

Royal Exchange Theatre presents



Local Exchange Festival

7 – 17 Aug

In the Den at Fred Longworth High School



DRAMA
ON YOUR
DOORSTEP!

royalexchange.co.uk

ALL TICKETS
PAY WHAT
YOU CAN
OR
FREE

Welcome to Local Exchange Festival

This August, the Royal Exchange Theatre's mobile theatre space, the Den, returns to Leigh, Atherton and Tyldesley for two jam-packed weeks at Fred Longworth High School. We've been working with a brilliant and passionate group of local Ambassadors and Champions to create a festival full of fun, creativity and local stories! Expect music, workshops, shows, comedy, drama, family activities and much, much more.

Useful Information

Everyone is welcome at Local Exchange Festival. Our venue is wheelchair accessible and has an accessible toilet. We also have a multiuse calm space and prayer room, and a selection of adapted shows.

CC

this show will be captioned



this show will be BSL interpreted

A

this show will be a sensory adapted performance

To find out more about the festival, what to expect and more information about the venue and how to get here, visit rxtheat.re/LEFestFAQs



This activity is suitable for families and children.

Please note that children under 14 must be accompanied at all times.

Want to get involved?

Stories of Us

Have you ever wanted to be part of something special? Do you love performing, interested in technical theatre – or are you simply curious to give it a go?

We're looking for local people aged 14+, from Leigh, Atherton, and Tyldesley to join the community cast or work behind the scenes on the new show that we are making in just one day! *Stories of Us* – a celebration of the people, places and stories that shape our towns – as told by the community, for the community. To find out more please visit rxtheat.re/StoriesOfUs

Raise Your Voice

In the first week of the festival we are looking for people aged 12+ to help create a brand new community anthem. Across two creative sessions, you'll help write lyrics and melodies that reflect real lives, stories, and hopes from the local community. No experience needed, just bring your voice, your ideas, and your passion. To find out more please turn to 7 and 9 August.

Then in week two, we are looking for more people aged 8+ to join an uplifting, intergenerational choir and help premiere the new anthem as part of the final festival celebration. Open to all levels – there are no auditions, you just need to bring energy and heart. Whether you've sung in choirs before or it's your first time, your voice matters. To find out more please turn to 16 and 17 August.

Our Show

We are looking for 13 – 18 year olds to take part in a week-long project about drama and theatre making. The group will create a new play from scratch under the expert guidance of director Julia Wilson and perform it on Saturday 9 August in the Den. To find out more please visit rxtheat.re/TTMProject

All opportunities are free and voluntary. If you have questions or access requirements you wish to discuss, please email engage@royalexchange.co.uk

Thursday 7 August

Open 11.00am – 9.30pm

Come Round Ours!

11.00am / Drop-In

Calling the people of Leigh, Atherton and Tyldesley!

You are invited to join us in the Den for the launch day of Local Exchange Festival.

Step inside Fred Longworth High School to get a taste of the events and activities which will take place over the next two weeks, which have been chosen especially for you by the incredible Ambassadors & Champions of Leigh, Atherton and Tyldesley.

Join us from 11am where Leigh Carnival will be running a variety of crafts for all ages.

Raise Your Voice: Songwriting Workshop

with Rachel McFarlane and Amplified Voices

2.00pm – 4.00pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

Help create a brand new community anthem. Share stories, shape lyrics, and celebrate unity through song. No experience needed – you just need to bring energy and heart.

The Snug x Youth Takeover

5.30pm – 7.00pm / Age 14-25 / Performance

Kicking off The Snug's evening residency, is a youth takeover event featuring a musical line up of young and emerging artists. This event promises to be a welcoming space for people aged 14-25 to come together and socialise with other young people from Leigh, Atherton and Tyldesley. Plus, there's free food!

The Snug Presents

7.00pm – 9.00pm / Age 14+ / Performance

The Snug is coming to the Den to host a special one-off evening of music. Join us to see some of the incredible local musical talent that Leigh, Atherton and Tyldesley has to offer!



Friday 8 August

Open 11.30am – 9.30pm

Puppets!

with Sainly Puppet Workshop

12.00pm – 1.00pm / Under 12s / Workshop

In this workshop kids can meet some fuzzy new faces and learn the basics of Muppet-style performance. No experience needed, just bring your imagination and get ready to let your hands do the talking!



Positive Poetry

with The Chubby Northerner

2.00pm – 3.00pm / Under 14s / Workshop

The Chubby Northerner has been brightening up streets with positive poetry and is now bringing his unique poetry to this fun workshop. So come join and write your own bit of positivity to help bring a smile to yourself and others.



