



# Working with Gold

Project Report

Clare Bryden  
December 2018

## Acknowledgements

Working with Gold was supported by:

A Grass Roots Grant from Exeter City Council

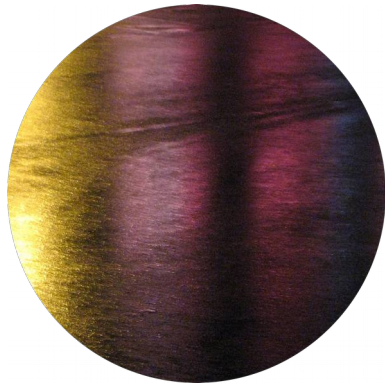


Digby Community Association

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## 1. Background

Working with Gold was a year-long programme of public art in its broadest sense in the City Council ward of St Loyes. It aimed to nurture a sense of place among St Loyes residents and workers; and build community.

St Loyes lacks heart: it has no community centre, pub, post office or anything obvious that connects people. It is a mix of council housing, mobile homes, suburbs, industrial estate, retail park, M5 J30 services and valley park. Few neighbourhoods have a sense of community.

The starting point of the programme was little to no arts provision in St Loyes, no engaged audience for public art, and no public venue / community centre.

The original proposal was for a larger project supported by matched funding. At that time, it was expected that a new Community Builder for St Loyes would be appointed in the autumn of 2017, and that we would work in partnership work to build awareness and audiences.

When the matched funding fell through, and as uncertainty over the Community Builder continued, the approach was renegotiated with the Council Officer responsible for administering the Grass Roots Grants.

The programme was refocused on research and experimentation with different types of work, locations and audiences. Where possible, the programme engaged with related initiatives. It ran from December 2017- November 2018. Even though the work continued at a lower level than initially intended, there have been a large number of outputs and outcomes, and a substantial legacy.

## 2. Outputs and Outcomes

### Online presence

#### Outputs:

- Visual identity for Working with Gold.
- Website as an ongoing resource and a platform for delivery of Minecraft my home, What three words...? and other outputs.
- Engagement with social media via a Facebook group, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

#### Outcomes:

- New networks formed, and seeds for audience engagement sown.
- Increased visibility of St Lloys.



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Website [WorkingwithGold.org.uk](http://WorkingwithGold.org.uk) 15,573 visits, up to 278 a day

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Facebook group [@workingwithgold](https://www.facebook.com/workingwithgold) 113 members

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Twitter [@workingwithgold](https://twitter.com/workingwithgold) 53 followers  
34,186 tweet impressions, 616 engagements

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Instagram [@workingwithgold](https://www.instagram.com/workingwithgold) 19 followers  
323 engagements

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## Local research

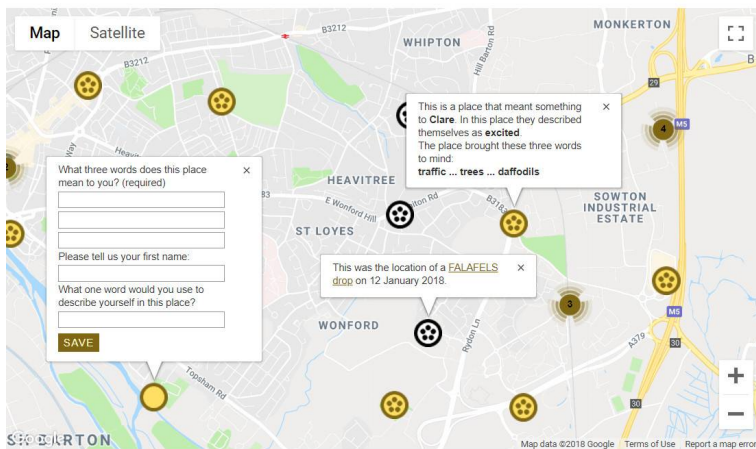
### Outputs:

- List of organisations (public sector and commercial) and contacts with an interest in St Loyes. The contacts have been passed to the Community Builder. Given data protection laws, they will not be shared any further.
- Set of useful websites and tools for researching local information, in general and specific to Devon, Exeter and St Loyes.
- Information and data about St Loyes. This was used in developing the programme of work and particular activities. Fun and educational material is published on the programme website.
- Information and fun facts on [WorkingwithGold.org.uk](http://WorkingwithGold.org.uk) about the horrible history, ghastly geography, and eccentric economy of St Loyes.

### Outcomes:

- Increased availability of information about St Loyes.
- Ongoing resource for engagement and research.
- Increased understanding of the place, and what could be found out about a place if the surface were scratched just a little.

