Happy 18th birthday, National Lottery!

19/11/2012

Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has announced confirmed funding of £22.5m for six projects. The sites are:

- The much loved but badly fire-damaged Hastings Pier in Sussex
- Picturesque Westonbirt Arboretum in the heart of the Cotswolds
- The magical Swiss Garden in Old Warden Park, Bedfordshire
- St Mary at the Quay, an imposing medieval church on Ipswich's waterfront
- Hoxton Hall, a thriving community arts centre in London's Shoreditch
- Flodden Field, a famous battlefield in Northumbria

Initial support has also been awarded for seven projects on the Isle of Bute and in Surrey, Portsmouth, Dorset, Snowdonia, London and Oldham.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said: "Eighteen years of National Lottery funding has enabled us to invest over £5bn in our heritage. Thanks to Lottery players, we're celebrating this milestone with grants for a number of wonderful projects ranging from restoring a seaside pier to widening the reach of a bustling music hall building in the heart of the capital. The projects' champions have demonstrated really imaginative plans to deliver benefits for people and heritage. Between them they illustrate the breadth and depth of the UK's heritage."

Hastings Pier, Sussex – confirmed grant of £11.4m
Grade II listed Hastings Pier is a local landmark with a history spanning over 150 years: from the elegance of the Victorian era to the wild days of the 'Swinging Sixties' when it hosted performers such as the Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd and The Who. One of seven surviving examples of piers designed and built by the celebrated pier designer Eugenius Birch, the pier was finally closed to the public in 2008 and subsequently ravaged by fire in 2010.

Jo Brand, comedian, writer and actress, said: "Hastings Pier was where I spent a great deal of time as a teenager and it was the gathering point for a whole generation looking to see bands and dance the night away. So, I suppose it's no surprise that I view it with enormous affection. I was gutted when the Pier was gutted and it's really great news that the Heritage Lottery Fund is awarding such a substantial sum of money to help with restoration work. I can't wait to see the new pier rise out of the ashes in the next couple of years. Hooray!"

Hastings Pier and White Rock Trust came together thanks to the commitment and passion of a group of local residents. With the help of a substantial HLF grant and strong support from the community, its vision is to restore the historic fabric of the pier and create new facilities which will give huge impetus to regenerating the town with the pier at its heart. This project will also provide much-needed opportunities for skills training, including apprenticeships in engineering and construction, plus a comprehensive volunteers programme.

Carole Souter said: "Hastings Pier has lived through over 150 years of history – from gentler Victorian times through to the Swinging Sixties and beyond. We're delighted to be backing these ambitious restoration plans which will not only save the fabric of the pier but also put it right back at the heart of the community, providing much-needed opportunities for social and economic regeneration."

Westonbirt, the National Arboretum, Gloucestershire – confirmed grant of £1.9m
Westonbirt is one of the world's most spectacular 'tree museums' with a collection of 16,000 historic trees and over 3,000 taxa (species). Dating from 1829, this popular site is managed by the Forestry Commission who took on responsibility for it over 60 years ago. HLF support will help to build a new welcome and interpretation centre, reinstate rare grassland in the central area of the Grade I listed Downland landscape and a programme of volunteer training to help with conservation and education work and guiding.

Chris Packham, environmentalist and presenter, said: "This announcement is particularly heart-warming set amongst the awful backdrop of news of our endangered trees. Westonbirt is truly magical so I'm chuffed to hear this news! I can't stress enough the importance of this particular arboretum – it's the natural world's equivalent of an outdoor museum and gives us a much greater understanding of the variety and value of trees. The Heritage Lottery Fund has a fantastic track record for supporting the UK's landscapes and wildlife and this investment of nearly £2m will delight the many of us who are passionate about trees and the environment."