Intro to Puppetry

with Sainly Puppet Workshop

4.00pm – 5.00pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

Curious about puppetry? Come meet some fuzzy new faces and learn the basics of Muppet-style performance. You'll try lip syncing, explore simple movements, and build fun, expressive characters. No experience needed, just bring your imagination and get ready to let your hands do the talking!

BIG STRONG MAN

presented by The Growth House

7.00pm – 9.00pm / Age 16+ / Performance

A raucous, interactive comedy featuring song, dance, improvisation, boyband parodies, lip syncs, ladders, karaoke and a bear. Join four northern lads for a night of Poundland level extravagance as they bring their fast-paced, quick witted and physical comic style to an unforgettable alt-comedy night out.



Saturday 9 August

Open 10.30am – 9.30pm

MiniFest

with Everyday



11.00am – 1.00pm / Under 8s / Workshop

Join us for the best summer party around for under 8s. Explore, create, and play, in this fun pop-up version of Everyday's magical Mini Makers – a weekly session where you can get creative and play – as MiniFest is coming on tour and you're invited!

Our Show

2.00pm – 2.30pm / Performance

Through a week-long drama course, young people from across the area have created a new play from scratch. Come and see the next generation of talent as they take to the stage!

Play House: Improv for Fun

3.00pm – 4.30pm / Age 16+ / Workshop

Join The Growth House for a playful improvisation workshop exploring connection, belonging, and community spirit. Through fun, creative games and conversation we'll celebrate what brings us together and strengthen our shared voices. No experience needed – just bring yourself.

Raise Your Voice: Songwriting Workshop

with Rachel McFarlane and Amplified Voices

4.30pm – 6.30pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

Help create a brand new community anthem. Share stories, shape lyrics, and celebrate unity through song. No experience needed – you just need to bring energy and heart.

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Sunday 10 August

Open 10.30am – 8.30pm

Costume Crafts

11.00am – 1.00pm / Under 12s / Workshop

Unleash your creativity in this fun workshop, creating captivating costumes from recycled materials.



Pirate Princess

written and performed by Gemma Bond

1.00pm – 1.50pm / Performance

This solo family show by circus performer Gemma Bond tells the tale of shipwrecked Princess Poppy. Can she overcome a big dress, extreme weather and the ultimate test of strength to see her way to safety?



Intro to Costume

2.00pm – 3.00pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

Ever wondered how the dazzling costumes you see on stage are created? Join this workshop to get an insight into the world of costume and have a go at designing your own.

Intro to Directing

3.30pm – 4.30pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

Delve into the art of directing with Andy Barry, the Royal Exchange Theatre's Associate Director (Interim). From creating your vision for a piece, to working with a cast to bring a play to life, this is a workshop for anyone looking to develop their practice and for the curious – no experience necessary.

Sip & Create

with Everyday

5.00pm – 7.00pm / Age 14-25 / Workshop

Join us for a 'Sip & Create' activity to be enjoyed alongside a variety of specially crafted Mocktails just for you. Come on down and embrace your Everyday Creativity.

WHOSE ROUND?

by Casino Improv

7.00pm – 8.00pm / Age 14+ / Performance

★★★★ 'Very funny' – The Reviews Hub

Inspired by Taskmaster and Game Changer, CASINO IMPROV presents WHOSE ROUND?, the improvised game show. Each round is a new game with a new host: Guess Who but horses? Knock-off Mock The Week? Watch performers from Doctor Who and more answer... WHOSE ROUND?

Thursday 14 August

Open 1.00pm – 8.30pm

Family Fun – Sharing Stories

with Louise Fazackerley



1.30pm – 2.30pm / Under 8s / Workshop

Mums, Dads, Nans, carers and lovely children – you're invited to listen and join in with stories from across the world. Enjoy books, games and lots of laughs.

Post Match Chat Workshop

presented by LALA Art

2.30pm – 3.30pm / Age 10+ / Workshop

Join LALA Arts in a fun, interactive and creative workshop ahead of the work-in-progress sharing of their show 90 + 5 and create your own artistic response to 'what sport means to you'. From t-shirts to canvases, footballs to writing, the space is yours to create!

Intro to Poetry

with Louise Fazackerley

4.00pm – 5.30pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

If you love poetry, or you want to try something creative in a friendly environment, come and meet professional poet and workshop leader Louise. We'll be reading, talking and writing all things poetry. This relaxed workshop is suitable for beginners, and confident writers.

