Major funding for South Lakeland landscape

06/11/2013

The initiative Rusland Horizons: Working a Lakeland Landscape has been successful in its first-stage bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The project aims to provide rural training, employment and create exciting opportunities for residents and visitors in woodland management, wildlife and archaeology.
Drawing on traditional woodland skills, but also involving other countryside crafts, the project will cover the High Furness Fells between Coniston Water and Windermere (lake), from Grizedale southwards.

The award is worth £68,500 in the development year and, if completed successfully, will lead to a further £1.35m for the four-year delivery phase. Money has also been given by the Sir John Fisher Foundation.

Colin Barr, chairman of the local partnership that spent three years putting the bid together, said: "This is very exciting for the local community.

"We know we have a very special place here and we want to make sure that all the best features are maintained for future generations. The bid is unique because it has been put together by local people, supported by committed staff from a wide range of organisations."

Sara Hilton, Head of HLF North West, said: "Rusland Valley and Fells, a wonderful part of the Lake District, is known for its traditional coppicing industry. We were impressed with this Landscape Partnership's vision for the area because it was multi-stranded with a particular emphasis on heritage skills and training opportunities.

"One of the special qualities of HLF's Landscape Partnership programme is that it helps forge strong local partnerships and in so doing brings together communities, giving them a much deeper understanding of their environment. We are looking forward to working closely with the Park Authority and its partners as they develop their plans in further detail over the next year."

Vice Chairman, Giles Wingate-Saul, added: "We are particularly grateful to our lead partner, the Lake District National Park Authority. It has provided excellent advice and a great deal of hard work. Similarly, Cumbria Woodlands, Natural England and the Forestry Commission have all been hugely helpful. The steering group has been sustained over the last three years, not just by dreams and aspirations, but by the wonderful hospitality provided by Carole Dickinson at the Abbot Park tearoom where we meet!"

Notes to editors

A Landscape Partnership (LP) earmarked grant means that money has been set aside by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the scheme in question. The applicant then progresses to the second round and submits a further, fully-developed application to secure the full award. This early level of strong financial commitment means that LPs can build strong partnerships with the assurance that funding for their scheme is in place provided that their final proposals fully

meet the programme's criteria.

HLF’s Landscape Partnerships are helping bring together members of the community as well as local, regional, and national organisations to deliver schemes which benefit some of the UK’s most outstanding landscapes and rural communities. Grants range from £100,000 up to £3m. The next closing date for LP applications is May 2014.

The Rusland Valley & Fells Heritage Partnership is an informal, voluntary group which was set up following public meetings in 2010. It comprises a mix of people who live and work in the community, as well as representatives of Government agencies and other countryside organisations.

Further information

Colin Barr, chairman of the local partnership cand be contacted on email: cj.barr@btinternet.com or 01229 861408.

Katie Owen, HLF press office on 020 7591 6036, email: katieo@hlf.org.uk.