Lottery win for Roman coins!

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Subject to a second successful funding bid to the HLF in 2013, the council intends to develop a programme of 26 learning and community activities centred on the Beau Street Hoard – a collection of around 22,000 Roman coins dating back to 270AD.

Bath & North East Somerset Council hopes this initial support, which includes a £50,000 development grant, will lead on to a successful second-round application next summer, which could see a further £480,000 contribution from HLF to help acquire, conserve and display the hoard.

Councillor Cherry Beath (Lib-Dem, Combe Down), Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, said: “If our 2013 application is successful, this grant would help Bath & North East Somerset Council to do more than simply display this magnificent hoard. We hope to be able to help people enjoy their cultural heritage and increase local learning opportunities right across Bath and North East Somerset.”

Current plans include the preparation of a South West roadshow in which a mobile display would tour towns and villages across Bath and North East Somerset, and making applications to other bodies for grants to help pay for the hoard. The final HLF grant would enable the tour to happen and help the council to display the hoard in the Roman Baths.

Richard Bellamy, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said: “The Beau Street Hoard is a wonderful discovery. It has the potential to develop our understanding of one of the most fascinating periods in the history of Bath. We at the Heritage Lottery Fund are delighted to be giving our initial support for these plans to save the collection and ensure that the coins will be held locally so that they can be enjoyed by people from across the community, as well as visitors from further afield.”

When the hoard was reported in the Bath Chronicle last year, news quickly spread around the world and reports appeared in news channels as far away as Russia, India and the Americas. The Roman Baths website recorded its greatest ever number of hits.

Communities Minister and MP for Bath, Don Foster MP, said: “Earlier this year I was lucky enough to see the amazing Bath hoard while conservation work was taking place at the British Museum. It was simply staggering to hold a handful of these coins and know that they were nearly 2,000 years old!

“It would be absolutely fantastic to have the hoard come home to Bath and I fully support Bath & North East Somerset Council’s application to display these magnificent coins on a permanent basis.”

The council’s application has also been backed by the Abbey Resident’s Association, in whose area the hoard was found, and other project partners including Bath Spa University, the British Museum and the Roman Society. There will be a temporary display of some coins from the hoard in the Pump Room in December.

Further information

For more information about Bath & North East Somerset Council’s visit Roman Baths website or call 01225 477 774.