



Working with Gold

19 or so ideas for place-based activities in schools

Working with Gold is a programme of public art in its broadest sense that aims to nurture a sense of place among residents and workers in St Loyes; and build community.

There is more information at workingwithgold.org.uk and the project is on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook as @workingwithgold.

It would be great if any of these suggested activities could be used to connect the people with the place and with each other: young and old; residents, businesses and public sector organisations. It would be equally great if some engaging public art was created. And last, but by no means least, it would be great if everyone involved had a lot of fun!

The ideas relate to different types of art, eg visual, conceptual, writing, digital, environment. Most of the ideas were dreamed up with 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. They could tie in to many different areas of the curriculum, eg English, design and technology, history, geography, science (environment, nature), citizenship, computing, economics, music, PE.

Enjoy!

Clare Bryden, 26 November 2018

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Make Place-Based Art

Make visual art that comes out of or is a visual response to St Loyes.

Run workshops with visiting artists.

Hold a competition across all schools in the ward, classed in age groups, media, themes.

Older students organise an exhibition of the artwork, that tours around the schools, with a private viewing to launch it, and sale of the work eg by auction.

Aims: Deepen attentiveness to the place and people; appreciate other students' visions; learn and create; work together; find out what goes in to organising a competition or exhibition.

Example art media:

- Paint, pencil and everything in between
- Print-making
- Photography, video
- Sculpture or collage using items found in the area, from leaves to litter
- Ephemeral art, documented
- Artist's impression of a monumental piece, eg in Minecraft – **see separate activity**

Example themes:

- Scratching the surface
- Movement
- Growth
- Bigger than life
- Generations
- Black and white

Example workshops and visiting artist:

- Led awareness walk around area – **see separate activity**
- Place-based art – Encounters Arts
- Land art – art.earth
- Social photography – Meridian Raw
- Print-making – Double Elephant

Free Art Friday

The worldwide free art movement has existed for many years. Artists leave pieces in public places that anyone can discover, enjoy and take home for free.

There are no rules. That's the joy! Only... In order to keep a record of exclusively free art you need to make sure the work is easily removable and does little or no damage to its environment.

Free Art Friday is not an original concept. There are many artists across the world making art and leaving it out on the street. Some put out canvas. Others use materials found on the street. Cardboard is popular but your imagination is your limit.

Take a photo and post it on the Free Art Friday Exeter Facebook page, or set up your own group. Find out more at <https://www.facebook.com/pg/FreeArtFridayExeter/about/>

P.S. It doesn't have to be Friday!

Aims: have fun; be generous; bring joy; show the world what the school is doing; take art out into the community; encourage the community to make free art too.

Carve Out a Tiny Gallery

Turn a corner of the school into a dedicated art gallery. It could be a small cupboard, or a shed outside, or even an alcove with a glass door.

Paint it white, and put some lights in. Get the students to curate it. Change exhibitions regularly, and hold launches. Get visiting artists in to show their work too.

Aims: have a dedicated space for showing art; something a bit different that's a talking point for the school; find out what goes in to managing a gallery.

Some examples of tiny galleries:

Gallery333 at the Exeter Phoenix is a small alcove that is only 125cm high x 74cm wide x 36cm deep, equalling 333,000 cm³ in volume.

<https://www.exeterphoenix.org.uk/category/gallery/>

There are many galleries in phone boxes that have been adopted by communities.

<http://www.galleryonthegreen.org.uk/>

<https://portylightbox.wordpress.com/>

Each year the Greenbelt Festival has a number of galleries in sheds.

<https://www.greenbelt.org.uk/artists/the-allotment-gallery/>

<https://www.greenbelt.org.uk/artists/the-peoples-gallery-all-weekend/>

Write a Book!

Creative writing that is a response to any aspect of life, real and imaginary, in St Loyes.

Run workshops with visiting writers.

Hold a competition across all schools in the ward, classed in age groups, genres, themes.