Creative Social

6.00pm – 7.00pm / Age 12+ / Drop-in

Join us to share ideas, meet collaborators, and get inspired in a welcoming space built for creative connection. No pressure—just conversation, community, and a chance to refuel your artistic spark. Come as you are and connect with fellow creatives!

90 + 5: Work-in-Progress Sharing

presented by LALA Art

7.00pm – 8.00pm / Age 14+ / Performance

'It wasn't just a pitch. It was our stage.'
Catch the first work-in-progress sharing of 90 + 5. A new, community driven play following four girls who used to play football together, now reunited in protest to save their beloved grounds. The sharing will be followed by a Q&A.

Friday 15 August

Open 10.30am – 9.00pm

Make it up!



11.00am – 12.00pm / Under 12s / Workshop

A fun-filled improvisation workshop where kids can let their imaginations run wild! Through silly games, creative storytelling, and spontaneous play, children learn to think on their feet, build confidence, and work together—all while having a blast.

Intro to Lighting & Sound

12.30pm – 3.00pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

Ever been curious about technical theatre? Then join our technical theatre workshops to get an insight into what goes on behind the scenes.

Intro to Lighting: 12.30pm – 1.30pm

Intro to Sound: 2.00pm – 3.00pm

Intro to Design

3.30pm – 4.30pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

Come and explore the creative process of a Theatre Designer with a focus on set design. No creative or artistic experience is necessary, just a willingness to think outside the box and have a go at creating your own designs.

Pigeon

By Joseph Walsh

Directed by Neil Bettles

Commissioned and Produced by Royal Exchange

Theatre in association with ThickSkin

7.00pm – 8.00pm / Age 12+ / Performance

Debs is convinced she saw a man turn into a pigeon outside The Bridge Inn in Leigh in 1987. 20 years later she is still telling the tale to anyone who will listen. A new play written by Leigh writer Joseph Walsh and directed by Neil Bettles, Pigeon is a play about this community, family folklore and what it means to fly away and never return.



Saturday 16 August

Open 11.30am – 8.30pm

Family Heirlooms

12.00pm – 12.30pm / Performance

Heirlooms are passed down from generations and have incredible tales from your grandma's lamp to your auntie's legendary family recipe. This show, performed by the students from Fred Longworth High School, has been created from the stories gathered by the students from their relatives.

Pigeon

By Joseph Walsh

Directed by Neil Bettles

Commissioned and Produced by Royal Exchange Theatre in association with ThickSkin

2.00pm – 3.00pm / Performance



7.00pm – 8.00pm / Performance



Age 12+

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Raise Your Voice: Choir Creation

with Rachel McFarlane and Amplified Voices

3.30pm – 4.30pm / Age 8+ / Workshop

Join an uplifting, intergenerational choir and help premiere a new anthem! Learn the song, find your harmony, and perform live on the final day of Local Exchange Festival. Led by powerhouse vocalist Rachel McFarlane. All voices welcome – no experience needed.

Intro to Writing

4.30pm – 5.30pm / Age 12+ / Workshop

Join playwright Kieran Knowles for an incredible introduction to writing. Whether you write regularly or have never picked up a pen, this one's not one to be missed! No experience necessary.



Sunday 17 August

Open 3.30pm – 9.00pm

Raise Your Voice: Choir Creation

with Rachel McFarlane and Amplified Voices

4.00pm – 5.00pm / Age 8+ / Workshop

Join an uplifting, intergenerational choir and help premiere a new anthem! Learn the song, find your harmony, and perform live at 7.30pm later that day to close Local Exchange Festival. Led by powerhouse vocalist Rachel McFarlane. All voices welcome – no experience needed.

Stories of Us

7.00pm – 7.30pm / Performance

Come along to this brand-new play unearthing the voices of Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley... created in just one day!

You are invited to celebrate the end of the festival with us in style as people from across Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley bring local tales to the Den, which will be followed by a performance from Raise Your Voice, our festival choir.

If you would like to take part in the making of Stories of Us, performing or working backstage, please visit rxtheat.re/StoriesOfUs



All tickets for Local Exchange Festival are either Pay What You Can or Free!

You can book

Online at royalexchange.co.uk

By phone at **0161 833 9833**

Via email box.office@royalexchange.co.uk

Or just turn up on the day (tickets are allocated on a first come, first served basis)

This festival is part of Local Exchange, the Royal Exchange Theatre's ambitious long-term programme co-created with Ambassadors and Champions in communities across Greater Manchester.

* We've kept the ticket price low because we want everyone to be able to attend. If cost or access is a barrier then please get in touch at engage@royalexchange.co.uk

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