Kimmeridge Trust secures Heritage Lottery Fund support

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The project aims to construct in Kimmeridge an accredited fossil museum to conserve and develop the unique and world famous Etches collection of Kimmeridgian fossils. Detailed development work will begin immediately for a planned opening in 2016.

The vision is for Kimmeridge to have an engaging accredited museum that will benefit all by providing access to this unique collection while securing a permanent future for the Etches Fossil Collection. Additional sustainable employment and volunteering opportunities will also be created and the local community will benefit from having a modern state of the art community facility.

The collection is already curated and conserved to a very high standard, but the aim is to put the 'Jurassic into the Jurassic' by placing it in the public domain, making it totally accessible, virtually and physically, with engaging imaginative exhibitions and participatory learning and activity programmes. Kimmeridge goes to the heart of international geology and palaeontology; it is the jewel of the Jurassic coast. Locating this beautifully prepared collection in its natural home, the Jurassic coast, will bring to life The Jurassic Coast as a World Heritage Site.

This collection of 2000 specimens, many of which are new to science, represents the most complete and unique collection of late Jurassic age fossils ever assembled in Britain making it of immense scientific and cultural importance.

General Sir Michael Hobbs, Chairman of the Kimmeridge Trust, said: “I find it inspiring that Mr Steve Etches dedicated life’s work will be celebrated in this museum. This small community’s enthusiasm and the generosity of the Heritage Lottery fund will give thousands of people a greater understanding of the Jurassic Coast as a World Heritage Site and its relevance to life today.”

Richard Bellamy, Head of HLF South West, said: “The ‘Etches Collection’ is truly extraordinary and gives us a comprehensive history of fossil collecting on Dorset’s Jurassic Coast. The Heritage Lottery Fund is pleased to be giving initial support for plans to create a new home for the collection as well as putting in place an exciting and complementary range of activities and volunteer training designed to get more people involved. We look forward to working with the Kimmeridge Trust over the coming months as they develop their ideas further.”

Notes to editors

A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project 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. On occasion, an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

The objectives of the Kimmeridge Trust are:

- to create, develop and maintain a museum as a permanent home in Kimmeridge to conserve The Etches Collection
- to maintain a village community facility for the benefit of Kimmeridge.

Further information

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