

Hastings Pier is set to reopen next month

It’s been spring madness on the South Coast today. Local boy Graham McPherson – also known as Madness’ lead singer Suggs - fixed the final screw in the re-decking of the town’s historic pier following a £15million renovation.

First opened in 1872, Hastings Pier enjoyed many years of popularity before the gradual decline in the British seaside holiday led to its closure in 2008. Two years later a devastating fire left the superstructure badly damaged.

[quote=Paul Hudson, Chair of HLF’s South East Committee]“Hastings Pier has witnessed over 130 years of history – from the Suffragette movement to the Swinging Sixties.”[/quote]

The money to bring the pier back to life was raised thanks to an energetic local community campaign. An £11.4m grant from HLF made up the bulk of the total and a Community Share issue helped raise another £600,000.

Restoration work started in early 2014. After 50 miles of new decking, more than 500,000 new screws, the replacement of 70% of the steelwork and the addition of a brand new visitor centre, café and formal restaurant, the pier is set to reopen in late April.

Paul Hudson, Chair of HLF’s South East Committee, said: “Hastings Pier, a landmark for those who live nearby or visit, has witnessed over 130 years of history – from the Suffragette movement to the Swinging Sixties. The completion of its restoration is auspicious for the pier’s survival and will also provide important opportunities for social and economic regeneration.”

Madness will headline a gala opening celebration on the pier on 21 May. Tickets are available from the Hastings Pier website.

[Editor's note: Watch the National Lottery's film about Hastings pier on our YouTube channel.]