

periplum

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**Proposal to The Land of Green Ginger
Pilot Phase – 2016**



Periplum proposal to the Land of Green Ginger Pilot Phase 2016

Overview

For the 2016 Pilot Phase, Periplum will embark on multi-strand research & development activities: testing approaches to engagement; building an audience base in specific neighbourhoods; developing a network of participating community groups, individuals and enterprises; researching and collecting Hull-specific legends, myths and folklore to inspire a new narrative for a large-scale event in 2017. We will develop these existing legends and generate new myths by creating a series of intriguing interactive artworks delivered direct to the doorsteps of residents and appearing in the heart of neighbourhoods through a project that grows during a 7-day residency from mid to late-August 2016.

Concept

The activities of the 7-day residency will be highly participatory and interactive, and take place through 3 phases:

1. Treasure on your doorstep
2. Treasure Trail
3. Hull's Treasure

1. Treasure on your Doorstep

Overnight, a series of 50 bottles will magically appear as miniature installations on the doorsteps of select recipients in a single neighbourhood. As they awake in the morning and open their door to the outside world, 50 community residents will each find one of these small wonders lovingly placed amidst a little island of sand and pebbles, as if washed ashore from the Humber estuary. The bottles will contain different messages, maps, folklore and written legends of Hull, both historic and contemporary, presented as beautiful illustrations, poetic and pictorial interpretations on rolled parchment visible through the glass. New sets of bottles will be delivered to more houses each day, as the phenomenon of these gentle interventions grows over the 7 days.

The decoration of each bottle appears to come from another time and place and has a note declaring it as a *'message from a faraway place that exists all around you'*. It will also have an invitation for the recipient to send a message in a bottle to another community member's doorstep, inviting them to enter the magical chain of communication.

Participating households simply need to place their own message in the bottle and leave it on their doorstep to be collected. Residents who actively participate in this will be rewarded with a new message – a clue leading to the beginning of a treasure trail: *'Go to this place to find out where your message might land...'* An illustration points the participant to the first port of call on a voyage throughout their neighbourhood.

2. Treasure Trail

The invitation to join the treasure trail ends with a word of advice: *'If it is treasure you seek, then a treasure you must bring. Bring something you treasure with you.'*

After following the first clue that leads them into the wider world, treasure-seekers enter a new level of intrigue. Beyond the initial surprise of these delightful artefacts landing on residents' doorsteps, the distinctive bottles have begun to subtly appear in shops, social spaces and public places. Each bottle has a clue leading to the next point of the trail, as the alternate reality they allude to starts to pervade the neighbourhood, like a window onto another world. It will become visible even to community members who haven't received a bottle and the treasure trail can also be followed by them: A bottle is placed amidst the cakes in the glass cabinet at the bakery, which in turn has a clue leading to the window display at the chemists, and so on. We will initiate shop workers into the narrative, asking them to relay the simple information that the bottle washed up at the shop one morning.

3. Hull's Treasure

Finally the trail leads to a central community location hosted by a Periplum performer and holding an interactive Community Treasure Chest. On reaching this destination, treasure-seekers are asked by the performer what treasure they have brought, what is the story of this treasure, what it means to the holder, and if they wish to add it to the chest. Treasure-seekers are then invited to open up the treasure trunk. Music and voice recordings emanate from the chest, which also has an artistically rendered map of Hull. Treasure-seekers are asked to name something they treasure about Hull and why it is important to them. They are then invited to add a miniature flag representing this onto the map, also being able to look at other community members' nominations and the stories behind these.

Residents who have visited the treasure chest will be invited to return during the week to see how the map installation has developed and share in other participants' treasure.

Inspiration

Several personal stories of messages in bottles in modern Hull have inspired our concept. Perhaps the most moving of these is the following: In 1979 a 13-year old girl from the Humber region was on holiday on Scotland's West coast. She threw a message in a bottle into the sea, asking for a pen pal. Two years later the bottle was found by a 6-year old boy called Richard from Motherwell. He replied to the girl's message with a postcard. Because of the age difference, the girl never replied. Thirty-one years later, now in his mid-thirties, Richard moved to Hull and soon met Mandy. They became partners. One day, Mandy was sorting through some old keepsakes when she discovered the postcard reply to her message in a bottle which she had received as a child. It was signed Richard Morwood – the same name as her now partner. She showed Richard the card and asked if it was him that had sent it. Richard had a distant memory. Yes: he was the one who had sent the postcard. His childhood address was on the postcard, and he had signed it off: *'Love, Richard'*.

