Swansea's secret garden to be restored thanks to National Lottery



Jennifer Stewart

The magical, almost forgotten walled garden, which is on the Penllergare Estate on the outskirts of the city will be fully restored turning this neglected garden into a place where local people and visitors alike can escape from hectic city life. The initial HLF support will help plan how the river valley can be better managed as a wetland habitat, balancing conservation with public access.

The Grade II registered Walled Garden also has the potential to become a significant tourist destination for Swansea following its restoration. At its heart of this exciting project will be unique Orchid House – currently in a state of serious disrepair – which is set to display a collections of these exotic plants.

This project will complement another HLF-funded project – a £2.3million scheme which is restoring the enchanting and much loved Penllergare Woods.

Commenting on the award Jennifer Stewart, Head of HLF Wales, said: "This delightful project will make the Walled Gardens a real asset for the people of Swansea. It is a project that has been put together by a committed Trust whose volunteers who have drawn up a strong case to draw more visitors to the area.

“To support the project, HLF has earmarked funding of £1,791,500, including a development grant of £159,800, to help the group develop plans for the project in more detail. We believe Penllergare Walled Gardens is an excellent investment of National Lottery players’ money.”

Welcoming the award, Terry Jones of the Penllergare Trust said: “We are really excited that, after 25 years’ campaigning on behalf of the local community to save this historic walled garden from dereliction and inappropriate development, the grant will at last enable us to repair and reopen it to visitors. Together with the Llan River corridor project we also expect upwards of 150 local volunteers to be involved in horticulture, arboriculture, stone walling, wetland conservation, community engagement and learning.

“This further generous grant will enable Penllergare Valley Woods to become a regionally unique and diverse visitor attraction and also demonstrate that, supported by National Lottery funding, recreational green spaces of this scale and complexity can be saved and managed by an independent local charity.”

Notes to editors

Plans for the project include:

- Purchase the lease for the Walled Gardens and acquire ancillary land currently owned by the council, including the redundant security bungalow
- Repair and restoration of the Orchid House (SAM), with appropriate interpretation
- Restore the garden walls and gothic bothy to their original condition
- Upgrade and refit the bungalow as the trust’s base for community engagement, learning and administration
- Sensitive adaption of the derelict vinery and former walled garden plots for a range of purposes including community horticulture and horticulture skills training
- Rebuild the gardener's house as a source of letting income. Restore and make new paths to allow access to the site, adapt the adjoining slip gardens for community uses, thin and replant vegetation in the quarry

Previous investment in the area

The previously delivered HLF-funded Phase 1 of the restoration project, worth £2,320,800, centred on the rugged informality of the upper valley of Penllergare Gardens.

This new Phase 2 investment concentrates on the other two contrasting locations, by restoring and reviving the formal walled gardens in their ornamental woodland setting, and balancing wetland habitat conservation with access in the lower Llan corridor.

Further information

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£2.3m HLF cash boost to restore romantic landscape of Penllergare Valley Woods