Stockton town centre recieves £1.8m lottery boost

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The project can now start working on plans for the vital restoration of some of the towns most run down areas. Working with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council the scheme will make a number of physical changes to the town including reinstating historic features of existing buildings and improve links with the town centre and cultural quarter.

Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the North East, Ivor Crowther, said: “Stockton is home to a wealth of heritage some of which has been neglected in recent years. This lottery investment will ensure that important refurbishment works can begin to some of the historical buildings in the area. The Heritage Lottery Fund is proud to be playing a key role in helping to revitalise Stockton and provide some much needed support for local autorities and residents who want to make where they live a better place to be.”

This Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) is part of a wider regeneration scheme named the Stockton Heritage in Partnership (ShiP) scheme, aiming to draw out and revitalise the important heritage of the area, showing the benefits of investment into historic towns. The THI and SHiP schemes will establish partnerships with local property owners to bring unoccupied buildings back into us and encourage further investment in the area. Plans also include providing volunteers with opportunities to learn traditional building skills and take-up work placements.

A number of community activities will be put in place including guided tours, historic re-enactments and heritage open days, all aiming to involve the community in past and the future of their town.

Stockton can be traced back to the 12th century when Bishop Bek of Durham granted a market charter – ‘to our town of Stockton a market upon every Wednesday for ever.’ The town is also well known for the Darlington and Stockton railway which ran the world's first steam hauled passenger train in 1825.

Councillor Bob Cook, Stockton Council’s Cabinet Member for Transport and Regeneration, said: "We are delighted that HLF have chosen to support our ongoing work to provide Stockton Town Centre with an economically vibrant future that retains its unique character. This is an integral part of our plans for the town. With the pride that we have in the long history of our town we are looking forward to working with owners and the community to develop schemes that will safeguard our shared heritage.”

Notes to editors

*Central Stockton THI received an earmarked first round pass of £1,784,900 including development funding of £44,500. A Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) earmarked first-round pass means that money has been set aside by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the scheme in question. Competition at this stage is tough, and while it does not guarantee funding, it is an indication of positive support. The applicants can then progress to the second round and submit a further, fully-developed application to secure the full award. On occasion, development funding will also be awarded at the first round. This early level of strong financial commitment means that THI’s can build strong partnerships with the assurance that funding for their scheme is in place provided their final proposals fully meet the programme criteria.

HLF’s Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) encourages partnerships of local organisations to carry out repairs and other works to a number of historic buildings, structures or spaces. Grants range from £500,000 to £2m. To date, HLF has

invested almost £200m regenerating towns that have suffered serious social and economic decline.

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 £209million in the North East.

As of 31 March 2009, HLF have made 84 awards in Stockton-on-Tees totalling £8,263,118.

Further information

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