Sites

2016 activities would preferably be focussed on neighbourhoods in the East as the 3 potential sites we have identified for a large-scale event in 2017 are East Park, Sutton, and our current first preference: the brown field site in Ings. This research and development project has been designed for an area with residential housing and local shops. We are open to further exploration of potential 2017 sites through the August residency and are flexible on the final location.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Our vision for the Pilot Phase has community engagement at its heart, and is highly participatory. The personalised artistic approach allows us to engage directly with the public and also provides opportunities for them to engage with each other. The phenomenon of bottles magically appearing and the chain of communication created will develop a growing sense of mystery, causing neighbours to speak to each other and spreading a creative buzz across communities. The charm of sending a message in a bottle is that the sender doesn't know when it will arrive, where it will land, and who will find it. This act of placing faith in the currents of nature to communicate with a stranger will be emulated through our project, where messages are transported between neighbourhoods in anonymous acts of giving and receiving. Beautiful works of art in their own right, the message in a bottle medium will provoke personal, intimate & intricate acts, encouraging the creative imagination of community members and creating links across neighbourhoods.

We envisage that up to 500 households will receive bottles over the 7-days of August activity, reaching families and community members across generations. With installations of bottles in shops and other public places being accessible to extra, passing audiences, the numbers reached could be well over a thousand people. We will also explore the potential of creating links between different neighbourhoods through this Pilot Phase.

Participation

During the preliminary phases of research and creative planning (June-July) we will look to initially engage with one or two community groups in Eastern neighbourhoods. These groups will be identified through liaison with Community Producer Louise Yates, and will take part in a first wave of activities through meetings and workshops with Periplum's team, including:

- Creation of a community treasure chest
- Researching & collecting Hull's myths & legends
- Nominating recipients of the first 50 bottles

A total of 6 half-day workshops will be on offer to community groups. There may be scope for some workshop participants to join in delivery of the intensive residency in August.

Community Treasure Chest

Through preliminary workshops, participating community groups will be invited to take part in initial decoration of the treasure chest, which will be located at the finale of the Treasure Trail. Participants can add objects, mementoes, personal effects, photographs of people and places, and stories about Hull which are dear to them, as well as adding the first flags and stories to the Treasure Map by electing their own nominations of 'Hull's Treasure'.

Nominating recipients

The first wave of bottle recipients will be elected by participating community members, who will be invited to anonymously nominate somebody they know to receive one of these surprise artworks on their doorstep.

Collecting legends & myth-making

We will invite our community participants to take part in the gathering of unique Hull folklore stories, sharing any stories they gather with each other, and given the opportunity to imagine new myths and legends. These will be translated into the artworks in the bottles.

We will also use the R & D to look forward to community engagement opportunities in 2017:

- We will build a database of actively participating households which will serve as an audience/participant base for 2017. These households and their journeys may also be turned into an artistic map as part of the documentation process.
- Having developed a support network of participating community groups, individuals and enterprises, we will create contact lists for future use

Learning Points & Evaluation

The following learning points will help us evaluate the success of Pilot Phase activities, including community engagement, experiments in artistic content & forms of intervention:

- The questions: 'What do you treasure in your neighbourhood?' and 'What do you treasure about Hull?' will help us build a picture of the people, places, traditions, ideas, hopes and dreams that residents value about the city and the neighbourhoods they inhabit. It will give us insight into our target audience, helping to inform the evolution of concepts and narrative for a large-scale event in 2017 that will ultimately be tailored to the identity & values of the host neighbourhood, empowering communities to identify with the work and celebrate their locality.
- The device of the message in a bottle is an exploratory model for infiltrating the everyday life of neighbourhoods and transformation of the mundane through myth-making, mystery and intrigue. The opportunity to test this in 2016 will be invaluable, helping us understand how to engage an audience in an other-worldly narrative where their creative participation reinforces this magical and transportative reality. If successful, this medium or an equivalent could serve as the lead-in to our 2017 event, or even be used as a way of creating city-wide interventions that link different neighbourhoods. It could also be a vehicle to generate news stories, e.g. an ancient artefact or message washed ashore, as well as extended to engage other organisations and community groups en masse, e.g. schools.
- The experimental approach of delivering artworks direct to residents' doorsteps could be a model for drawing in non-arts attenders as new audiences and ensuring that our project reaches as widely as possible into neighbourhoods, helping us to engage both audience and participants in 2017. We will gauge uptake on how many recipients of the bottles take up the treasure trail as an indicator of the potential of this technique.

Delivery Plan

We will begin by seeking to establish project infrastructure and confirming timelines from early June onwards through liaison with the Green Ginger team. Guidance on the following would be especially appreciated:

- Identifying and approaching potential participating groups
- Securing community workshop space and dates for the workshops
- Securing a Creative/Production Base for the 7-day residency
- Approaching potential host venues (shops, etc.) to display installations and the final Treasure Chest location

Community participant groups and workshop space should be in place for first contact in early July.

