High-tech scheme to retell Salford’s past

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Locally-based social enterprise Engage with Media will be working with community volunteers of all ages thanks to a grant of £46,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Chapel Street is the core of the historic town of Salford and a major route into Manchester city centre. A £650 million regeneration project is now getting underway which will alter the character and appearance of parts of the area. The HLF-funded digital heritage trail will concentrate on the half-mile stretch running from the ancient Plague Pits, where some 22,000 bodies lie buried beneath what is now a public park, past the Grade II-listed town hall to the corner of Fire Station Square.

Points of interest include an original red telephone box, one of Salford’s smallest listed buildings, the site of the ‘Battle of Bexley Square’ where a near riot occurred in front of the town hall in 1931, St Phillips Church which was sketched by the area’s most famous artist, LS Lowry, and the Crescent public house where Karl Marx is reputed to have met Frederick Engels.

Locals of all ages and students have already expressed an interest in finding out more about specific aspects of the area and they will be involved in research, media production and publicity for the project.

The resulting interactive digital heritage trail will be accessible on an internet website and mobile phones making use of digital mapping, video, pictures, audio and text. One particular aim is to make it accessible to new audiences, including young people.

Sara Hilton, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North West, said: “HLF is delighted to be able to support this project which will provide the local community with the opportunity to create a fascinating account of the rich history of this part of Salford.”

For Engage with Media Alan Mcglone, said: “We want volunteers to come and help make us this project a success. It will allow us all to learn how important the old centre of Salford has been to UK and world history and to learn web and digital media skills at the same time.

Anyone who is interested can register at the Heritage Footsteps website. We’re especially interested in talking to anyone with memories of the area.”

Hazel Blears, MP for Salford and Eccles, said: “I am delighted that the Engage with Media project is to receive funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The use of digital media to record the history of this important part of our city supports the aspirations that we have for Salford being home to the industries of the future. With Media City UK and the relocation of many digital companies to the area, the use of the new to preserve the old is a perfect combination. I wish them every success.”

Further information

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