



Research Brief

Monuments Audit of Contested Heritage in Bristol Cathedral

SUMMARY

Research Partner Monuments Audit Bristol Cathedral

Job Description

Title: Research Partner, Bristol Cathedral Monuments Audit

Salary: Fixed contract for £12,000

Hours/Duration: The contract assumes pro-rata £25,000 for six months full time work or twelve months part time work.

Purpose

To contribute to the data held by Bristol Cathedral regarding those who are memorialised in the Cathedral, with particular reference to their links to transatlantic slave trafficking.

Responsibilities

- To complete, as far as possible, a short biographical note on those memorialised in the Cathedral who lived between 1548 and 1900. The biographical note would normally be around 300 words in length, and not normally longer than 500 words.
- To add, if relevant or possible, details of the history of the monument, who commissioned the memorial and the artist and date of manufacture.
- To complete these entries to a high standard of accuracy and with academic rigour
- To co-operate with others undertaking similar work, for example in the Diocese of Bristol and at St Paul's Cathedral, for the purposes of research and public understanding of the project

I Background

I.1 In June 2020 the Bishop of Bristol made a commitment on behalf of the diocese to address issues of racism in the church, including the need to acknowledge and repent of the Church's past involvement in, and benefit from the slave trade.¹ In tandem with partners in the City of Bristol and the Church of England, the Dean and Chapter will consider historic and theological issues around racism (and other forms of exploitation and discrimination) which will inform future strategy and decision making. Like many institutions in the city, the Cathedral has been the beneficiary both directly and indirectly of the trade in trafficked African people and seeks to redress the way in which the story of its heritage is told.

I.2 Bristol Cathedral will compile information about the memorials in the building and its surroundings which have links to enslavement. This work is supported by the Cathedral & Church Buildings Division of the Church of England, which has been leading work on how

¹ <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/news/statement-from-the-rt-revd-vivienne-faull-bishop-of-bristol-.php>

churches and cathedrals can approach contested histories around monuments, statues, gravestones and dedications located within the buildings and demesne.²

1.3 Contested history is a complex area. English Heritage states 'contested heritage' includes historic objects, structures, buildings or places where the associated stories or meanings have become challenged.³ International charters⁴ give guidance on the preservation and understanding of monuments. The Burra Charter specifically discusses understanding the cultural significance of historic artefacts. It makes it clear that significance covers a wide range of topics; aesthetic, historic, cultural and intangible, that is how people feel about the object/building under discussion. This might also include 'wider benefaction or conflicting values'.⁵

1.4 In addition to information about the person memorialised in eg a monument or window, the Cathedral may need information on such factors as a memorial's method of construction and the materials used. This is because information, such as the asset's fragility or condition, could influence decisions about change. Knowledge of the location and the originality or other-wise of the asset will help to answer questions about how much significance derives from these factors .

2 Research principles

2.1 The process of understanding a heritage asset's significance is important. It helps put into perspective relevant historical associations, both positive and negative, as well as other factors such as the quality of the fabric or the artistic endeavour. The research will be used to provide documented information, enabling the Dean and Chapter to manage interpretation of monuments held by the Cathedral. The resulting information will be entered on the Cathedral inventory and may be publicly available.

3 Research objectives

To establish those monuments with links to slave-derived wealth and slavery associated wealth. This might include individuals who:

- invested in slave ships
- earned money from insuring slave ships
- investing in shares in companies that were involved in the slave trade (such as the Royal African Company or the South Seas Company)
- provided trade goods to Africa or the slave plantations
- dealt in slave produced goods from the plantations
- owned plantations that operated on the use of slaves, (whether that ownership came from the purchase, marriage, inheritance, or as the default of a payment of a loan)
- used slaves in other contexts
- held colonial office or otherwise involved in the administration of colonies containing slaves
- payments of reparations to slave owners (or their heirs) after abolition

² Email from Janet Berry dated 4 December 2020 to Deans, Administrators, DACs and Facs

³ Checklist to Help Local Authorities Deal With Contested Heritage Listed Building Decisions

Updated 3 December 2020

⁴ ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, Venice 1964, Article 7.

