15th Anniversary unlocks London's wonders

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Londoners can dig into history beneath River Thames mud, discover a magical medieval landscape, marvel at the restored majesty of the capital's best-loved church or delve into the lives of their fellow city-dwellers from years gone by. All is revealed in the 15th anniversary exhibition of the Heritage Lottery Fund at City Hall throughout June.

As part of Mayor Boris Johnson's Story of London festivities the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is showcasing 15 projects from throughout the capital. The exhibition runs from June 1st to 30th.

The projects chosen illustrate the sheer breadth of HLF's support to help preserve not only historic buildings and works of art but also less visible heritage such as community memories and nature conservation. The HLF has given many different ethnic groups a voice, and encouraged learning, understanding and volunteering on a vast scale.

The showcased projects range from £15million worth of support to the National Portrait Gallery and £14 million for the recently-completed full restoration of St Martin-in-the-Fields, to £21,600 for a young people's project that traced the history of Ladbroke Grove.

Along the way have been schemes to enable the RSPB to buy medieval Rainham Marshes and create a unique wildlife reserve; archaeological digs along the length of the tidal Thames; recording the memories of hundreds of Eastenders about their working lives in long vanished firms and communities; and creating a public archive of documents from Anti-Slavery International – the world's oldest human rights organisation.

Wesley Kerr , Chairman of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the London Region, said: "The Story of London festival coincides with 15 years of the HLF, which has invested £850 million in our great old city, opening the gates of memory, strengthening the common life, and helping to tell countless stories through conserving historic buildings, parks, museums, collections, archives and a myriad of diverse cultures."

London Mayor, Boris Johnson, said he was pleased that City Hall was hosting the exhibition: "I'm delighted the Heritage Lottery Fund has come on board with the Story of London. So much of what we know about London's past is preserved and looked after by our heritage organisations - often supported by volunteers. It's a chance to let Londoners know about the treasures in their neighbourhoods, and inspire them about the city they live in."

The Heritage Lottery Fund exhibition can be visited during normal opening hours at City Hall: 8.30am to 6pm Mondays to Thursdays, and 8.30am to 5.30pm on Fridays.

Notes to editors

The Story of London is a celebration of the city's past, present and future, which takes place throughout the whole of June. Organised by the Mayor of London in partnership with a host of organisations across the city, there are more than 350 events and activities, covering history and heritage, art and architecture, design and fashion, music, theatre and film. More information, including events listings can be found at www.london.gov.uk/storyoflondon.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, **the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)** sustains and transforms a wide

range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 28,000 projects, allocating over £4.2billion across the UK, with over £850 million has granted in London alone.

Since 1994 in London the HLF has invested nearly £100m in parks, £1.5 million in young Londoners' projects, £390m in galleries and museums, £7.7 million in oral histories and £602 million in historic buildings and monuments.

The month-long Story of London festival will celebrate the capital's past, present and future, with a wide ranging programme of activities across the city that illustrate as well as celebrate London life from its ancient origins to the present day.

The 15th anniversary projects showcased at the exhibition are:

- Hall Place, Bexley
- Thames Discovery Programme
- Orleans House Gallery, Richmond
- Grove Roots, Kensington
- St Martins-in-the-Fields, Westminster
- Anti-Slavery International, Lambeth
- London Wildlife Trust local nature reserves, Barnet, Bromley, Croydon, Hillingdon,
- Southwark and Sutton
- Evelyn Oldfield Unit, Refugee Memories, throughout London
- Valentines Mansion and gardens, Redbridge
- Myatts Field Park, Lambeth
- Working Lives in the Thames Gateway, Barking & Dagenham, Bexley, Greenwich,
- Havering, Lewisham, Newham and Tower Hamlets
- Black Cultural Archives, Lambeth
- Rainham Marshes, Havering
- National Portrait Gallery, Westminster
- Manor Farm, Hillingdon