



The Make and Mend pop-up studio in use at Belsay Hall.

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Creative collaboration with English Heritage launched at Belsay Hall

Designers and creators from Northumbria University have unveiled a collaboration with English Heritage which has transformed Belsay Hall in Northumberland for a special event this autumn.

Make and Mend, led by a team from the University's School of Design, Arts and Creative Industries and the School of Architecture and Built Environment, has already seen the Hall's historic library – once used as a workshop during the building's construction – become a dynamic pop-up studio.

Phase One of the initiative began on Monday 15 September, inviting visitors to watch creators at work and explore evolving displays of works in progress. Over the course of six weeks, the studio will showcase a constantly changing collection, as the Northumbria team respond to Belsay Hall's heritage through textiles, furniture, photography, and architectural studies. Blending traditional craftsmanship with contemporary techniques, the project celebrates both the history of making and the art of preservation.

Each participating designer and creator is also leading a public workshop, offering visitors hands-on opportunities to experience their practice. The finished works will be presented in a dedicated exhibition opening in Spring 2026.

[Anthony Forsyth](#), Assistant Professor at Northumbria University's School of Design, Arts and Creative Industries, said: "As designers, sites like Belsay Hall are rich in inspiration; design is often concerned with the future but engaging with the past offers alternative perspectives. The works created are inspired by the property, its stories and the fabric of the buildings and each creator has found their own interpretation. In turn, we hope that visitors will engage in aspects of Belsay Hall and its history prompted by the pop-up studio and workshops."

[Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens](#) is the creation of the Middleton family and evolved over more than seven centuries. It includes a 14th Century pele tower with a Jacobean mansion wing and an elegant classical Greek revival villa surrounded by 20 acres of unique gardens.



Belsay Hall. Photo: English Heritage

Frances McIntosh, Curator at [English Heritage](#) said: “Working with skilled craftspeople is such a pleasure. We have opened the Hall to their creative processes and we’re very excited to see what will come of their artworks which will be inspired by the buildings, estate and its fascinating history.”

Make and Mend follows previous collaborations at English Heritage sites including Brinkburn Priory (2023) and Aydon Castle (2022) in Northumberland, and continues a programme designed to highlight the skills required to create, maintain, and care for historic sites. With a legacy of showcasing art, Belsay Hall provides the perfect setting to weave together history, creativity, and community engagement.

Find out more [here](#) about visiting *Make and Mend* at Belsay Hall.

At Northumbria University, our academic strength is shaped by dynamic Faculties and Schools that unite a diverse range of disciplines and expertise. Discover more about the [School of Design, Arts and Creative Industries](#) and the [School of Architecture and Built Environment](#).

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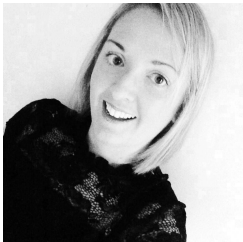
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