Southampton Sea City Museum sets sail

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has announced confirmed funding* for Southampton Sea City Museum as well as initial support** for projects in Suffolk, Herefordshire, the Outer Hebrides, Nottinghamshire, Wiltshire and a UK-wide film heritage project.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said: “Today’s decisions demonstrate the diversity of the UK’s heritage – from an imaginative museum about our powerful maritime history to rare grassland habitats and the wonderful home of a famous composer. Heritage is something to be celebrated: it touches all our lives, on a daily basis, and we must remember that it needs to be conserved and treasured so that those who come after us can also enjoy it.”

Southampton Sea City Museum – confirmed grant of £4.6million
Southampton City Council can now move forward with its plans to convert the Grade II listed Magistrates’ Court into a modern museum which will showcase the city’s archaeological and maritime collections and put heritage back on Southampton's map.

Situated in the heart of the emerging cultural quarter, Sea City Museum will been home to two permanent galleries: **Gateway to the World** will look at the city’s role in the global context of emigration and immigration over 2,000 years of history, and **Southampton’s Titanic Story** will recount previously untold stories of the 549 Southampton people who lost their lives on the ship in 1912. There will also be space for temporary exhibitions.

Carole Souter, commented: “Southampton Sea City Museum will be an exciting addition to the city’s cultural quarter and will remind people of its important contribution to the UK’s maritime heritage. Heritage Lottery Fund money is helping Southampton’s Council create a place which tells the fascinating and moving stories surrounding Southampton’s Dockyard.”

Over £700,000 in development funding for six projects
Six projects have received initial HLF backing – plus confirmed development funding totalling £709,100 - and will now move to the next stage of their plans before a final funding decision is made:

Britten 100, Aldeburgh, Suffolk – initial support for a £1.2m HLF bid, including £65,800 development funding
Benjamin Britten, one of England’s most famous composers, lived at the 17th-century **Red House** with his partner, the tenor Peter Pears, between 1956 and 1976. It was the backdrop to the creation of many of Britten’s best works, including War Requiem and Noyes Fludde, and home to Pears’ wonderful art collection comprising 2,000 items ranging from the landscapes of John Constable to the contemporary works of John Piper. Increased exhibition space would open up the site to many more visitors, enabling them for the first time ever to visit Britten's restored composition studio, and also to follow a new Britten trail around Aldeburgh. The project is part of a programme leading up to the centenary of Britten's birth in 2013.

The Secret Meadows of Bury Farm, Hope-under-Dinmore, Herefordshire – initial support for a £1.06m HLF bid, including £72,200 development funding
The Grassland Trust plans to acquire Bury Farm in order to safeguard the future management of its extraordinarily rare species-rich grassland habitat. Bury Farm, comprising 76.5ha of land, has been farmed by the same family since the

1920s, with the majority of the grassland remaining untouched for the past 50 years.

The site is exceptional due to its deadwood fauna as well as yellow meadow ant hills which are a key indicator of the ancient grassland habitat. Plans include restoring the land over a three-year period as well as undertaking an ambitious programme of work to open up the farm for both educational and recreational purposes.

Lews Castle and Museum nan Eilean, Stornoway - initial support for a £2.6m HLF bid, including £240,000 development funding
Dramatic Lews Castle, dating from 1847, sits in a commanding position overlooking Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides. Currently vacant, plans would convert the castle into a museum and archive service. There would be an emphasis on telling stories about local archaeology and important elements of island life such as crofting, Harris Tweed and the fishing trade. The development also involves identifying a commercial partner who will work with the Western Isles Council.

Old Magnus Buildings, Newark – initial support for a £2.8m HLF bid, including £203,700 development funding
The Old Magnus Buildings are a set of former charity school buildings dating from 1529. They were established with a bequest from Thomas Magnus, a Newark man who served King Henry VIII at the Field of the Cloth of Gold and as Ambassador to Scotland. Plans include the repair of the Tudor Hall, the Georgian town house and Victorian schoolroom and accompanying education, training and community activities. The redevelopment would be used to house the District Museums Service and includes a national centre for the English Civil War to explain the birth of English democracy.

The Wessex Gallery, Salisbury – initial support for a £1.6m HLF bid, including £87,400 development funding
Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum plan to create a new gallery in Salisbury Museum to tell the story of the history and archaeology of the local area. It would house the museum's outstanding archaeological collections, including material from every 20th-century excavation of Stonehenge, the Pitt Rivers Wessex Collection and the Amesbury Archer. Plans make up the first phase of a 10-year master plan to redevelop the museum as well create a raft of imaginative programmes for visitors. This gallery would be the intellectual gateway to nearby Stonehenge with completion due for 2013.

Portrait of Britain/British Film Institute, UK-wide – initial support for a £1.65m HLF bid, including £40,000 development funding
Portrait of Britain is a partnership project between national and regional film archives, designed to bring together young and old to explore their local community's history through the evocative medium of film. It is a resource to give people online access to Britain's rich and diverse heritage as represented on film and television, regardless of where they live or where the material is held. The scope of the project, including dedicated educational resources, training and mentoring, will be rolled out across the UK and builds on the success of programmes such as **The Lost World of Mitchell and Kenyon** which was watched on BBC 2 by an audience of over 11 million.

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.

** A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has

up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm 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.

Further information

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