

Coffin Works HLF Evaluation: Invitation to Tender

23 September 2016

Birmingham Conservation Trust

Birmingham Conservation Trust (BCT) is a charity run by a volunteer board of trustees. It employs a Director and four other staff, but is predominantly a volunteer organisation, with around 80 active volunteers.

BCT manages the Coffin Works heritage attraction, events programme and commercial lets and provides management and consultancy services to a range of building preservation projects around Birmingham.

The Coffin Works

Birmingham Conservation Trust received a grant of £999,400 from Heritage Lottery Fund in 2013 to restore and conserve the Grade II* Newman Brothers Coffin Furniture Works in Fleet Street in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter; and to create the Coffin Works complex which includes a heritage attraction focussed on Newman Brothers' social and industrial heritage, event and meeting accommodation for hire and six commercial units for let.

HLF funding completes in August 2017 and BCT requires a consultant to evaluate the project against the outcomes and outputs agreed in the Activity Plan.

Historic background

From 1894 to 1999 the firm of Newman Brothers made coffin fittings such as handles, breast plates and ornaments, as well as shrouds and ornate fabric coffin linings. They supplied the furniture for the coffins of several famous people, including members of the royal family and Sir Winston Churchill.

When the factory finally closed its doors, everything was left in its place – the machinery, the stock, even a pot of tea on the stove – as if it were just the end of an ordinary working day. Entering the factory, the visitor steps back in time to experience what it was like to work in this extraordinary place, with much of the machinery, some of it over a hundred years' old, still operational.

Volunteer tour guides share the stories of those who worked in the factory, and demonstrate how the machinery worked. It is not a morbid place, as some people imagine, but a fun, fascinating celebration of Birmingham's industrial past.

Commanding respect from the heritage sector

Opening in October 2014, Newman Brothers at the Coffin Works has won a number of awards and accolades including two West Midlands RICS Awards, best restoration project and best

tourism & leisure project; a Birmingham Civic Society Renaissance Award; a Historic England Angel Award ('People's Favourite') and an ICON 'Conservation in the Community Award'.

Appealing to a wider non-heritage audience:

Newman Brothers at the Coffin Works rapidly rose to become one of the most popular museums in Birmingham according to TripAdvisor. The reviews are overwhelming 5-star and highly enthusiastic, especially about the volunteer tour guides. Other events, such as the drama productions, exhibitions and food festivals attract a large non-heritage audience.

In 2015, we were awarded a Museum +Heritage Award for our Customer Service 'To Die For' and this month, one of our volunteers has received the West Midlands Museums Young Volunteer Award for his work in developing relaxed tours for young people with learning disabilities.

Scope of HLF-funded work

The 3-year delivery of the HLF project activity will complete in August 2017. The Activity Plan set the following **qualitative** aims:

THE PROJECT WILL...

- 1... help more people to learn about the heritage of the Coffin Works**
- 2... enable people to enjoy & gain new experiences of the heritage**
- 3... give people new skills & confidence**
- 4...develop people's understanding of their own & others heritage**
- 5... improve the quality of life for local people**
- 6... create a sense of community & involvement**
- 7... develop partnerships to underpin the sustainability of the scheme**
- 8... deliver a positive economic effect in the area**
- 9... improve the quality of the local environment**

The **quantitative** targets were as follows:

- At least two school visits per month during school term for the first year and four visits per month in the following three years, either at the factory or in schools, reaching a total of 3500 school children.
- 500 BME individuals involved with the project, with at least 250 from different faith groups, participating in activities to promote better understanding of different rituals around death and dying
- 100 professionals involved in training or learning activities, including trustees, teachers, contractors and consultants
- 150 local people actively involved as volunteers, of which 20% would be from the Ladywood area
- 300 students actively involved with the project, of which 10% would be from the Ladywood area
- 180 unemployed young people given training and employment skills
- 4000 people to attend special events; of which at least 1000 are young people attending events targeted at them
- Over 5200 visits through Open Days and tours
- 2400 people attending talks for local community groups