Make a book or books out of the work, with illustrations drawn from Make Place-Based Art – **see separate activity** – and publish them online.

Celebrate with a book launch!

Hold a local literature festival!

Aims: Deepen attentiveness to the place and people; appreciate other students' insights; learn and create; work together; find out what goes in to publishing a book and organising a launch or festival.

Example genres:

- Poetry
- Memoir
- Site-specific or nature writing
- Sci-fi
- Historical fiction

Example themes:

- Horrible histories; Loathsome legends; Ghastly geographies; Noisome nature; Execrable economics
- Trees
- The road less travelled
- Blank slate
- Dreaming

Note that there is plenty of material for Horrible histories of St Loyes: executions at Gallows Corner, Ringswell; the Clyst Heath massacre; the Prayer Book rebellion and graveyard under Tesco carpark; Digby mental asylum.

Example workshops and visiting writer:

- Led awareness walk around area – **see separate activity**
- Place-based writing – Resident Writers
- Poetry – Anthony Wilson
- 360Stories – Marjolein Rijken, <https://www.360stories.one/en/>

Publish a Local Newspaper

Collaboration across all schools in the ward to share stories of community and place via a regular newspaper, say one each term.

Design the paper's branding – look and feel, tabloid or broadsheet style, editorial policy.

Feature writing from Write a Book and illustrations from Make Place-Based Art – **see separate activities**

Publish it as a print version for sale, pdf on Issuu, or as a blog with supplementary material.

Set up rival papers and have circulation wars.

Aims: Sharing stories of community and place; each person has their own angle on its truth; reporting on other activities and advertising what's coming up; giving another purpose to class activities; learn what goes into editing and publishing a printed and online newspaper

Example names:

- *SLAnT St Loyes Arts n Times*, tagline “Tell the truth but tell it slant” (Emily Dickinson)
- *SLoT St Loyes Times*, produced by the SLoT machine

Free desktop publishing software – <https://www.scribus.net/>

Ask local printers to sponsor by printing for free, eg Stormpress on Sowton

Build a Picture of St Loyes

Scratch the surface of the area, notice some of its quirks, see how it fits within the contexts of Exeter and Devon, make visualisations of what you find out.

Aims: Find out more about the area, its history, geography, people, organisations, and how stuff works; engage local organisations with local schools; learn research and visualisation skills

Go for a wander and see what you can see, and reflect on it

- On foot, following your nose and anything that looks interesting
- On any of the buses that go through the ward, such as the D and H buses
- Borrow the Stagecoach bus named St Loyes, and go for a jaunt

Play “Call My Road Name Bluff”

- For a road near your house or on your way to school, find out the origin of the name, make up a couple of alternatives, see if your friends can guess which one is true

Visit local organisations and places of interest

- Great Moor House to learn about tithe maps and other archives of information
- Public services like Middlemoor, or big companies like SW Water, or small independent companies, to find out more about what they do
- The quarries off Quarry Lane and Woodwater Lane with Devon CC Geology or Devon RIGS – <https://new.devon.gov.uk/geology/educational-register-of-geological-sites-in-devon/>

Hold a creative question time at your school, inviting:

- City Councillors for St Loyes, the County Councillor for Wonford and St Loyes
- MP Hugo Swire
- City Council and County Council officers in interesting areas, like arts, tourism, air quality, or flooding

Try and find as much information as you can about St Loyes:

- Devon CC Environment Viewer – <https://new.devon.gov.uk/environment/environmental-maps>
- Drawing for 1801 OS map of Exeter overlaid on Google Maps – <http://bit.ly/Exeter1801>
- Local elections – <https://exeter.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections-and-voting/electoral-services/>
- Exeter Data Mill – <https://exeterdatamill.com/>
- Local statistics – <https://www.ons.gov.uk/help/localstatistics>
- Play a “How well do you know your area quiz” – eg <https://www.inyourarea.co.uk/news/how-well-do-you-know-your-area/>

Make visualisations and maps of all the information you find – **see separate activity**

Make Marvellous Maps

Make big and small, shared and personal, paper and electronic maps of St Loyes, as a way of visualising the place and information about it.

