

All Our Stories - Heritage Lottery Fund's £4.5m investment to help us delve into our colourful past

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is announcing over 500 successful projects across the UK which will be receiving a total investment of £4.5m to help people explore their community's heritage, through its All Our Stories programme.

This grant programme - developed to coincide with BBC Two's history series, *The Great British Story: A People's History* - aims to get thousands more people involved in exploring the local history, customs and traditions that are important to them. Small grants will enable people across the UK to find out more about their own local heritage – often complex, sometimes quirky but always fascinating – at a truly grass roots level. A kaleidoscope of unusual stories of communities is already emerging, such as why Nottingham is synonymous with bicycles, how people in Salford want to remember their lost pubs and how football has been a vital part of Cambridge's identity for over a century.

All Our Stories, launched in April, was so popular that HLF has quadrupled the amount it had originally set aside for projects. Grants range from £3,000 up to £10,000 and have been granted to all sorts of organisations, from small community groups, residents' associations and local history groups to larger heritage organisations and charities. The grants will bring communities together to explore the past, as well as providing those people with the skills and expert advice - delivered by top academics - to delve into their local community's history in a lasting and well-informed way.

Speaking today at the All Our Stories project launch at the Museum of London, Dame Jenny Abramsky, Chair of HLF, said: "These grants seem to have struck a chord – perhaps it reflects the wonderful community spirit of the Olympics – but clearly people of all ages and backgrounds and lottery players themselves want to look into and celebrate what has shaped their communities over the years. We have been bowled over by the response and the great news is that we have been able to find the money to support so many fascinating projects. We're looking forward to hearing more about the colourful stories that emerge; they will create a unique picture of these islands at an important time in our history."

Historian Michael Wood presented *The Great British Story* which was broadcast earlier this year and encouraged people to get more personally involved with the heritage in their own backyard. He said: "We British love our history, and no wonder: few nations in the world, if any, have such riches on their doorstep, and so much of it accessible to all of us. It is fantastic that so many people have been inspired to get involved, both from The Great British Story series, and HLF's All Our Stories. Thanks to lottery players people can now dig deeper into their own past and I'm certain many surprising stories will be uncovered which will not only bring to life the excitement of local history, but will illuminate every community's connection with the national narrative."

Cambridge United Football Club is among 542 successful projects being announced today. Their project is using volunteer researchers including supporters, managers and students from the university and local schools who will help gather information to create a database, make a film and produce a smartphone app that will encourage people to explore the club's 100 year history.

Cambridge Fans United spokesperson David Matthew-Jones said: "It's Cambridge United Football Club's centenary year and the memories of past players, fans and managers will be collected to bring alive the story not just of sport but of a community. A football club is a living thing, people come and go and the generations change. The history of the club is the social history of this part of Cambridge. The project will enable some very passionate football fans and local people to really get to learn about the fantastic heritage of the Club."

Other successful applicants today include:

- The Raleigh – a workers' history of an iconic Nottingham bicycle factory
- Experiences of the first Chinese immigrants in Swansea and the surrounding area
- The Fenland in Roman Times, the Fenlands
- The Lost Pubs of Chapel Street, Salford
- 'When I was Younger I Remember' - 50 years of being an Area of Outstanding Beauty on the Isle of Wight
- Potteries Tile Trail – Stoke, West Midlands
- Living Along the Cut: Canal Memories – Pontycysyllte, North Wales

To support All Our Stories, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) is providing funding so that projects can work closely with universities and benefit from the professional support of heritage experts. The AHRC funding will be encouraging early career researchers to work with community groups to share and develop their research skills. HLF will also be commissioning the Media Trust to help projects create a new type of digital record of the work they do.

Although the All Our Stories programme is now closed to further applications, HLF will be launching a new £3,000 - £10,000 community heritage grants programme, Sharing Heritage, in February 2013. It will use a similar, simple to access application process and will also be designed to reach new applicants working at grass roots.

