York Mansion House treasures to be revealed

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The project aims to give the historic building a more secure future in terms of its financial stability, getting more people involved in learning at the 18th century town house, and making it easier for more people to visit. Development funding of £75,500 has been awarded to help City of York Council progress its plans to apply for a full grant at a later date. This initial grant will fund work including developing plans with architects and specialist conservators.

The four main areas of the project involve restoring the 18th century kitchens; improving displays, conservation and access to the civic collection of gold and silverware; developing an integrated environmental and conservation plan for the structure; and preparing an oral history project, involving people past and present with a connection to the building.

The aim is to create a fully working, 18th century and modern kitchen to allow the house to continue hosting learning events and functions, as well as to illustrate three centuries of eating in the house.

Improved interpretation, education, conservation and access to the gold and silver collections will include displays about the people behind the objects; the York silversmiths who made them and their donors and patrons.

The integrated environmental and conservation plan will cover the contents and structural requirements of the building, including installing an effective conservation heating system to minimise long-term damage to the contents and fabric of the building and reduce its carbon foot print.

The oral history project will collect and share memories from those who have been associated with the house, such as the butlers, cleaners and cooks, along with the Lord Mayors and Sheriffs.

The building is a focal point for the local community and hosts numerous civic and other events and was the first purpose-built house for a Lord Mayor in the country. Since then it has been used for celebrations, business, civic events and announcements, including welcoming Her Majesty the Queen in April 2012 as part of the York 800 celebrations, and announcing that York will be the second Grand Départ of the Tour de France in July 2014.

Cllr Tracey Simpson-Laing, Deputy Leader of City of York Council, said : “Over almost 300 years, this beautiful building has witnessed many significant events and welcomed many Lord Mayors and Sheriffs. Now this grant sets us on the road towards orchestrating the most comprehensive restoration of the Mansion House since its completion in 1732.”

Fiona Spiers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund for Yorkshire and the Humber, said: “The Mansion House has been a hub of York’s civic life for 280 years and has many fascinating stories to tell. We look forward to receiving the detailed plans for this project.”

Notes to editors

*A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project 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.

Further information

Further information can be found on the Mansion House website.

Otherwise, contact Megan Rule, Communications Officer at City of York Council, on 01904 552 017 or megan.rule@york.gov.uk.