



# Heart of the Headland

Design Brief for the commission of creative community workshops



DigVentures

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## Purpose of document

This document has been prepared as a Design Brief for a public outreach project at St Hilda's, Hartlepool. DigVentures accepts no responsibility or liability for any use that is made of this document other than for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned and prepared.

## Document Control Grid

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 DigVentures has prepared this design brief to define the strategy and methodology for the commissioning of artist-led creative community workshops as part of the National Lottery Heritage Funded (NLHF) 'Heart of the Headland' Project. This will contribute to the public outreach aspects of the project, broadening engagement with the church and its historical significance, deepening ties with the community, and attracting new audiences through the offering of novel and creative types of engagement with St Hilda's church.
- 1.1.2 This brief has been written to assist with the appointment of up to eight artists to undertake the development and delivery of free, public workshops that seek to generate creative forms of engagement with St Hilda's church through the Heart of the Headland project. These workshops will be designed and delivered by creative professionals with the aim of drawing new audiences into the church to learn about the building's heritage and its prominent role within Hartlepool throughout the past and into the present.
- 1.1.3 Tenders should be submitted by **16 October 2023**. Commissioned artists will then be required to develop detailed workshop proposals by 8 January 2024, with workshops to be delivered as part of a creative programme at St Hilda's Church running between August 2024 and October 2025. The development stage is funded by NLHF with delivery stages subject to successful funding application.

## 1.2 Short site history

- 1.2.1 Much of the fabric of the present St Hilda's church dates back to the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, though it is likely that the church stands on or close to the site of an earlier Anglo-Saxon religious site. You can find out more here:
- <https://digventures.com/projects/st-hildas/st-hildas-church-heart-of-the-headland-history/>
- 1.2.2 A monastery found by Irish monk and missionary St Aidan was established around AD 640, with St Hilda becoming abbess in around AD 648. The Venerable Bede records St Hilda as coming from a royal Northumbrian household, spending time at court before taking up her religious vows. She spent around a decade leading the double monastery (occupied by both male monks and female nuns) at Hartlepool before going on to become the founding abbess of Whitby Abbey in AD 657.
- 1.2.3 Archaeological excavations have indicated that this early monastery would have covered a large area of the Headland, comprised of a range of wooden buildings and at least three cemeteries which included the remains of men, women and children. One of the most striking finds from this time is a 'namestone', a type of early medieval sculpture unique to the northeast of England. It is inscribed with the female name 'Hildyryth' and can be seen on display in the church (an image can be found via the link above). Similar namestones from the region can be seen in our Virtual Museum:
- <https://digventures.com/virtual-museum/etched-in-stone/>
- 1.2.4 Despite our usual imaginings of marauding Vikings attacking Anglo-Saxon monasteries from the end of the 8th century onwards, there is no evidence for the wholesale destruction of the monastery in Hartlepool, but rather it is likely that the religious site waned as the political stability of the Northumbria kingdom fell apart.



- 1.2.5 The church as you see it today likely began to be constructed towards the end of 12th century. It is in the 'Early English' style, including features such Norman doorways and large buttresses that were added to stabilise the bell tower. It is generally believed that the building of St Hilda's church was initiated by Robert de Brus IV, the great-grandson of Robert de Brus, 1st Lord of Annandale who was one of the knights arriving with William the Conqueror in 1066. He was keen to show both his power and piety by building churches and other religious houses such as at Guisborough Priory. Robert de Brus IV was crowned King of Scotland in 1306.

