

# Create Berwick

## BRIEF

### Art Commission 2025/26

#### CCZ Create Berwick

##### Summary

The culture and creative sector are a key part of Northumberland's economy and is valued highly within the County. As such, the Council has attracted £1.5m of funding from the North of Tyne Combined Authority to develop an ambitious Culture and Creative Zone (CCZ) for Berwick upon Tweed to support the growth of the sector, to attract tourism and benefit local people.

Taking inspiration from other UK and international cities this pilot Zone will focus on supporting the existing and emerging clusters within Berwick and Northumberland through the progressive implementation of a range of tailored interventions that are authentic to the challenges and opportunities of that locality.

Northumberland County Council wishes to invest CCZ funding from WP3 (Engaging Communities) to contract a cultural agency to deliver an ambitious contemporary art commission to be delivered in 2025/6. The Art Commission must be of national significance and raise Berwick's profile as a major cultural visitor destination. It must also engage local communities in the project in some way, either through idea development, co-creation or active participants in the making and final public presentation. It will take its inspiration from Berwick's unique qualities, either its heritage, people, topography or environment.

A creative agency or freelancer with a track record of curating ambitious and high-quality arts projects rooted in place is sought to work with residents to produce exciting and engaging temporary artwork. The investment must deliver the following outputs in 2025/6:

- Create an ambitious temporary artwork for Berwick upon Tweed
- Engage local people in the commission in some way
- Attract visitors to Berwick
- Safeguard jobs in the creative sector

NCC supports place-making and community well-being agendas and is also committed to demonstrating Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in all its projects. The Art Commission must be accessible to a broad public without compromising on quality of concept, production and presentation.



Funded by  
UK Government

  
Northumberland  
County Council

 North East  
Combined  
Authority

# Create Berwick

## Overview:

Berwick-upon-Tweed has a range of assets and strengths that make it the ideal location for the Northumberland CCZ Create Berwick. It is a town with a significant cultural and creative capital of artists, makers, craftspeople, and heritage assets, as well as being the location of two Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations, The Maltings and Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival and a thriving creative ecology made up of artists', writers and performers.

This most northerly of English towns has a rich history forged in the heat of an ownership dispute between England and Scotland. This fractious history culminated in Elizabethan artillery ramparts wrapping around the town to protect it from Scottish attack. Nestled within sturdy Elizabethan walls and bordered by the River Tweed and North Sea, Berwick survives as one of the most important fortified towns in Europe. History and the surrounding natural environment are reflected in Berwick's living heritage festivals like Salmon Queen and Riding the Bounds, while Berwick Literary Festival, Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival and connect Berwick to contemporaneous national and international culture.

Create Berwick is working in partnership with the cultural, creative and community sectors to deliver culture-led regeneration between 2023-2027. Our programme is designed to support an energised and dynamic creative economy and provide opportunities for residents and visitors to experience and participate in creative and cultural events. Since our programme launch in 2024 we have funded pop-up cultural hubs like Tortive Theatre at Straw Yard Studios and awarded grants to creatives like Berwick Contemplative Arts to pilot arts and well-being projects. We are working in partnership with English Heritage to revive Berwick Barracks by investing in new artists workspace while supporting living heritage festivals to commission local artists for their events.

## Vision

*Celebrating our heritage, creating our future*

By 2030 Berwick upon Tweed will take its place among the UK's most distinctive, must see cultural destinations. Fusing rich heritage with contemporary culture, it will be a trailblazer in nurturing successful creative communities, and an innovator in culture-led town regeneration. It will be a thriving creative hub, where new opportunities and experiences for businesses, young people and visitors combine with an unrivalled quality of life in a stunning coastal location.

## CCZ Berwick: Create Berwick

Create Berwick is an opportunity to coordinate and scale up Berwick's many cultural and creative assets and activities, creating significant impact and meaningful growth of the sector. It also offers the opportunity to build on and amplify the impacts of planned strategic investments



# Create Berwick

in the town, including the Borderlands Growth Deal and developments of The Maltings Theatre, Cinema and Arts Centre and Berwick Barracks.

CCZ Create Berwick will deliver:

- A 2027 vision for Berwick delivering transformational change
- A focal point for strategic coordination and collaboration, bringing together the wide range of existing and planned cultural and creative projects and activities
- Co-designed complementary and new cultural programmes
- Providing the relevant training and advice to ensure the sector develops and grows, supporting workspace provision, facilities and resources
- Improved and coordinated visibility of Berwick's cultural and creative offer

Creative Berwick will benefit people, businesses and communities across the whole of the Berwick area, its physical location will be in the Town Centre. Over the next few years Create Berwick is working in partnership with a wide range of partners, from artist-led networks, independent creative businesses, heritage organisations to theatres and civil societies. Through collaboration and cooperation, we will grow and expand Berwick as a truly creative town where vernacular and contemporary culture are valued equally, and creative businesses and ideas flourish.

A highly visible focal point for the culture and creative sector, the Creative Berwick will create jobs, generate investment in cultural and creative people and businesses, and support more people to make a career in the creative industries, helping to attract and retain talent in the local area. We want to ensure Creative Berwick to be a truly grass-roots led project, designed to meet the needs of Berwick's current and future creative practitioners, as well as its communities and visitors. For more information, please refer to:

<https://createberwick.co.uk/>

## Scope of work:

CCZ Create Berwick is committed to supporting the development of existing and new cultural activity which positions Berwick upon Tweed as a significant cultural destination. This project is part of Work Programme 3: Engaging Communities aimed at producing high quality, nationally significant arts which connects residents and visitors alike. The Arts Commission is an opportunity for a highly creative individual or organisation to research and commission artists to deliver exciting artwork which is inspired by Berwick upon Tweed. The project must build opportunities for collaboration or participation by local people in the making or presentation of the final temporary artwork.

