

Dear Radford Semele Parish Councillors.

As we expressed at the Council Meeting on the 28th September, we have successfully received a grant from Warwick District Council for £1,989.00 to deliver an arts project for the community of Radford Semele concluding around March 2027.

The project will be based on material from *Alex and Peter: A Book of Portraits*. This whimsical promenade performance was developed with the community of Hatton in 2023. For context, please watch short film 'Alex and Peter Book of Portraits, Hatton 2023' on our website. Or at: <https://youtu.be/jmSrm6T5B08?si=0D1RE3Bzs0hbYbiB>

This new iteration of A Book of Portraits will be developed specifically with and for the community of Radford Semele. We intend the delivery to be split into three phases.

First, we will spend time with the community of Radford Semele, creating a new character that is rooted in local stories. The original *A Book of Portraits* featured The Scholar, who was derived from the history of the parish church. In 1862, William Burden gifted a set of hand bells to the church. The Scholar performed an original song about Burden which featured the ringing of his commemorative bells. We hope to find a similar opportunity in Radford Semele to develop material specific to the community and its heritage. This creative investigation will be spearheaded by community members during an informal **Creative community event at Radford Semele Community Hall on the 27th of November 2027 10am till 3pm.**

The second phase of the project will feature a bespoke folk promenade performance that will take place in various locations around Radford Semele.

Performance premise: The characters from the original *A Book of Portraits* have heard of an interesting new character living in the local area (created from community discussions). The audience will journey through the village, helping *A Book of Portraits* to find their new potential companion. The event will culminate in a fictitious folk ceremony featuring combined arts, performed by the community, to welcome the new character into the group.

This project aims to unite the growing community of Radford Semele, making new connections between families, neighbours and local community hubs, including the community hall, St Nicholas Church and Radford Semele Baptist Church, Radford Semele C of E Primary School, as well as local businesses.

We are hoping this **performance will take place on Sunday the 13th of March starting at 2pm.** Please let us know if there are any concerns about the chosen date.

The third phase (funding dependent)

We have also applied for a £30,000 Arts Council grant. If successful we hope to:

- Engage the local primary school in creative workshops that generate performance material that is shared at the phase three event. This would entail four workshops for KS2 pupils creating performance material to be presented; workshops creating bottle rocket birds for KS2 pupils to bring along; and a character and music showcase for KS1 pupils.
- Facilitate a bottle rocket bird crafting workshop with the wider community. These will be used in the phase three event where participants race against each other to launch their birds along a string, up a maypole-like structure erected in the playing field.
- Facilitate four music and theatre workshops in libraries in Warwick, Leamington, Nuneaton and Bedworth.
- Deliver a final performance in June/July 2027 including the following:
 - Procession through the village culminating in a ceremony where the bottle rocket birds will be launched.
 - Short vignettes performed by *A Book of Portraits* characters (Fox, Flower Maiden, new community created character).
 - Performance of material created in school workshops by the children in KS2.
 - Village fete style activities including music, dancing, games and refreshments.
 - Live music throughout.

Support from the Parish Council

We would be very grateful for your support in promoting the first two phases of the project to the community. We would also greatly appreciate the use of playing field for the second phase performance proposed for Sunday the 13th of March.