



**BURTON
AT BIDEFORD**

The Burton at Bideford

**Craft Gallery Curator
(Freelance)**

Director Welcome

We are The Burton at Bideford, an art gallery and museum based in North Devon, situated in the historic town of Bideford where craft, agriculture and maritime heritage meet at the water's edge.

As a proud National Portfolio Organisation, The Burton is at a pivotal moment with new leadership and ambition for the next stage of our story. As we move towards our 75th birthday in 2026 we are excited to build on the reputation of our existing work with fresh partnerships, projects and strategy.

The uniqueness of place is a key part of our context and our vision for the future. The Burton is located in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, in a district that has recently been awarded over £20 million from the Community Regeneration Partnership Scheme. North Devon and Torridge District Councils' shared cultural strategy commits to supporting cultural, creative and economic development in the region, with an ambition that "in the next five years, northern Devon will be locally, nationally and internationally a place where creativity thrives in unison with landscapes and communities."*



Now is an exciting time to join The Burton team and we are looking forward to welcoming a new freelance colleague to refresh the strategy for our thriving commercial Craft Gallery. Founded in 1994, the Craft Gallery builds on the unique creative heritage of North Devon and has established an outstanding reputation over the past 30 years for supporting some of the best contemporary makers from the South West and beyond.

If you are an experienced curator who can bring a fresh curatorial eye, commercial acumen and strategic thinking to our work in this area we would love to hear from you. Please do get in touch with any questions you have about the role ahead of applying.

Harriet Cooper
Director, The Burton at Bideford

* Flourishing Culture - The Northern Devon Culture Strategy 2022-2027



About The Burton

The Burton at Bideford is a National Portfolio Organisation and one of the leading cultural venues in the South West, attracting over 160,000 visitors last year.

With two exhibition spaces, a museum, Craft Gallery, shop, workshop area and café, we provide opportunities for people of ages to access and engage with artists, collections and exhibitions. Placing community at the heart of our activities, The Burton also offers a rich programme of outreach activities to engage those who don't have easy access to a traditional arts venue in a predominantly rural region.

Our priority is to enable engagement with The Burton to be free, thereby removing social and economic barriers to participation. To achieve this, we aim to finance as much of our work as possible through trading income – our shop, Craft Gallery, room hire, workshops and café – in addition to funding from Torridge District Council, Arts Council England, trusts and foundations, and our loyal Friends scheme.

Connection to the landscape around us is a key artistic enquiry for The Burton and is reflected in our historic collections, our annual environmental commissions and our public exhibitions programme. Upcoming exhibitions include a major solo project with Emma Stibbon RA, the touring exhibition 'Into Abstraction: Modern British Art and the Landscape' in partnership with The Hepworth Wakefield, and an exhibition of lithographs by Spanish Catalan artist Joan Miró.

In 2024 The Burton embarked on a new sustainable museum project with the support of Arts Council England, installing solar panels on our roof, replacing windows to reduce heat loss, and redesigning our bathroom facilities for greater accessibility and efficiency.

The Burton is renowned and valued in the South West as a community venue for everyone to love and access freely. It strives for excellence in being a creative destination that can both inspire and challenge.

* Yinka Shonibare CBE: Modern Spiritual, installation image, 2024. Photo Jim Wileman

About the Craft Gallery – Supporting Contemporary Makers

Supporting contemporary makers is an integral part of The Burton at Bideford's work. For over 30 years the Craft Gallery at The Burton has exhibited, promoted and sold the work of contemporary makers from the South West and further afield – bringing the best of British craft to North Devon.

Historically Bideford was a significant centre for pottery production in the 17th and 18th centuries, supplying pots across England, Ireland, Wales and North America. With over 1,000 individual pieces, The Burton has one of the most significant pottery collections in the South West, today housed in a dedicated Ceramics Gallery. More recently, North Devon has been home to a thriving printmaking community and The Burton's collection includes work by modern pioneers Gillian Ayres, Hilary Paynter and Wilhelmina Barns-Graham.

Job Details

Job Title: Craft Gallery Curator

Contract: Freelance

Duration: 10 months (July 2025 – April 2026), with potential of extension

Fee: £5,000 (25 days work at £200 per day)
The fee includes VAT (if applicable) and you will be responsible for your own Tax, NI contributions, Public Liability Insurance and business insurance for your vehicle.

