£3.4million lottery win to save HMS Alliance

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The funding will help save HMS Alliance, the only surviving WW2 era submarine that is the memorial to 5,300 British Submariners.

Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East, said: “This Heritage Lottery Fund investment will help transform this unique heritage treasure meaning it will still be around for years to come. However, as we approach Volunteers Week at the beginning of June, it’s important to remember that in addition to much needed funds it is also the vital contribution that volunteers make to both heritage and the wider economy that keeps special assets like HMS Alliance alive.”

HMS Alliance is listed in the UK’s historic ship’s register, sitting alongside the Cutty Sark, the Mary Rose, and HMS Victory in the Core Collection list, and she is the only remaining WW II submarine in the UK that is open to the public. Designed during the war for service in the Middle East, she was launched in 1945, as victory was achieved. She then began a distinguished 28 year career until she retired as the centrepiece of the Submarine Museum.

The project is the First Sea Lord’s top naval heritage priority, and for good reason. Exposed to sea water over cradles by the Museum quayside, the outer structure of HMS Alliance has corroded so badly that parts are literally in danger of falling into the sea below in a rusting process that has proved hard to arrest due to difficulties of access.

As well as the physical conservation, at the heart of the project is a new education programme and dynamic interpretation scheme which will bring Alliance ‘back to life’ for all visitors. Improvements will include dressing the accommodation spaces to reflect the decades of Alliance’s service from the 1940’s through to the 1970’s with interactive soundscapes that reflect how the submarine looked and felt whilst on operation. The Museum will also be taking the project to the local community with an outreach programme featuring a range of fun and engaging events. It is hoped that volunteers will play an important role in all these activities as the project aims to clock up to 2,500 hours of volunteer time over its life span.

Bob Mealings, Acting Director at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum, said: “It comes as a great relief that our ambitious plans to restore and conserve HMS Alliance has been seen as worthwhile by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

We are extremely grateful to all our staff, volunteers and supporters across the country that are working so hard to raise the money that we need. This grant is a massive boost and will mean that we can start work very soon.”

Vice Admiral Sir Tim McClement, Chairman of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum, said today: “As the memorial to all the submariners who have fought and died in service, it is so important that she is saved and brought to life for future generations to have the opportunity to understand and learn about “the silent service” that has been in operation for over 100 years protecting our nation.”

HRH Prince William of Wales is the Royal Patron of the HMS Alliance Appeal that aims to raise the £6.5 million that the conservation work is budgeted to cost. Over £5.8million in funds and pledges has now been raised, including the £3.4 million award by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A further £1.5million is required for a new Alliance gallery.

Fundraising still continues at the Submarine Museum which is open every day. For more information on HMS Alliance and how people can get involved, contact the HMS Alliance Appeal Office on 023 9251 0354 ext 244, or visit Royal

Submarine Museum website.

Notes to editors

*A confirmed award means that money had already been earmarked by HLF for the project in question and that the full amount has now been secured.

Volunteers' Week will take place during the week of 1-7 June 2011.

Further information

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