HLF funding saves Maryhill Burgh Hall

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One of Glasgow's areas of highest deprivation has been thrown a lifeline with a grant of almost £1million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to restore the derelict Maryhill Burgh Halls. Announced today by HLF, the project will see the Burgh Halls and adjacent former police station not only transformed into a hub for community life but also become a key element in an ambitious £9m regeneration project for the area.

One of the few remaining historic buildings in the area, the Burgh Halls was officially opened in 1878. It has lain empty for the past eight years and is listed on the buildings at risk register. Today's grant of £990,000 will see the neglected buildings developed into a modern public hall, cafe, 11 offices, a commercial and a community recording studio, nursery, meeting rooms and public garden.

The restoration will also see a significant collection of 20 stained glass windows, which have been in storage for over 45 years, conserved and exhibited at the Burgh Halls. These were designed by the studio of Stephen Adam, an internationally important artist in the field of stained glass design and they depict the 19th-century trades of Maryhill, including linen bleachers, canal boatmen and calico printers. The windows were removed from the building in 1963 and most have been kept in storage at the Burrell Collection ever since. They have been carefully recreated using animation and light and images of the windows are currently projected onto the building each evening in the run up to their return.

The restoration of Maryhill Burgh Halls and Police Station will form an integral part of the adjacent development of a new swimming pool and leisure facility by Glasgow City Council. The historic facade of the former fire station will form a common arched entrance courtyard to both the Burgh Halls and the leisure centre.

Commenting on the today's grant announcement, Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: "This important civic building has given the community of Maryhill a heart for over 100 years, a symbol of history and identity that cannot be replaced. Today it stands empty and derelict.

"At the Heritage Lottery Fund, we believe that breathing new life into the Burgh Halls will not only re-establish it as a centre of community life and make a marked contribution to the economics of the area but will also give a renewed sense of pride. This major investment of Lottery players' money is exciting news and an important step forward in the revitalisation of modern-day Maryhill."

Local MSP Patricia Ferguson, added: "Maryhill was a Police Burgh for only 10 years but the Burgh Hall has been part of our history for over 100 years. With the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund we have the opportunity to restore this important building to its rightful place at the heart of our community."

Billy McAllister, Chair of Maryhill Burgh Halls Trust, said: "The Board of the Trust is absolutely delighted to be awarded this very substantial grant which is crucial for unlocking opportunities for the Trust to secure the balance of funding to deliver our ambitious and much needed community project. Our sincere thanks go to the Heritage Lottery Fund for supporting this important and historically significant initiative for the people of Maryhill. So far, more than 5 years hard work has been put into developing proposals for the project. The Board of the Trust, which comprises local people and representatives from partners Maryhill Housing Association, Cube Housing Association and Glasgow City Council have worked tirelessly to get to where we are today, as have members of our support team. We have made sure to regularly

consult and involve local people, schools and a variety of organisations and have maximised opportunities to promote our hugely significant heritage assets at events such as Doors Open Day over the past few years. The Trust will continue to do this and I am confident that before long, we will be celebrating the re-opening of what is and will continue to be a much loved hub for the local community for generations to come."

Councillor George Ryan, Executive Member for Development and Regeneration at Glasgow City Council, said: "This announcement marks another step along the way towards the full restoration of the Maryhill Burgh Halls and the Maryhill Leisure Centre project. When the whole project is complete, some of the area's most celebrated buildings will be restored back to their rightful role in the heart of the community. We are delighted that the work of all the project partners is now bearing fruit."