HLF gives the heartland of the Welsh language a New Year boost

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Popular with tourists, ramblers and wildlife enthusiasts, the Ll?n Peninsula is considered to be amongst Wales' finest landscapes, famous for its hills and medieval pilgrimage route and recognised as the heartland of the Welsh language.

Gwynedd Council is leading the Partnership which includes other statutory, environmental, educational, community and economic bodies. They will work together and with local communities and visitors to get actively involved in conserving and learning more about the outstanding natural, cultural and linguistic heritage of the area.

A wide range of projects will incorporate topics such as the small trading ports, marine folk lore, language and literature, habitat conservation, providing activities and training which will in time promote Llyn's economy, environment society and culture.

Work will include conservation and restoration work to 330 hectares of habitat, developing educational resources for schools and the wider community, improving interpretation for visitors with organised walking festivals and volunteer guides, as well as offering rural skills training, in particular for young people.

The project area encompasses 200km² of land and was one of the first sites in the UK to be designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1957. The surrounding sea is also a designated Marine Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the coastal rim has been designated as a Heritage Coast.

The celebrated Welsh poet R. S. Thomas lived in the village of Aberdaron and the internationally-famous singer, Duffy, comes from the town of Nefyn, both located within the project area.

Members of the local community will be encouraged to take ownership of the project through volunteering and training opportunities that will be provided. It is expected that 3,290 volunteer days will be contributed throughout the project, from clearing litter from the beaches and pathways to managing the heritage resources. Local people will also be asked to share their knowledge of the local fishing industry, by researching the history and recording people's local stories.

To encourage involvement from the community, training for 800 people will be provided. Activities such as land management, traditional building techniques and rural skills training will safeguard the range of skills available in an area where demand for agricultural knowledge is high. Training in using and installing alternative energy sources for historic buildings will also be offered to volunteers.

Dan Clayton-Jones, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund Committee for Wales, said: "Today's investment is a great start to the New Year and will provide Gwynedd Council and partners with the support they need to make this project a reality. In Wales, we have such a rich landscape heritage and we tend to take it for granted, but it is particularly important at this time of social and economic change, that we ensure their unique character is retained and this can only be done by investing in both the landscape and the people, through projects such as this.

"This investment will help forge lasting partnerships and give local people the tools they need to protect this important natural environment. The grant will ensure it is maintained and managed for future generations and keep these small

rural communities alive.”

Meinir Jones, the Chair of the Partnership, said: “I'm very happy to see all the preparation work come to fruition, and that the projects that have been identified and developed by the local community and agencies will be implemented over the next few years, bringing environmental, community and economic benefits.

“The project will help local people and visitors to understand and celebrate the uniqueness of the Ll?n Peninsula’s environmental and cultural riches.”

The partnership has spent over a year consulting the public and developing their proposals, through an HLF development grant of £46,800.

Notes to editors

* HLF made an initial grant of £46,800 to develop the proposals of Ll?n Peninsula Landscape Partnership Project. The announcement confirms the full grant of £706,400 has been secured.

HLF has made 120 awards in Gwynedd amounting to over £13.3m.

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 and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK.

Further information

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