The Swiss Garden, Bedfordshire – confirmed grant of £2.8m
The Swiss Garden in Old Warden Park, designed in the 1820s by Robert, the third Lord Ongley, may have taken its name from its principal building, the Swiss Cottage. It was designed in the late Regency style giving it a 'secret' feel with meandering paths, garden ponds and ornate hump-backed bridges. HLF's grant will help the Shuttleworth Trust and its partner Central Bedfordshire Council repair and conserve the garden's buildings and ornamental structures such as the Thatched Tree Seat, the Indian Kiosk and the Grotto and Fernery. The project will involve local residents in managing the garden as well as offering two horticultural apprenticeships and two built heritage apprenticeships. A key aim of the project is to promote it to a greater range of people so that more visitors, including school groups, can come and learn about this very special green space.

St Mary at the Quay, Ipswich – confirmed grant of £3.6m
Suffolk Mind and the Churches Conservation Trust have jointly created plans for the restoration of the redundant medieval church, St Mary at the Quay, into a Wellbeing Heritage Centre for everyone in the community. This innovative collaboration brings together two charities – one focusing on emotional health and wellbeing and the other on heritage – that will provide a quiet but welcoming sanctuary in a busy town. There will be a centre for complementary therapy as well as a café with volunteers being integral in all aspects of the centre.

Hoxton Hall, London – confirmed grant of £1.8m
The 149 year old Hoxton Hall, located in vibrant Shoreditch, is a rare surviving example of a saloon-style music hall. The hall is well supported by the surrounding community who attend drama, dance, arts and music groups, stand-up comedy, contemporary concerts and cabaret there; it currently receives 12,000 visitors a year but once modernised it would be able to welcome over 40,000 visitors. As a much-loved historic building within a very deprived part of London, this restoration project will play a key role in the heritage-led regeneration of the area. Additionally, Hoxton Hall's archives, comprising photos, Victorian ephemera and architectural items, will be relocated to Hackney Archives for improved storage and cataloguing.

Flodden 500, Northumberland – confirmed grant of £877,300
Flodden 500 is a four year project designed to bring together communities from the Scottish and Northumbrian border areas to mark the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Flodden. This battle, fought in 1513, heralded a ninety-year period of unrest in Scottish politics, which only concluded with the union of the Scottish and English crowns under King James (VI/I) in 1603. The project focuses not just on the lives lost during the campaign but also the impact the battle had on the culture of today's border communities. Exciting plans for community archaeology and learning programmes will engage

and involve people of all ages in their local heritage.

Projects in the pipeline

Initial support plus £1.8m development funding has been awarded to seven projects which can now progress plans in order to apply for a full HLF grant:

- Rothesay Pavilion, Isle of Bute - initial support for a £2.7m HLF bid, including £103,100 development funding
- Limnerslease – Saving the Studios, Surrey – initial support for a £2.5m HLF bid, including £184,100 development funding
- The Boatbuilding and Heritage Skills Training Centre, Portsmouth – initial support for £3.9m HLF bid, including £240,800 development funding
- Kimmeridge Fossil Museum, Dorset – initial support for a £2.8m HLF bid, including £299,300 development funding
- Yr Ysgwrn, Snowdonia – initial support for a £2.7m HLF bid, including £149,700 development funding
- Conservation of the Winter Garden at Avery Hill Park, Eltham, London – initial support for a £2.9m HLF bid, including £192,100 development funding
- Oldham Heritage Centre and Coliseum Theatre, Greater Manchester – initial support for a £3.9m HLF bid, including £615,100 development funding

Notes to editors

A confirmed award means that money had already been earmarked by HLF for the project in question and that the full amount has now been secured.

A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

Lottery funding has been changing people's lives for 18 years - 19 November is the National Lottery's 18th birthday. Every week National Lottery players raise over £30 million. From funding our Olympic and Paralympic athletes to grass roots sport, the National Lottery has invested in museums and galleries, local parks, artists, theatres, film, charities and local communities. For more information visit Lottery Good Causes' website.

Images available on request

Further information

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