Epiacum Heritage Ltd wins Heritage Lottery Fund



Epiacum Roman fort is at the heart of a 3,000 year heritage timeline

The project will focus on the development and management of the Epiacum Roman Fort and its associated landscape and will enable Epiacum Heritage Ltd to assess future options for the site and the best way to facilitate future access, enjoyment and understanding of this important and unique local heritage. The project will be carried out over an eight month period.

The project will enable the company to work with partners and professionals to facilitate a strong basis for future development. A long-term lease for site management will be secured based on the findings and outcomes of an options appraisal and the architectural survey of a redundant farm building (Holy Mire), which was previously a Bastle House. This will assess the development and reuse of the building as a resource centre for site interpretation and visitor access. Training for company volunteers and directors will ensure that they are in a stronger, more resilient position to take the company forward and manage site development.

The Epiacum Roman Fort is situated on a working farm and has been called 'The best preserved Roman Fort in the Roman Empire' (Prof Stewart Ainsworth, 2009). The site and associated landscape was subject of the 'Farmer Miner Landscape Project' carried out by English Heritage (2009- 2012) and sits at the heart of a 3,000-year timeline of heritage, including Celtic settlements and Bastle Houses. Epiacum is of local, regional and international importance and has the potential for major development that will bring it to the attention of visitors.

Commenting on the award, Elaine Edgar (Director) said: “We are thrilled to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and are confident the project will enable us to develop a strong approach to development, which is focussed on the best options at the present time as well as ensuring we can develop a long-term vision which is rooted in collaboration with partners and the needs and interests of a range of stakeholders. We are excited at the prospect of being able to fully explore these options and are grateful to the HLF for this opportunity.”

Ivor Crowther, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North East, said: “We’re pleased to support Epiacum Heritage Ltd through our Start-up Grants programme as it takes an important first step in the development of this significant heritage site. By creating a strong business foundation and helping staff and volunteers to build on their skills, this project will go a long way to securing the fort’s future as a shining example of our Roman heritage for future generations to continue to explore and enjoy.”

Notes to editors

About Epiacum Heritage Ltd
Epiacum Heritage Ltd was established in 2011 for the purpose of developing a long-term approach for the promotion and stewardship of Epiacum Roman Fort. In close partnership with the landowner, John Edgar, the company aims to ensure that the site is maintained and conserved in line with the land management practices which have secured this to date, whilst also ensuring the site is able to be accessed, enjoyed and understood more fully by visitors.

The company has already benefited from HLF funding to promote and raise awareness of the site. The momentum achieved to date has created a need for management to be formalised and for the company to develop a stronger position in order to plan and develop the site to its full potential.

Further information

For further information, images and interviews, please contact Elaine Edgar (Director) at Epiacum Heritage Ltd on 01434 382 080 or info@epiacumheritage.org or Paul Frodsham (Director) at AONB North Pennines on 01388 528 801.