Aims: Get to know the area better; share stuff; mix up ways of presenting information as images, text and numbers; learn some coding

Put a massive map of St Loyes on your wall. Post photos, sketches, data, text and link them to places on the map and each other. Something like the police investigation boards as shown on TV!

Draw a new map of St Loyes that shows the significant places and particular stories. It will be different for each person.

Make a book of walks around the area, with maps and directions.

Use Minecraft to explore the neighbourhood in a new way, imagine new possibilities for it, get rid of the things you don't like, and put in the things you do. "Minecraft my home" is a re-creation of St Loyes as a world in Minecraft. Experiment, and ask what if? Make giant sculptures in the neighbourhood. Pave the streets with gold. Turn your school into a castle, or blow it up! Cover car parks with flowers and Mondrian paintings.

See <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/activities/minecraft/>

Share knowledge and experiences of the area on online maps:

- Set up a Google map and share where to picnic, forage for blackberries, find conkers, and make dens
- Map the places where cars have been prioritised over other forms of transport, especially walking and cycling, and over communities
- And notice where people have made 'desire paths' – where they have ignored tarmac and taken a short cut across grass or through a hedge
- Share three words about what the area means to you on What three words...? and find out what others have said – <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/activities/what-three-words/>
- Post your tranquil places on #TranquilCityExeter, and find out where others find tranquility – <https://www.exetercityfutures.com/tranquil-city-exeter/>
- Log your walking, running and cycling routes through the area on Strava, and make a heat map like <https://www.strava.com/heatmap>, or use pencil and paper to map frequent journeys!
- Add your stories of happiness to Bring the Happy – <http://www.invisibleflock.com/bringthehappy/>

Events in Your Streets

In many neighbourhoods, the street names have a theme. Scratch the surface and find out whether they show up what used to be there. Do any of them lend themselves to some sort of activity?

Aims: Be more attentive to the neighbourhood; explore other neighbourhoods; engage the community; have fun together

Example: SiNg Songs in the Neighbourhood – <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/events/sing/>
Either side of Broadfields Road, the roads are named after English composers. In May 2017, the choir Sine Nomine held a safari concert, serenading the neighbourhood with the music of each composer on their own street corner: Britten Drive, Coates Road, Grainger Close, Stanford Road, Sullivan Road, Walton Road, Delius Crescent, Purcell Close, finishing at Elgar Close with a rousing ‘Land of Hope and Glory’.

Example: The Birds of Sowton Industrial Estate – <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/events/birds/>
In September 2018, the ‘Birdman’ from the RSPB led a walk to discover the birds, both real and imaginary, of one of Exeter’s most neglected ecosystems. The route followed the roads named after birds: Kestrel Way; Falcon Road and Harrier Way; Mallard Road; Heron Road and Heron, Swan and Cygnet Units; Bittern Road; Kingfisher Way; Avocet Road; Osprey Road, Goshawk Units and Sanderling Court; Moor (Hen) Lane and Eagle Way.

Example: Star Spangled Kyrangle <https://workingwithgold.org.uk/events/kyrangle/>
The Kyrangle is an area of green in Digby. A local resident and researcher in astrophysics led two stargazing events in August and November 2018, around the Perseids Shooting Stars and Winter Star Lore.

Example: Heraldry Day

The roads near Heraldry Way in Digby are named after royalty, and St Loye is the patron saint of horses. Find out more about both. Hold a fun day for all including fancy-dress jousting; medieval fair and food; troubadour group; procession led by a town crier. Use the jousting to champion causes. Invite local experts to show at the fair: female knight; hawk flier; stonemasons; blacksmiths; stained glass artists; jewellers; bee keepers. Channel the Horrible histories in eg Splat the Plague Rat.