### 1.3 Key words/phrases

- Historic church dating back to the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, with earlier foundations as an important religious site.
- Named for St Hilda, an important early medieval female abbess and saint who led the monastic community at Hartlepool and then at Whitby.
- Contains an Anglo-Saxon 'namestone' which includes an inscription of the name of a female nun.
- 'Early English' Gothic style including impressive buttresses, Norman architectural elements and lancet windows.
- The sustainability of heritage buildings for the future
- Celebration of past and future life

### 1.4 Current situation

- 1.4.1 The church is now a Grade 1 listed building and occupies a central position on the historic Headland area of Hartlepool. Also within the vicinity are an array of similarly historic sites central to Hartlepool's heritage, including the Heugh Battery Museum, Hartlepool Marina, HMS Trincomalee, the Museum of the Royal Navy, and the Museum of Hartlepool.
- 1.4.2 St Hilda's presently contains a small visitor centre and café, though due to the high costs associated with opening and heating an historic building, and a dwindling number of volunteers, it has limited opening hours for visitors. A significant aim of the Heart of the Headland project is to address these issues and to see the building become a hub for wider community use and involvement.

## 2 THE COMMISSION

### 2.1 Commission scope

- 2.1.1 This commission is intended to generate a series of creative public workshops to be held in St Hilda's church, Hartlepool. The primary aim of the workshop programme is to facilitate new and creative types of engagement with the church and its heritage. It will take elements of the building's history as a jumping-off point for wider discussions about the role the church does and could play in the civic life of Hartlepool.
- 2.1.2 Workshops can be designed with a range of audiences in mind, including children, adults, families, and communities with particular needs, such as people with disabilities, refugee and asylum seeker groups, or those accessing mental health services. We are looking to commission workshops that target a range of audiences and will be particularly interested in those that will help us achieve the NLHF's priority outcome 'a wider range of people will be involved in heritage' (<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/outcomes/wider-range-people-will-be-involved-heritage>).
- 2.1.3 There are four major themes present throughout the Heart of the Headland project that we encourage artists to respond to in some way:



- The person and role of St Hilda as an early female leader in her community
- Anglo-Saxon namestones and stone sculpture, including ideas of identity, life and death, and memory.
- Celebration of past and future life on the Headland, including themes of continuity and change, community, and our shared humanity.
- The importance of sustainability for our shared futures.

2.1.4 Workshops will be delivered in St Hilda's church and should make use of the space and the heritage elements of the church in some way. Artists are encouraged to respond to the fabric of the building, including artefacts such as the namestone that is displayed in the church, so that workshops interact with the church's heritage in a responsive way and encourage participants to do the same.

2.1.5 We welcome submissions from artists working in any creative media including but not limited to creative writing, photography, painting, drawing, poetry, theatre, filmmaking, dance, crafting, and digital media. We will be interested in responses from a wide range of disciplines and will seek to commission novel and exciting responses.

2.1.6 Although artists need not be resident in Hartlepool to apply, we are particularly interested in commissioning artists with creative links and practices in the town, or across the northeast more generally. Workshops will be delivered in-person at St Hilda's church. We would be interested to consider submissions that include a blended or option for online participation model, but meaningful interaction with the building and the above project themes should remain central.

## 2.2 Outcomes

2.2.1 Although we do not wish to be prescriptive about outputs for the workshops, there are several outcomes we would like to see. Participants should be guided through a creative process with something to show for their time in the church. Although this does not necessarily have to be a finished piece of art or creative work, having something they created to take home or continue to work on would be greatly encouraged. As part of our reporting obligations to the NLHF, being able to take pictures or videos of what participants have been working on (with their permission) would be welcomed.

2.2.2 We encourage artists to be thoughtful and deliberate in thinking about the proposed audience for their workshops which should seek to address the NLHF's mandatory priority outcome 'a wider range of people will be involved in heritage' (<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/outcomes/wider-range-people-will-be-involved-heritage>).

2.2.3 Participants would ideally be encouraged to work both individually and as part of a group, leading to a feeling of community cohesion and sharing, and the positive mental health and personal benefits that can arise through working creatively together. This link's to the NLHF's priority outcome 'people will have greater well-being' (<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/outcomes/people-will-have-greater-wellbeing>).

