

Case Study

Pallant House Gallery

Drawn to Nature: Gilbert White and the Artists

Background

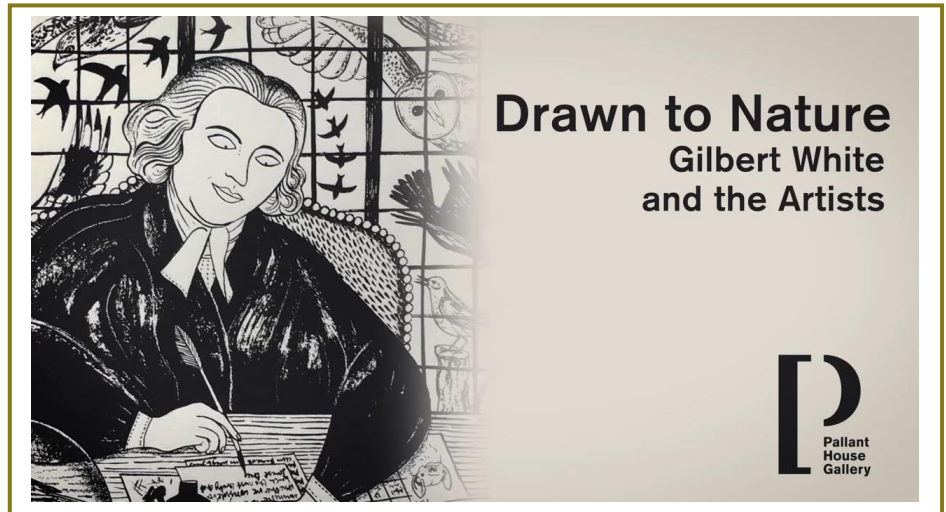
In 2020, the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) set up a Recovery Fund of £375,000 to help support partner organisations and local communities in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cultural heritage grants, totalling £81,272.59 were awarded to twelve organisations through an open application process. One of the beneficiaries of the grant was Pallant House Gallery, a Modern British art museum situated in Chichester.

Funding was used for the production of a film to support their exhibition relaunch, *Drawn to Nature: Gilbert White and the Artists*.

“Originally the project aim was the promotion of the physical exhibition, but second and third lockdowns meant that the exhibition was available to view for only a very short period. The decision was therefore taken to produce a book of the exhibition and the film is being used to fundraise for and promote that... The film has been used in a fundraising campaign for the gallery, meaning that it is possible to publish the book with confidence, and with the potential to create further profitability.”

Russell Le Page,
Head of Audiences and
Development,
Pallant House Gallery



The project

The project delivered a [high quality documentary film](#), working with a local videographer, and featuring artists and makers inspired by the South Downs landscape and wealth of cultural heritage.

The film celebrates the role of ecologist Gilbert White, not only for his contribution to our understanding of landscape, species and habitats, but his influence on artists and makers since the publication of *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*. The film includes interviews with contemporary artists who continue to be influenced by White's work, and who find their inspiration in the South Downs.

Although the film was originally designed to support a relaunch of the exhibition after the first lockdown, the impact of the pandemic on the cultural heritage sector (which resulted in long periods of enforced shut down of museums and galleries) meant that the film was repurposed:

- The film fronted a fundraising campaign, raising £7,000 for the Gallery (so far).
- The funds raised will enable the Gallery to turn the work that went into *Drawn to Nature* into a high quality print publication.
- The film will be used to support an education programme connected to *Drawn to Nature*, as well as ongoing fundraising initiatives by the Gallery.

The project was awarded £2,000 from the SDNPA Covid-19 Recovery Fund.

“Artists have a role to play in bringing our attention to nature, to the natural world, which is at risk from environmental change.”

Simon Martin, Director, Pallant House Gallery

The outcome

- The film has so far attracted **1869 views** (as of July 2021) on YouTube, and has also featured on Instagram TV, Facebook and Twitter.
- £7,000 was raised for the Gallery through a fundraising appeal featuring the film.
- The film will promote the *Drawn to Nature* book, due to be published in November 2021.
- The Film will form part of associated educational resourced linked to *Drawn to Nature*.
- Worldwide distribution agreements for the book will mean that its story will reach beyond the local area with the possibility of encouraging visitors to the South Downs.

The book is available for pre-order and includes an introduction to Gilbert White written by Sir David Attenborough.

[Pre-order from Waterstones](#)

[Pre-order from Yale Books](#)



The future

Due to the pandemic, *Drawn to Nature* may not have had the chance to reach people through the physical exhibition but the production of an associated book will help to ensure an ongoing legacy for the vision behind it. Both the book and film will also serve to promote the work of the artists and makers who continue to be inspired by Gilbert White's work.

South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) were able to operate flexibly to support the Gallery, ensuring they had the freedom to react to changing circumstances raised by the pandemic. SDNPA has also valued the opportunity to work with the Gallery on this project.

The South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan (PMP) 2020–25 sets out a shared vision for how we all would like the National Park to be in the future. It includes 10 long-term outcomes, and provides a framework for communities, landowners, charities, businesses and public bodies to work together to make this vision and these outcomes a reality.

This project successfully achieved the following PMP outcomes:

Outcome 4.1: Increase conservation, awareness, access to and understanding of South Downs cultural heritage

Outcome 10.2: Increase awareness and desirability of the South Downs as a special place to visit

southdowns.gov.uk/partnership-management-plan/

For further information regarding cultural heritage in the South Downs National Park, please contact:

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