



**National
Trust**

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Dear Sir or Madam,

In 2019, the National Trust Research Department commissioned Desirée Baptiste to produce a research audit on the impact of the Transatlantic Slave Economy on the built environment of Northern Ireland. Working as part of a team of six researchers, Desirée's audit focussed on three counties in Northern Ireland. Her audit, which was delivered to me in February 2020, was thoughtful, well-researched, and genuinely innovative. I was particularly impressed by her story-finding skills as in, for example, her discussion of Lemuel Cox, who built the first bridge in Derry/Londonderry. Desirée was able to show, convincingly, that the labour of enslaved African-Americans may have contributed to the building of the bridge, in addition to the American Oak imported especially for the project.

Desirée is an excellent collaborator with strong leadership skills and worked well with the other members of the research team. In particular, she was proactive in her collaboration with the second researcher whose audit was focussing on Northern Ireland, organising meetings to compare work in progress, offering guidance and support, and sharing source materials.

Finally, I would like to emphasise that Desirée's research has served as an important jumping off point for future research in this area. It has helped us to shape an ambitious, multi-partner research project, paved the way for new interpretation at properties and contributed to our broader thinking around how best to embed 'inclusive histories' in our practice.

Desirée has been a pleasure to work with, and I am glad to be able to recommend her to you for the post of 'Curator for Inclusive History'.

Yours sincerely

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Research Manager

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