2.2.4 Through the creative process, participants should be introduced to one or more of the above themes and supported to think through these ideas individually and as part of the group. They should come away having learnt something new about St Hilda's church or Hartlepool's history, with an increased personal connection to a sense of heritage or the past. In this respect, the workshop should help us achieve the NLHF's outcome 'people will have learned about heritage, leading to change in ideas



and actions' (<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/outcomes/people-will-have-learned-about-heritage-leading-change-ideas-and-actions>).

- 2.2.5 You do not need to address all of these outcomes or have a detailed knowledge of the NLHF and their funding priorities to submit your response. This information is provided so that you can see the kinds of outcomes we want to generate through these commissions, but DigVentures staff will work closely with you throughout all stages of the project to achieve one or more of these outcomes.

### 2.3 The support we can offer

- 2.3.1 The design and delivery of the workshop activities will be supported by DigVentures Programme Officer, Johanna Ungemach, and other team members. During on-site delivery of the activities, it is likely that there will be additional support from staff and volunteers from St Hilda's church who can advise on furniture and additional resources that can be utilised.
- 2.3.2 It is an important part of the project that we solicit creative and individual interpretations of the brief from interested parties. As such, we adopt a 'light-touch' approach to the creative direction of the commissioned workshops where we will work with you to help determine what is feasible and relevant, but will avoid being proscriptive throughout the creative process.

## 3 BUDGET AND TIMESCALES

### 3.1 Timescales

- 3.1.1 As per the structure of NLHF grants of this category, the Heart of the Headland project is divided in a development phase and a delivery phase. Because these phases are independently funded, please note that we have separated the costing schedule into a proposal and delivery phase in the unlikely event that the Heart of the Headland project does not receive funding for the delivery phase of the project.

### 3.2 Budget

- 3.2.1 The table below includes indicative costs for the entirety of the commission, with work broken down into two payments for the proposal and delivery stages.

Table 1 – Requirements, indicative costs and timescales

| Item | Description   | Estimated cost for stages | Timescales   |
|------|---|---------------------------|--|
| 0    | Tender  | n/a                       | Submission due – 16 October 2023.<br><br>Decision from tender notice responses expected by the close of October 2023 |
| 1    | Proposal stage<br><br>It is suggested that artist's calculate the time they spend on this stage according to their daily/hourly rate and the £300 budget. | Up to £300                | Start – 1 November 2023.<br><br>Completed proposals due 8 January 2024.  |



| Item | Description  | Estimated cost for stages                                   | Timescales  |
|------|--|---|---|
|      | They should include a maximum of an hour meeting with DigVentures staff within this and a site visit to St Hilda's church if appropriate.  |   | Payment for this stage to follow delivery.                        |
| 2    | <p>Delivery stage</p> <p>Is it estimated that costs associated with the delivery of the workshops should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One day for delivery of a workshop between two to four hours, to include travel time and set up/pack down time</li> <li>- Two days for workshop preparation, to include meetings with DigVentures staff, a site visit if necessary, and an end of project interview (max one hour) with DigVentures staff for NLHF reporting purposes.</li> </ul> | Up to £900  | Delivery of workshops expected between Summer 2024 to Summer 2025 |
| 3    | <p>Travel and material costs</p> <p>To include travel to and from St Hilda's church either by public transport or at the rate of 25p per mile when using a personal vehicle.</p> <p>Where materials cannot be provided by DigVentures or St Hilda's church for free, artists will calculate material costs for workshop delivery.</p>  | <p>Up to £50 for travel</p> <p>Up to £100 for materials</p> | During delivery stage only  |

## 4 WHAT TO DO NEXT

### 4.1 Response stage

4.1.1 Thank you for your interest in this commission. The next step is for you to send us a response to this brief summarising your idea for a creative community workshop to be held at St Hilda's church. This should be no more than two sides of A4 and need only be a brief outline of your idea. If your response is accepted, we will then commission you to develop your idea into a full proposal.

