

# Shop Front Theatre

ARCHIVE 2009 – 2022

## It transformed how we work and how we engage people with our research

The Centre for Television Histories (University of Warwick) had two residencies at the Shop Front Theatre, for our project *Ghost Town: Civic Television and the Haunting of Coventry*, in 2018 and 2022. This enabled us to take historical television programming made in and about Coventry out of the archive and (re)screen it for the people of the city.

We turned the Shop Front Theatre into a relaxed screening space and a series of vintage living rooms in which people could connect with the city's history through familiar (and sometimes unfamiliar) television programmes. The nature of the theatre's flexible and welcoming space meant that we could create an exhibition which was open to all, and in which people felt able and welcome to sit and chat and share their thoughts with researchers from the Centre, about the city and the television archive.

This enabled us to develop a radical new way of connecting people, place and archive together and has led to new research being published and our research methodology being shared all around the world. We couldn't have done this without the warmth, generosity and hospitality that were shown to us by Theatre Absolute.

Shop Front Theatre transformed how we work and how we engage people in our local community with our research. I am forever grateful for this.

**Professor Helen Wheatley**  
**Co-Founder, Centre for Television Histories**  
**University of Warwick**