## Welcome to What three words...?



What are the places that mean something to you? Click on the map markers to find out what others have said about their places. Or find a place and make your own marker...

Search on Google Maps

or Click to find your location

or Click anywhere on the map

**What three words...?** is part of [Working with Gold](#), a programme of public art that aims to nurture a sense of place and build community.

The [map above](#) captures in a simple way what places mean to people.

It's very easy.

First pause and reflect for a moment, and then choose three words that your place means to you. If you would like to, you can add your first name or nickname, and one word about yourself right now. This could be how you are feeling, or what you are doing.

There are three ways you can add your place:

- You can search for your place on Google Maps, then click on the search result.
- You can choose your present location. You will need to allow your browser to access this.
- You can click anywhere on the map to choose a place.

Please also feel free to browse what others have said about their places. You may also notice some mysterious 'FALAFELS drops'. There is [more about FALAFELS](#) on the Working with Gold website.

I hope you enjoy,  
Clare Bryden

**Terms of use:** In submitting your three words, and optionally your first name or nickname and one word about yourself, means that you are implicitly giving permission for it all to be stored in a database with your chosen location, displayed in this application, and reused in other artwork. If you would like your submitted information to be removed, or in case of error or to find out more, [please get in contact](#).

## What three words...?

### Outputs:

- An online tool that captures in a simple way what places mean to people, accessed via <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/activities/what-three-words/>.
- Responses captured during January-March.

What three words...? is aimed at encouraging people to pay attention to place. The instructions are: "First pause and reflect for a moment, and then choose three words that your place means to you. If you would like to, you can add your first name or nickname, and one word about yourself right now. This could be how you are feeling, or what you are doing. Please also feel free to browse what others have said about their places."

### Outcomes:

- Insights into people's views of St Loyes as a place to live and/or work.

On Sowton Industrial Estate the common reaction to being asked about their place was bemusement, and the responses indicated a functional attitude:  
retail ... factory ... employment      place ... of ... work

In the suburban areas, the most common response was a sense of home:  
quiet ... home ... welcoming      home ... convenient ... community

There was also an awareness of nature in the area, and a sense of joy in unexpected discoveries, but tempered with melancholy as regards increasing development and the disappearance of green space:

trees ... hidden ... circle      traffic ... trees ... daffodils  
discovery ... tennis ... sadness      digging ... blue ... unsure

## FALAFELS (Free Art Friday Exeter St Loyes Loves Anagrams!)

### Outputs:

- An experiment with Free Art Friday during January and February.

Free Art Friday is about artists leaving small works for others to find, take home and enjoy.

Seven pieces were dropped in locations across St Loyes, with labels encouraging people to take them away, and get in touch.

### Outcomes:

- The works did disappear, but there were no responses or indications that other joined in and left their own work.





## D-Tour: thoughts looking sideways

### Outputs:

- Promotion of Blind Ditch's project in March.
- A short article about My D-Tour and recordings of others' contributions.
- Published my article and the project's video output at <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/d-tour-on-the-bus/>.

Blind Ditch were commissioned by the University and Stagecoach. The project invited travellers on the D bus route in Exeter to contribute short writings, musings and poetries about their journey. Most of the publicity and activity was focused on the part of the bus route between the city and the University. Hence,

### Outcomes:

- According to the organisers, most contributions were from the city-University stretch.
- Ensuring some contribution from the city-Digby stretch meant that Stagecoach would be aware that it is valued.

## Tranquil City

### Outputs:

- Promotion of Exeter City Futures' project mapping tranquil spaces in Exeter.
- Published the mapping output at <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/activities/tranquil-city/>.

Tranquil City aims to: celebrate nature's presence in the Exeter, show how periods of rest are good for our mental well-being, and encourage walking and cycling.

### Outcomes:

- People who work and live in St Loyes have a source of information about the tranquil spaces available for them to enjoy.
- The places will be incorporated in City Future's tranquil pavement, under development.





## Minecraft my home

### Outputs:

- St Loyes available as an online multiplayer Minecraft world during May-November.
- A single player version of the St Loyes world, available to download for multiple platforms at <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/activities/minecraft/>.
- A small piece of work for City Councillor Peter Holland, to create an artist's impression of a wilderness area behind Warwick Road.

Aimed at enabling people to reimagine their local area, engaging children, and making virtual public art. I am now known to some in St Loyes as 'the Minecraft lady'.

