

David Livingstone Centre

The award includes a grant of £334,000 to help develop the project to the next stage.

The birthplace in 1803 of celebrated missionary and explorer, Dr David Livingstone, will be completely refurbished in a multi-million pound project managed by the DL Trust and supported by its partners, the National Trust for Scotland and South Lanarkshire Council. Historic buildings and collections will be opened up to provide a much stronger and more relevant visitor journey with the David Livingstone story at the very the heart of the museum.

The Museum's mission will be to conserve and interpret the internationally significant heritage, collections and legacy, to create a dynamic new destination for visitors of all ages, and to grow to be a centre for research delivering learning and public programmes to support community regeneration and international development.

The Chair of the David Livingstone Trust, Dr Isabel Bruce said: “This is incredibly welcome news. David Livingstone was a remarkable man who lived his life of education, exploration and missionary endeavour to the full, and is warmly known by many Africans as a visionary because of his views on their potential for self-development and his respect for their human rights. [quote=Dr Isabel Bruce, The Chair of the David Livingstone Trust]"This is incredibly welcome news. David Livingstone was a remarkable man who lived his life of education, exploration and missionary endeavour to the full."[/quote]

“In spite of the recent bicentenary events to mark his birth, it is still fair to say that today he is better understood and remembered in Africa than he is in the land of his birth. This project gives us the opportunity to reawaken his story and provide the memorial he deserves in Scotland, while enhancing his international legacy.

“Through showcasing the remarkable life and heritage of David Livingstone we will tell a powerful story that sets Scotland in a global context and presents a compelling universal example of what each of us can achieve – and what we have to offer the world. There is a lot of hard work ahead, but the generous support we have received from HLF, as well as the help from the National Trust for Scotland, South Lanarkshire Council and others, allows us to move forward purposefully to realise our ambitions for the Centre.”

Commenting, Head of HLF Scotland, Colin McLean, said: “The life of David Livingstone is both incredible and inspirational yet his pioneering work is recognised more in Africa than it is in Scotland where he was born. We are delighted to give our initial support to a project which will allow us to celebrate this rich heritage and put David Livingstone’s birthplace on the world’s stage as a tourist destination and valuable education resource.”

Speaking for South Lanarkshire Council, Provost Eileen Logan said: “As South Lanarkshire’s Provost and a Trustee of the David Livingstone Trust I am doubly delighted that HLF has handed us a tremendous boost to the long-term plans for this iconic internationally important facility.

“It is hard to overemphasise just how important the centre is. It is a centre of excellence at a local, national and international level, preserving the local history of an area and a time in which David Livingstone’s character and international standing was cultivated. This funding will ensure that the birth-place of one the giant’s of exploration and missionary endeavour will continue to grow and promote the importance that a man from Blantyre did to shape the history of Africa and its people.

“The Centre is dedicated to preserving the historical influences of its namesake but with this funding the plans for the David Livingstone Centre will allow it to continue to look to the future and prepare and expand to provide the next generations of visitors who travel from all corners of the globe to explore the past.”

Speaking for the Scotland Malawi Partnership, and from the international perspective, Rev Kenneth Ross said: "Representing Scotland's many civic links with Malawi, which date back 156 years and in which more than 94,000 Scots are now involved, we are absolutely delighted to learn of this HLF support for the David Livingstone Centre. Since David Livingstone first arrived in what became Malawi our two nations have enjoyed a close relationship: a friendship defined and underpinned by mutual understanding and mutual respect, by solidarity and support. Today, an estimated 46% of Scots personally know someone with a link to Malawi.

"These contemporary civic links with Malawi are the living legacy of Dr Livingstone and for this reason Livingstone is warmly remembered in both our nations. Indeed, every past Malawian president has visited Scotland at least once, and while doing so every president has been sure to include a visit of the David Livingstone Centre in Blantyre. It is an essential component on the itinerary of any friend visiting from Malawi, from primary school teacher to president!

"We are greatly excited by this funding announcement which will allow Scots and Malawians to understand and be a part of our shared history, and Livingstone's living legacy, for many more generations to come."

The David Livingstone Centre is formed around a single-roomed house in Shuttle Row, Blantyre, which was once part of a complex of workers’ dwellings alongside a cotton factory on the banks of the Clyde. Livingstone was born here on 19 March 1813 and as a young boy worked 12-hour days in the factory. Later, he daily walked to and from Glasgow to

undertake his medical studies.

Originally intending to go to China as a missionary, Livingstone was fired by the conviction that the African slave trade might be destroyed through the influence of "legitimate trade" and the spread of Christianity, and embarked upon the travels that made him among the most famous of Victorians before his death in Africa in 1873.

The David Livingstone Trust was established in 1930 with the aim of preserving what was left of Livingstone’s birthplace and creating a fitting memorial to his life and work. Since 1999, the centre has been managed by the National Trust for Scotland on the DL Trust’s behalf with support from South Lanarkshire Council.

?**Further information**

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