**For immediate release: 30 April 2021**

**Clare Wood announced as new Artistic Director and CEO of the**

**British Ceramics Biennial**

A picture containing person, wall, person, glasses

Description automatically generated

The British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) is delighted to announce the appointment of Clare Wood as its new Artistic Director and CEO. After three years as Chief Executive of Re-Form Heritage, a national charity that supports communities through the regeneration of their historic buildings, based at Middleport Pottery in Stoke-on-Trent, Clare will join BCB in August ahead of the seventh edition of its festival, which opens in the city on 11 September.

As well her experience working at the heart of Stoke-on-Trent’s creative heritage, Clare brings to the organisation substantial knowledge of the wider cultural sector, having worked at organisations including MK Gallery, the Royal West of England Academy and with Stockholm’s museums and cultural organisations. During her time at Re-Form Heritage, Clare worked closely on the campaign to reinstate bell founding to the famous Whitechapel Bell Foundry site and has been instrumental in the transformation of a terrace of former pottery workers’ houses in Stoke-on-Trent to create a new heritage attraction, studio and workshop complex, a publicly accessible archive service and a community centre.

On her appointment Clare Wood comments: *“The rich heritage of the Potteries and the work of leading contemporary artists offers brilliant inspiration for encouraging people to discuss, experience and create with clay. It is a real honour to build upon Barney Hare Duke’s innovating work and I look forward to being part of the British Ceramics Biennial team to develop both the festival and the year-round programme of activity throughout Stoke-on-Trent. I am very proud to be joining such a remarkable and pioneering organisation.”*

Alison Wedgwood, Chair of the Trustees of the British Ceramics Biennial comments: *‘Clare’s significant experience of leading cultural and creative organisations, most recently at one of Stoke-on-Trent’s most iconic heritage sites, meant that she immediately understood the ambitions and ethos of BCB. We are very much looking forward to working with her to build on BCB’s success and take the organisation into new, exciting directions.’*

As part of her role, Clare will work alongside BCB Executive Director, Iain Cartwright to develop the the organisation’s strategy for the next five years, as well as developing the BCB year-round artistic programme, and the programme for the 2023 BCB festival.

The British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) is a prestigious and high-profile festival of contemporary ceramics that takes place in Stoke-on-Trent and is underpinned by a year-round programme of artists’ commissions, education and community engagement projects. The festival returns for its seventh edition from 11 September to 17 October 2021. The full BCB festival programme will be announced on 11 May.

[www.britishceramicsbiennial.com](http://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com)

**-Ends-**

For more press information and images, please contact: Iliana Taliotis on +44 (0)7931 341 112 or mail@ilianataliotis.com

**Notes to editors**

**About Clare Wood:**

Clare Wood started her career at the Royal West of England Academy in Bristol, co-curating, funding and promoting exhibitions by artists including Gillian Ayres, Richard Long and Anthony Whishaw. She then moved to Stockholm supporting the city’s museums and cultural organisations in event and exhibition delivery. On returning to the UK, Clare ran the Manor House Museum and Alfred East Art Gallery in Kettering before joining The Culture Trust Luton. In 2013, Clare joined the team at MK Gallery to work on delivery of the £12m redevelopment that doubled the gallery spaces and introduced facilities to transform the accessibility and appeal of this iconic Milton Keynes cultural organisation. In early 2018, Clare became Chief Executive of Re-Form Heritage, a national charity that supports communities through the regeneration of their historic buildings, based at Middleport Pottery in Stoke-on-Trent. At Re-Form Heritage, Clare has worked closely on the campaign to reinstate bell founding to the famous Whitechapel Bell Foundry site and has been instrumental in the transformation of a terrace of former pottery workers’ houses in Stoke-on-Trent to create a new heritage attraction, studio and workshop complex, a publicly accessible archive service and a community centre. Having been inspired by the amazing creative heritage of Stoke-on-Trent, Clare is delighted to be joining the British Ceramics Biennial team in late summer 2021.

**About the** **British Ceramics Biennial:**

The British Ceramics Biennial festival takes places from 11 September to 17 October 2021.

The British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) is a prestigious and high-profile festival of contemporary ceramics that takes place in Stoke-on-Trent. BCB presents artworks from the UK’s leading ceramicists alongside work by international artists, in exhibitions and special events held across the city. BCB is underpinned by an exciting year-round programme of artists’ commissions, education and community engagement projects.

British Ceramics Biennial is a prestigious project that embraces the heritage of the Potteries as the home of British ceramics; that stimulates creativity and innovation across the breadth of its practice and sharpens Stoke-on-Trent’s creative edge as an international centre for excellence in contemporary ceramics.

Initiated in 2009, BCB has grown to be the single largest ceramics event in the UK, a flagship cultural project for Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and a catalyst for regeneration. BCB has been successful in bringing great art, creative energy and critical attention to the city, and has facilitated meaningful new public engagement with local communities, visitors and cultural tourists.

**British Ceramics Biennial funders:**

The British Ceramics Biennial is funded by Stoke-on-Trent City Council and is supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

