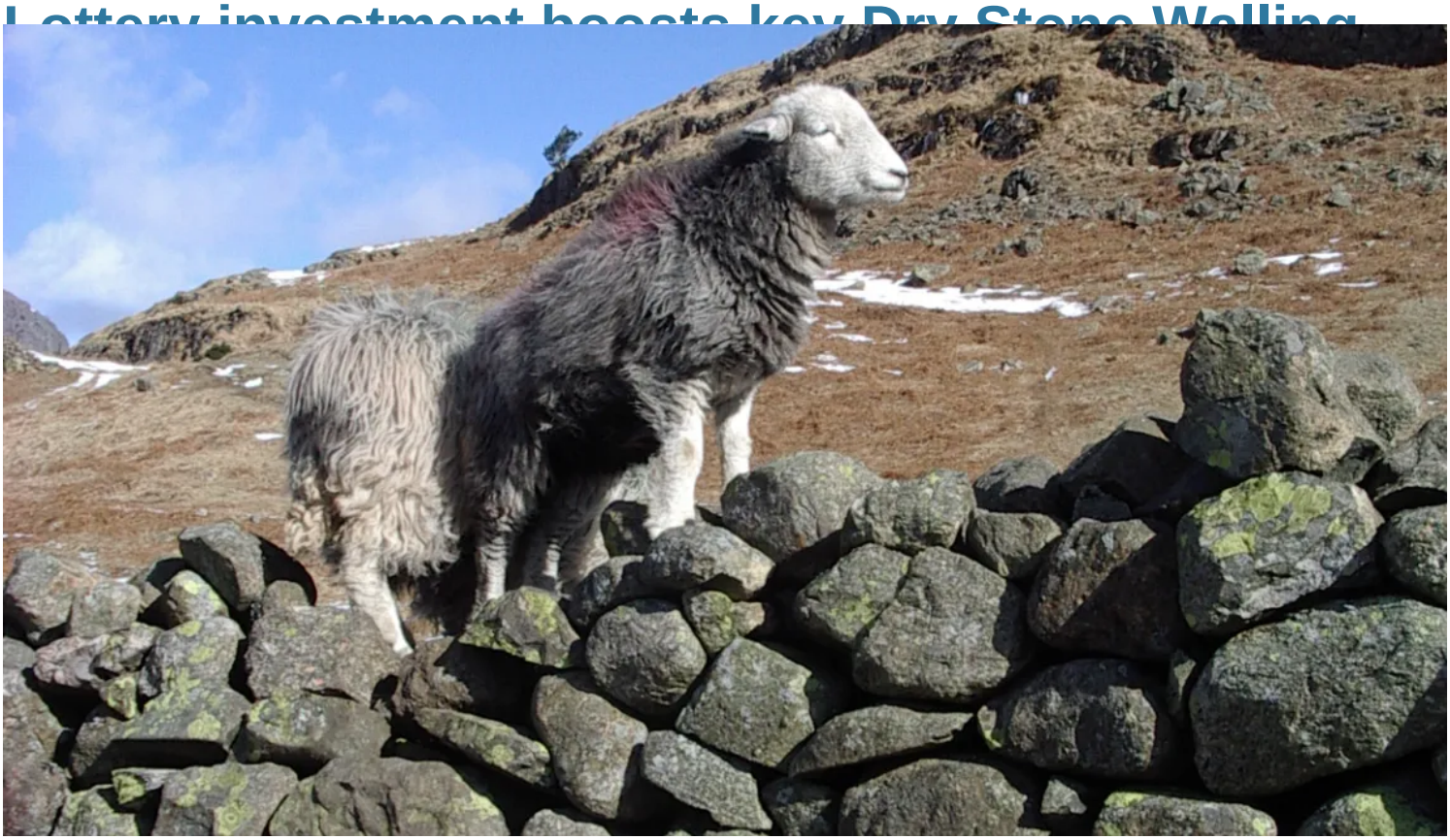
Lottery investment boosts key Dry Stone Walling



Herdwick sheep on a dry stone wall

The project aims to increase career prospects in dry stone walling by providing five training bursaries throughout the North West and offering support for established dry stone wallers to enhance their skills.

The provision of training bursary opportunities in the North West will enable individuals to learn heritage skills that will ultimately provide an income whilst also helping to maintain the landscape for future generations to enjoy.

The project will also deliver an educational programme for schools and colleges providing access to online teaching resources and offer students the opportunity to engage with the age-old craft of dry stone walling. Local communities in the North West will be encouraged to get involved in local restoration projects and help address the decline of traditional boundaries which affects both their practical and aesthetic value.

The craft of dry stone walling is vital to the preservation of our landscape heritage. Since pre-history this ancient technique has been used for dwellings and enclosures; the earliest form known in Great Britain built some five thousand years ago on Orkney. However, it’s the field walls, mostly of the 18th and 19th centuries, that have made the greatest impression on the present day landscape. The network of dry stone walls are a unifying feature, providing a skeleton to the landscape, giving it form, coherence, structure, perspective and distinction. Visitors to the uplands of the UK marvel at the patchwork of field boundaries stretching up from the valley floors and climbing the steep slopes of the fells. The

uplands of North West England are particularly rich in dry stone walls.

Explaining the importance of the HLF support, Sara Hilton, Head of HLF North West, said: "The heritage sector has a real need for people who have specialist conservation skills to protect our wonderful heritage for future generations. We at HLF are passionate about looking after our historic environment and equally about giving people, especially younger generations, the chance to gain new skills and training opportunities that will help them in later life."

Ray Stockall, Chairman of the Dry Stone Walling Association said: "We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund is supporting the Dry Stone Walling Association in our mission to preserve, improve and advance the knowledge and understanding of the traditional craft of dry stone walling. The provision of Training Bursaries and support for skills development, coupled with a programme to enhance public awareness of our heritage sector will help us to ensure that the skills vital for this ancient craft are passed from the Master Craftsmen of today to the young craftsmen of tomorrow to secure the future of our landscape heritage."

Further information

For further information, images and interviews, please contact:

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