### Outcomes:

- Collaboration with Exeter City Futures, under the umbrella of on their Exeter 2025 Minecraft Challenge.
- Further contacts relating to modelling place in Minecraft.
- An ongoing resource of the downloadable St Loyes world, which could be used with children as a bridge from screens to exploring their actual place.
- A tool for reimagining St Loyes, experimenting with new developments and recreating its history. Plus the visions already created, including an imagined new community hub.





ST LOYES

WORKING WITH GOLD  
MINECRAFT WITH GOLD & EXETER CITY FUTURES

SEE EXETER BY MINECRAFT

## Art Week Exeter: Minecraft meet-up and See Exeter by Minecraft

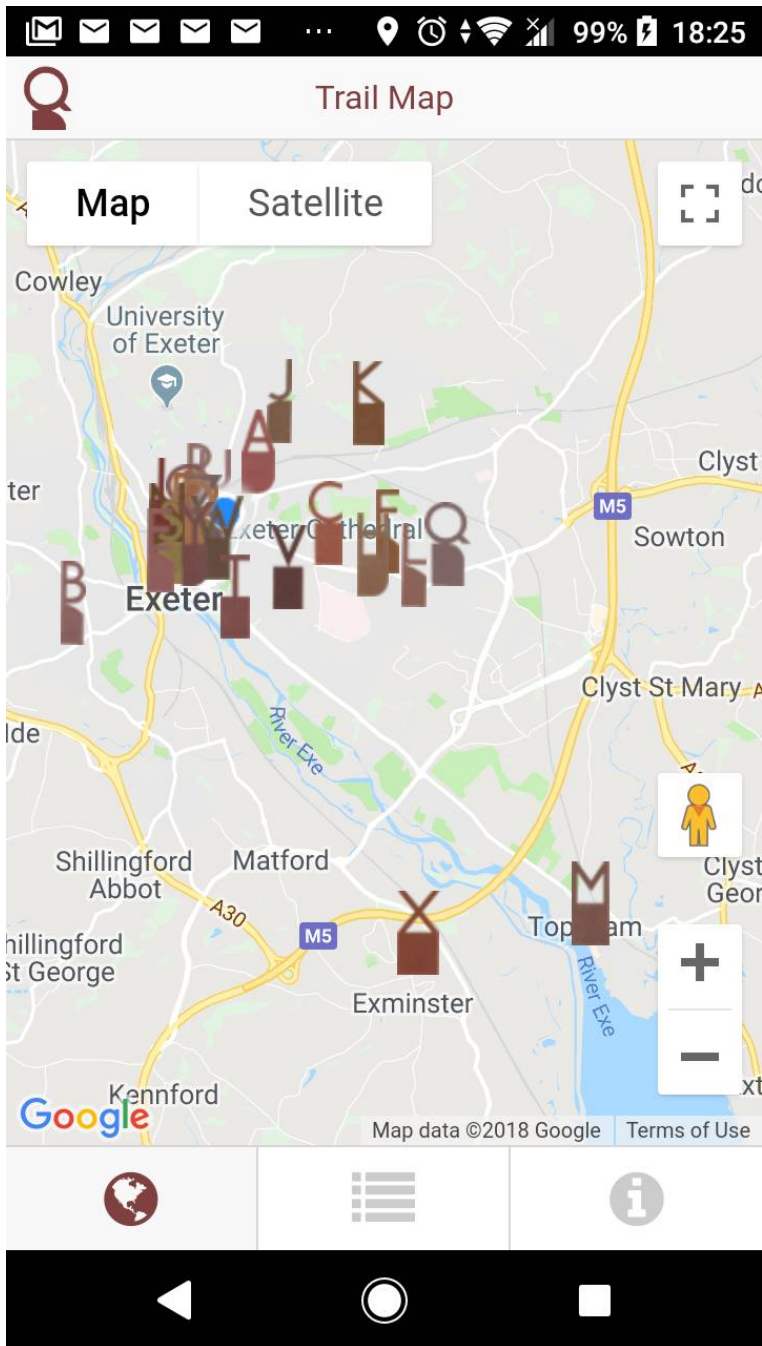
### Outputs:

- Held Minecraft meet-up in my home in May, with the support of Exeter City Futures. This was the only AWE event in St Loyes.
- Cards and posters of Minecraft St Loyes views, in the style of old postcards and GWR railway posters. The files for printing are available.
- Exhibited in the AWESome Art Show in Paris St.

### Outcomes:

- Although there is awareness of the need to engage with the wider area, the Exeter art scene is very dominated by the city centre. Engagement in AWE in recent years has put St Loyes on the map and given it a voice.
- Lesson: It is difficult to attract people to events in a private dwelling.





