

England, London & South: Committee minutes for June 2023

Minutes of the Committee for London and South meeting held on 13 June 2023 at 10.30am in Briefing Room, The Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset and via Microsoft Teams.

Members:

- Andrew Vines
- Carole Stewart
- Caroline Kay
- Lydia Lee
- Neena Sohal
- Nick Holliday
- Nicole Collomb
- Richard Smith
- Stephen Boyce
- Taryn Nixon (Chair)

Apologies:

None received.

Committee Business

Welcomes and apologies

The Chair welcomed the committee to the June meeting, held via Microsoft Teams and in person at The Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset.

Minutes from the last meeting on 14 March 2023 and matters arising.

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

There were no matters arising.

Declarations of interest

The following declarations were noted:

We are London – collections, galleries, and people in a new museum of West Smithfield Rooms (Applicant – Museum of London)

Simon Thurley was Director of the Museum of London 20 years ago. There was no direct conflict.

Taryn Nixon was employed directly by the Museum of London (MOL) from 1987 to 2011. Taryn had held no governance role or influence with the Museum of London since. There was no direct conflict.

Richard Smith had recently been appointed as Head of Gresham College, London, which had worked closely with the Museum of London; both organisations are funded by the City of London Corporation. There was no direct conflict.

The Centre of Memory and Learning (Applicant – The Liliesleaf Trust UK)

Nicole Collomb worked for the Greater London Authority (GLA). Nicole had not been involved in the project. There was no direct conflict.

Project Kaida: Reinterpreting the Gurkha Museum (Applicant – The Gurkha Museum Trust)

Richard Smith was an MOD employee. The Gurkha Museum was an independent charity, part funded by the MOD. There was no direct conflict.

Pine Martens Bounce Back: The Two Moors Pine Marten Reintroduction Project (Applicant – Devon Wildlife Trust)

Nick Holliday was Deputy Chair of Exmoor NPA within the last 5 years; he had had no involvement with the project. There was no direct conflict.

Caroline Kay was a serving National Trust (NT) Board Member but had not been involved with decision making on the project. There was no direct conflict.

Assizes for Devizes: unlocking Wiltshire's Stories (Applicant: Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society)

Caroline Kay had had informal discussions about the project with its Chair and members of its team. There was no direct conflict.

Andrew Vines had been invited by the architect for the Devizes Assize Court Trust to attend a meeting that also included a member of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, to discuss the proposals. At the time Andrew was not aware that the application would be on the June committee. There was no direct conflict.

Stephen Boyce had been invited to the site in Devizes several years previously. There was no direct conflict.

Chair's report

The Chair's report was received. It was noted that the September Board meeting would be held in Torbay on the 27 and 28 September, presenting an opportunity for Board members to immerse themselves in one of the first tranche of Priority Places identified as part of the Heritage 2033 strategy.

Corporate update

Anne Jenkins presented the Corporate updated as circulated, noting, in particular that:

- The new corporate strategy, Heritage 2033, had been submitted to Board in May for final approval.
- Open Programme thresholds had increased from £5million to £10m on 30 May 2023 to acknowledge the current economic climate and the impact of rising costs and inflation.
- Budgets would be managed flexibly to ensure the support of good quality projects.
- Applications would continue to be assessed under the Strategic Funding Framework guidance until new grant process guidance had been released. Due to the timescales involved in larger grants, it was likely that some applicants would make an Eol or Development application under SFF and a Delivery application under Heritage 2033.
- A review of the Eol process was underway. Board and Committees would be kept informed of interest and pipeline.