Artistic Planning

Research and artistic activities will begin in June 2016 with initial artistic planning – sourcing bottles and treasure chests and designing prototype contents for both.

Historical content – folklore & legends – will be gathered and developed prior to and through workshops with community participants in July, and also ideally through contact with local archivists and historians, such as Hull Maritime Museum.

We will create artworks for the bottles which can be reproduced, working on these from mid-July into early August and largely finished by the beginning of the August residency.

7-Day residency

We will make a clear plan and schedule for shop installations and co-ordinated day-to-day delivery of bottles to neighbourhoods – up to 50 errands per day. We will plan each day's deliveries to be localised on specific areas.

Periplum's Artistic Directors Claire Raftery and Damian Wright have extensive Production Management experience and will carry out the practical delivery and collection of bottles and messages alongside curation of the evolving exhibitions and interventions. This will allow us to directly gauge the success of interventions and make any logistical adjustments as necessary, also enabling us to evolve the creative content over the 7 days.

Initial thoughts are that the treasure trail will run from 2-6pm each day.

During the process we will keep a record of all households which have actively participated. We will also scan all artworks and messages written by the public, as well as recording contributions to the 'Hull's Treasure' installation to document this Pilot Phase process and use as inspiration for 2017 developments.

Timeline

Summary:

Early June	Contact with Green Ginger team, confirmation of requirements Planning first site visits and arranging meetings
Mid-June	Artistic planning, bottles & treasure chest researched Research into historic & contemporary folklore
Late June	Prototype bottle contents produced
Early July	Site visit Initial community contact – introducing project Bottles and treasure chest ordered
Mid-July	First community meeting/workshop – research mission unveiled Walk up to meet venues, discuss installations
Mid-July onwards	Creation and reproduction of bottle artworks
Late July	All installation locations confirmed Second community workshop – sharing of ‘legends’, treasure chest make begins
Early August	Third community workshop – treasure chest & map completed Participants nominate first bottle recipients
Mid-late August	7-day residency – shop/community space installations set up Bottles distributed (continues for 7 days) Treasure trail active for 6/7 days Ends with de-rig of installations
Mid-September	Documentation collated, evaluation undertaken

Budget

Periplum - Hull LoGG Pilot Phase Production Budget

			Total
Artist Fees			
Artistic Director & Visual Artist On Site	7 days @ £200 per day	1400	
Artistic Director & Script On Site	7 days @ £200 per day	1400	
Preliminary community meetings & workshops	2 Directors x 3 days @£200 p.d.	1200	
Artistic Planning, Design, Delivery & Evaluation		1600	
Treasure Chest Host	7 days @ £150 per day	1050	
			6650
Materials			
Bottles	Up to 500 bottles	650	
Bottle contents materials		600	
Treasure chests	2 large treasure chests	700	
Treasure maps printing		280	
Treasure mementos (audience)		300	
			2530
Production equipment			
Exhibition Materials		400	
			400
Travel, accommodation, subsistence			
Production Travel	£200 x 4 journeys Brighton - Hull	800	
Accommodation	2 people x 3 nights Ibis	300	
	2 people x 8 nights self-catering	632	
	1 person x 8 nights Ibis	400	
Meals	2 people 3 days per diem	150	
	3 people 7 days per diem	525	
	Community meetings provision	300	
			3107
Admin Costs			
Project Management, Admin & Overheads		1500	
			1500
Contingency			
			1000
			1000
			15187

*Please note, Periplum is VAT-registered. The above budget is net of VAT.

Accommodation Requirements

We will require accommodation for 3 initial research visits/community workshops from early-July to early August.

We will also require accommodation for 3 people for the 7-day active residency from mid-August. Our budget accounts for these requirements. Exact dates are to be confirmed.

Support Required from Hull 2017

Periplum have extensive experience in community engagement. We are very self-sufficient both in terms of engagement and production-wise once a process is under way and we are embedded in a community. However, we would be grateful for preliminary support and pointers in the following areas of community liaison:

- Identifying and approaching initial participating groups in 2 Eastern neighbourhoods
- Securing workshop space for 3 initial community workshop days (3 x ½ days in each neighbourhood)
- Securing a Creative/Production Base for the 7-day residency which is central to the location of our activities
- Introductions to potential collaborating organisations, particularly for sourcing Hull legends, e.g. Hull Maritime Museum
- Initial pointers to potential hosts for window/interior displays of bottles