HLF East Midlands welcomes new committee chair



Their appointment takes effect on 1 April and their first meeting in June 2014. The HLF Committee for the East Midlands is made up of leading figures in the heritage sector across the region chosen for their wide range of experience and local knowledge. Responsible for making decisions on regional applications to the Fund from £100,000 to £2million, the committee are supported by the regional HLF team for the East Midlands who operate from Nottingham-based offices.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, HLF funds an amazing array of projects that encompass all aspects of the UK's rich and diverse heritage. 2014 is the 20th anniversary of the National Lottery and during this period HLF has supported more than 2,900 East Midlands projects awarding grants worth nearly £325million.

Jim Harker together with new colleague Mo Cooper will join the existing five members of the committee made up of local people. Their expertise widely reflects and compliments the range of heritage applications that HLF receives.

Jim Harker has led the County Council for the past nine years. A retired chartered surveyor, he was awarded an OBE in 2012 for services to civic society and economy of his county. He has chaired several major county council committees. He ensures that heritage is placed high on the agenda in his county and his region, and is involved in a number of Northamptonshire heritage projects, including chairman of the nationally important Chester Farm and Roman Town project, and was recognised with an English Heritage Angel Award.

Commenting on his appoint as the new chair of the HLF Committee for the East Midlands Jim Harker said: “I have always found our heritage immensely inspiring and am committed to its preservation and promotion throughout our region. It is with great pleasure therefore that I start my new role on this committee.

“Arguably the role of heritage has never been more important than it is now. We are in the centre of a significant growth area and it is vital that our heritage plays a central and critical part of this growth. The role of this committee is pivotal in realising this ambition and I am delighted to be chairing it at this time.”

Mo Cooper is the Heritage Officer at St Anns Allotments, a 75 acre Grade II* listed site in inner city St Anns, Nottingham. She is also a founder member of the Nottingham Women’s History Group, and volunteers on other history projects and initiatives in and around the city.

She said: “I'm really looking forward to serving on the East Midlands Committee, and I hope my background of working in inner city developments in Liverpool, London and Nottingham will bring a different experience to an extremely knowledgeable committee."

Vanessa Harbar, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East Midlands said: “We are extremely pleased to be welcoming these two new members to the committee. They bring a wealth of experience to what is already a very strong team of decision makers. Their wide ranging expertise and strong regional awareness will be of great benefit to both HLF and the East Midlands heritage.”

The committee that Jim Harker will chair covers Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland and the cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham. The range of HLF-supported projects include restoration of historic buildings, improvements to museums and galleries, makeovers for town parks, purchasing works of art and treasured artefacts, helping to conserve the natural environment, and promoting community involvement in conserving local social histories. HLF is also actively involved in supporting a wide range of projects marking the centenary of the First World War. The projects are both large and small ranging from multi-million pound building refurbishments to local youngsters tracing the history of their local town and filming a DVD or producing a play.

Notes to editors

Biographies

Jim Harker

Councillor Jim Harker is a retired chartered surveyor, having previously been senior partner in a large Midlands-based firm of architects and surveyors.

He has been Leader of Northamptonshire County Council for nine years, and a member of the County Council since 1979. In that time he has chaired the Planning, Transportation and Environment committees and, while a member of the East Midlands Councils, he chaired the Regional Spatial Strategy Review. He was a board member of the East Midlands Regional Development Agency for five years, and chaired the Joint Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies merger in 2010.

He has been Vice Chairman of the Local Government Transport Board, is currently a member of the Environment and Housing Board and a member of the Rural Housing Advisory Board. He is a director of the West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership, the Royal and Derngate Theatres Trust and Silverstone Holdings Ltd.

He was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in June 2012 for services to the civic society and economy of Northamptonshire.

Mo Cooper
Mo Cooper is the Heritage Officer at St Anns Allotments, a 75 acre Grade 2* listed site in inner city St Anns, Nottingham. She was awarded an MA in History from the Centre for Urban History at the University of Leicester (2006), where her specialist interest was urban housing provision.
She is a founder member of the Nottingham Women's History Group, and volunteers on other history projects and initiatives in Nottingham. Her interests include the heritage of communities of interest and the built environment.

Mo previously worked in social housing provision, working in the ground breaking Liverpool Housing Co-operative movement of the 1970s through to inner city regeneration in London in the 1980s and 90s.

Mo has also spent many years working in the equalities sector including Women and Manual Trades and the Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Forum.

Jim Harker and Mo Cooper have their first Committee meeting in June. The other HLF Committee members are: Atul Patel, John Everitt, Jean MacIntyre, Geoff Nickolds and David Stocker.

Further information

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