

Celebrate Chelston

Artist Commission – Call for Expressions of Interest

December 16, 2019

THE BRIEF

Torbay Culture (part of TDA*) working in partnership with Torbay Community Development Trust (TCDT) would like to commission an artist/s to work with the local community to celebrate Chelston and its people; to create with them, informed by them, an artwork/s (creative output). The work should culminate in June in a way that inspires and engages the wider community, beyond those who have participated in its creation.

This is a pilot project and it is hoped that the final work created and presented, as well as the process of working, will involve people who don't typically engage in cultural activity, and will inspire a longer-term love of (and engagement in) arts and culture across the Chelston community.

This brief has been created with Chelston residents, some of whom will be involved in the recruitment and selection process for the successful artists/s.

As a result of this commission:

- Chelston residents will be more informed about, and engaged in, creative practice
- Chelston residents will feel an enhanced sense of pride in Chelston, where they live
- People who have not previously engaged with arts or heritage (as makers or as audience) will take part
- The people and place of Chelston will be celebrated through tangible, creative outputs.

INTENDED OUTPUTS

The successful artist/s will be required to:

- Meet with residents who have already participated, to learn more about what is important to them
- Design and deliver a creative project that delivers tangible outputs and culminates in June 2020, using processes that involve residents
- Present the creative outputs in a way that engages a wide cross-section of the community
- Manage all production activities related to the project development and presentation.

*TDA is a trading name of Torbay Economic Development Company Limited, a company registered in England and Wales No. 7604855 Registered Office Tor Hill House, Union Street, Torquay, Devon TQ2 5QW.

BACKGROUND

In 2017, Torbay Culture applied for Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund's *Great Place Scheme* and was successful in securing £1.2m grant funding across 3 years. The objective of this scheme is to champion great places to live, work and visit, by putting arts and heritage at the heart of everyday life. Torbay Culture is working with a range of partners to implement Torbay's *Great Place Scheme* in different ways, trialling many new approaches. The "Celebrate Chelston" project is part of this, developed and delivered as a partnership between Torbay Culture, TCDT and the local community.

TCDT has a team of Community Builders who work alongside Torbay residents to identify the assets within the Bay's communities, and then use them to connect people and places, and improve people's quality of life. During the summer of 2019, Community Builders engaged with residents in Chelston to:

- Find out what they love about the area they live in and what they would want to celebrate
- Explore the forms of art and culture that people have experienced or are most interested in
- Understand baseline levels of engagement in culture in the neighbourhood.

In November 2019, Torbay Culture and TCDT commissioned two creative workshops for residents, which explored these questions more deeply. We discussed:

- What is important to them about the area
- The different ways these assets could be interpreted/celebrated
- Forming a core group of residents to be involved in the commissioning process.

The workshops collected stories and mapped local assets to inform this brief.

The workshop participants would like to come together again to meet the successful artist/s at the start of their commission. The artist will be given all work created and collected from residents to inform their creative approach and content. This will provide an opportunity for the artist/s to better understand participants' stories and hopes, and engage them in the making process from the start whilst considering how to reach others (with TCDT support).

It is hoped that this project forms the start of a longer-term creative programme for Chelston, co-created by the community.

KEY THEMES TO BE REFLECTED IN SUCCESSFUL COMMISSION

1. Chelston, The Place

Chelston lies about 1 mile southwest of Torquay town centre, almost entirely west of the Torre-Torquay railway line. In 2013, the total resident population of Chelston (with neighbouring Cockington) was around 10,700. It has a mix of Victorian to modern private housing, including a Conservation Area and a large post-war, formerly council-owned estate which is densely populated with many young families.

The Chelston Conservation Area Character Appraisal of 2005 lists some of the area's main physical assets:

'Without doubt Chelston is one of the best preserved Victorian suburbs of Torquay; late-Victorian in character, (1880-1900) it was developed two or even three decades later than several of the other 19th century suburbs to the north and east of the town centre, and incorporates some of the prevailing ideas of the garden suburb'.

'The many footpath links, often connecting streets and open spaces, provide the pedestrian with a rich variety of options in a largely traffic-free environment'.

(Examples of) the elements which make the most essential contribution to the character of Chelston conservation area may be summarised as follows:

- *The rich almost parkland setting and several areas of attractive open space – a veritable garden suburb;*
- *the interconnecting network of footpaths across the natural gradients, many treelined and stepped to ease the steep inclines;*
- *the survival of many original details on the buildings; and the retention of most original boundary features, including gate piers and ironwork;*
- *the variety of mature trees and shrubs able to flourish in sheltered locations."*

During the creative consultation workshops, participants identified the following assets they would like to celebrate:

- A recurring theme was how much people value the open spaces and parks in Chelston and how connected they feel to the sea and to nature. They talked about how easy they find it to walk around Chelston, referencing steps, pathways and streets full of independent shops and businesses that give Chelston a village feel.
- They talked about the red brick of the Victorian houses and touched on personal memories, little known facts and stories that they may like to share.
- Supporting local wildlife was important to those who attended the workshops.
- Participants said:

'This is the only part of Torbay that calls its parks something different to what they are officially called'.

'It feels open'

'It's all here'

'Never far from green'

'Chelston is the hidden gem of Torquay'

'When I come back from the sea it is nice to return somewhere as nice as where you've been'.