More possibilities:

- Apple Festival in Whipton where the roads are named after apples
- Archery Contest on Apple Lane, channelling William Tell
- Foraging or garden spotting where the roads are named after plants & trees
- Football match where the roads are named after 1930s Exeter City footballers
- Cricket match where the roads are named after cricket grounds

Hold a Random Picnic

SluRP St Loyes Random Picnics

Hold picnics in green pockets and unusual locations around St Loyes.

Notice nature and collect eg types of leaves. Measure the air quality and noise. If possible, count the modes of transport seen. Reflect on tranquillity and wellbeing.

Aims: Explore and connect to place; reflect on planning, environment and quality of life; get outside

Exeter City Council uses diffusion tubes to measure air quality. Smartphone apps are available to measure decibels.

Use the data in the classroom, and share on eg <https://communitymaps.org.uk/project/air-quality-monitoring>

Add the picnic spots to the maps of St Loyes – **see separate activity**

Example locations: the tree circle at the M5 services, roundabout middles, the green space near Tesco.

Build Your Own Country

St Loyes is a bit of a mishmash of housing, industrial estate, green space, public sector, motorway services, with no centre. It's not designed for the people, but maybe it could be.

Imagine St Loyes or a neighbourhood as its own country. Declare its independence and set it up with its own constitution, currency, flag, history, etc. Negotiate treaties and trade with neighbouring states.

Aims: Find out more about St Loyes and its neighbourhoods; develop a sense of civic pride; understand what being a nation state means; maybe get an insight into Brexit

Why would you set up a People's Republic of St Loyes? Or should it be a Kingdom or United States? What are its values? What does that mean for its constitution and government, and its people's rights and responsibilities? Write a Declaration of independence.

What is distinctive about the area? Design a flag for the new country, a currency (gold?!), and a passport. Write its actual, or invented, history. Write a new national anthem based on its history and hopes for its future. Draw a map – **see separate activity**. Develop a national culture and cuisine.

How will your country be financed? What taxes will you collect and how will you run your treasury? Set up a foreign office and a board of trade, and negotiate treaties and trade deals with neighbouring areas. Set up a tourist board, and develop a campaign to encourage tourism. Set up some other departments, like education or environment.

Speed stating:

- How to Start Your Own Country – <http://www.wikihow.com/Start-Your-Own-Country>
- About the state builders of South Sudan – <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/05/opinion/how-to-build-a-country-from-scratch.html>
- What another school did – <https://web.archive.org/web/20161224192054/https://www.thetynings.co.uk/how-to-build-your-own-country/>

Beat the Bounds

In olden times, when maps were rare, it was the custom to beat the bounds of the parish, as a way of sharing knowledge about its extent and boundaries. It is still practised in some parishes. It was done at the time of Ascension Day, in spring at the time of crop sowing and planting out, and the people also prayed for protection and blessing on the land.

SloBBs St Loyes Beating the Bounds

Beat the bounds of St Loyes today, or a neighbourhood, or the country you have built – **see separate activity**

Aims: Find out the extent of St Loyes; get to know it, what's included within those boundaries, and what's outside; find out what makes a place tick; get outside and get some exercise

St Loyes used to be farmland, but doesn't include much productive land today. What does it produce instead? How does it support its population and workers?

Part of the St Loyes boundary is the M5 and the railway line, so some creativity will be needed. Take a slightly different route, or use different as many different modes of transport as possible:

- A group taking the train from Digby-Polsloe wave to a group waiting in the green area off Thornpark Rise, who will...
- Walk or paddle along the Northbrook to Honiton Road, possibly further, and hand over to another group who will...
- Cycle, skateboard or scoot along the Northbrook & Ludwell Lane, Rydon Lane & junction with A379 spur to Russell Way, where they will hand over to...
- Cars down to J30, up the M5 to J29, and back to Honiton Road bridge

The practice is called beating the bounds, because the boundary markers were beaten with sticks. Sometimes the knowledge was also beaten into the children - this is not recommended today(!) But some way of marking key points and corners on the boundary could be used. Perhaps make this part of the establishment of the new People's Republic of St Loyes. Carry its new flag in procession, and sing its national anthem.

