Town centre museum a step closer for Crawley

19/10/2011

The £113,500 grant is a first-round pass*, which will go towards developing the project to relocate Crawley Museum from Goffs Park House to Grade II-listed The Tree and The Tree Annexe in the High Street.

A first-round pass means that the HLF believes the funding can deliver high quality benefits and value for National Lottery money. It is an endorsement of outline proposals and having been awarded a first-round pass, Crawley Museum Society and the council now have two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for the rest of the bid.

The total bid is for £998,500, which will see The Tree restored, renovated and fitted out as a new museum space. The project will see new specialist display facilities and equipment to The Tree and The Tree Annexe, educational material developed and lots of exciting opportunities ahead for volunteers and the public to get involved.

An extra £763,000 has already been earmarked by the council to refurbish the listed building and bring it up to standard.

Helen Poole, Curator of Crawley Museum, said: “We are delighted with the news, which will enable us to provide a museum fully worthy of Crawley. As I write, we have two groups of 30 schoolchildren visiting the present site at Goffs Park House, which needs very skilful space management. We look forward to moving to the much more interesting and central premises at The Tree and are very grateful for the support that has recognised the need and made it possible.”

Councillor Lenny Walker, Cabinet member for Leisure and Culture, said: “This is fantastic news. We’ve been working closely with Crawley Museum Society to develop our bid and are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has approved this. This would provide a massive boost to the regeneration and heritage in the town, giving the museum a much more central location from which to inform, educate and entertain. I would like to thank the Heritage Lottery Fund, volunteers and staff of the Crawley Museum Society, officers and staff of Crawley Borough Council and councillors who have supported us on the journey thus far.”

Stuart McLeod, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund South East, said: “We’re extremely pleased to give initial support for a new museum in Crawley, and we look forward to receiving the application for a full grant in the future."

Crawley Museum Society will operate the new service with financial support from the council. The Tree has great potential to improve heritage in Crawley, with its central location, architectural quality and greater size. The building is well worth preserving, originating around 1280.

If the second stage of the bid is successful, it is hoped that the museum could be open in 2013.

Notes for editors

*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.

On occasion an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

Heritage Lottery Fund

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 30,000 projects, allocating £4.7billion across the UK.

Further information

Further information is available from Helen Poole, Museum Curator, on 01293 539 088, or Allan Hambly, Communications Manager, Crawley Borough Council, on 01293 438 781.