

5/12/2023

## **Grow Studios Selected to Transform Historic Alice Billings House into Affordable Art Studios.**

Creative Land Trust is thrilled to announce a dynamic partnership with Grow Studios to transform Alice Billings House into an inspiring hub for artists and creatives.

After a competitive tender process with seven shortlisted applications, Grow Studios, will convert the Grade II listed building into affordable artist studios alongside curating community activations and operating the communal garden. Upon completion Alice Billings House will contain over 6,800 square feet of long term affordable workspaces for up to 80 resident artists and makers.

Since 2007, Grow Studios have provided adaptable and affordable space for over 300 local artists, creative practitioners and small businesses. They have a strong commitment to sustainability and supporting the local creative community; particularly known for their achievements at Grow, Hackney, a creative space and yard for art, music, food and culture since 2014.

Soon into the new year, Grow Studios will take on operations of the South block at Alice Billings House, one of Newham's most historic buildings owned by the Local Authority. Built in 1905-6 as firefighter's accommodation for the West Ham Fire Brigade. The building's history will allow for the new artists' studios to combine with the rich heritage of the local area through an outreach and engagement programme in a dedicated public-facing project space, along with activities and events for the local community, as well as job creation for the local area. These activities are supported in part by funds recently acquired by Creative Land Trust from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and will align with LB Newham's Community Wealth Building goals.

Artists seeking a permanent residency can express their interest [here](#).

### **QUOTES**

#### **Creative Land Trust**

"We are thrilled to partner with Grow Studios at Alice Billings House. With refurbishment works nearing completion and funds being made available to support outreach activities, we look forward to building on the relationships that are already developing in the area. This is the second property in Creative Land Trust's portfolio, and as we look to expand it to other places, having Grow Studios' expertise on the ground in Stratford will ensure that the new studios cater as effectively as possible for Newham, its artists and the creative community."

Yves Blais, Creative Land Trust

**Newham Council**

“Working with Creative Land Trust, we are excited to have reached this important milestone to progress the retrofit of Alice Billings House reimaged as a cultural hub for Newham residents. We are really pleased that Grow Studios have been appointed and are looking forward to working collaboratively with them to advance our wider aspirations for Stratford; bringing more creative talent to our emerging cultural scene.”

Yanni Pitsillides, Newham Council

**Grow Studios**

“We’re delighted to have been entrusted to work with the Creative Land Trust and LB Newham to provide studio space and outreach and engagement at Alice Billings House. We plan to build on our experience of both creating conditions for cultural activities to thrive and providing space for artists to work and we are incredibly thankful to have the opportunity to do this at this fascinating heritage site right off Stratford’s historic High Street.”

Reuben Jacobs, GROW Studios

**ABOUT****Creative Land Trust**

Creative Land Trust was established in 2019 to secure long term, affordable workspace for London’s artists and creatives, ensuring a vibrant and prosperous future for this critical industry, enriching communities and strengthening our city. The Trust’s aim is to secure 1,000 affordable workspaces in the first five years, providing space for the creative sector and helping to maintain London’s status as an international cultural capital. This is a critical moment for art and culture in London, as the impact of Covid adds to the financial pressures forcing creatives out of the city; Creative Land Trust aims to reverse the trend. The Trust acquires buildings through purchase of freeholds and long leaseholds, asset transfers and strategic partnerships with local authorities, developers and landowners. The Trust then works with expert studio providers to lease space to artists, makers and other creative practitioners.

[www.creativelandtrust.org](http://www.creativelandtrust.org) @creativelandtrust

**Grow Studios**

GROW is an ecosystem of studios in Hackney Wick, London. The first GROW studios in Hackney Wick were established in 2007 and since then has been a creative home to over 300 artists and SMEs, including visual and fine artists, photographers, filmmakers, architects, clothing and set designers, music producers, a baker, a blacksmith and street artists. Grow Hackney (a grassroots cultural and community hub and experiment in ethical and sustainable business) is also part of the studios and marks its 10th anniversary next year.

[www.growstudios.co.uk](http://www.growstudios.co.uk) @growhackneystudios