Hours: The successful applicant will be responsible for setting and communicating to colleagues their own working schedules in order to meet key deliverables and timelines in discussion with the Director.

We currently work with around 40 makers using different mediums including ceramics, print, woodwork, textile and jewellery. This includes Clive Bowen, Paul Young, Hannah Forward, Jack Welbourne, Blandine Anderson, Bill and Peach Shaw, and Hilary Paynter. Alongside exhibiting new work in the Craft Gallery, we aim to programme craft showcase exhibitions during the year which introduce our visitors to emerging artists and new makers.

The Craft Gallery is part of Burton Enterprises Limited which leads the commercial offer at The Burton at Bideford including our shop and room hire. It plays a key role in supporting income streams for the artists we support and for The Burton at Bideford, which is a registered charity.

Responsible to: Director

Primarily works with: Visitor Service Assistant (Craft), Commercial Operations Manager, Marketing Officer, Director

Location: This is a hybrid role with a combination of remote work and work on site at The Burton at Bideford, North Devon.

Role Purpose: We are seeking a freelance curator to bring strategic, creative and commercial vision to the Craft Gallery at The Burton at Bideford, refreshing our approach to supporting makers and increasing revenue.

Role Responsibilities

- Review and refresh the Craft Gallery strategy in liaison with the Director, focusing on expanding profile, visitor experience and increasing revenue.
- Audit current stock and sales performance in liaison with the Visitor Service Assistant (Craft), making recommendations for stock returns.
- Bring a curatorial eye to presentation in the Craft Gallery, working with the Visitor Service Assistant (Craft) to refresh displays and improve the interpretation available to visitors.
- Research and recommend new makers for the Craft Gallery strengthening the breadth, diversity and quality of practices we support.
- Review existing artist contracts and commercial terms.
- Plan and curate a series of 'showcases' to introduce new makers, bridging the gap between exhibition and selling opportunities, and advising on potential engagement events (workshops, talks, book launches, etc.).
- Explore opportunities for new partnerships to raise the profile and audience for the Craft Gallery.
- Input strategically on opportunities to present the Craft Gallery artists at partner events, e.g. Created Festival (September 2025).
- In liaison with the Marketing Officer, develop ideas and a consistent identity for connecting the Craft Gallery to new digital audiences, including refreshing its presence on the website.
- In liaison with the Commercial Operations Manager, strategically feed into the development of the Craft Gallery's presence in the online shop on our new website launching in January 2026.



Key Deliverables:

- Curate and deliver 2 showcases of makers' work in the Craft Gallery.
- Bring 3 new artists into the Craft Gallery by end of March 2026.
- Refresh the visual identity and feel of the Craft Gallery in-person and digitally.
- Increase revenue in the Craft Gallery by 15% on previous year's sales by end of March 2026.
- Reduce stock held to a maximum of £50,000 cost value.
- Review and standardise all artist contracts by end of March 2026.

Person Specification:

Potential candidates may already be in a similar role within the craft sector or have strong transferable skills that would enable them to fulfil this job. You don't need to meet all of the person specification but we are ideally looking for candidates with:

- Significant curatorial knowledge of the applied arts and crafts sector across the UK.
- Existing networks with craft artists, makers and organisations.
- Experience of curating displays and creating interpretation.
- Demonstrable commercial acumen and experience.
- Experience of stock management systems.
- Understanding of digital engagement and marketing in the arts or retail sector.
- An ability to work flexibly and collaborate with a small team.
- Exceptional communication skills.



Key Dates

If you have any questions while making your application, require this information in a different format or would like to have an informal discussion about the role please get in touch with us at secretary@theburton.org.

Application deadline: 10am, Tuesday 27 May 2025

In person interviews: Monday 9 June 2025

Start date: July 2025

How to Apply

The Burton at Bideford is an equal opportunities and Disability Confident employer who understands the benefits of diversity so that everyone – irrespective of individual identities, background, or any personal characteristics – receives fair and equal treatment in a safe, welcoming, and enjoyable environment.

To apply for the position, please email secretary@theburton.org with a CV and a cover letter telling us why you are interested in this role and what you can bring to it. We also ask all candidates to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.

If you would prefer, your cover letter can be delivered in video or audio format – no longer than 4 minutes.