£570,000 to open up Cotesbach's heritage

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Once conserved, the buildings will provide a new home for the important estate archive, which contains records dating back to the early 15th century.

Alongside this new learning spaces will be created, with new learning resources that will tell the story of the local area through the last 500 years. This will allow the trust to raise awareness of Cotesbach's heritage including its little known but important role in the enclosure riots of the early 17th century and the 1607 enclosure riot which took place in Cotesbach.

The archive viewing facilities and associated education programme will be available to schools and wider communities in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire and using modern technology CET hopes to reach a national audience over time.

Jackie Strong, Chairman of Cotesbach Educational Trust (CET), said: "The Trustees are delighted to have received such generous financial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The grant will allow us to sympathetically renovate three 18th and 19th century buildings located on the Cotesbach Estate. They will provide storage for local archives of national interest and act as a base for sustainable educational and community activities focusing on our local social, environmental and artistic heritage. The CET Trustees will be working closely with the Estate and with HLF to achieve their aim of reconnecting with place and land to develop skills for the future".

Emma Sayer, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East Midlands, said: "Cotesbach Village and the surrounding area have a fascinating local heritage. Alongside the conservation of key historic buildings within Cotesbach Village, the re-housing of the estate archive will give more people the chance to explore and learn about the events that shaped the social history of the area."

The history of Cotesbach village is entwined with the Cotesbach estate which encompassed much of the surrounding countryside and villages. In 1620 the estate was sold to the Marriott family, who remain the current owners of Cotesbach Hall. The estate archive dates back to the time of Henry IV and covers documents from this period right up to the 20th century, including poignant letters from the front in World War 1.

In 1607 Cotesbach saw the culmination of a spring of unrest in response to the increasing enclosure of common fields. Rioters from surrounding areas converged on the village, violently cutting and breaking hedges, filling in ditches and laying open enclosures. Numbers reportedly reached 5,000, and as a response gallows were raised in Leicester as a warning to those contemplating joining the rebellion. Stories of the riots reached a national audience at the time, with William Shakespeare reportedly basing a character in one of his plays on the infamous leader of the Cotesbach riot.

The Cotesbach Educational Trust are looking for motivated new volunteers to take part in the project and get involved in activities including cataloguing the archives, marketing and fundraising. To find out more about volunteering opportunities and to receive regular updates on the project's progress.

Notes to editors

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. They have supported more than 30,000 projects, allocating over £4.5billion across the UK.

Pictured are (left to right): Jackie Strong (Chairman of Cotesbach Educational Trust), Jason Pegg (Project Manager) Jacqueline Krarup (Trustee), Richard Marriott (The Marriott family live at Cotesbach Hall) and Joan Bray (Heritage Lottery Fund East Midlands committee member) pictured outside the Cotesbach schoolhouse.

Further information

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