

# Consulting in Swansea

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What matters to you about Swansea's heritage? The city's parks? Perhaps it's the football club? Or maybe it's Swansea's famous ship, Olga?

With a massive £300million annual awards budget, to allocate from 2013 to 2019, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is asking people across the UK about the funding priorities for the future. As part of this conversation HLF wants to hear from the people of Swansea about what is important locally and how and on what HLF money should be invested on in the future.

During the past 16 years, HLF in Wales has supported 59 projects in Swansea, investing nearly £18.5m in the area. Projects range from the £11.1m National Waterfront Museum to an award of £74,500 to help young people and adults learn traditional building techniques through the Down to Earth Project.

Jennifer Stewart, Head of HLF in Wales, said: "The money the Heritage Lottery Fund has invested so far in Swansea has helped make a real difference to the area. In addition to helping people to celebrate and get involved in their heritage, it has helped create jobs, contributed to economic regeneration and, in turn, has attracted more visitors to the area.

"What's more these projects have given local people the chance to develop a range of new skills and train as volunteers, which is both fun and rewarding.

"People are at the heart of HLF projects and we value their view which is why, as well as consulting with heritage experts at a meeting in Swansea last week, we are asking for views from local people on what's important about their local heritage and how HLF money should be spent. This is your chance to tell us what you think our priorities should be, what we should continue to, and what we should do differently."

Heritage is everything that we've inherited from the past that we want to pass on, for future generations to enjoy. It can include archaeology, archives, cultures and memories, languages and dialects, historic buildings and monuments, industrial heritage, landscapes, museums, historic parks, places of worship, wildlife and nature conservation.

Public responses from Swansea will feed into HLF's new five year plan from 2013 which is currently being prepared for launch in 2012, shaping the future funding priorities across the UK.

If you are a member of the public and would like to express your views on heritage, please visit [Our Consultation page](#). The consultation is open until 26 April 2011.

HLF projects that have made a difference in Swansea by the people behind the projects:

## **Down to Earth Project**

Down to Earth was first awarded a £24,900 grant from HLF in 2006 to deliver activities focusing on traditional and natural building skills to the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP) in Swansea.

As part of the project, young people learnt skills including clom building with earth and straw, green woodwork sessions to make rustic furniture, traditional woodland management and historical survival skills.

As well as helping the young people build career choices the project also helped them develop communication skills and build their confidence.

Following the success of the project, Down to Earth was awarded another £49,600 grant to help unemployed adults living in the community get involved in their natural heritage and provide them with new skills through similar activities.

Mark McKenna, Director for Down to Earth, said: "Without the help of HLF, we wouldn't have been able to build our traditional timber frame barn and so wouldn't have the learning space to share these traditional skills.

"Aside from this, it has also made it possible for us to work with groups on the edge of our society, like young people who are often seen as a hard group to connect with and disadvantaged adults in the community, to give them new skills. As well as the more practical skills, these groups have also built on their social skills and grown in confidence.

"It was really rewarding to see many of the young people go back into mainstream education as a result of their involvement in the project. Some of them had lost confidence or didn't think they were perhaps capable of studying for an academic qualification, but through the project they realised their potential.

"Investing in the people behind the projects is so important in taking our heritage into the future, and a big part of this is getting young people to take part. I think we all need to be looking at ways of making heritage more appealing for young people to get them actively involved.

"HLF is already doing so, but I would like to see more money put into traditional vocational training in the future. At a time when climate change is high on our political agenda, investing in these traditional and sustainable skills and techniques is of huge importance. I also think that HLF should continue to invest in projects that involve hard-to-reach groups, as it can make a real difference to their lives."

## **Brynmill Park**

The Grade II listed Brynmill Park was restored to its former glory following investment of over £1.2m from HLF. In addition to restoring the Park's lake and many of its features, the grant also funded a Discovery Centre, to give schools, visitors and community groups alike a place to learn about the Park's wildlife and history.

The Discovery Centre has become a focal point for the Park and offers arts and crafts and educational games for children, as well as a range of educational activities for adults.

Steve Hopkins, Specialist Park Manager, said: “The Park really is at the heart of the community once again thanks to HLF. It has changed from being a tired and run down park to a beautiful space that local people can be proud of and use as part of their everyday lives.

“We have numerous community groups, from a Tai Chi class to a children’s playgroup, who use The Discovery Centre on a weekly basis, while volunteers from the Friends of Brynmill Park, local students, young people and scouts regularly devote their own time to help plant flowers, clear-up and maintain the grounds. It’s great to see the whole community getting involved.

“The funding allowed us to recruit a Parks Officer, who went on to get a job with another park supported by HLF once the project had come to an end. The skills she gained while working at Brynmill Park not only made a difference to her as an individual, she passed them onto our volunteers and is now sharing them wider to make the most of other parks in Wales.

“We’ve got lots of plans for the future, such as developing a junior basketball league, and we’re soon launching a blog featuring a 24 hour webcam to view the wildlife at the Park. Through fun activities and use of online and video, we’re hoping to get more young people interested in their local park and its history so they will look after it in the future.”

### **Notes to editors**

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 30,000 projects allocating over £4.5 billion across the UK, including more than 2,000 projects totalling over £217million in Wales.

### **General facts for Wales**

- In Wales, over £217million has been invested in projects across the country, from Newport Medieval Ship to Skomer Island; from Pontypridd Museum to Nant Gwrtheyrn.
- Every £1million of HLF funding attracts £620,000 from partner organisations.
- 62% of HLF projects in Wales have been led by local community groups and voluntary organisations.
- 25 public parks in Wales have benefited from £25million in HLF funding, including Bute Park, Cardiff, Brynmill Park, Swansea and Ponciau Banks, Wrexham.
- More than 98% of grants awarded in the last year have created volunteering opportunities.
- 21 deprived urban conservation areas have been rejuvenated through the [Townscape Heritage Initiative](#), which has awarded £22million to towns such as Aberdare, Denbigh, Cardigan, Colwyn Bay, Bridgend and Cefn Mawr (Wrexham).