4.1.2 For your response to be considered, we require:

- A clear written description of the workshop that is being proposed and why it is relevant to the project, including reference to the project themes outlined in Section 2.1.2



- A brief outline of workshop structure, including timings, number of participants, the creative media proposed, and a sense of any potential outputs workshops participants will be supported to produce
- A short description of your artistic practice and teaching experience that demonstrates your suitability for a creative commission of professional quality
- A list of materials you expect to use in preparation for and during delivery of the workshop, including indicative costs
- If your workshop will target any particular demographic or community group within Hartlepool and the wider area, mentioning as a minimum whether your workshop is suitable for children, adults, or family groups
- Whether you have any access requirements or additional needs, or any other support you might need from us

4.1.3 **Responses should be submitted to Programme Coordinator, Johanna Ungemach, by Monday 16 October 2023.** Any questions regarding the tender can be sent by email to [Johanna@digventures.com](mailto:Johanna@digventures.com).

4.1.4 If your response is accepted, you will be invited to take part in the proposal stage of this commission where you will work with DigVentures and St Hilda's church staff to take your idea forward into a more developed proposal.

## 4.2 Proposal stage

4.2.1 During the proposal stage, you will work alongside DigVentures and St Hilda's church staff to develop your response into a full workshop proposal. Within this, we would expect a maximum of an hour either online or in-person meeting with Programme Coordinator, Johanna Ungemach, where you will have the opportunity to ask questions and be sent additional project information and information and resources related to the history and heritage of St Hilda's church. This could be combined with a site visit to St Hilda's church if the artist is local and this would not incur significant travel costs.

4.2.2 Full proposals will be submitted by 8th January 2024 and payment for this stage of work will be made on receipt of completed proposals. Please see Table 1 for a more detailed breakdown of how the £300 budget should be allocated.

4.2.3 In your full proposal, you should include:

- An expanded written description of the workshop that is being proposed including copy that can be used for marketing and promotional purposes.
- A detailed breakdown of workshop structure, including timings, number of participants, the creative media proposed, and expected outputs workshops participants will be supported to produce.
- A detailed breakdown of costs for your proposal, including any amendments to the suggested budget outlined in Table 1 (see Section 4.3.2)
- Expected outcomes from your workshop, relating to suggested outcomes outlined in Section 2.2
- A professional CV including description of your artistic practice and teaching experience that includes examples of previous work and/or images that can be used in promotional materials.
- A detailed list of materials you expect to use in preparation for and during delivery of the workshop including full cost breakdown and links to suppliers where necessary.
- Details of the proposed workshop audience including any existing community or organisational relationships that will be used for recruitment.
- Whether you have any access requirements or additional needs, or any other support you might need from us throughout the delivery stage.





- A glossary of images/video that illustrate your proposal which could include any provisional design work or examples from previous work or commissions.
- Any quotes or feedback from previous projects that you would like to include in your proposal.

### 4.3 Delivery stage

- 4.3.1 The delivery stage of the Heart of the Headland project is dependent on DigVentures' successful application to the NLHF. On confirmation of this, you will be invited to continue into the delivery phase of the project where you will work with DigVentures and St Hilda's church staff to carry your proposal forward into the detailed design and delivery of your workshop.
- 4.3.2 Please see Table 1 for a breakdown on the proposed costs and budget breakdown for this stage of work. These costs are a suggested guideline, and you are welcome to amend them. If you would want your costs to deviate from these suggestions, **you must** provide a detailed budget breakdown in your full proposal and justify any additional costs above the suggested total costs.
- 4.3.3 For example, you may want to propose a series of workshops and so adjust the budget accordingly. Alternatively, you may suggest running your workshop multiple times for different audiences and so your proposal might offer enhanced value for money. Or perhaps you may be at the beginning of your creative career and feel that you can offer a quality proposal where your day rate is typically less than what we have suggested here.
- 4.3.4 Questions related to the flexibility of the budget can be raised with Programme Coordinator, Johanna Ungemach, at [johanna@digventures.com](mailto:johanna@digventures.com).