our 'fair use' policy in terms of electricity.
- We require three month's written notice if you wish to end your lease agreement.
- You must not bring any equipment/chemicals into your studio that you have not told us about in your application without notifying us in writing first.
- You can't make any alterations to the fixtures and fittings in your studios (these are very minimal) and you must not attach anything to the walls of your studios without our written permission. You must not paint/draw on or decorate the walls of your studios.
- You will also be expected to enter into the community spirit of the Hotwalls Studios as a place where creative enterprises can flourish in a supportive environment, and to respect your fellow tenants and surrounding neighbours.