

Artist impression of the refurbished interior of the Toll House Stratford Historic Building Trust

Thanks to support from the HLF and Historic England, Stratford Historic Buildings Trust will undertake a project to refurbish and restore the Old Toll House, and bring it back into use as both a heritage attraction and a viable commercial enterprise.

The Old Toll House, located on the medieval Clopton Bridge, was built in 1814. With its crenelated roofline and gothic windows it is a familiar local landmark and a Grade I listed building. However, over the last 30 years it has fallen into serious disrepair and has been included on Historic England's *Heritage at Risk* Register.

The restoration project will preserve the historic fabric of the building and provide it with a new use as office space at ground floor and mezzanine level. In addition, the project will include a public display area in the basement and the delivery of a range of activities to explore both the history of the Toll House and also the wider industrial heritage of Stratford, much of which was originally located along the River Avon and around the canal basin.

This Heritage Enterprise grant builds on HLF's significant previous investment in Stratford, and will add to the cumulative impact of HLF's on-going commitment to Stratford's fascinating heritage. HLF has now invested over £18million in Stratford, including £7.5m to projects exploring the life and works of William Shakespeare.

Kevin Bond, SHBT Chairman, said: "This is brilliant news for the Old Toll House. The project has seen quite a few false dawns over the years, but securing these two grants means we can now at last start work on restoring this splendid historic building. We are extremely grateful to HLF and Historic England as their support has been critical to making the

project a reality.”

[quote=Vanessa Harbar, Head of HLF West Midlands]"This investment will continue to breathe new life into this distinctive part of Stratford’s heritage"[/quote]

Vanessa Harbar, Head of HLF West Midlands, said: “HLF celebrates with Stratford Historic Buildings Trust as they receive their second round of Heritage Enterprise funding. Thanks to National Lottery players, this investment will continue to breathe new life into this distinctive part of Stratford’s heritage. Heritage Enterprise projects go beyond bricks and mortar; they enable historic buildings like the Old Toll House to become an important part of the economic health of communities by nurturing business and creating jobs.”

Veryan Heal, Historic England’s Planning Director in the West Midlands, said: “Historic England is very pleased to be supporting Stratford Historic Building Trust’s in conserving the Old Toll House, bringing it back into beneficial use. This beautiful, important building is one of our top ten Heritage at Risk priorities in the West Midlands and we are delighted to be part of this project.”