HLF to pump additional £7.3million into heritage skills

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announces it is to invest an additional £7.3m to support a wide range of specialist skills and training opportunities within the heritage sector. This will deliver up to 1,000 paid training opportunities for people seeking a career in heritage and will include specialist skills ranging from horticulture to conservation and web design.

HLF is taking a two-tiered approach to this investment:

- £2.3m will be invested quickly with current grantees as an extension of HLF's successful £7m Training Bursary Programme[1];
- £5m will create a new programme, entitled 'Skills for the Future', to launch towards the end of the year. This will offer new work-based training in the skills that are needed to look after our buildings, landscapes, habitats, species, and museum collections. This could include training education and outreach officers, volunteer managers and people who need new technology skills to help the public learn about our heritage and play an active part in its future.

Dame Jenny Abramsky, Chair of the HLF, said: "More than ever in these difficult times, HLF wants to focus on offering people skills that will give them a future career and at the same time meet the needs of the sector. I believe passionately that heritage can play a significant part in economic recovery."

"This immediate cash injection followed by a wider commitment over the longer term will ensure our heritage is protected for the future and represents a hugely exciting chance to attract people who might not usually consider a career within it."

Ben Bradshaw MP, Culture Minister, said: "I am delighted by this news. It's a significant amount of money which will have a real impact on the heritage sector and on individuals' lives. It's wonderful to know people will be trained in the skills needed to look after and help us learn about our shared heritage and that this will include opportunities for all sorts of people, especially younger people. The money will help a whole host of organisations nurture new talent and provide those who are currently unemployed or changing direction with the opportunity to really make a difference."

£2.3m to current HLF applicants

The first tranche of investment of £2.3m will provide an extension of HLF's current Training Bursary Programme, enabling up to 150 additional training places to be created straight away with current grantees[1]. These places will provide accredited on-the-job training by highly skilled crafts people and environmental specialists.

HLF's evaluation of the current programme has demonstrated a great demand from potential trainees and hosts and shown that the heritage sector continues to provide jobs for people with the right skills.

Sarah Heaffey, Training Bursary Project Manager of the Broads Authority, said: "No-one can underestimate the importance of skills to maintaining our historic landscapes and buildings but there is such a severe shortage of skilled

people to look after them. The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, which are a huge magnet for tourism, really struggle to retain local craftspeople. HLF funding has already helped us to maintain crafts such as reed and sedge cutters and millwrights, and this money will go even further to ensure we're able to preserve all that makes the Broads so distinctive long into the future."

Michelle King, former HLF reed and sedge cutting trainee (age 28), said: "Through HLF funding, I did an18-month on-the-job training course which paved the way to finding a full time job with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust as an assistant warden. I consider myself extremely lucky to have had this opportunity and it's fantastic news that many more people will now also benefit and find interesting and fulfilling careers within the heritage sector."

£5m into 'Skills for the Future'

The immediate investment is to be followed by a further £5m for a new programme, entitled 'Skills for the Future', to be launched later in the year. As well as delivering traditional heritage skills, this scheme will aim to equip organisations to engage with the widest possible range of people and inspire them to get involved with heritage. It might include training in how to best work with schools, young people and communities and teaching skills such as how to use new technology to bring heritage sites and collections alive for new audiences.

Organisations will be able to apply for funding for a number of traineeships over a period of up to five years. The criteria and priorities are currently being developed but the emphasis will be on high-quality practical work-based training.

Mark Farrar of ConstructionSkills[2], the Sector Skills Council for the construction industry, said: "Our built heritage is an invaluable part of the UK's culture, society and economy, so it is essential that we have the right skills, knowledge and expertise to properly maintain and repair it. ConstructionSkills welcomes the timely boost this new initiative and funding will provide, especially in the current economic climate, to help train craftspeople in the heritage sector."

HLF's Training Bursary Programme – the success story so far

HLF's Training Bursary Programme has been a resounding success story, providing over 300 people so far with high-quality on-the-job accredited training over a range of 50 skill sets in craft and conservation. 89% of those who completed placements in 2008-09 went on to secure jobs in the heritage sector.

The programme was designed to produce craftspeople with skills in danger of being lost, such as lime plastering, reed and sedge cutting, blacksmithing and biological recording or to support specialist skills, such as in archaeology or horticulture. The 10 schemes have not only had a great impact on the heritage itself, but they have also developed innovative training models, piloted new qualifications and created excellent new working partnerships.

Fast facts – the need for skills

- The demand for training places for HLF's Training Bursary Programme has far outstripped the opportunities available by as much as 60 to one.
- National Heritage Training Group research estimates that over 10,000 additional skilled craftspeople are needed to meet current shortages in the built heritage sector across the UK.
- Traditional heritage skills used to be passed down from generation to generation but are now becoming something of a rarity. Those who want to learn skills, such as thatching, lime plastering and stone masonry, struggle to secure funding for practical apprenticeships and mentoring from experienced practitioners.