Notes to editors

- All Our Stories was developed in response to HLF's Strategic Framework consultation with the public and heritage sector which encouraged HLF to make applying for funding simpler and easier for first time applicants and community groups
- All Our Stories featured in five BBC Learning events at flagship heritage locations and regional events across the UK which ran in tandem with The Great British Story: A People's History TV series to get people involved with their local heritage. These events provided opportunities for people to discover their place in history, learn about their surnames and uncover the history of their local area
- The funding has been made available through the AHRC's Connected Communities programme whose aim is to understand through research the changing nature of communities and the role of communities in sustaining and enhancing our quality of life. Please see <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk> for more information
- The NCCPE support universities to engage with the public. It works with all the beacons to promote best practice in public engagement and provide a single point of contact for the whole higher education sector. The NCCPE also works strategically with key national partners to help develop work across the higher education sector
- The Media Trust believes in the power of media to change lives. It works with the media industry to empower charities and communities to have a voice and be heard. This is achieved by providing communications skills and resources, helping access audiences, and harnessing creative industry talent. For more information visit [Media Trust's website](#) or follow on Twitter @Media_Trust

Project examples

The Raleigh – a history of an iconic Nottingham factory: this project, inspired by the runaway success of a community theatre project, will gather the memories and visual material of ex-employees of the iconic Raleigh Bicycles factory so they can be shared by the wider community. They will create an on-line living history archive which will bring together the rich experiences of some of the thousands of local people who worked at the factory, including the works outings to Blackpool that filled 16 trains. Student volunteers and members of the Retired Raleigh Workers Group will be trained to create oral histories and upload them onto a dedicated website.

Experiences of the first Chinese immigrants in Swansea: this project will explore the experiences of first-generation Chinese immigrants to Swansea and the surrounding area. Working with Swansea University, the scheme will collect memories and stories from surviving residents to delve into the past to build a picture of the very first arrivals in the area. IT workshops to deliver skills on recording and presenting oral histories and a DVD will be produced and shared amongst the wider community.

The Fenland in Roman Times, the Fenlands: this project will give local people and volunteers of all ages a chance to find out more about the fascinating history of the Fens. They will carry out a landscape archaeology survey and produce activities and resources for local school children highlighting and recording the evidence of Roman life in this area. A new website, leaflets, a celebratory event and a short film will all be created and equipment such as dig boxes and costume sets will be used in outreach visits to local schools.

The Lost Pubs of Chapel Street, Salford: this digital and social media project will train local community reporters to bring together memories and archive images of the now-closed pubs which were the heart of the community in this area which is now experiencing decline and deprivation. Key social media skills and a good understanding of digital media will be acquired by those taking part

When I was Younger I Remember - Isle of Wight: this project will explore the special memories of the landscape of the people of the Isle of Wight over the fifty years since it was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Local people, including community groups, the WI and surfers' clubs, will be asked to dig out old photos, objects, and other memorabilia to help build up a comprehensive picture of the island over the last half century. The stories they uncover will be used in a touring exhibition around the island, on-line and in schools' teaching packs.

Potteries Tile Trail – Stoke, West Midlands: From everyday crockery to matchless Minton tiles, the stamp of Stoke-on-Trent can be found the world over. This project aims to bring Stoke-on-Trent's world-famous potteries legacy of up to date by involving young people, creatives and start ups in exploring the city's rich history of tile-making and architectural ceramics. Twelve project ambassadors will scour local and national museums, archives and manufacturers to present archive material, film footage and first-hand testimonies in a roadshow visiting six Potteries towns, while a legacy publication and website will offer self-guided tours.

Living Along the Cut: Canal Memories – Pontcysyllte, North Wales: this project aims to bring together communities living along the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, spanning the counties of Wrexham and Denbighshire in Wales, to Shropshire in England. The 'Aqueducks' Friends Group will encourage local residents to share and celebrate their common histories and take pride in their heritage, by exploring the many stories of the villages and towns growing up alongside the canal. Volunteers will receive training to record and archive material and people will be able to take part via a range of activities, from guided walks to Show and Tell events.

The National Lottery

Lottery funding has been changing people's lives for 18 years - 19th November is The National Lottery's 18th Birthday. Every week National Lottery players raise over £30 million. From funding our Olympic and Paralympic athletes to grass roots sport, The National Lottery has invested in museums and galleries, local parks, artists, theatres, film, charities and local communities. [National Lottery Good Causes website.](#)

Further information

HLF Press Office: Katie Owen or Alison Scott on 020 7591 6036 / 6032, out of hours mobile 07973 613 820. . Images and further project examples are available on request.