Multi-million pound boost to transform Jewellery



Sir Albert Bore (far right) with the project team in the Jewellery Quarter

Birmingham's Grand Central redevelopment has led the way for a revitalisation of the city centre. This latest investment will allow the industrial heritage which made Birmingham great to play as much of a role in the regeneration going on across the city as the 21st-century architecture and on-going commercial development.

- Some of the Quarter's most historic, but endangered, buildings are to be saved and restored, making them available once more for commercial, office and residential use
- Two historic cemeteries that provide the Quarter with much needed open space will receive a major makeover
- New opportunities for people to learn about the fascinating industrial and social history of the area will be created
- The green light has been given to develop a project that aims to create the Quarter's first visitor heritage centre

[quote=Shabana Mahmood, MP for Birmingham Ladywood]"This is fantastic news for the Jewellery Quarter, and for Birmingham."[/quote]

"The concentration of jewellery and metalworking craftsmanship to be found in the Jewellery Quarter is unequalled anywhere in the world. It has been a hub of expertise for more than two and a half centuries," said Anne Jenkins, Deputy Director of Operations at HLF. "Thanks to National Lottery players we are able to support three superb projects that will help to restore and re-energise this area to safeguard its special heritage, strengthen its future potential, and

contribute to the city's prosperity."

HLF has funded a number of projects in the Jewellery Quarter in the past, including the Newman Coffinworks restoration, the Birmingham Pen Museum, and the Birmingham Assay Office, and the cumulative impact of these awards will provide a huge boost to the area. Since April 1994, HLF have invested over £85m in heritage projects across Birmingham.

Shabana Mahmood, MP for Birmingham Ladywood, said: "This is fantastic news for the Jewellery Quarter, and for Birmingham. These three projects will put the heritage and history of Birmingham at the heart of the city's on-going regeneration, and I'm delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund is continuing to invest in the area".

Jewellery Quarter Townscape Heritage Initiative - £1.8m

The Jewellery Quarter Development Trust will be able to restore five listed, derelict or partly vacant properties in the 'industrial middle' of the Quarter's Conservation Area. Three of the properties – all Grade II listed structures - at 46, Frederick Street; 6, Legge Lane; and 36-46 Vittoria Street are now too dangerous to enter. The restoration project will work with private owners and the city council to bring the buildings back into use for either commercial, office or residential purposes.

The project also includes a range of learning opportunities with volunteers researching the history of buildings and the lives of those who lived or worked in them. This will include working with artists and actors creating street plays to bring the uncovered stories to life.

Jewellery Quarter Cemeteries - £1.38m

Birmingham City Council will restore Key Hill Cemetery, created by Nonconformists in 1836, and nearby Warstone Lane Cemetery, laid out by Anglicans in 1848. Covering some seven hectares between them the two burial grounds made use of spectacular former quarry sites to create a dramatic series of catacombs in the redundant quarried faces. The cemeteries have long since ceased to be used for burials but provide a haven for wildlife in the midst of the urban area. Grade II* Key Hill has many mature London plane trees and Grade II listed Warstone Lane has black poplars.

The project will include the restoration or replacement of railings and stone pillars, with new paths, gates and seating. The catacombs will also be made safe and restored. The community and local schools will be encouraged to get involved in researching the history of the cemeteries and helping to maintain them in the future.

Sir Albert Bore, local ward member, said: "These two cemeteries are of huge historical significance to Birmingham, with prominent local figures such as Joseph Chamberlain, Alfred Bird and John Baskerville buried there, as well as providing important areas for wildlife to thrive in an urban setting.

"I am absolutely delighted that this valuable funding will enable us to restore and, ultimately, preserve these important sites for the benefit of the local community, future generations and, of course, the many visitors interested in learning more about the area's rich history."

The New Standard Works – an initial £39,800

Ruskin Mill Land Trust has been awarded an initial £39,800 to develop a detailed plan to restore the Grade II listed former industrial building whose curved façade graces Vittoria Street and Regent Place. Built in 1878-9 as a development of workshops and offices the building was, unusually, constructed using rolled-iron and cast iron beams as a structural frame. A later extension was purpose-built for jewellery manufacture with large glazed windows and floors designed to accommodate benches.

The Trust will now prepare a plan for a full grant of nearly £890,000 to restore the building and create a Heritage Gallery that would act as a visitor centre for the Jewellery Quarter plus a community workshop, a cafe and makers' studios available to craftspeople.

Janine Christley, Director of Fundraising at Ruskin Mill Trust, said: "Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter is a remarkable hub combining a rich history and a contemporary vision. This valuable grant will give the Ruskin Mill Land Trust an opportunity to restore one of the JQ's most iconic buildings and work in partnership with HLF and the JQDT to help shape the next phase in its future. We are hugely grateful and excited."

Notes to Editors

- The Townscape Heritage area focuses on 7.6 hectares of the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area. It largely covers the Industrial Middle character area. This is the part of the Quarter which has suffered most severely from industrial buildings becoming vacant with no demand for their manufacturing use and so becoming redundant. Some have been vacant for 20 years or more and have deteriorated to a point where they are now in a very poor state of repair
- The Jewellery Quarter Cemeteries have a multi-faceted heritage. The social, religious and political history of Birmingham captured in the collection of extant memorials and associated burial and census records is of national significance. The ecology of the cemeteries is another important dimension of their heritage creating a magical woodland heritage with populations of birds and butterflies in the heart of the city
- The Standard Works is a Grade II listed building in the heart of the Quarter. It had been empty for 20 years and, although structurally sound, was in need of complete renovation and a new lease of life. It is a source of architectural and historic interest and has community value, both in its story and its future use. The significance of the building is intertwined with the development of the jewellery industry in Birmingham in the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century

Further information

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- Jewellery Quarter Cemeteries: Russell Poulton, Regeneration Manager on tel: 0121 464 9841
- New Standard Works: Janine Christley, Director of Fundraising, Ruskin Mill Trust, on tel: 01453 837617, or 07977 174761