



APPENDIX TO PROJECT BRIEFS BACKGROUND INFORMATION

DISCOVER DECRYPT Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

**Location: St Mary de Crypt and Old Crypt Schoolroom, Southgate Street,
Gloucester GL1 1TP**

INTRODUCTION

The Discover DeCrypt Project Group wishes to engage the services of a number of staff to deliver and operate the facilities and services at the historic Church of St Mary de Crypt and its adjacent Old Tudor Schoolroom in central Gloucester. The project received Round 1 approval from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2013, and has engaged a range of consultants to develop the detailed design, activity and learning proposals for the project.

PROJECT COST AND TIMETABLE

HLF's Permission to Start the Delivery Phase was granted in May 2017, with a twelve month construction phase which commenced in January 2018. The estimated capital cost is £1million exclusive of VAT, contingency, professional fees, and inflation. The Delivery Phase includes detailed design, capital works, and the installation of interpretation facilities and other fixtures and fittings. A range of learning, discovery and community engagement activities will be delivered throughout the duration of this phase, with staff and budgets, working alongside volunteers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The medieval church of St Mary de Crypt and adjoining Tudor Old Crypt Schoolroom are prominently positioned at the junction of the Via Sacra and the busy Southgate Street, in the heart of the historic city of Gloucester. The church of St Mary de Crypt is included on the statutory list of buildings of architectural and historic interest, Grade 1, and is one of Gloucester's most important medieval churches. Of Norman origin and built in the heart of the Romano-British city, the church was substantially rebuilt in the Perpendicular style in the late C14th and contains much in the way of important fabric and fittings from this period.

The Old Crypt Schoolroom is listed grade II*. It was founded in 1539 and is a rare survival of an early educational establishment. The building retains its early plan form, external appearance and much internal fabric, including timber panelling.

Like many inner-city churches, St Mary de Crypt has suffered from a decline in its congregation. As a result, over a number of years, ways have been sought to find new uses for the church and schoolroom and give them a viable future. Discover DeCrypt is the project to make these once again two of the most visited and prominent buildings in Gloucester. The project is working in partnership with the City Council's Southgate Street Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI), and has offered training opportunities for young people, hard hat days for professionals and the local community, and an outreach programme during the capital works.

CURRENT POSITION

At present the church is underused, and the schoolroom is in unsafe condition and not used at all. However, there is much enthusiasm for these two buildings to remain important venues in the centre of Gloucester.

Discover DeCrypt is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) constituted in May 2016 and owns the Old Crypt Schoolroom. It works in partnership with the Parochial Church Council of Hempsted with St Mary de Lode and St Mary de Crypt, Gloucester (PCC) which has responsibility for St Mary de Crypt Church. Both the CIO and the PCC are chaired by the Rector, Canon Nikki Arthy.

Heritage Lottery Funding was obtained for Development Phase work and the design team has been appointed: Architect and Lead Consultant, Quantity Surveyor, Structural Engineer, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers and Lighting Designers. Listed Building Consent was granted in February 2016 for renovation works to the schoolroom, and Faculty was granted for the proposed works to the church in March 2016. The building contractor was appointed in December 2017 and began work on site in January 2018. An Archaeological Contractor was appointed to hold a watching brief during works.

Also to be appointed prior to re-opening are a Centre Manager and Caretaker.

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

Aims:

- To create a sustainable heritage attraction
- To create a cultural venue and community hub, open and available to all
- To make a visit accessible to a wide range of people
- To involve the local community of all ages
- To offer volunteering opportunities to enable engagement with heritage To open up the church to other activities, whilst continuing use as a place of worship and prayer

Objectives:

- To create a heritage discovery centre to engage children, young people, and families providing multi-sensory learning and interpretative opportunities for the discovery of heritage and faith
- To involve young people and other volunteers in the renovation work, and enable them to learn about heritage and acquire skills in building conservation
- To be open to everyone, including people from a diverse range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, and a diverse range of abilities
- To make the building energy efficient, warm, well-lit, and easy to navigate
- To use modern architectural intervention whilst retaining both the historic structure and sacred space
- To provide opportunity for learning and creativity with guided and self-led tours, courses and training, events, school visits and use of the space for meetings.
- To provide child and family friendly facilities (buggy parking; baby changing; refreshments; toilets etc)
- To enable a visitor to gain:
 - information
 - improved understanding
 - change in attitude or behaviour
 - inspiration
 - creativity
 - enjoyment

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The following are a range of proposed uses for the buildings after the capital works programme:

In the church:

- Guided and self-led tours of the buildings
- Talks, concerts and other performance art
- Temporary exhibitions - south aisle of nave and/or possibly Raikes Chapel
- Dinner events in the nave
- Large Civic Services
- Parent and toddler group – spill out to nave of church for play with large-apparatus equipment (to be stored in the current vestry area)
- Ground floor schoolroom used for storytelling sessions and coffee point
- Raikes Chapel used for small prayer meetings

In the schoolrooms:

- Ground floor schoolroom to offer coffee point and storytelling area
- Bi-weekly Memory Café in the ground floor schoolroom in partnership with The Alzheimer's Society

- Schools and pre-school group visits use both floors as classroom space
- Parent and toddler group use first floor as classroom space (one or two mornings per week)
- In school holidays – creative workshops for children in first floor
- Both floors used by community groups/private hire for training, functions (eg, wedding/drinks receptions), meetings, adult education
- Oriel room – kitchen area for users of first floor schoolroom
- Range of creative classes and workshops in first floor schoolroom

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about the project can be viewed on the project's website:

www.discoverdecrypt.org.uk

Summary Construction Programme

Activity	Timeline
HLF DELIVERY PHASE:	
Detailed Design	May - Sept 2017
Construction and installations tender package prepared	July – Sept 2017
Main Contractor appointed	November 2017
Construction and installation work (assumes 12 month contract)	Jan – Jan 2019
Discover DeCrypt Opens for Summer Season	March 2019

NB The full programme is available separately