

30 June 2022

To whom it may concern

**Consultant Researcher in relation to research project The Bishop of London, colonialism and transatlantic slavery.**

I am writing to provide a reference for the work that Desirée Baptiste did as our Consultant Researcher on the above project from August 2021 to January 2022.

Desirée completed an extensive 51,000 word report, which met the following deliverables:

- A fully referenced summary of the core stories, quoting key primary and secondary source documents
- A timeline of key events
- A current bibliography

Fulham Palace Trust is an independent charity, and we manage the house and garden which was home to the Bishop of London from 704 to 1973. The Bishop of London was often very central to major events in British and world history, but his influence has been relatively unknown. In 2020 we felt it was the right thing to do to start to explore the Bishop of London's historic links with colonialism and transatlantic slavery so that we can reflect that in our museum.

From summer 2022 changes to the museum displays and the guided tour script are being prepared and will include further information about the role of the Bishop of London as the

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“colonial diocesan”, and the exploitative nature of plant collecting in North America and the Caribbean. Fulham Palace Trust is also working with four organisations to develop a temporary exhibition for launch in October 2022. We hope that the exhibition will encourage visitors to think about how history is told and by whom.

All of these initiatives would not be possible without the significant and focussed research report delivered by Desirée, whose sourcing and delivery of an impressive amount of information from secondary and primary documents has moved us on significantly in our knowledge. Some of the work on primary documents not seen before is especially helpful, and I found that I understood Bishop Porteus better. Desirée has also made some very useful connections for us with academics in the UK and the Caribbean, and with archives such as Lambeth Palace and the National Archives.

Desirée has also, on a number of occasions, helped us express ourselves in a more appropriate manner with difficult subjects. For example, she wrote to me personally about how we might think about our approach to the sensitive topic of the Church of England's involvement in the Codrington plantation in Barbados and we took on board her advice. This of course goes beyond the brief as a researcher and speaks to Desirée's knowledge of Caribbean history and awareness of live debates and discussions in the Caribbean and UK.

Finally, Desirée suggested the involvement in the project of early career scholars from African Caribbean, Indian Caribbean and African American backgrounds. She assisted us with the search, recruitment and selection of two excellent candidates who undertook specific research topics in relation to the wider project and she helped us forge lasting relationships with them.

Fulham Palace Trust is firmly part of the UK museums community which is determined to challenge the standard narrative of British history. Desirée's contribution, in her role as Consultant Researcher on this project and specifically her significant report, was particularly valuable for putting forward views which counter any tendency toward a traditional establishment perspective. We are currently discussing a short article from Desirée for our annual report.

If you have any further questions please give me a call on +44 7557 433329 or [sian.harrington@fulhampalace.org](mailto:sian.harrington@fulhampalace.org)

All the best

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sian', written in a cursive style.

**Sian Harrington**  
Chief executive