# Community champions look after World Heritage Site

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The project, World Heritage Site Community Champions, led by the Hadrian's Wall Trust, will roll out an exciting programme of learning and volunteering opportunities for local people, encouraging them to become 'champions' for the site. Local events, workshops, site visits and talks will help build people's interest and encourage a wider audience, of potentially over 1,000 people, to better understand and share the iconic World Heritage Site (WHS) with visitors.

Champions will explore a range of topics that encompass not only the Wall itself but also the surrounding environment too. Themes will include the site's Roman heritage, the surrounding natural habitats and archaeological treasures, the industrial story, border conflicts and christian heritage. Roles on offer will include Conservation Rangers, Guided Walk Leaders and Wall Watchers. The Conservation Rangers and Wall Watchers will play a vital role in conservation activities such as monitoring vulnerable sections of the wall and identifying any possible threats to its condition.

Ivor Crowther, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North East, said: "The Hadrian's Wall corridor is one of the North East's most impressive and well-known heritage sites and attracts thousands of tourists every year. This project will empower local people, who live and work in the surrounding areas, to become ambassadors and help to promote the sites historic importance and take an active role in its conservation and long-term future. We at the HLF are proud to be supporting the Hadrian's Wall Trust to encourage people, from near and far, to learn more about and enjoy this wonderful piece of our history."

Linda Tuttiett, Chief Executive of the Hadrian's Wall Trust, said: "We are extremely grateful to HLF for this fantastic opportunity to build on our community of much appreciated volunteers in such a significant way. Through the Community Champions project we can involve many more people in understanding and helping to protect one of Britain's greatest World Heritage Sites."

Volunteers will be able to share their knowledge and skills with each other through a range of interactive tools including social media channels, a social events programme and an annual volunteer conference. Through enabling local people to become ambassadors and champions, visitors will benefit from their in-depth local knowledge and skills and be able to better understand the important part Hadrian's Wall and its surrounding landscape have played in the North East for so many years.

**Notes to editors**

The 150 mile Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site runs from the western Roman coastal defences at Ravenglass, through Whitehaven, Workington and Maryport to Bowness-on-Solway, along Hadrian's Wall through Carlisle and Hexham to Newcastle, Wallsend and South Shields.

There were over 30 forts on the Roman frontier across the north of England, including 16 along the line of the 73 mile wall itself plus coastal, outpost and supply forts. Along the wall there were around 80 milecastles and 160 turrets, a ditch to the north and the great defensive vallum earthwork to the south.

Hadrian's Wall is part of the first transnational World Heritage Site – Frontiers of the Roman Empire - which includes the Antonine Wall in Scotland and the German Limes. This represents the borderline of the Roman Empire at its furthest extent in the 2nd century AD. It stretched from the west coast of northern Britain, through Europe to the Black Sea, and from there to the Red Sea and across North Africa to the Atlantic coast.

The Hadrian's Wall Trust's role is to lead and facilitate all aspects of managing the world heritage site for the long term benefit of local and regional communities, working in partnership with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to protect the archaeology, conserve the landscape that surrounds it, promote understanding and access, and realise the potential of the WHS to contribute to the social and economic benefit of local and regional communities through sustainable tourism development and sense of place. A wall-wide, holistic, interdisciplinary, partnership based approach is central to this role.

The trust aims to promote:

- the conservation and protection of Hadrian's Wall
- public understanding of the World Heritage Site through interpretation, education and research
- sustainable economic development through tourism, marketing and communications, supporting local businesses and communities

**Further information**

HLF press office: Laura Bates on 020 7591 6027, email: lbates@hlf.org.uk.

Hadrian's Wall Trust corporate communications: Alison Fowler, 07761 838 641, email: alison.fowler@hadrianswallheritage.co.uk.