The artwork will be temporary and likely outdoor work or presented in a non-traditional venue for an agreed period. The Art Commission is inclusive of all artforms, e.g. visual arts, digital,



# Create Berwick

performance, sound, text or any combination of the above. We want the work to be by an artist of national standing and with experience of working with people and responding to place. The commission will likely take its inspiration from Berwick, either the built environment, heritage, vernacular culture, people or the natural environment. Furthermore, the successful candidate will be sensitive to conservation issues and have experience of working in a town with listed buildings and conservation areas.

The appointed individual or organisation must evidence their experience and ability to commission and project manage ambitious artwork for a non-gallery setting. A familiarity with Northumberland and Berwick is a plus as it will help establish partnerships and locations for the final artwork.

It is also important the successful candidate can develop strong working relationships with varied stakeholders to ensure the project is supported and delivered successfully. They will have a demonstrable ability to think creatively and be a problem solver and manage budgets. Strong project management skills are essential alongside excellent knowledge and experience of working in the arts sector. We also expect the candidate to liaise with Create Berwick's Marketing & Comms team to document and promote the final artwork, organise a launch event and produce interpretation material.

The successful individual or organisation will report directly to the CCZ Manager and gather monitoring & evaluation data for a final report documenting agreed outputs and outcomes.

This is an opportunity for a creative curator, producer or cultural organisation wanting to develop their practice and deliver imaginative, engaging and ambitious artwork in response to Berwick.

We look forward to receiving applications from creatives with concepts which can help raise Berwick's standing as a commissioner of high-quality artworks and attract visitors to the town. In summary:

- An experienced Creative, Curator, Producer or Cultural Organisation to manage the commission of an artwork from concept to presentation
- An interest or awareness of Berwick and Northumberland
- An ability to work closely with others, including Berwick stakeholders and NCC CCZ Create Berwick
- To be experienced in delivering commissions which engage communities in the making and presentation of the final temporary artwork
- To produce an ambitious and engaging artwork for a non-traditional setting
- For the Commission to be inspired by, or take its starting point in Berwick upon Tweed
- To project manage the commission, including providing reporting to CCZ Manager and gathering evaluation data against agreed outputs and outcomes
- Experienced at managing budgets, scheduling and risk assessments
- Experience of conservation and listed status building and environments



Funded by  
UK Government

  
Northumberland  
County Council

 **NE** North East  
Combined  
Authority

# Create Berwick

- A willingness to liaise with CCZ Marketing & Comms to document and promote the project
- To deliver a project that is inclusive and supports diversity and equality
- To abide by Statutory and Legal requirements inc. DBS and safeguarding

All print or publicity material associated with this opportunity will include NCC and NECA logos and acknowledge receipt of investment. Logos will be provided by Northumberland County Council.

Photographs of artwork, cultural events and activities relating to Berwick must include copyright and name photographer and artist whenever possible.

## **Timescale**

We expect the art commission takes place in the year 2025/26 and no later than 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

## **Budget**

**£40,000 is inclusive of VAT**

**To produce a new temporary artwork for public presentation no later than end of March 2026**

The budget includes all costs relating to the Annual Commission, including fees, inc. Artist's fee, materials and production, presentation, de-installation, insurance, documentation and contingency.

## **How to respond to this Brief**

Candidates are asked to provide the following information:

A proposal outlining your concept for an arts Commission, including how it relates to contemporary curatorial practice and place making agendas. The proposal must be no more than 1000 words and outline your process for delivering the commissions, from Writing an Artist Brief, appointing an artist and gathering evaluation data. It will explain an approach for community engagement and experience of working in non-traditional or outdoor locations. Please include an indicative timescale for planning and delivering the commission. Please provide as much detail about your idea, for example if you have an artist or artform you wish to employ or your ideal location for the artwork.

You will also provide information demonstrating your experience of developing and delivering



Funded by  
UK Government

  
Northumberland  
County Council

 **NE** North East  
Combined  
Authority

# Create Berwick

similar programmes of work and may include up to 4 images relating to previous projects and any press articles, plus a link to relevant websites.

The proposal will also include an indicative budget for the project, including your fee, the Artist's fee, production and presentation costs, plus a contingency. You may wish to provide an example of a previous project budget to demonstrate the costings of a similar sized project. (please redact any personal names or private information contained within examples of previous projects)

Please provide your contact details and confirm you are available for interview on Thursday should you be shortlisted.

Northumberland County Council asks you submit the names and contact details of two referees who will be contacted with your permission.

**Deadline for submission: 5pm Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

- Shortlisted candidates will be notified by Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April
- Interviews will take place online on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May
- Decision and successful candidate notified on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

Please contact Andrea Oliver CCZ Manager if you wish to discuss this opportunity further: [andrea.oliver@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.oliver@northumberland.gov.uk)

All applications must be submitted to Lauren Morgan, NCC Procurement [lauren.morgan@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:lauren.morgan@northumberland.gov.uk)



Funded by  
UK Government

  
Northumberland  
County Council

 North East  
Combined  
Authority