Lottery Boost to Conserve Outstanding Local Landscape

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The first-round pass[1] and development grant of £91,700 was awarded through HLF's Landscape Partnership (LP) programme[2] which helps to protect some of the UK's most outstanding landscapes. The decision is an endorsement of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust's outline proposals, and they now have up to two years to submit more fully developed plans to compete for the full £1.5million award.

Commenting on the announcement, Head of HLF Northern Ireland, Paul Mullan, said: "The Glens of Antrim contain some of the most stunningly beautiful landscapes Northern Ireland has to offer, so we are delighted to support these plans to conserve and celebrate the unique natural and cultural heritage of the area. With outreach and educational activities at the heart of the proposals, the LP will reconnect the local community and visitors to the area with the landscape to secure its habitats and traditional features for generations to come."

Landscape Partnerships act as a catalyst to bring organisations and communities together to form partnerships that create a shared vision for the conservation and management of our landscape heritage, enabling people to tackle the heritage needs of their local landscapes in a co-ordinated and effective way. Each scheme involves a portfolio of individual projects that deliver long-term social, economic and environmental benefits for rural areas.

The Glens of Antrim consist of nine spectacular glens on the Antrim Coast which run down to the dramatic cliffs, headlands and bays of the rocky North Channel coastline. The area is one of high scenic value, important habitats and vigorous community life. It is a popular tourist destination thanks to its distinctive farmsteads known as Clachans and traditional field patterns. The four coastal villages of Glenarm, Cushendall, Cushendun and Carnlough alongside the town of Ballycastle, all designated Conservation Areas, are home to the majority of the population of the Glens and each has its own distinct relationship with the glens.

The five year Heart of the Glens LP will conserve and maintain the special landscape character of the area and re-enforce the relationship between people and place through a series of individual projects. The rich natural heritage of the area will be conserved through a series of schemes to manage the woodland, conserve the red squirrel and improve the condition of the upland blanket bog habitat. Built heritage projects will include the survey and restoration of selected archaeological sites and heritage features such as the dry stone walls of the ladder farms.

The LP will reconnect the local community to the glens landscape through a series of events and activities such as a public art competition, food festival and exhibitions and talks. Working in partnership with local businesses and other organisations with an interest in the area, a number of learning and training opportunities will be offered on subjects as diverse as sustainable fishing and farming practices, hedge laying and whitewashing traditional buildings or traditional music and sport.

Commenting on the announcement, Bill Harpur, Chairman of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust said: "This is very good news for the Glens of Antrim and the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust. The Heart of the Glens LPS will offer many opportunities to ensure that the nine Glens of Antrim and their unique heritage are protected, enhanced and celebrated for the benefit of all, residents, businesses, visitors and everybody who has an interest in this

stunning area. Over the coming year the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust will develop a series of projects involving a wide range of stakeholders that will deliver lasting outcomes for the area, its landscape quality and unique heritage."

Notes to editors

[1] A Landscape Partnership (LP) earmarked first-round pass means that money has been set aside by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the scheme in question. Competition at this stage is tough, and while it does not guarantee funding, it is an indication of positive support. The applicant then progresses to the second round and submits a further, fully-developed application to secure the full award. This early level of strong financial commitment means that LPs can build strong partnerships with the assurance that funding for their scheme is in place provided that their final proposals fully meet the programme's criteria.

[2] HLF's Landscape Partnerships are helping bring together members of the community as well as local, regional, and national organisations to deliver schemes which benefit some of the UK's most outstanding landscapes and rural communities. Grants range from £250,000 up to £2m. The next closing date for LP applications is 28 February 2012.

Since 1994 the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded £135 million to projects across Northern Ireland.

Further information

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