The Committee discussed:

- the impact of the threshold change and increased competition for small and medium-sized projects
- the future change in case paper format to reflect the new strategy
- The position of the new lottery operator (Alwyn) regarding lottery income allocated to good causes. A process of forecasting had taken place and budgets had been adjusted to take account of additional adjustments Board may make

Area overview

Stuart McLeod presented the circulated London and South area overview:

- The Dynamic Collections campaign had resulted in 21 applications in April, many at the upper end of the £250,000 band. Having awarded a large number of development grants last year, the Committee would be receiving increasing numbers of delivery round applications at the coming Committee meetings as well as a higher total request per meeting for grant uplifts.
- The potential closure and relocation of the Jewish Museum had been announced. A Heritage Fund grant had been awarded in 2007 and the contract had nine years outstanding. The museum is part of Arts Council England's (ACE) National Portfolio and will remain in close contact with ACE. The Committee noted the sum owing to the Heritage Fund and asked to be kept up to date with developments.

- There had been positive discussions with the two proposed Priority Places in the London and South Area, Medway and Torbay. Both local authorities were enthusiastic about collaboration and, in particular, about the proposed cohort approach. The discussions highlighted the importance of early-stage resourcing, and it was noted that the Heritage Fund's investment may help to leverage new funding from other partners. Both authorities were taking time to consider the breadth of their heritage assets in the context of their strategies. In Medway, a good mix of investment already existed and landscapes had been identified as a priority but there was no heritage strategy. There were clear challenges with the high street development and parks required attention. In Torbay, there were levelling up partnership opportunities and a recognition of the importance of natural environment and green spaces. Work is now underway internally to develop Heritage Fund methodology and guidance and to set out the Heritage Fund's theory of change.
- In discussion, the Committee noted the media following a GB News article about Heritage funding for the Ubele Project, and the continuing need for tight guidance and support for applicants who find themselves at the centre of intense media attention.
- The Area Director reported on his attendance at the Grand opening of the Dockyard Church, Sheerness.

Grant increases for discussion and decision

We are London – collections, galleries, and people in a new museum of West Smithfield Rooms

Applicant: Museum of London

Grant request: £5,000,000 (23%)

Project description: To relocate the Museum of London to West Smithfield, which houses an extraordinary array of market buildings. The museum will bring new life and purpose to these buildings which will house the galleries, collections and programmes. There is substantial financial support from City of London Corporation and the Greater London Authority, and the Heritage Fund is being asked to contribute towards the galleries, publicly accessible spaces and engagement activities only.

Declarations: Richard Smith elected to leave the room.

The Committee for London and South **AWARDED** a grant increase of £5,000,000 to make a total grant of £9,597,300.

SFF Delivery round applications for discussion and decision

The Centre of Memory and Learning

Applicant: The Liliesleaf Trust UK

Grant request: £1,211,812 (39%)

Project description: To create the first UK venue dedicated to the UK Movement Anti-Apartheid, the Centre of Memory and Learning (CML). This will provide a permanent base to explore the history of the Movement Anti-Apartheid (MAA) through permanent display, heritage-based activities, learning and skills development. The building is an important site for UK Black-led social heritage, further enhanced by its archive collection.

The Committee for London and South **AWARDED** a delivery grant of £1,211,812 (39% of total eligible delivery costs).

Nature + Love

Applicant: The Horniman Public Museum and Public Park Trust

Grant request: £5,737,122 (62%)

Project description: This project will play an essential role in strengthening the social, economic and green recovery of the Horniman and its local community as it emerges from the devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic. Several areas of the Horniman's estate and heritage assets will be redeveloped, making new connections between outdoor green spaces and interior gallery displays using accessible interpretation and digital technology, delivering a sustainable legacy.

The Committee for London and South **AWARDED** a delivery grant of £5,737,122 (62%).

SFF Development round applications for discussion and decision

Project Kaida: Reinterpreting the Gurkha Museum

Applicant: The Gurkha Museum Trust

Grant request: £291,580 (56%)

Project description: The Gurkha Museum, which holds a collection of 15,000 objects. is the only museum in the UK to celebrate 200 years of remarkable Gurkha service to Britain. The project will deliver a complete redisplay and reinterpretation of the museum galleries and introduce improved visitor facilities, alongside a programme of engagement with target audiences.

