Suffolk museums secure HLF investment for Saving the 70s project

07/10/2013

The Association for Suffolk Museums will lead a two-year project to enable 11 museums and heritage organisations to work with the local community to explore the impact of the decade that brought us the three day week, the package holiday, decimalisation and the first test tube baby among many other highs and lows.

The project will feature a series of local exhibitions and community events exploring the influential decade, run by museums partners and local people for people of all ages.

Suffolk museums are Moyse's Hall Museum in Bury St Edmunds, the Museum of East Anglian Life at Stowmarket, Halesworth and District Museum and the Haverhill History Centre along with the History of Advertising Trust, based at Raveningham, Norfolk, near Beccles. The Hertfordshire project partners are St Albans Museum, Letchworth's First Garden City Heritage Museum, Hertford Museum, Mill Green Museum, Stevenage Museum and the Dacorum Heritage Trust.

Saving the 70s will deliver practical training and professional support for museum staff and volunteers to help them with contemporary collecting, delivering interesting exhibitions and related public events programmes. In gathering people's stories and researching the era further, the project will recruit new volunteers and appeal to new audiences. Each county will also have its own project officer and museum intern.

Already there are plans to hold a 1970s fashion show and a 1970s cinema night. Other museums are planning a trip down a 1970s high street, an exhibition around the emerging computer technology of the day and a look back at the Albion Fairs which ran until 1976 and were a product of young people moving to East Anglia because they were unhappy with the direction urban life had taken.

Cllr Beccy Hopfensperger, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Localities said: "This project will create many opportunities for delivering engaging inter-generational community and educational activity – especially as it touches on many people's memories of an important time in the way Suffolk has evolved. A lot of attention has been focused on the 1970s lately, so this project is both timely and exciting."

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said: "This is an exciting project that will explore our relatively recent history and the impact it has had on society, a legacy still affecting the way we live today. There will be lots of opportunities for people of all ages across Suffolk and Hertfordshire to get involved, and in particular for young people to explore what contemporary heritage means to them."

Further information

Lyn Gash Secretary for the Association for Suffolk Museums and Suffolk County Council's Museum Development Manager on 01473 265241, email: lyn.gash@suffolk.gov.uk.