

## **Consultant Brief**

### **Gibbs & Canning: Community Consultation for Inclusive Audience Development**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Tamworth Castle is seeking to appoint a heritage and community engagement consultant to design and deliver a consultation programme exploring the legacy of Gibbs & Canning, the renowned Victorian terracotta manufacturer once based in Tamworth.

The consultation will explore how diverse local audiences connect with Tamworth's industrial past and how the Castle can interpret and present this heritage in ways that are inclusive, engaging, and relevant today.

The successful consultant will co-deliver community workshops with a local ceramic artist and produce a concise report with recommendations to inform a future heritage funding application.

#### **2.0 Project Background**

Gibbs & Canning produced world-renowned architectural terracotta during the 19th century, supplying iconic buildings such as the Natural History Museum in London. Their factory was based in Tamworth and the company played a major role in the town's industrial and social history.

Tamworth Castle has received funding from the Museum Development Midlands (MDM) Open Grant Fund to deliver a short consultation project (Nov 2025 – Feb 2026). The project aims to:

- Gather views from seldom-heard and underrepresented community groups about local industrial heritage.
- Understand potential audiences' interests, barriers, and motivations.
- Shape future programming and audience development at Tamworth Castle.
- Provide evidence to underpin a future heritage funding application.

Community partners are expected to include Dementia Caring, Liberty Jamboree (inclusive youth group for young people with SEND/SEMH and neurodivergent barriers) and a local history group or older residents' network.

#### **3.0 Consultant Specification**

The consultant will:

- Design and deliver three themed consultation workshops:
  - Liberty Jamboree (inclusive youth group).
  - Time Out Club (people living with dementia and carers).
  - A local history group / older residents' network.
- Conduct 1–2 interviews with local historians and community leaders.
- Facilitate consultation during workshops, while the ceramic artist leads creative clay-based activities.
- Analyse findings and collate results into a written report with recommendations for inclusive heritage programming.

- Provide an interim update (mid Jan 2026) and a final report with an executive summary (early Feb 2026).

#### 4.0 Creative workshops

The consultant will work alongside a local ceramic artist during each workshop.

- The artist will lead a clay-based activity, providing a sensory and accessible entry point for participants.
- The consultant will focus on gathering feedback, facilitating discussion, and capturing insights.
- The exact format (e.g. concurrent delivery or a split session) will be agreed in advance with group leaders to ensure accessibility and best outcomes.

This combined model is a tried-and-tested approach in heritage consultation, ensuring sessions are both engaging and effective in generating insight.

#### 5.0 Deliverables

- Consultation plan and timetable (by Nov 2025).
- Delivery of 3 community workshops and 1–2 interviews (Nov 2025 – Jan 2026).
- Short interim update (mid Jan 2026).
- Final consultation report (max. 15 pages) with analysis, recommendations and supporting evidence (by 7 February 2026).
- Executive summary (2–3 pages) for wider sharing.

#### 6.0 Skills & Experience Required

- Demonstrable experience of heritage or community engagement consultation.
- Strong facilitation skills, including working with diverse and under-served groups.
- Experience in inclusive practice and co-production methods.
- Ability to analyse and present findings clearly for funders and stakeholders.

#### 7.0 Fee & Timescale

- **Consultant fee:** £3,225 (inclusive of VAT and all expenses).
- **Project runs:** Nov 2025 – Feb 2026.
- **Final report deadline:** 7 February 2026

#### 8.0 Application Process

Applicants are invited to submit:

1. A short proposal (max. 2 pages) outlining your approach to the brief.
2. A CV or summary of relevant experience.
3. An example of similar work (consultation, evaluation, or report).

**Deadline for applications: Monday 29 September 2025, 5pm**

**Interviews:** to be held online during **week commencing 6 October 2025.**

Please send applications and queries to:  
**Emma Carter, Heritage Engagement Co-ordinator**  
Tamworth Castle  
Email: [emma-carter@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:emma-carter@tamworth.gov.uk)

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## **Appendix: Supplementary Information**

### **About Gibbs & Canning**

- Founded in the 1840s, Gibbs & Canning grew into one of the most important producers of terracotta and architectural ceramics in Victorian Britain.
- Based in Glascote, Tamworth, the company operated for well over a century before finally closing its doors in the 1970s.
- At its peak, the company employed hundreds of local people and was closely tied to the mining and coal industries that fuelled the kilns. Whole streets of houses in Tamworth were once owned by Gibbs & Canning for their workforce.

### **The Castle's Collection**

Tamworth Castle Museum holds an extensive collection of Gibbs & Canning material, ranging from household items to architectural pieces. These include:

- The griffin sculpture (now displayed in the Castle courtyard), originally created for London's Natural History Museum.
- Household ceramics such as jars, jugs, beer bottles, and utility items.
- Decorative and structural pieces of architectural terracotta used on buildings across the country.

These objects provide a rich and tactile way of engaging participants in the consultation — from handling everyday items to exploring large-scale architectural pieces, like the griffin sculpture.

### **Why This Matters**

- Gibbs & Canning were part of Tamworth's industrial identity, with their products reaching from local homes to world-famous landmarks.
- Their story connects local lives and labour with national and international heritage.
- By revisiting their legacy today, we can open up conversations around industry, craft, community and sustainability.

### **Project Context**

This consultation project, funded by the Museum Development Midlands Open Grant Fund, will:

- Engage under-represented groups in Tamworth with Gibbs & Canning's heritage.
- Use the Castle's collection as a springboard for sensory-friendly workshops and discussion.
- Generate inclusive ideas for future programming and audience development.
- Provide evidence to shape a future heritage funding application.