## Q is for Quarries

### Outputs:

- Created “Q is for Quarries”, an A-Z trail around Heavitree Stone sites, available on Placeify at <https://www.placeify.co.uk/QisforQuarries/> and TICL at <https://ticl.me/Exeter/headlines/13556/view>.
- Created the website for the overall Heavitree Quarry Trails project at <https://heavitreequarrytrails.org.uk/>.
- Collaborated on the development of the Heavitree Stone font, available at <https://heavitreequarrytrails.org.uk/heavitree-stone-font/>.

Heavitree Quarry Trails was a Heavitree Squilometre project, working with the ‘Quarry Pod’ to develop work that celebrates the Heavitree Stone quarried in St Loyes and used to build much of Exeter.

St Loye is the patron saint of miners as well as goldsmiths. You can still see the remains of some significant quarries in St Loyes. For some houses, the quarry face is their garden wall! There is much more about the quarries and St Loye’s Chapel on the Heavitree Quarry Trails website.

### Outcomes:

- Good community engagement, with a great deal of interest in Heavitree Stone and the quarries.
- Many volunteers involved in mapping use of the stone as a building material.
- Engagement with similar work in Heavitree.
- Greater awareness of what can be experienced on our own doorstep, appreciation of our geology and history, both visible and hidden.

## The Birds of Sowton Industrial Estate

### Outputs:

- A walk to discover the birds, both real and imaginary, of one of Exeter's most neglected ecosystems, targeted at Sowton workers.
- Resources for anyone thinking to run a similar event are available at <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/events/birds/>.

Many of the roads and industrial units on Sowton are named after birds, and there was lots of other evidence of bird life to be found.

Just as birds migrate back and forth every year, and some species gather together before roosting, so do holiday-makers migrate through the motorway services, and the workers on Sowton flock onto the roads in their cars at the end of the working day.

### Outcomes:

- Collaboration with Tony Whitehead of the RSPB.
- Most of the 10 attendees were not Sowton workers. Lesson: There is little take-up for events on Sowton at the end of the working day.





## Star Spangled Kyrangle

### Outputs:

- Two stargazing events in Digby in August and November, led by local resident Dr Claire Davies and her Astrophysics colleagues at the University.
- Resources for anyone thinking to run a similar event are available at <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/events/kyrangle/>.
- Specific resources include DIY constellation worksheets, and an application visualising NASA meteorite hits!

The August event focused on the Perseids meteor shower, with telling of myths and legends found in the sky. The November event focused on winter star lore, with more activities for children as it could start earlier.

### Outcomes:

- Good community engagement, with an appetite for further events in Digby.
- 10 volunteers altogether helped with the organisation.
- Collaboration with the University Astrophysics department.
- Engagement with Community Builders in other areas, and further events planned in Poldloe Park and Belmont Park.
- Greater awareness of what can be experienced on our own doorstep, appreciation of our green spaces, and understanding of the night sky.



*My son and I really enjoyed this tonight. Big thanks to Claire and her team for giving up their time to help us get so much out of it. 🍷*

*Awesome (says my 9yr old). Thank you – we enjoyed our evening & learnt lots. A favourite was the telescope.*

*Thanks Clare and Claire for a magical evening. We look at the night sky with a little more understanding and wonder.*

*Will definitely look up more often now the nights are drawing in ... such a friendly and easy way to learn a little bit about the night sky. Thank you.*

*We really enjoyed it, lying there in the dark, staring up at the activity above and with bats flitting around us.*

*Those were the first shooting stars we've ever seen.*

*We really enjoyed everything. The lovely enthusiastic, passionate and knowledgeable people made our day (night). Thank you so much for your time.*

*It was great to see how many people were interested.*

*Thanks for getting it going. Hopefully it'll inspire a couple of folks to do some other fun things together, :)*

For each event, metrics and feedback were collected via a head count and a 'Star Jar' for comments on the night, a follow-up survey, and via email and social media.

August – 45 attendees, of which approx 10 were under 16 and few had prior astronomical knowledge/interest

November – 36 attendees, of which approx 10 were under 16

Engagement with the e-mailings about the events far exceeded the 'industry average'.

All attendees that responded to the follow-up survey were very or extremely likely to recommend the event to friends and neighbours.

## Listening to Silent Spring

### Outputs:

- A piece of sound art based on an awareness walk around St Loyes.
- A leaflet with some guidance for any who want to take their own awareness walk, both available at <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/work/listening-to-silent-spring/>.

On 27 September 1962, Rachel Carson published “Silent Spring”. It documented the impact of DDT and other pesticides on the food chain, biodiversity and human health, and led to many pesticides being banned. It was the drastic impact on bird life that gave Carson the title for the book.