- The heritage building industry – based on repairs and maintenance - is reported by ConstructionSkills to be holding up well in the face of the recession. There are approximately 10m pre-1919 buildings in the UK.
- Mainstream building contractors are moving into the repairs and maintenance market but there is a risk to the heritage if they are not properly trained.
- There is a shortage of younger building craftspeople.
- Training people to restore and reuse older buildings contributes to a low carbon economy.
- Creative and Cultural Skills reports that the Cultural Heritage sector (museums, archives, built environment and archeology) employs 57,000 people. It contributes £1.01bn GVA to the UK economy each year.
- Learning on-the-job with mentoring from experienced practitioners is one of the best ways for individuals to develop heritage skills but there are few funding opportunities for people seeking qualifications above Level 2.
- HLF also supports training in its mainstream grant programmes. In 2002, HLF introduced a mandatory requirement for all grants over £1m to deliver training.

The details of the new £5m programme 'Skills for the Future' will be announced before the end of 2009 when the programme will open to applicants.

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, skills and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 28,800 projects, allocating over £4.3billion across the UK.

Images are available on request.

[1] Background to HLF's Training Bursary Programme

HLF set aside £4m in 2004 to fund the bursary programme which was increased to £7m due to huge demand. HLF has funded the following 10 schemes:

- £721,000 for a partnership of 17 heritage organisations led by English Heritage to run the 'Historic & Botanic Gardens Scheme'.
- £730,000 for the Institute of Field Archaeologists' offering thirty-two archaeology placements across the UK.
- £714,500 for the Broads Authority to run the 'Reed, Sedge, Fens and Mills bursary', providing much needed training in the Broadland area for reed and sedge cutting and millwrighting.
- £1m to enable Icon (the Institute of Conservation) to offer 60 bursary placements in the conservation of objects and collections - from books and textiles to metalwork and architectural details.
- £900,000 for a 'Traditional building skills for England and Wales scheme' run by English Heritage and the National Trust.
- £180,500 for 'The Guild of Cornish Hedgers' Apprentice scheme.
- A £1m awarded to Historic Scotland for a £2.28m Masonry Conservation in Scotland and Northern Ireland project.
- £677,500 for BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) to run 'Natural Talent', training 20 apprentices to develop skills in the conservation of specialist habitats.
- £360,500 for Hampshire County Council's Transport Heritage scheme enabling16 engineering training work placements.
- £704,000 to help 36 trainees learn about natural heritage conservation skills on the Herefordshire Nature Trust's 'LEMUR' scheme.

HLF Training Bursary Programme case study - Broads Authority

An HLF grant of £714,500 is providing training in the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads for reed and sedge cutting and millwrighting. The reed and sedge cutting industry is not attracting enough new entrants to manage existing fen vegetation and this money is boosting cutter numbers and increasing opportunities for trainees to learn additional skills to manage this sensitive local landscape.

Broadland's drainage mills are in a perilous state yet millwrighting skills are in danger of extinction. There are only two millwrights currently working in the Broadland area which has 74 remaining drainage mills. HLF money is helping train five apprentice millwrights over a three-year period. Now in their final year, trainees are restoring a historic drainage mill - Stubb Mills on Hickling National Nature Reserve - which was managed by the same family for nearly 200 years.

Case studies of HLF-supported skills projects outside the Training Bursary Programme

Cottage industries - HLF grant: £708,000
The Mourne Heritage Trust acquired and restored nine traditional cottages to their original state. The project delivered an extensive training programme, including workshops for building professionals and planners, school visits and demonstrations of walling, hedging and ironwork. A cottage garden and heritage trail were created, all of which raised understanding of the importance of conserving this type of traditional building.

Sailing through time - HLF grant: £23,700
Young people in Herefordshire designed, built and eventually raced their own coracle (a one-person boat). More than 140 young people learnt traditional boat building skills, and the history and craft of coracle making. They will gain recognition for their achievements through award schemes, including the Duke of Edinburgh scheme.

Heritage engineering - HLF grant: £569,500
More than 650 volunteers who look after historic aircraft in museums across the UK are receiving training from the British Aircraft Preservation Council. HLF funding enabled these volunteers, who are passionate about historic aircraft, to work with experienced conservators and hone their skills.

Building basics - HLF grant: £173,000
On-site training during the restoration of the ancient tithe barn at Waxham in Norfolk enabled builders to gain accreditation in conservation building skills. Carpenters and bricklayers were trained in flint work and the use of lime mortar. Workshops were held for local construction students, allowing them to gain insight into working on historic buildings.

[2] A note on ConstructionSkills
ConstructionSkills is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the construction industry. As a partnership between CITB-ConstructionSkills, CIC and CITB Northern Ireland, we are UK-wide and represent the whole industry from professional consultancies to major contractors and SME's.

Established as an SSC in 2003, ConstructionSkills is working to deliver a safe, professional and fully qualified construction workforce through the industry's Sector Skills Agreement. We are responsible for raising employer engagement in training, implementing industry-led skills solutions, securing appropriate funding, producing labour market data, and developing standards and qualifications that meet employer needs.

ConstructionSkills is a partner in the National Heritage Training Group (NHTG), an independent specialist skills group with a UK-wide remit to provide assistance with all aspects of recruiting, training, and qualifying the built heritage sector

workforce of the construction industry. This is achieved by working with clients, heritage bodies, contractors, trade federations, trade unions, FE and private training providers. For further information about the National Heritage Training Group. www.nhtg.org.uk.