Instead of beating the bounds, conduct explorations to the centre (probably Middlemoor roundabout) and the farthest points of St Loyes. Plant a flag.

Record the journeys using video, audio, photo, sketches. Make a short 'TV programme', and write them up as a travelogue.

Signs of the Times

Signs are everywhere. The roads are full of street furniture telling us what to do and what not to do. We're targeted with advertising. Some of it is useful and helps us find out what's on and where we are.

Notice and document all the signs in an area. Make your own alternative signage.

Aims: Be more attentive to overt and subliminal messages; make the area a more positive place

Who are all the signs targeting? What are they doing? eg commanding, warning, forbidding, threatening, or informing, inviting, celebrating?

Interpret the messages. Especially decode the advertising – its images, colours, and text.

Make your own signage.

Put blue plaques up to celebrate special people who live in or have visited the neighbourhood.

Make sure there are as least as many women as men.

Make plaques to celebrate special places and particular events.

Direct people to beauty spots and tranquil spaces.

Make road names for desire paths – **see separate activity**

Make Trails

Explore St Loyes, and make trails to introduce others to different aspects of it. Follow the trails.

Aims: Explore and learn about the area; introduce other people to it; get out and about; learn some more online apps

A history trail could take the visitor around places where events happened in the past. Or make a quirky trail that includes more recent everyday events, or an invented history.

Create a nature trail that takes in good places to spot wildlife or forage for wild food, gardens that are good for bees, green pockets in more urban areas that have been left relatively untouched, and places where the wilderness is re-emerging.

Make a treasure hunt.

Create walks around the area, make maps and write guides to them.

Create long-distance trails, like the SW Coast Path and Two Moors Way, and design waymarkers. How about the Five Gold Rings Way, with the Working with Gold logo as the waymarker?

On a map, make a pattern of dots at similar organisations (eg public sector) or locations (traffic lights) around St Loyes. Join the dots however you please to make pictures and trails.

Follow actual streets on the map to make pictures and trails. Follow them on Strava and publish the image of your route.

Plot your trails and walks on your large-scale or online map of St Loyes – **see separate activity.**

Make a guide booklet.

Use Placeify or a similar app to publish the trails for others to follow – <https://www.placeify.co.uk/>

Example: Q is for Quarries

St Loye is the patron saint of miners as well as goldsmiths, and you can still see the remains of some significant quarries in St Loyes. For some houses, the quarry face is their garden wall! The quarries are the source of the red Heavitree stone that has been used to build many of Exeter's most interesting and historic buildings.

"Q is for Quarries" is an interactive mobile tour on Placeify around an A-Z of 26 different Heavitree stone sites around Exeter. There is one site for each letter of the alphabet, each telling its own story about the use of this material. L is for St Loye's Chapel, and Q is of course for the Quarries.

<https://workingwithgold.org.uk/activities/q-is-for-quarries/>

<https://www.placeify.co.uk/QisforQuarries/>

Take an Awareness Walk

Take a walk around St Loyes, and be aware of everything around. Use all your senses. Spend some time using only one of your senses, for example only your sight or only your hearing.

Aims: Practise being attentive; get out and about; experience and get to know St Loyes in different ways

Example: Listening to Silent Spring

“Silent Spring” by Rachel Carson was the book that kick-started the environmental movement. It documented the impact of pesticides on biodiversity (including bird life) and human health.

“Listening to Silent Spring” is a piece of sound art based on an awareness walk around St Loyes.

Written notes of all the sounds, including those we usually tune out, became the script for the piece. For the 40-minute duration of the walk, the actual sounds are replaced by the narrator’s 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.

<https://workingwithgold.org.uk/work/listening-to-silent-spring/>

Walk around St Loyes using only your hearing while listening to “Listening to Silent Spring”.

Use the guided awareness walk available with “Listening to Silent Spring” as a pdf.