Burra Charter , The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013

⁵ IHBC Guidance team letter dated 16 Feb 2018 from Fiona Newton

3.1 Information held by The Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slave-ownership at UCL is an acknowledged tool for discovering whether there are clear links of individuals to enslavement. The Oxford National Dictionary of Biography will also be referred to for a wider understanding, if possible, of the person memorialised. Local records and the Cathedral archive held in the Bristol Records Office may also be consulted. The information may include:

- knowledge of its fabric and artist, whether it is original or a replica,
- its historic context and evolution (including the original commission,
- whether the location is the original one,
- the nature of relationship between the asset and its current location,
- the reasons for its creation in the first place (including intent, and the biography and history of the individual or event commemorated), etc.

3.2 The research will be focused on facts surrounding the monuments and must be evidence-based, with references made clear.

4 Target audience

The information is for the use of the Dean and Chapter of Bristol Cathedral. It will be shared, if appropriate, with existing centres dealing with enslavement (EH and UCL for example).

5 Budget and timings

5.1 The audit will cover only monuments inside the Cathedral dated between 1548 and 1900. This is to allow the project to focus on the most relevant material. There are 379 items on the inventory in this category of which 5% are illegible. The inventory already records the monuments, their inscriptions, and any other known data. The material is held on a specialist software (eHive, Vernon Systems, New Zealand).

5.2 The research should be completed within 12 months to the contract price of £12,000.

5.3 This price covers researcher's time to deliver the above outputs and all travel and other business expenses and overheads. The contract is a fixed price contract and all the key tasks will be required to be completed within the maximum sum available.

5.4 The research partner will be expected to have a robust contingency plan in place to cover accident / illness, will be expected to provide such information to Bristol Cathedral and will be responsible for ensuring a contingency plan is in place throughout the entirety of the contract.

5.5 Bristol Cathedral will draw a full contract up following the award of the contract. Payment will be made in stages on the satisfactory completion of the set milestones, to be confirmed at the inception meeting.

6 Deadlines

6.1 The successful research partner should initially discuss the scope of the work with the Cathedral to agree a detailed project timetable for the work.

7 Project Management

7.1 This project is being managed by the Dean of Bristol and the Chief Operating Officer (line management to be confirmed) with the support of Fabric Advisory Committee and the Chapter

7.2 Academic mentoring will be provided by Professor Beth Williamson, University of Bristol and member of the FAC.

7.3 As part of the contract, regular phone, zoom or email contact should be kept with the Dean

7.4 The research partner will be required to provide a brief progress report at 2 monthly intervals.

8. TO APPLY FOR THIS ROLE

Deadline for application (5pm) Monday 24 May 2020

Interviews Friday 4 June 2021

By Zoom or in person to be confirmed

8.1. Applications should be sent by email to the Dean, dean@bristol-cathedral.co.uk and will be acknowledged. These should arrive by date shown on the timetable. Late submissions will not be accepted.

8.2. The proposal should be as brief as possible while also demonstrating the requirements below. Please submit the following information in your application for us to evaluate your response:

8.3. A CV (four pages max) contact details for two referees who can be contacted to confirm your expertise, experience and track record.

8.4. Method statement outlining your approach and demonstrating a clear understanding of the risks and requirements of the project. You should demonstrate:

- What you can bring to the success of this project
- Your experience and track record relevant to this role and this work
- Your commitment to academic rigour
- What robust contingency systems you have in place to ensure that you can meet the deadlines – e.g. who you will collaborate with in case of illness or other delays
- Any other information that you consider appropriate to inform us of your suitability for this project.

Person Specification

Essential

- A good first / post graduate degree in a relevant subject
- Experience of research in a related area
- Excellent IT skills sufficient to upload data to the E-Hive system
- Good written and oral communication skills
- Organised and self-motivated, able to prioritise work and achieve targets.
- Capable of working independently

Desirable

- Experience of maintaining records management systems
- Experience of working in or with cathedrals and sacred heritage
- Experience of working in the Bristol context