'All the parks are connected, you can walk between them all, we're so lucky'.

'The best thing about Chelston is Rocket Park and the slide!'

'We have lots of 'unloved' sets of steps that are shortcuts between each road, because it's so hilly! They're quite characteristic of the place'.

'It is close to the sea which is good for the soul'.

'I didn't realise I liked the area so much'

2. Chelston, The People

During the creative consultation workshops, participants identified the following assets they would like to celebrate:

- People talked about how they grew up in the area and brought their children up, and shared memories of playing in the park and having fun with friends. They wrote about personal memories they have of living in the area.
- People referenced places where they enjoy coming together and making friends: charity shops, pubs, parks, cafes, schools. In the workshops people talked repeatedly about the strong community spirit, the welcoming feel and the care that residents show each other.
- The community have expressed an interest in bringing residents of all ages together to create and connect with each other.
- Participants said:

'It is just lovely to meet up with people or neighbours and to do something crazy'.

'The best thing about Chelston is the people' 'A community where care is foremost'

'We laugh lots in the Caritas Charity Shop'

'We have so much wildlife round here and even a hedgehog hospital on our doorstep'

'Chelston is historic, it has a warmth and great feeling of community'

'It's just lovely to meet up with neighbours and do something creative'

'I bump into people I grew up with and went to school with'

'It's friendly, I feel safe here and included in the community'

THE ARTIST/S

Residents have expressed interest in outdoor arts (carnivals, processions, street theatre, circus, dance), communal activities based around food (eating together), visual arts and crafts, music/singing, creative workshops and celebratory events. However, we are very open to considering other art forms and approaches that will bring a wide range of people together to celebrate and enhance a pride in where they live.

We are looking for an artist/s who can work with the community to further understand what's important to them and respond to the identified themes. Criteria for selection have been agreed.

The successful artist(s) will:

	Assessed at shortlisting stage	Assessed at interview stage
have practical experience of devising and leading arts activities, engaging members of the public to produce creative outputs	√	
be skilled and experienced in their own arts practice and able to relate this to others and involve them in the making process	√	√
be confident in using arts and creative activities to inspire and connect people of all ages with varied experience, to develop an enhanced pride and sense of place	√	√
have experience of organising, producing and promoting arts events	√	√
have experience of managing arts projects of similar scale and budget	√	√
have experience of managing arts projects of similar scale and budget	√	√
be able to explain how they believe their proposal demonstrates value for money.	√	√
hold public liability insurance of minimum £5,000,000 and, if appropriate, employer's liability insurance (evidence to be provided by successful artist prior to contracting)	√	
understand the importance of working in a safe and professional manner to comply with relevant health and safety legislation, providing risk assessments prior to		√

undertaking activities		
be able to provide a safeguarding policy, evidence of a current enhanced DBS disclosure certificate with barred lists check, and a statement about how they will manage personal data in line with GDPR (to be provided by successful artist prior to contracting)	√	
<p>Words that residents used to describe their ideal artist include:</p> <p><i>Fun, Good listener, Flexible, Open, Good with budgets, Down-to-earth, Good sense of humour, Patient, Energetic, Enthusiastic, Has empathy, Creative, Reliable, Open to change.</i></p>		√

PRACTICAL DETAILS

Location: Chelston, Torquay, Devon

Commissioner: Torbay Culture (part of TDA*)

Artist Fee and Production budget: £9,000 (to include VAT, all fees, all materials, necessary insurances, production costs and expenses)

Duration: February-June 2020. All activity must be completed by 30 June which is our grant expiry date.

HOW TO APPLY: Recruitment and Selection Process

We are seeking expressions of interest (EOI) from artists with a commitment to social engagement. The EOI should include:

1. a covering letter, no more than three sides of A4, outlining the following:
 - your name and/or business name, and whether applying as sole trader, limited company, CIC, partnership, etc.
 - how you meet the artist requirements as described in this brief outlining relevant skills and experience
 - how you would approach this project, within the required timeframe
 - your intended creative outputs
 - if working with others, who else will be involved and how.
2. a proposed budget breakdown
3. an outline activity plan, showing milestones during the project

4. a CV for each artist that will be involved, including links to websites with examples of work
5. Names of two referees (employers/commissioners/clients for your two most recent or relevant projects) who can be contacted prior to contracting if successful at interview.

Applicants will be shortlisted and invited to interview by members of the community, Torbay Culture and TCDT.

Send your application by email to: culture@tda.uk.net

Closing date: 10am, Wednesday 15 January 2020

Interview date: Monday 27 January (note that this interview date is fixed, due to the logistics involved in convening a community panel).

If you have not been contacted by Friday 24 January, you will not have been shortlisted for interview on this occasion.

CONTACT

If you would like any further information prior to submitting your Expression of Interest, please contact Anna Matthews, Great Place Scheme Programme Manager, (Torbay Culture): anna.matthews@tda.uk.net or 01803 208692.

Note that the Torbay Culture office will be closed for Christmas from 1pm on 24th December, reopening at 10am on Thursday 2nd January.

MAP OF CHELSTON

For the purposes of this project, the area defined as Chelston is outlined in orange:

