# Commissioning Brief for a History Wall

at the Balfour Hospital, Kirkwall, Orkney

**Commissioning Client: NHS Orkney**
**Project Management: Royal Scottish Academy**

## 1 Overview

The Balfour Hospital is a rural general hospital managed by NHS Orkney (NHSO). This new purpose-built hospital was completed in July 2019 and officially opened on the 25 May 2021 by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. This rural general hospital facilitates and supports the delivery of Health and Social Care services to the 21,000 strong population of the Orkney Islands. The building accommodates a diverse range of departments designed to be flexible both at user level, supporting complex staffing conditions, and for future expansion and service planning.

The hospital design embraces a strong sense of community with a large, light filled, central Hub which provides a welcoming space where staff, patients, and visitors can meet, relax and access all clinical departments and facilities.

NHSO developed and adopted an arts strategy in response to the new hospital comprising three main concepts:

- Creating high-quality art for the new hospital and healthcare facility that support the wider design, build and wayfinding strategy.
- Creating meaningful and memorable experiences for patients, staff and the wider healthcare community.
- Creating opportunities for artists to develop and present art including work developed through a process of involvement and collaboration.

To date, two public artworks have been commissioned by NHSO. These are located in the Hub and are by Orkney based artists Samantha Clarke and Jack Whitwell. In addition, the NHSO Art Collection was reviewed, re-presented, and hung throughout the hospital, by the Royal Scottish Academy, and this is complemented by artworks, on long term loan, from Art in Healthcare.

This brief is for a History Wall commission to be located and installed in the central Hub area of the Balfour. This site-specific artwork is intended to celebrate the history, role and contribution made by the Balfour hospital within the Orkney community. A key element to this commission will be engagement with NHSO staff, past and present, and the wider Orkney community who have provided care, or have benefited from the care and provision of services at the Balfour. In promoting engagement and participation this commission will fulfil key objectives of the adopted arts strategy for the new Balfour.

**We are seeking creative and engaging proposals from Orkney based artists/artist collectives/craft persons/makers for the design and fabrication of a permanent artwork. It is also the client's wish that the approved commission is fabricated in Orkney using local suppliers and makers.**

The intention is to give people pause for thought or perhaps provide a welcome distraction whilst visiting the hospital. The hope is that through pictures, objects, experiences and stories, memories will be evoked, and conversations will be inspired for staff, patients and visitors engaging with the work.

## 2 Project Outline and Aims

During the NHSO Art Collection review a number of items of historical interest, including medical instruments, photographs, plaques, gifts and other objects, were recommended for safe keeping. These items have inspired the proposed History Wall commission in providing a tangible link between past and present. Please refer to Appendix 1.

These objects and gifts provide a starting point for artists to investigate and celebrate events, stories and personal experiences from those who worked at, were cared for at or visited the old hospital. The Balfour hospital has certainly played an important role in the Orkney community from its origins in 1836, the subsequent development of a purpose-built hospital in 1927 and in 2019 the opening of a state-of-the-art general hospital with its design rooted in the culture and context of Orkney. It is this collective history which should be celebrated in the new artwork commission.

The design and form of the History Wall is open to interpretation. The challenge will be for artists to present a design concept which is engaging and visually dynamic whilst ensuring this can be built, installed and maintained safely in a clinical environment.

Key aims of the commission are to:

- Create an artwork which fully engages the local audience – a conversation piece which connects people through the power of objects and stories. It should be visually appealing and form a creative focal point in the Hub.
- Encourage engagement and participation with NHS Orkney Staff, patients and the wider community, which is at the heart of this commission.
- Present a clear design concept and approach which can be developed through to a detailed design and fully costed proposition.
- Create a design which can be successful integrated and maintained within an established clinical environment and in accordance with NHSO Health and Safety and infection control guidelines.

## 3 Project Location

The proposed location for the History Wall is the triple height wall located next to the main stairs (providing access to/from the first floor) and adjacent to the Outpatient Department. This location is bathed in natural light and looks out onto the sensory courtyard garden. The provision of informal seating ensures this is a popular meeting area. It is also highly visible and readily accessible. Please refer to Appendix 2 for photographs of the Hub and location of the proposed History wall.

The dimensions of the History Wall are:

Height 720cm

Width 560cm

## 4 Delivery

Following appointment and contracting, the project will progress in three stages:

**Stage 1:** Research, Engagement and Concept Development ( Sept – October 2022)

The artist will familiarise themselves with the historical, social and architectural context of this commission. Organise and lead a community workshop to give local people the opportunity to access, explore and contribute to the concepts and materials relevant to this commission. The artist will distil concept ideas into a draft design and present their rationale, proposed approach and outline fabrication costs to the commissioning client for approval.

**Stage 2:** Detailed Design (October - November 2022)

The artist will develop the approved concept into a detailed, fully costed proposal for implementation. This will include fabrication details and costs, and an installation and maintenance schedule for approval by the commissioning client.

**Stage 3:** Fabrication and Installation (December 2022–February 2023)

On approval of Stage 2, the Artist, working with the project manager, will oversee the production and fabrication of the agreed work. A comprehensive installation plan will be supplied by the artist for approval by NHSO Estates. On approval of this plan, the artist will arrange the safe and secure installation of the work and any associated interpretation material, in accordance with NHS Health and Safety and infection control guidelines. The artist will also submit a comprehensive maintenance schedule for approval by the commissioning client

## 5 Budget

A fee of £ 6,300 (excluding VAT, if applicable) will be awarded to the successful artist/artist makers to complete Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the delivery schedule.

The artist fee will be inclusive of travel and subsistence and exclusive of materials, fabrication costs and installation of the approved final design.

A separate fabrication and installation budget, presented and approved by the commissioning client, at Stage 2, will be made available to enable Stage 3 to proceed. It is the client's wish that the approved commission is fabricated in Orkney using local suppliers and makers.

## 6 Copyright and Reproduction

Ownership of the work lies with the commissioning client. The copyright and all intellectual property rights in the works and/or documents remain vested in the artist(s)/maker. The commission client shall be entitled without further payment to make, or authorise to be made, any photograph in any publication or film, video, recording or television broadcast which is intended to advertise, promote or record the making of the work or the project to which it forms a part. The commission client may sell such items without further payment to the artist(s)/maker.

## 7 Submission Requirements

Submissions should include:

- Examples of previous relevant work/projects
- A concise CV (maximum two sides of A4 paper)
- An initial design concept or proposed approach (up to two sides of A4 paper) detailing the approach to be taken if awarded the commission
- Indication of fabrication costs
- Outline a clear project programme/ commission development timescale
- Statement confirming that the commission can be completed within the timescale stated.

Artists/makers are invited to send their response to this brief, in digital format to Jane Lawrence, RSA Art Consultant, e-mail: janelawrence@royalscottishacademy.org no later than 4pm on Monday 1 August 2022.

You will be notified within two days of receipt of your submission. If you do not receive notification, please contact Jane Lawrence to ensure your application has been received.

Interviews for shortlisted artists will take place in late August 2022.

## 8 Contacts

To arrange site access to view the proposed commission location, at the Balfour, and view the historical items detailed in Appendix 1 please contact Anne McOmish, e-mail: Anne.Mcomish2@nhs.scot

For an informal chat about the brief please contact Jane Lawrence, e-mail: janelawrence@royalscottishacademy.org