Use all your senses. We don’t just have the five of sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste. There are also spatial awareness of the body, balance, temperature, pain, vibration, hunger and thirst, and intuition.

Stay still and look up. Lie on your back and get lost in the blue sky. Watch the birds flying over. Look for shapes in the clouds, and learn to identify them. The Cloud Appreciation Society is a fun

resource – <https://cloudappreciationsociety.org/> – and the Met Office has a cloud-spotting guide – <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/learning/clouds/cloud-spotting-guide>

Look at the stars. Download a space-watching app and find out what you are looking at –

<https://www.tomsguide.com/us/pictures-story/752-best-space-watching-apps.html>

Rediscover the Land's Productivity

St Loyes used to be farmland and is now mostly suburbia or industrial estate. But the land is still productive, and could be made even more productive in many ways.

Aims: Learn about biodiversity, foraging, how to grow food, how to cook; think about where our food comes from and how we use land; reconnect with the land; learn about the sharing economy

When the houses around Grecian Way were built, the developers called the area 'Mulberry Farm'. It was invented, rather than the name of a previous farm, but it did highlight that the area used to be farmland.

Not is lost! Some productive areas were not bulldozed, such as the verges of the old green lane Woodwater Lane, which have eg blackberries and hazelnuts. The developers planted landscaping that can be foraged, such as cherries, quince, rowan and rosehips. And many people grow food in their gardens and on their windowsills.

Go foraging in the area with an expert guide, learn about the qualities of all the plants – food wood, medicine, etc.

Harvest and share what you have gathered.

Learn about permaculture and urban gardening, and how to use every available space to grow food and other useful plants.

Learn about how to keep bees, and what sort of garden plants benefit bees and other pollinators.

Hold a sunflower growing competition, and make sure the birds can enjoy the autumn seeds.

Start, or expand, your veg plot at school. Plant a wildflower bed.

Do some guerrilla gardening. Make neglected patches beautiful. Plant veg in public spaces for anyone to harvest.

Share seeds, tools, jars, experiences, produce, recipes.

Learn about how to cook what you have gathered and grown.

Make jam and chutney, and sell your produce.

Design a new food brand, with a name related to St Loyes (eg Mulberry Farm), logo, etc.

Document everything in a scrapbook or on a blog.

Make a beautiful recipe book.

Possible partners:

- Devon Wildlife Trust, and the Exeter Wild City campaign – <https://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/what-we-do/our-projects/exeter-wild-city>
- Transition Exeter – <http://www.transitionexeter.org.uk/>
- Exeter Forest school – <https://www.facebook.com/ExeterForestSchoolDevon/>
- Wonford Planters and Whipton Planters
- Whipton Lane Allotment Association (Sweetbrier Allotments)

Beautify the Streets

Make street art in neglected spaces.

Do a litter pick and turn what you find into art.

Hold a street art workshop, beauty ugly walls and hoardings with proper graffiti.

- Miss*C Graffiti Academy – <http://www.graffitiacademy.com/>

Beautify ugly fences by yarnbombing them.

- Wool on the Exe community fibre arts space – <https://wool-on-the-exe.myshopify.com/>

Turn the World into a Playground

- “Ludocity is a collection of pervasive games, street games and new sports – social forms of play that take place in public spaces, such as city streets, parks and public buildings.” – <http://ludocity.org>

Set up a Coding Club

This could cover:

- Making digital art generally
- Creating with Arduinos and Raspberry Pis
- Coding for big data visualisation and infographics
- Integrating data into maps and other online visualisation
- Design and image manipulation software
- Desktop publishing software

Possible partners:

- Code Club – <https://www.codeclub.org.uk/>
- Fab Lab Devon in Exeter Library – <http://www.fablabdevon.org/>

Set up a Creativity Club

SLAAAM St Loyes Anyone's An Artist Meet-up

Provide a space for celebrating everyone's creativeness. Hold regular informal get-togethers where people bring and share what they have created recently. Support each other's work. Collaborate.

Hold an exhibition/performance of work.