- 5 local community representatives on the Project Steering Group
- Over 25,000 people accessing the project via the website, and up to 20% of those visitors becoming actively engaged in blogging, commenting or contributing their stories

The participant segments were identified thus:

COMMUNITY PARTNERS	These are the local groups that we work with or deliver activities to as part of the HLF activity plan. The person answering these questions will be the group leader or manager.
HE/FE PARTICIPANTS	HE/FE Participants include tutors and students
INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS	These are people who take part in activity as part of the HLF Activity Plan, such as community engagement, consultation workshops, or arts development activity etc.
SCHOOLS	Schools includes questions for teachers and pupils.
STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders encompass a range of funding bodies, local authorities, organisations, companies and individuals who have a direct stake in the successful redevelopment of the Coffin Works. They may not all be located in the Jewellery Quarter. Many will be members of the CW Advisory Group.
VISITORS	These are people who take part in short (less than a day) scheduled events on site, like tours, workshops, performances or visits to the attraction once it is open.

See appendix 1 for a list of HLF Activity plan tasks. A copy of the HLF Stage 2 Activity Plan is available on request.

A formative evaluation framework was drawn up by a BCT Trustee in 2013, but it is not certain how much has been implemented during delivery. A copy of this framework is available on request.

The evaluation required:

An external evaluator is sought to review the project activity against HLF Stage 2 application and the intended outputs and write an evaluation report for submission to BCT's Board of Trustees and the Heritage Lottery Fund (Midlands).

We expect that the successful candidate will:

- Use an agreed evaluation framework for capturing evidence of success and project outcomes (see Appendix 2)
- Undertake a review of all activities in the Activity Plan by means of data collection (survey completion, face to face interviews etc) and desk research
- Interview key stakeholders to measure success against expectation
- Complete a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of results
- Produce a final summative evaluation report for internal use and to submit to HLF as part of the requirement to complete the project

- Present the report findings and recommendations to the BCT staff and trustees at a date to be decided

The methodology and reporting must include both quantitative and qualitative measures of success.

HLF guidance is available at <https://www.hlf.org.uk/evaluation-guidance>

Budget

£8,000 is available for this external evaluation.

Work completion date

July 2017

Tender process

If you are interested in this work please provide the following information:

- Your approach and methodology.
- A proposed timetable of your work, including appropriate milestones and dates, taking into account the remaining delivery timeline
- Costings to carry out the evaluation, including a daily rate and work plan plus any other associated costs.
- Details of members of your team, if any, with an explanation of individual roles and responsibilities.
- Experience of similar work, including examples where appropriate of experience of evaluative research in a museum or built heritage setting.
- Experience of working with different stakeholders, including children and families.

The contract will be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender as determined by scoring against quality and price. The quality to price ratio is 70:30. Scores for quality will depend on the experience of the team proposed and an assessment of the quality of the approach proposed. Scores for price will be based on the overall price and amount of time allocated to the project.

Deadline for applications:

Applications must be returned by **Friday 21st October 2016** by email to Vicki@birminghamconservationtrust.org

Interview date

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for interview on **Tuesday 8th November** at the Coffin Works, 13-15 Fleet Street, Birmingham B3 1JP

Contact for any questions you may have:

Jane Arthur, Chair of BCT Trustees on jane.l.arthur@btinternet.com

Jenni Waugh, BCT Trustee on jenni.waugh@talktalk.net

Appendix 1

The Coffin Works: Activity Plan Task List

No.	Task	Outputs/HLF targets
Evaluation		
1.	Establish evaluation framework based on HLF outcomes	Evaluation Framework
2.	Continuous evaluation	Evaluation documentation
3.	Evaluation report	Evaluation report
Partnerships & Promotion		
4.	Develop JQ Partnerships	Joint initiatives and events/ <i>contribute to participation and learning targets</i>
5.	Develop community partnerships	Joint initiatives and events/ <i>contribute to participation and learning targets</i>
6.	Recruit community members onto steering groups	Community members on steering groups/ <i>HLF target is 5</i>
7.	Promote the Coffin Works	Contributes to all outputs, especially visitor numbers
8.	Heritage Open Days	Contributes to visitor numbers/ <i>HLF target is 5,200</i>
Training		
9.	Building conservation training	<i>10 placements from local colleges 5 placements on SPAB courses</i>
10.	Restoration of historic machinery training	<i>10 people trained</i>
11.	Deaf awareness training	Tour guides and ‘front-of-house’ trained BSL tour
12.	Training in bereavement awareness	Tour guides and ‘front-of-house’ staff trained (note: we will not be offering bereavement counselling but staff will be aware of the issues)
13.	Recruitment and training of volunteers	<i>150 local people actively involved as volunteers, of which 20% from Ladywood area</i>

No.	Task	Outputs/HLF targets
Interpretation & Learning		
14.	Create interpretation panels for site hoarding	Interpretation panels on site hoarding (also advertising the units to let)
15.	Mural for site hoarding created by school children	Mural on site hoarding
16.	Leaflets for dispenser on site hoarding and general distribution	Leaflets (print run to be decided)
17.	Hard-hat tours during construction phase	Tours with very different themes, from tours for schools to tours for conservation specialists. <i>Contributes to HLF targets of 5,200 visits and 4000 people to attend special events</i>
18.	Construct 'Coffin Works' website	Website
19.	Maintain & manage website, providing regular new content	<i>Over 25,000 people accessing website, 20% becoming actively involved in commenting, blogging, etc</i>
20.	Make a full photographic (including time-lapse) and videographic record of the restoration works	Full photographic and videographic record, accessible through website in edited form/ <i>contributes to target of 150 volunteers</i>
21.	Production of three short films on 1) Reminiscences of former employees, 2) Technology in the Factory, 3) Funerary traditions	Three films <i>Making of films contributes to HLF targets for volunteering and community participation</i>
22.	Production of four 'digital interactive' tours for delivery on iPads: 1) young person's tour, 2) BSL tour, 3) family tour, 4) Conservation tour	Four digital interactive tours <i>Making of digital interactives contributes to HLF targets for volunteering and community participation</i>
23.	Restore and conserve historic machinery	Restored/conserved machinery <i>Contributes to HLF training, volunteering and participation targets</i>
24.	Create learning resources focussing on activities, e.g. around the salesman's bag	Learning resources <i>Contributes to HLF target of reaching 3500 school children</i>
25.	Purchase of iPads and A/V equipment (LCD screen, sound posts)	The equipment

No.	Task	Outputs/HLF targets
26.	Commission making of props (salesman's bags and sample books) and dressing up costumes	The props and costumes
27.	Recruit Learning Officer	Recruitment of suitably skilled and experienced Learning Officer
28.	Further develop learning resources in run up to opening of the Coffin Works	Learning resources ready for delivery of both on-site and off-site learning programmes
29.	Test learning resources	Learning resources honed and improved as consequence of testing
30.	Deliver main learning activities (primarily visits from and to schools)	<i>HLF target of reaching 3500 school children</i>
31.	Recruit Operations and Volunteers Manager (timed to be ready for the opening of the Coffin Works)	<i>The appointment of this staff member will greatly increase capacity for volunteering and participation</i>
32.	Prepare for start of operations	Coffin Works ready for opening as 'visitor attraction'
33.	Deliver operations (the Coffin Works is now fully operational and open)	<i>Main contribution to delivering targets for events (4000), visits (5200), learning and participation</i>
Collections Management		
34.	Recruit Collections Manager	Recruitment of suitably skilled and experienced Collections Manager
35.	Return collections to the site	Conservation Workshop and Storeroom set up. Artefacts either in store or returned to locations around the Coffin Works
36.	Collections conservation and research	On-going management and conservation of the Coffin Works collections, together with research. <i>This work offers diverse volunteering opportunities for people with different interests and skills, working with intrinsically fascinating material. Likely to make a major contribution to HLF participation and learning targets</i>