£1m to Morden Hall Park ‘deep green’ restoration

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Morden Hall Park, once owned by the Hatfeild family who made their fortune from snuff milling in the 18th-century is now run by the National Trust and forms part of the Wandle Valley Conservation Area. The park has a strong industrial, social, cultural and economic heritage.

The HLF grant will go towards the £2.5m Heart of the Park project. This will see important buildings, such as the 19th century stable yard and the remaining waterwheel renovated and conserved. The project will allow visitor access to the 19th-century stable yard for the first time in 130 years, as well as creating a centre for sustainable renovation. The conservation of the waterwheel will help explain the river Wandle’s industrial heritage.

Another really exciting element of the project is the work to install a hydroelectric turbine in the river Wandle which flows through the park. The turbine, an Archimedes screw, could be the first hydroelectric turbine of its type in London. It will be highly visible as a new modern “wheel” harnessing the power of the water.

Sue Bowers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for London, said: “This innovative and exemplary approach to restoration, conservation and interpretation will make this a genuinely sustainable ‘deep green’ heritage project that will simultaneously bring alive the industry of the past whilst embracing that of the future.”

New facilities in the renovated stable yard building will include the Livinggreen exhibition centre, workshop space for craft artists, a small café and family picnic area.

A community projects manager will work with the local community during the project to develop and deliver an extensive programme of activities to involve and educate local people and visitors alike on sustainable historic renovation using green technologies and the heritage at Morden Hall Park. These will include:

- New exciting volunteer opportunities
- One apprenticeship in traditional building skills and four work placements in arts and events management
- A new schools’ programme focussing on the restoration, the waterwheel and use of green technologies
- Tours, workshops, and training programmes in heritage skills, historic building restoration and environmental management, for adult learners and local volunteers
- Permanent and temporary Livinggreen exhibitions on the restoration of historic buildings using green renewable energies
- On-site interpretation focussing on green and historic themes e.g. waterwheel technology
- Film and new media project opportunities for local college students.

Patrick Begg, Regional Director for the Thames and Solent Region of the National Trust, explained: “This is a fantastically exciting time for Morden Hall Park, the National Trust and for me personally. We in the Trust all share a passion for Morden, its heritage and for the wider environment in London.

"This grant allows us to forge ahead with what will be an exemplar for the Trust in terms of carbon neutral building renovation. But the Trust is as much about people, and it’s doubly rewarding to know that we will also be giving our

supporters and the community members in Merton what they have very firmly told us they want from their own, local National Trust."

Morden Hall Park was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1941 by Gilliat Edward Hatfeild who stated that the park be used "as an open space and public park to benefit primarily those living in its neighbourhood". Today it is a community treasure in the heart of South West London that attracts over 750,000 visitors a year. The two year project, will begin in summer 2010.

Notes to editors

* The HLF grant to the project The Heart of the Park Project – Morden Hall Park – The National Trust is for £990,000 (40% of project costs) and is a second-round pass, which means it is a confirmed award.

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, including £865million to projects in London alone.

To date, the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded just over £3.8million to 44 projects in LB Merton.

Further information

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