Buildings, botany and boats!

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These are: Hastings Pier, one of the UK's best-loved piers, currently at risk of loss due to recent fire damage; the world's largest surviving Victorian glass structure at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; a collection of vintage boats housed on the shores of Lake Windermere; the British Museum's new World Conservation and Exhibition Centre in Bloomsbury; and major redevelopment work at the Geffrye Museum in the heart of Hackney, East London.

Dame Jenny Abramsky, Chair of HLF, said: "This year's decisions for HLF major grants were some of the hardest we have ever faced. The range was both diverse and of the highest quality – so the projects we are supporting are truly exemplary and will make a real impact on people's experience of heritage in the years to come. The five that won through at this initial stage can now begin their development phases meaning there's still plenty of hard work to be done."

John Penrose, Minister for Tourism and Heritage, said: "I'm delighted that such a wide range of projects has been given the green light by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It's particularly good news for our tourism industry as they are all popular visitor attractions which are important to local economies. As more people stay at home to enjoy what the UK has to offer, it's great to see these sorts of imaginative projects winning through."

Hastings Pier, Sussex – initial support for an £8.75m HLF bid, including £357,400 development funding
Grade II listed Hastings Pier is one of only seven surviving examples of piers designed and built by the foremost Victorian pier designer Eugenius Birch. Opened to the public in 1872, it closed in 2006 and subsequently suffered extensive fire damage last year leaving its future at serious risk. The pier has had an eclectic and colourful past, including hosting a number of musical greats such as Jimi Hendrix, Bob Marley, The Who and Pink Floyd. Hastings Pier and White Rock Trust, set up by a group of highly committed local residents, has put together plans to restore the historic fabric of the pier and create new facilities which will give huge impetus to the social and economic regeneration of the town. The particular strengths of this project are that it has mobilised enthusiastic support from the surrounding community and will also provide much-needed opportunities for skills training plus a volunteers' programme.

The Temperate House Project at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London - initial support for a £15m HLF bid, including £890,900 development funding
The 250-year-old Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is one of the UK's most visited heritage attractions. Central to the site is the Temperate House, a Grade I listed glasshouse designed by Decimus Burton and home to a vast array of palms including ones gifted by King George V. Kew's ambitious plans include: urgent conservation work to the Temperate House; restructuring the plant displays as well as rejuvenating the existing world-famous botanical collection; converting the adjoining Evolution House into a centre for community outreach and engagement; setting up an apprenticeship scheme and volunteer programme; and creating a new arm to Kew's schools education programme which will encourage young people to learn more about plants and climate change.

Windermere Steamboat Museum, Cumbria – initial support for a £7.4m HLF bid, including £494,000 development funding
The Windermere Steamboat Museum, situated on the shores of Lake Windermere near Bowness, houses a nationally significant boat and maritime collection dating from the 12th century. This unique collection showcases the development

of boatbuilding in the Lake District over the last two hundred years, telling the story of how these wonderful vintage vessels were used on Windermere. The project aims to reinvigorate the museum (which is currently closed to the public) to create an exciting tourist attraction where people can enjoy the 40 vessels it houses and the surrounding landscape. Integral to these plans are new apprenticeships in boat conservation plus an inspiring learning programme targeted at visitors of all ages and backgrounds.

The British Museum World Conservation and Exhibition Centre, London – initial support for £10m HLF bid, no development funding

The British Museum is working towards developing the north-west corner of its Bloomsbury site. Plans for an elegant but functional building are being drawn up with the ultimate goal of bringing the museum's world-famous collection to the widest possible audience. Key elements of this extension will include: a loans management centre to facilitate partnership work with a range of museums across the UK; environmentally-controlled stores and study rooms; conservation and science studios and laboratories. There will also be a three-year UK-wide education programme - 'Object Journeys' - which will use the museum's extensive ethnographic collections to inspire and enthuse.

Geffrye Museum: Museum of the Home, London – initial support for a £10.9m HLF bid, including £518,500 development funding

The Geffrye Museum, set in the former almshouses of the Ironmongers' Company, is planning a comprehensive redevelopment of its site. An entrance from the new Hoxton Station will be created, the collections, library and archives opened up, congestion eased in the galleries and education facilities and temporary exhibition spaces improved. The Geffrye, which looks at all aspects of the history of the home, is a hugely popular cultural gem with a particularly impressive track record of working with Hackney's local communities. It will build on this strength through an enhanced learning programme, including new sessions for primary and secondary schools, an apprenticeship and training for young volunteers to become guides and undertake research into the history of their own homes.

Notes to editors

- [1] A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals for a firm award.
- [2] A Heritage Lottery Fund major grant is for £5m and over.
- Using money raised through the National Lottery, the 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 over 33,000 projects, allocating £4.5billion across the UK.
- Images available on request.

Further information

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