# Belfast’s Hit the North festival sparks urban revival and cuts crime through street art



Belfast’s vibrant street scene is coming alive once again as the annual Hit the North Street Art Festival takes place, an initiative that has significantly contributed to the revitalisation of neglected areas in the city. Organised by Seedhead Arts and supported by Belfast One, the festival, which has been running for over a decade, aims to enhance community spirit and reduce crime through the proliferation of street art in the North Street region.

Callum Craig, the marketing, communications, and events manager for Belfast One, shared insights on the festival’s impact during an interview with The Irish News. "We’ve noticed that since starting the festival there’s been a reduction in anti-social behaviour, crime and vandalism," he said, highlighting the positive changes observed in the local community. He also noted the unique accessibility of street art: "Whenever you see any piece of art, but particularly street art, the skill, time and effort put in by the artists is massively impressive and I think it resonates with people."

This year’s festival highlights include various new public art installations across Belfast city centre, alongside a collection of smaller works, guided street art walking tours, bus tours, as well as classes and workshops for beginners. A fresh addition to the festival is "The Other Place," a street art conference aimed at providing a platform for businesses to comprehend the beneficial impacts of street art on urban settings.

Mr Craig emphasized the importance of engagement from various stakeholders in the community. "It’s really important that local businesses, stakeholders, politicians – everyone really, sees the benefits that street art can have," he remarked. The festival has become a magnet for artists from across the globe, who have showcased their talents in various parts of the world prior to bringing their work to Belfast.

Artists participating in this year’s festival include notable names such as Hera, Taxis, Ajax Piper, My Dog Sighs, Slim Safont, Jo Caslin, and many others. Mr Craig expressed his enthusiasm for the local artistry, stating, "I always look forward to seeing what our local artists come up with because the local talent here is just class."

Ultimately, the Hit the North Street Art Festival represents more than just a celebration of creativity; it serves as a catalyst for urban regeneration, fostering a renewed sense of safety and pride within the community. "What these artists are doing for the city is an amazing thing," Mr Craig concluded, emphasising the intrinsic value of artistic expression in urban life.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://belfastone.co.uk/blog/article/belfast-one-bid-supports-hit-the-north-street-art-festival-in-bringing-colour-to-the-city-centre/> - This article discusses Belfast One's support for the 'Hit the North' Street Art Festival, highlighting its role in revitalizing neglected areas and combating anti-social behavior, aligning with the festival's objectives as mentioned in the provided text.
2. <https://www.northernirelandworld.com/news/hit-the-north-street-art-festival-revamps-neglected-city-centre-areas-4614677> - This piece details how the 'Hit the North' Street Art Festival aims to breathe new life into neglected parts of Belfast, including the Tribeca area, through vibrant street art installations, supporting the festival's impact on urban regeneration.
3. <https://bamni.co.uk/2023/05/22/new-murals-draw-crowds-at-biggest-art-festival-yet/> - This article highlights the growth of the 'Hit the North' Street Art Festival, noting its expansion into the largest street art festival in the UK and Ireland, with over 75 artists contributing murals that reflect a modern and diverse city.
4. <https://www.seedheadarts.com/street-art/hit-the-north-hidden> - This source provides an overview of the 'Hit the North' Street Art Festival, emphasizing its role in transforming the visual landscape of Belfast's city centre and Cathedral Quarter, with over 350 murals painted to date.
5. <https://inspiringcity.com/2023/05/05/all-the-street-art-murals-from-the-2023-hit-the-north-festival/> - This article showcases the diverse range of murals created during the 2023 'Hit the North' Street Art Festival, featuring both local and international artists, and highlighting the festival's contribution to Belfast's vibrant street art scene.
6. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/belfast-in-top-20-world-street-art-hotspots-DAMDNYEP35A5HHJVYJM52A5B3M/> - This study ranks Belfast among the top 20 street art hotspots globally, underscoring the city's prominence in the street art scene, a status bolstered by events like the 'Hit the North' Street Art Festival.
7. <https://www.irishnews.com/life/new-street-art-breathes-life-into-neglected-parts-of-belfast-city-centre-U2L4FI6YYJDTBG4ATGHYJY47AQ/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data