

The VIVA project was developed and delivered in various locations across the Heart of Teesdale programme area, focussing particularly on the character of villages in the Heart of Teesdale area. This project has involved communities in learning about the natural and cultural heritage of their local area and given them the opportunity to participate in a range of artistic workshops with local artists and be actively involved in creating a piece of artwork for their community.

The project has worked with the following communities:

- Boldron
- Eggleston
- Romaldkirk
- Barningham
- Whorlton
- Gainford
- Barnard Castle
- Cotherstone
- Headlam
- Staindrop

### **Boldron**

The community worked with local stone carver, Peter Coverdale, to design a bench to sit outside their village hall. The completed bench was installed in June 2013 and includes carvings of a shepherd's crook, a curlew and the Yorkshire rose. Ideas came from community events held in 2012, which were then discussed by volunteers with Peter Coverdale at two workshops to ensure that the bench design reflected the thoughts of the local community. The bench was unveiled at a community event in June 2013.



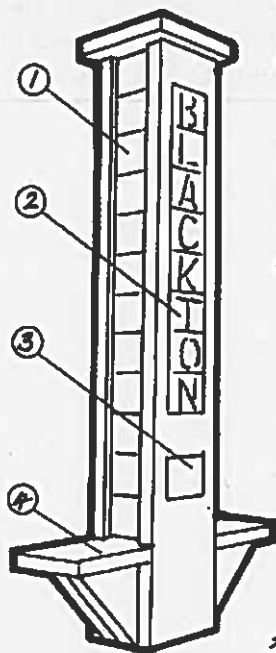
Peter Coverdale at work on the bench



Completed bench outside the village hall

## Eggleston

The Eggleston project involved the creation and installation of four marker posts at the four corners of Eggleston, which includes Eggleburn, Folly Top, Blackton and Hill Top. Each feature, which was created by local artist Phil Townsend, includes a selection of clay tiles which were created by residents from each of the areas and that highlight various aspects of the heritage of the area.



FOR THE 4 OUTLYING AREAS OF EGGLESTON:

FOLLY TOP, EGGLEBURN, HILL TOP + BLACKTON

Construction: Treated Redwood (2")

Height: 7'6" (2.3m), X-section 9" x 10"

Length underground 25" (0.7m) set in concrete.

Tile size: 5" x 5" (130mm x 130mm)

1. Up to 12 tiles per side (inset)\*
2. Name tiles recessed into front.
3. "In the Parish of Eggleston" tile.
4. Seat on either side.

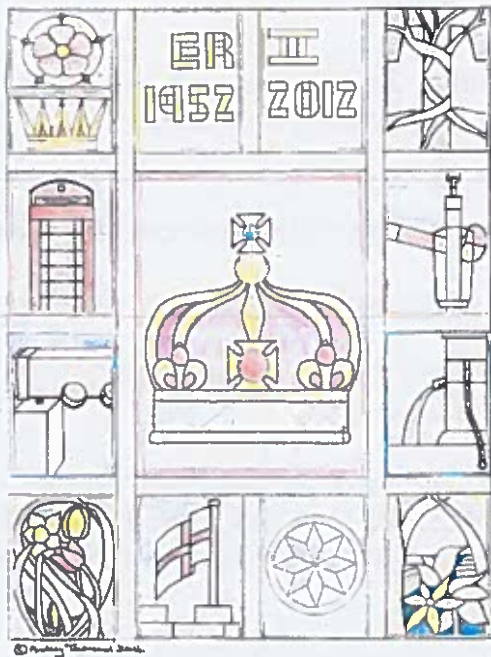
\*To be made in community workshops.

Design work by local artist Phil Townsend

## Romaldkirk

This project involved the creation and installation of an artistic stained glass window within the Reading Rooms in Romaldkirk. The window was created by local artist Audrey Townsend and Martin Sayer from Bowes was responsible for the frame, glazing and installation. Match funding of £1080 was secured from the Reading Rooms Committee as part of this project.

Two community workshops took place over summer 2014, which enabled local people to spend time with Audrey learning more about the art of stained glass and contributing ideas to the design. They also each made a small stained glass item to take home with them. The window was installed in December 2014 and a celebration event took place soon after, which was attended by the community and local media.



## **Barningham**

Initial meetings were held with the community, which identified that the community would like to recognise their rich farming heritage in a new bench to stand at the entrance into the village from the Moor Road and which would incorporate the name of the village within the feature so it would double up as an entrance feature/ name sign.

Grace Crawford met with the local history group and with members of the Parish Meeting to discuss the project, who were all very supportive and permission was secured from the landowner.

Local artist Phil Townsend provided some sketches of how the farming heritage could be represented within the feature along with the other aspects; however estimated costs were over the budget available. Match funding opportunities were investigated but unfortunately due



to the size of the community no suitable funding streams were identified. As a result of this it was decided not to go ahead with this project at the present time.

### Whorlton

The project at Whorlton involved working with local artist Jane Young and residents from Whorlton and the surrounding area. Jane Young held a series of workshops focusing on different aspects of the local environment. This included:

- Local nature and wildlife, with a walk and talk by members of the Darlington & Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club.
- The architecture and local history of the village, with a walk and talk with a member of the local history society.
- The river and geology of the Tees at Whorlton, with the Groundwork Project Officer.
- A creative writing workshop with local writer Becca Jenkins.

A range of different materials and techniques were used and the resulting artwork was displayed in an exhibition at Whorlton Village Hall from Friday 20th until Sunday 22nd November. The exhibition was very well attended and received a write up in the Teesdale Mercury. Feedback from participants was also excellent.



### **Gainford**

The project at Gainford involved the appointment of two local artists, Anna Harding and Anne Mason, to run a series of community art workshops at Gainford Village Hall. During these workshops the artists worked with local residents to design and create artwork inspired by the landscape and cultural heritage of the local area. The resulting artwork was displayed during an exhibition at Gainford Village Hall in May and will remain on display to the community at the Village Hall.

The workshops included a talk by volunteers from the Darlington & Teesdale Naturalist's Field Club on the botanical interest of the area and a visit to St. Mary's church to view the heritage boards, which were used to inform and inspire the designs.

The project also involved the running of a Longsword Dance workshop, which is an ancient dance form that has strong historical associations with Gainford. The workshop was led by Patrick Langdon and Mike Bettison of Music at the Heart of Teesdale and participants were taught about the history of the dance form as well as learning the dances themselves.



### **Barnard Castle & Cotherstone**

The project at Barnard Castle involved the appointment of two local artists, Jane Young and David Hall, to hold a series of workshops with local residents to create artwork inspired by the wildlife of Kennedy's Ponds at Cotherstone.

The project involved a presentation by a volunteer from the Darlington & Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club about the Kennedy's Ponds project and the associated flora and fauna of the area. Participants also visited the site to inform and inspire their artwork.

The resulting art created was displayed in an exhibition at the Witham in March, which was very well attended and received excellent feedback. Some of the artwork will also be displayed at local GP surgeries in the community.





### **Headlam & Staindrop**

The final VIVA project consisted of a series of art workshops focussing on the heritage of the village of Headlam and in particular Headlam Hall. A total of five workshops were held, along with a guided tour of Headlam Hall and the project culminated in an exhibition held at the Hall and which featured artwork created by the participants. The workshops were held at the Masonic Hall in Staindrop and engaged participants from throughout the local area.

The art workshops were developed and delivered by local artist Jane Young and encouraged the participants to try different artistic styles and 'move out of their comfort zone.' The project received excellent feedback from participants and was enjoyed by all.



## Outputs

- 10 communities engaged
- 8 artistic features created and installed in village locations
- 28 community workshops held
- 4 art exhibitions held
- 74 people engaged in workshops
- 10 local artists/tutors engaged
- 4 volunteers involved in delivering talks and presentations

## Feedback/quotes

'This was a superb experience. Enjoyed it all.' (Headlam & Staindrop)



'I really enjoyed being able to experiment with the different materials on offer.' (Headlam & Staindrop)

'It has been a wonderful opportunity to learn.' (Barnard Castle & Cotherstone)

'The insight and suggestions throughout by the course leaders were excellent- Jane and David were continually approachable and encouraging.' (Barnard Castle & Cotherstone)

'This has been a most enjoyable experience. Not only working with known friends but also meeting new people. This activity was completely new to me and opened up new avenues. I was extremely impressed.' (Gainford)

'Great fun- creative, encouraging, productive. Community projects such as this are an important element of rural village life and bring the community together in an empowering way.' (Gainford)

'Most enjoyable- lots of variety of mediums and subjects, certainly bringing in all aspects of our environment. An excellent tutor, very enthusiastic and encouraging to us all.' (Whorlton)

'I have really enjoyed the opportunity to try techniques and mediums which I would otherwise not have had and working on the local landscape has given a lovely focus to the work.' (Whorlton)

'It's all we hoped for and more. We think it represents what Romaldkirk is about, which is a real sense of community, and the history of a country village.' (Romaldkirk)

'I think it is nice that they have been done in all the parts of Eggleston. We are very impressed.' (Eggleston)

'A very big thank you to Groundwork and Heart of Teesdale for the wonderful bench...I think it fits the remit perfectly and it has certainly been a community project.' (Boldron)

**For further information contact:**

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