



Options Appraisal Tender - Allen Gallery, Alton

1. Introduction

Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) was established in 2014 to promote Hampshire as a great cultural county and to operate arts and museums facilities previously operated by Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council.

We directly manage and support 26 arts and museums attractions across Hampshire and deliver local and county-wide outreach programmes that bring great culture to local communities.

Within our portfolio we manage two museums in Alton, the Allen Gallery and Curtis Museum. Both venues host and showcase key pieces of HCT's collection, with the Curtis Museum focusing on the local history of Alton and the surrounding areas and the Allen Gallery providing an impressive and varied selection of pottery, porcelain, tiles and decorative arts from 1250 to the present day.

As part of an ongoing investment and refurbishment programme, HCT want to commission an options appraisal for the refurbishment and reinterpretation of the Allen Gallery, ensuring the wonderful ceramics collection and the work of WH Allen remain part of Alton's and Hampshire's rich heritage for many years to come.

2. Allen Gallery

William Herbert Allen's life as a working artist spanned more than fifty years, from the late 1880s to the early 1940s. He became Art Master and later director at Farnham School of Art, whilst also painting thousands of pictures of the countryside around the south of England and the continent. Regular exhibitions of original WH Allen watercolours and oils take place in the Allen Gallery, which was named in his honour.

Visitors to Alton have been able to see fine English pottery and porcelain in the town since the early 1930s, when local resident Major Ross Bignell first contributed items to the nearby Curtis Museum. Many of these pieces were transferred to the Allen Gallery in 1980 and are still on show today.

The gallery continues to display a wide range of ceramics, from Wedgwood and English Delftware to unique studio pottery. Of the thousands of pieces currently on show, the majority are drawn from around the UK, but they sit alongside Eastern Asian and continental wares which have historically influenced the ceramics industry in this country.

The gallery contains pieces by some of the best-known names in ceramics and sculpture. Items by Lucie Rie can be seen and the tin-glazed earthenware collection, containing examples of

English and European work, is of international importance. The gallery is also home to a range of sculptures, with a Parian ware bust of Queen Victoria and a bronze sculpture of a woman known as 'Dolores' by the American sculptor, Jacob Epstein.

The Allen Gallery also has a beautiful garden which dates back to the days when founder William Curtis lived at 4 High Street in Alton. The garden's sundial is mounted on a baluster from the Old London Bridge which was presented by Alderman James Curtis. Our gardens are tended by a team of volunteers who maintain a beautiful and relaxing space for our visitors to enjoy.

Situated in the gallery garden is a life-size sculpture of two young girls playfully dancing, based on sculptor Roger Burnett's own daughters.

3. Options Appraisal: Future Plans

Both the Allen Gallery and the Curtis Museum are well supported by the local community, both with a strong volunteer base. Volunteers have extensive knowledge of the ceramic collections at the Allen Gallery and welcome groups of visitors from far afield who travel specifically to see key pieces in the collection.

There is a commitment both locally and county wide to preserve and enhance the ceramics collection, to encourage a wider audience into the venue and to also provide social impact programmes for the community of Alton and East Hampshire.

However, to enable future plans and developments to happen the venue and collections need investment and a reinterpretation and refurbishment of the venue is required.

This Options Appraisal is being commissioned to scope out the potential of the venue and collection and support HCT in their decision making for future developments. The Options Appraisal should illustrate how the venue can accommodate the following requirements:

- Reinterpretation of ceramics to highlight our key pieces and bring to life their unique and significant stories, for both the ceramics enthusiast and the general visitor
- Redesign of permanent gallery space to enable clearer narrative, spotlight pieces and a better visitor experience throughout
- Installation of a permanent WH Allen gallery/space to display his work.
- Flexible space for community engagement including ceramics specialist work as well as more social impact driven work, which can potentially be separate from our main gallery displays and can be multi-purpose.
- Seamless transition between all areas of the gallery including shop, café and garden
- Possible collections store to enable volunteers to manage collection use, display and interpretation

4. Project Brief

We are looking for an experienced specialist to undertake an Options Appraisal for the reinterpretation and development of the Allen Gallery.

The piece of work needs to:

- Explore the value and potential of the existing ceramics collection
- Explore how the gallery can showcase the life and work of WH Allen
- Create the outline for a new narrative focused around key pieces in the collection
- Develop plans for a community engagement programme which contributes to and enhances the collection
- Work with us as we develop architectural solutions alongside the reinterpretation
- Undertake a community consultation with the existing volunteer team
- Present feasible solutions that respond to our project objectives based on your professional experience and research
- Facilitate our decision making to agree a preferred option
- Test the overall feasibility of the preferred option

5. Skills and experience required

It is expected that the appointed specialist will have the following skills and experience that are deemed necessary to deliver the project:

- Experience of undertaking museum based options appraisals
- Experience of reinterpretation projects
- Experience of museum refurbishment projects
- Experience of community consultation
- Experience of working collaboratively with museum staff, volunteers and other creatives
- Ability to communicate their work and ideas to a variety of stakeholders
- Experience of project and time management

8. Key dates

1. Deadline for quote submission	Friday 29 March 2019 – 5pm
2. Interviews	Tuesday 16 April 2019
3. Contract awarded	Friday 26 April 2019
4. Briefing held with project team	w/b Monday 6 May 2019
5. Project is complete	Friday 30 August 2019

9. Method of work

We anticipate that the successful consultant will include consultation with the following stakeholders;

- Hampshire Cultural Trust Community Team
- Hampshire Cultural Trust Programmes and Projects Team
- Hampshire County Council's Architects Team
- Allen Gallery Volunteers
- Local and national ceramics community

The methodology will be agreed at the start of the project with the Head of Community and Community Manager and form part of the contract.

8. Budget

This project is being quoted on a fixed fee basis.

The maximum budget available for this project is £15,000 including travel, administration and other related expenses and VAT.

We are seeking a total and inclusive price for the project and no other costs, except the quoted price, will be payable. The payment schedule will be as followed:

- 25% paid on sign of contract
- 50% paid at mid-way point
- 25% paid on completion of project

9. Quote response

Your proposal should include a response to the project brief:

- An outline of how you propose to deliver the project
- Your assessment of the key challenges and issues
- Project management procedures
- Timetable for delivery
- Detailed budget breakdown
- Relevant experience, expertise and relevant examples of previous work
- Details of all the personnel proposed to carry out the work (if applicable)
- Details of your levels of insurance

The top three scoring quotes that can mathematically win the contract will be invited to a meeting to present their proposals.

The scoring criteria are as follows:

- Experience in similar heritage project 20 (response to brief)
- Quality of work 30 (response to brief and interview)
- Originality of work 30 (response to brief and interview)
- Value for money 20 (response to brief)

For more information please contact:

Deborah Neubauer, Head of Community

Deborah.neubauer@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk

Please submit your proposal to Deborah.neubauer@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk by Friday 29 March, 5pm.