

# THE Tower STORIES



**St Michael's the Archangel Church  
Mere, Wiltshire**

**February 2024**

## **WRITER IN RESIDENCE**

The Friends of St Michaels the Archangel Church in Mere supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund is seeking a Writer-in-Residence. Mere is situated on the Wiltshire, Somerset and Dorset borders.

The writer will research and develop original family friendly work inspired by the town, the Tower of the Church and the rich history of the local environs. They will also work with local schoolchildren to develop creative stories around the Tower, run a workshop for emerging or aspiring writers and contribute to the performance event which will mark the finale of the Tower Stories in June 2025. The residency will take place over ten months from September 2024 – June 2025.

### **Context of residency**

The Grade 1 listed parish church presents a powerful and lasting image to our small town, standing towards the western end of Mere, approximately 200 metres from the town centre in a conservation area. The tower, 124 feet high is a landmark from the Wiltshire Downlands to the north and east and across to the Vale of Blackmore to the south.

The project is to develop a community programme which brings to life the Tower's rich and varied story by creating new interpretation that focuses on the Tower's rich heritage and the part played by the stonemasons, the gilders, the architects, the bell ringers and the local people of Mere.

**The Friends of St Michael the Archangel Church** [elaine@thetowerstories.co.uk](mailto:elaine@thetowerstories.co.uk)

Charity number: 281604

The Writer-in-Residence will develop the rich story each room in the Tower has to tell.

- The Bell Room (used by a regular team of 15 bell-ringers)
- the Clock Room (C18th turret clock and Medieval chime barrel)
- The Belfry (Eight Bells with the oldest cast in 1460)
- The Roof (at a height of 124ft with magnificent views of the Blackmore Vale and Mere Downs)
- The carved graffiti (1551 - current)
- The peregrine falcon

This is not a faith led project it is a community project. It is important that it draws all to the rich heritage of the building.

### **Objectives of residency**

A writer-in-residency for The Tower Stories will:

- Spend time researching the archives and reading existing research. Embed themselves into the site, getting to know our knowledgeable and passionate teams.
- Generate high quality, creative and original family friendly writing/material in response to the Tower and its history.
- Work closely with all those involved in the site to draw out contemporary stories as well as history.
- Provide visitors and local communities more opportunities to engage with St Michael's through interpretative materials, fictional writing, workshops and any other events the programme generates.
- Support local schools and students to understand the heritage of the site and see it as an inspiration going forward.
- Create a legacy through writing The Tower Stories – particularly for children and young adults. This writing can be used long after the project is finished and may be interpreted in many different mediums.
- Recognise that the work the writer generates will be widely available. The form this takes will be decided as the residency progresses
- Have open access to the Project Administrator and monthly meetings with the Project Administrator and nominated Community Working Group. These meetings can be held online.

## Fee

The residency will take place from September 2024 – June 2025. The fee will be £5000. There is a further budget to cover dissemination, event costs, travel costs, photography etc.

The successful candidate will probably have links to the Southwest, but this is not obligatory. If you do have links to the Southwest (however tenuous!) please detail these in your application.

## Attribution of digital works created

We are committed to making sure that the Tower Stories benefits as many people as possible. As you know, this project is being supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (The NLHF), and this means we have to follow the formal requirements it sets out.

All digital resources created for the Tower Stories must be “accessible, available and open” to the public for at least five years. We are therefore asked to use the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC-BY 4.0) in respect of all digital works produced as part of this project, including images, music, documents, web pages, code and other digital resources. This means that they will be available for **others** to re-use, adapt and republish **as long as they give the correct attribution** of the source. The attribution will name the creator, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Friends of St Michael’s Church, Mere.

## Income from the sale of creator’s work for The Tower Stories

The Friends of the Church of St Michael, Mere hopes to create commercial income from the sale of works produced by its’ Tower Stories creators in order to further support the needs of the church building and the other charitable works relating to St Michael’s Church. The Friends will cover the production costs and will give the creator an agreed percentage of any profits made.

## How to apply

Apply on our website [www.thetowerstories.co.uk](http://www.thetowerstories.co.uk) or email [elaine@thetowerstories.co.uk](mailto:elaine@thetowerstories.co.uk) including a covering letter (of no more than 2 pages) explaining why you would like to undertake the residency and your experience of running workshops particularly with young people. Please include your writing CV with the names of two professional referees, and a sample of your writings.

**Please submit your application by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024.** We will invite shortlisted candidates for interview in the week beginning Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024.