The Committee for London and South **AWARDED** a development grant of £291,580 (56% of total eligible delivery costs).

Treasures of the history of surgery; engagement and discovery through digitisation

Applicant: Royal College of Surgeons of England

Grant request: £104,060 (27%)

Project description: A digitisation project to unlock the little-known heritage treasures of its Library and Archives Collections to a broader and more diverse global audience. It aims to identify the most relevant and revealing items and themes, the most historically significant materials in the Collections and create an online resource that will resonate deeply with different audiences and become freely available to anyone with internet access.

The Committee for London and South **REJECTED** a development grant of £104,060 and potential delivery grant of £763,790 (27%)

Pine Martens Bounce Back: The Two Moors Pine Marten Reintroduction Project

Applicant: Devon Wildlife Trust

Grant request: £22,315 (17%)

Project description: To introduce pine martens to Dartmoor and Exmoor, through the creation of appropriate woodland habitat, and the delivery of a public and landowner engagement programme to promote learning about martens and woodlands, teaching new skills and helping local communities take practical action to improve their landscape for nature. This project will help to deliver Devon Wildlife Trust's 10-year strategy "Towards a Wilder Devon".

The Committee for London and South **AWARDED** a development grant of £22,315 (17%) and potential delivery grant £1,223,312 (52%).

Tor to Shore

Applicant: Cornwall Wildlife Trust

Grant request: £176,145 (55%)

Project description: To create a Nature Recovery Network expanding from Helman Tor, through the river catchment, into St Austell Bay. It aims to reintroduce keystone species, such as beavers and large herbivores to help manage the reserve naturally, creating conditions for rare wildlife to thrive. It will provide opportunities and experiences to connect nature with under-served communities, benefiting physical health, mental wellbeing, and attitudes towards wildlife.

The Committee for London and South **REJECTED** a development grant of £176,145 (55%) and potential delivery grant of £2,988,011 (63%).

The Place Where We Live: Cloudesley Rejuvenated

Applicant: The London Diocesan Fund

Grant request: £480,722 (78%)

Project description: To repair and refurbish the Grade II* listed Cloudesley Centre building in Islington – which is on the Heritage at Risk register – to house a Montessori school and deliver an

activity and skills development programme. This project offers an opportunity to support those struggling with isolation and mental health, in partnership with the Stuart Low Trust, and children with SEND through local schools and New River College PRU, supporting excluded children.

The Committee for London and South **AWARDED** a development grant of £480,722 (78%) and potential delivery grant of £3,472,591 (57%).

Assizes for Devizes: unlocking Wiltshire's Stories

Applicant: Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society

Grant request: £300,748 (43%)

Project description: To create a vibrant, inclusive community and tourist destination in the heart of Wiltshire, bringing life back to the derelict Grade II* Devizes Assize Court and creating a sustainable new home for the internationally significant Wiltshire Museum, which houses world class collections. It aims to work with core and under-served audiences by building and enhancing partnerships to co-produce accessible spaces and develop programmes of activities centred around wellbeing, creativity, and learning.

The Committee for London and South **AWARDED** a development grant of £300,748 (43%) and potential delivery grant of £4,697,171 (43%).

Blenheim Palace – High Level Repairs Project

Applicant: Blenheim Palace Heritage Foundation

Grant request: £482,880 (69%)

Project description: To carry out urgent repairs and conservation work to enable the very pinnacle of the Palace to be opened up to one million annual visitors, irrespective of their physical ability, to stand where Churchill stood, to admire Vanbrugh's arts and Capability Brown's landscape as he visualised it, never seen before but now possible. The project will work closely with community groups, engage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and provide work experience for children with special educational needs.

The Committee for London and South **REJECTED** a development grant of £482,880 (69%) and potential delivery grant of £4,517,020 (29%).

Prioritisation and feedback on Development Items

The Committee agreed to award the cases as outlined above.