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Accessing Aidan

**Press Release**

**(No Embargo)**

Bamburgh Bones is thrilled to announce that they are hosting a special **'Two Talks, Two Authors’** event at St Aidan's Church, Bamburgh on Saturday 13th November at 3pm.

Authors Max Adams and John Connell will be speaking about Early Medieval Northumbria and St Aidan respectively.

Max is a renowned author, biographer, and archaeologist, His critically acclaimed books include The King of North, The First Kingdom, Aelfred's Britain and In the Land of Giants. Inspired by art, travel, heritage, literature, and landscape Max is a brilliant speaker and a joy to listen to.

John, heralding originally from Alnmouth, recently published 'The Man who Gave His Horse to a Beggar' a lavishly illustrated biography and travelogue of St Aidan, his times and his travels. John is a true champion of St. Aidan and his talk will focus on his life and works and reaffirming Aidan's position as one of, if not the most, important Northern Saints.

Books will be available purchase from the authors. Given the current and forecasted delivery crisis, this is an ideal opportunity to sort out many a Christmas present for loved ones!

The event is free to attend, but donations to Bamburgh Bones are most welcome. Registration for the event is via the Eventbrite website; it can be found by searching ‘Bamburgh Bones’.

The Bamburgh Bones project, telling the Anglo-Saxon story at Bamburgh in the crypt of St. Aidan’s Church, has been made possible by a grant of £355,600 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The grant enables a partnership of the Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership, St. Aidan’s Parochial Church Council, Bamburgh Heritage Trust and Northumberland County Council to work together to reopen the beautiful 12th century crypt to the public once again

For more information, visit the Bamburgh Bones website: <https://bamburghbones.org/visit/events/> or call 07774 943157

**Ends**

**Images:**

**Max Adams and John Connell**

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**NOTES TO THE EDITOR**

**Accessing Aidan**

The aim of Accessing Aidan is to develop the Crypt as an appropriate and high quality new interpretive and community facility for Bamburgh, which will deliver an enticing, inspiring and coherent experience for a variety of audiences. Ultimately, we aspire that more people who visit the village will understand Bamburgh’s significance in Anglo-Saxon times, a period often called the Golden Age of Northumbria.

The Accessing Aidan project will provide a new safe public access into the crypt, allowing it to become open to visitors on a daily basis. It will also create new interpretation in the crypt and in the church to enable visitors to learn about the story of St Aidan, the Golden Age of Northumbria and the characters who now rest in the Bamburgh Ossuary. The new visitor experience will be supported by new website which will include the ‘digital ossuary’ where people will be able to learn more about the skeletons and their excavation. A range of project activities including guided tours and walks, talks and lectures, school activities, outreach events, storytelling, creative writing and arts, an Academic Symposium and a high-profile travelling exhibition, will bring the heritage stories to life and allow the project to engage new audiences and reach beyond Bamburgh.

**Bamburgh Heritage Trust**

Bamburgh Heritage Trust (BHT) was formed in 2012 to provide education, interpretation and information about the history and heritage of Bamburgh. In 2016 the Trust was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, managed by a board of charity trustees. BHT is supported by three partner organisations working together to address the heritage need and develop a more holistic heritage visitor experience.

**St Aidan’s Parish Church**

St Aidan’s Parish Church is the only church in the village of Bamburgh. It stands on the site of the original place of worship founded by Saint Aidan in 635. Almost no trace of that wooden building can now be seen (other than, perhaps, the beam in the Baptistery which St Aidan is reputed to have been leaning against when he died). The greater part of the current church was built in around 1200, with some extension in the 14th century. As well as being the Apostle of Northumbria, Aidan is rightly regarded as the Apostle of England. This parish church is therefore not only the “mother church” of the modern-day Diocese of Newcastle but also central to the history of Christianity in this land. The PCC manages the Church which includes the Crypt.

**The Northumberland Coast AONB**

The Northumberland Coast has been designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) since 1958 in recognition of the quality of the landscape. AONBs are a national landscape designation and together with National Parks they make up our finest landscapes. The Northumberland Coast AONB covers 135 sq kms between Berwick and the Coquet estuary. The area is best known for its sweeping sandy beaches and open views, rolling dunes and rocky cliffs, isolated islands, dramatic castles, ancient relics and rich wildlife.

**The Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership**

The Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership is a broad partnership of representatives from local authorities, statutory organisations, interest groups and the local community. The Partnership guides management of the AONB, offers advice to land managers and the local community and takes action to improve the wellbeing of the AONB for all those who value it, now and in the future. To carry out this work, the Partnership employs a small team which is hosted by Northumberland County Council and jointly funded by Northumberland County Council and DEFRA.

**AONBs**

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), along with National Parks, are considered to be the most special landscapes in the country and belong to an international Protected Landscape Family. There are 38 AONBs in England and Wales, and a further eight in Northern Ireland.