Still today there are many threats to biodiversity from pesticide use, changing land use as we pave over areas that used to be green, and climate change. So on the 50th anniversary of its publication, I spent a couple of hours walking around St Loyes and listening. I was not just listening for birds, but for everything, including all those sounds we usually tune out.

Six years later, I turned my notes into the script for “Listening to Silent Spring”. Its duration is the same time as my walk from my home to Ludwell Valley Park – 40 minutes. The actual sounds I heard are replaced by my voice. Hence the work is mostly silence, which provides space for the listener to become aware of and pay attention to their own ambient soundtrack.

### Outcomes:

- A way to engage with the local area, and step outside the consumerist rat face for a time to pay attention.





## Elsewhere

### Outputs:

- A fun piece of digital art pretending to be a monumental sculpture at J30 Services – see <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/work/elsewhere/>

In recent years, a storm washed up a large chunk of engineering at St Loy's Cove near Land's End. The work imagines it resettled to the M5 Services at Junction 30. Part of St Loy is now in St Loyes. Or, because the Latin name for St Loye is St Eligius, the name of the hospital in the TV show St Elsewhere, you could say that part of St Loyes is from Elsewhere. And it is pointing Elsewhere, back south to St Loy.

It can be seen by anyone arriving at or leaving the Services, or on their way to or from Sowton Industrial Estate for work or retail. People travelling, their minds on their destination, or the 101 things they have to think about today. Their minds in another place or another time. Their minds Elsewhere.





## Resource packs

### Outputs:

- 19 or so ideas for place-based activities in schools, distributed to the three primary schools and one secondary school in St Loyes.
- Even more ideas for place-based activities in the community, both available at <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/resources/>

While developing the original programme proposal, I came up with many ideas for events and activities. There were too many to be able to do all of them, so instead of losing the ideas I turned them into these resources.

The ideas for schools could tie in to many different areas of the curriculum. Most had KS2 and KS3 in mind, and some (which are more organisational) are more suitable for KS4 and KS5. Many can be adapted to fit different age groups, and hence there is also quite a lot of overlap between the activities for schools and for communities.

The ideas are focused on St Loyes, but most could be adapted to other locations.



## Songs in the Neighbourhood



### Outputs:

- A safari concert on the street corners of the Broadfields Road area, with audience participation.

Along Broadfields Road the roads are named after English composers. In May 2017, I and my choir Sine Nomine held a safari concert and sang music by each composer on their eponymous street corner.

We started at Britten Drive, then moved to Coates Road, Grainger Close, Stanford Road, Sullivan Road, Walton Road, Delius Crescent, Purcell Close and finished with plenty of pomp and circumstance at Elgar Close. There were opportunities for audience participation at Coates, Sullivan and Elgar.

### As a pilot it showed the following:

- Direct benefits for audience and choir – getting to know their place or another part of Exeter; meeting other residents; education re composers; morale boost from someone taking an interest
- Indirect benefit – prompting the County Councillor to chase road surfacing!
- An engaged audience
- More work is needed in community engagement and audience-building
- How delivering leaflets/newspapers encourages conversations and community building
- Financial and on-the-ground support from Exeter City Council officers, local City and County Councillors
- Greater awareness of far-flung Exeter among Exeter art institutions and artists





### 3. Lessons

Never underestimate how hard it is to start something from scratch, especially working alone. The Community Builders need a good support network.

Engaging and collaborating with related projects in the local area and across the city are helpful both in terms of maintaining energy and generating outputs and outcomes.

It is most productive to focus on the residents, where they are.

- The Birds of Sowton Industrial Estate showed that Sowton is not a place that people feel engaged with. It is merely a space where they spend their working day.
- Star Spangled Kyrangle and Songs in the Neighbourhood showed that there is an appetite for events on the doorstep that engaged with the ultra-local area, and that only a few people are willing to travel to events.
- Minecraft meet-up showed that private residences are not successful venues.

There are skills and experience within the local residents, and they are often willing to share and participate.

Although there is awareness of the need to engage with the wider area, the Exeter art and culture leads need to be continually challenged to think beyond the city centre.





## 4. Financial Summary

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|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Artist fees, of which</b> | <b>£10,495</b> |
| Projects                     | £8,205         |
| Admin, meetings              | £2,290         |
| <b>Contributors</b>          | <b>£146</b>    |
| <b>Purchasing, of which</b>  | <b>£359</b>    |
| Website services             | £86            |
| Printing, advertising        | £241           |
| Refreshments                 | £32            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>£11,000</b> |

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