Bridge Cottage wins support

17/10/2013

Development funding of £23,300 has also been awarded to help UDPS progress their plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

The project aims to make Bridge Cottage a usable and sustainable building that can be used as a centre for community heritage activities. These activities will include those that utilise the Society's collection of historic local maps, pictures and documents as well as exhibitions, local history talks, small concerts and fairs. It will be an historic meeting place that will allow the growing population of Uckfield to appreciate their local heritage.

Much of the refurbishment work will need to be undertaken by experts and the development stage funding will help to finalise what needs to be done and the associated costs. Once the main refurbishment work is completed, the heritage centre will need a range of volunteers to help deliver a range of heritage activities.

Bridge Cottage is a Grade II listed timber framed Wealden hall house built in 1436 at an important river crossing in the centre of Uckfield. It is a unique example of this type of building being both in public ownership and so complete, including medieval soot on the walls! Saved from demolition in 1983 through a public fundraising campaign, the building has since then been used by the local community for craft, artistic and historic activities, albeit limited to the ground floor due to limited fire escapes.

Mick Harker, chairman of the Bridge Cottage committee said: “We’re delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us this support. Bridge Cottage is a wonderful building right in the centre of the town and our plans will enable it to play an important heritage role in the town for the next few hundred years.”

Notes to editors

About The Uckfield and District Preservation Society
The Uckfield and District Preservation Society (UDPS) was founded in 1968 to encourage interest in the local history and environment of the parishes around Uckfield in East Sussex. The society, which is an independent charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee, offers, for a small annual subscription a membership that is open to all who share its stated aims, set out below:

- the promotion and encouragement of public interest in care for the beauty, history and character of the locality;
- to encourage the preservation, development, improvement and beautification of features of general public amenity or historic interest;
- to encourage high standards of architecture and town planning;

These aims are achieved through our four interest group sub committees set out below:

- The Local History group which holds meetings, exhibitions and publishes booklets on subjects of local interest;
- the Nutley Windmill group looks after Nutley windmill, a Grade II* listed building that was built around 1700;

- the Planning and Environment group monitors development in the area with particular interest on any impact to either Listed Buildings or the Conservation Area of the town;
- the Bridge Cottage group looks after this building and is fronting this project.

Further information

Mick Harker, Chairman Bridge Cottage Committee on 01825 765684 or info@udps.co.uk.