Over £200,000 will allow Welsh museums to Share Treasures

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This funding will help develop exhibitions and projects that will include artefacts from national collections across Wales and the UK.

The project is a joint initiative between the Welsh Government and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) who have contributed £105,766 and £99,900 respectively.

The scheme aims to make historic collections more accessible to the public by helping local museums, archives and libraries across Wales to establish partnerships with national institutions so that items from national collections can be loaned to them and exhibited at a local level. The funding will assist with the costs of setting up exhibitions as well as alterations and improvements to buildings to make them suitable for the loaned exhibits.

Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales is also an important partner in the scheme. It will offer specialist services to the local museums which are taking part to encourage the sharing of skills and expertise as well as lending collections to a number of the exhibitions.

The museums that will benefit are:

- Cyfarthfa Castle, which will receive £50,000 to create a permanent exhibition space within Cyfarthfa Castle Museum. The new gallery's first temporary exhibition will be a display of works from the National Library of Wales' collection of paintings by Sir Kyffin Williams., one of Wales' most well known artists.
- Buckley Museum, which will expand its collection of excavated Buckley pottery with items borrowed from National Museums Liverpool. The funding of £49,817 will allow the museum to improve interpretation elements to tell the story of the Buckley potteries from the Medieval period to the Second World War and to explain their relevance to the people of Buckley today.
- Wrexham Museum, which will receive £16,200 for a project that will explore the cultural impact of Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn's Grand Tour of Italy and France in the 18th Century. It involves the creation and staging of a fine art exhibition featuring the work of those artists he sponsored on his return.
- Llangollen Museum, which is planning a project that will bring to life the story of the Valle Crucis Abbey/ Eliseg Pillar site. Funding of £39,650 will enable the museum to create an exhibition based on finds from archaeological excavations.
- Abergavenny/Chepstow Museums which are jointly undertaking a three year project to explore the cultural impact of Tintern and Llantony Abbeys culminating in two concurrent exhibitions at Chepstow and Abergavenny Museums. The project has been made possible with funding of £50,000.

Announcing the funding, Housing, Regeneration and Heritage Minister Huw Lewis, said: "Sharing Treasures is an excellent project that will allow artefacts belonging to national collections to be displayed in the communities whose stories they tell. Increasing access to our history to all in Wales is an important commitment for the Welsh Government and this project will achieve just that. It is an excellent example of what can be achieved when we all work together. I

look forward to seeing the exhibitions when they are ready and wish all the museums the best of luck with their projects”

Jennifer Stewart, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund Wales, said: “We are delighted to support the Sharing Treasures scheme and in doing so to have encouraged a wider range of museums and libraries to plan exhibitions using national collections. Our funding will also support activities around the exhibitions which will help local communities learn and get involved in the project, sharing it with future generations.”

David Anderson, Director General, Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales, said: “Amgueddfa Cymru works with local museums in Wales in many ways, supporting them in presenting and interpreting the history of different regions across the country. Our involvement in Sharing Treasures helps to strengthen our relationships with partner museums, ensuring that expertise is shared and the national collections are as widely available as possible. The national collections do, after all, belong to the people of Wales!”