

# St. Sidwell's Community Centre

## Sidwella Rewritten - Writing Competition 2023

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We are inviting you to create a new story of Sidwella, Exeter's patron saint.

The Anglo-Saxon legend goes that Sidwella's rich land-owning father, Benna, died leaving his daughter in the care of a cruel stepmother, who was jealous of her beauty, virtue and inheritance. The evil step mother plotted Sidwella's death and paid two corn reapers to creep up on her as she knelt in prayer in a field and cut off her head with a scythe. Miraculously, a spring of pure water appeared from the ground where her head came to rest, which was said to have healing powers. For the next three nights, the spot was illuminated by a heavenly shaft of light. On the fourth night she was seen walking in the fields with her head re-attached to her body: at that place a church was built, and named St Sidwell's. Sidwell Street is named after her and it's the only Sidwell Street in the world.

We think we could have a more empowering and inspiring story for Sidwella, Sidwell Street and Exeter so we are inviting people to reimagine it. You might start with the original tale and add a new ending, take inspiration from the people of Sidwell Street today, or anything else!

There are probably lots of examples of rewritten stories – if you are after some inspiration here is one in the form of a poem, with some interesting thoughts on how it is done from the podcast Poetry Unbound. [J. Estanislao Lopez – Alternate Ending: The Escape of Jephthah's Daughter | The On Being Project](#)

We look forward to your responses.

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### Key dates:

- Competition launch date **29<sup>th</sup> July** – come and find out more and get inspiration as part of our Sidwella Day celebrations
- Deadline for application/submission: 5pm 15<sup>th</sup> September

### Terms of entry:

Entrants must be living in Devon, and work submitted must not be previously published. Length should be a maximum of 300 words of fiction or 25 lines of poetry, 2 pages comic strip/graphic novel style or a 2-minute video. Please include a short introduction about yourself, to a maximum of 30 words.

Send your **submissions** to George using the email address [george@stsidwells.org.uk](mailto:george@stsidwells.org.uk), with the subject line Sidwella Rewritten Writing Competition by **5pm on 15<sup>th</sup> September**

The winner will be contacted by 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**First prize is a £50 National Book Token**, provided by Exeter UNESCO City of Literature, and publication of the work on the Exeter UNESCO City of Literature and St Sidwell's Community Centre website.

One runner up will receive a £20 Co-op voucher, and all entries will receive a meal or coffee and cake in our Café.