Lottery investment making a difference to local communities

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Funding of more than £355,000 was awarded to support local communities, groups and organisations as they get actively involved in a range of projects to explore, protect and preserve the heritage that matters to them.

Announcing the latest round of grant awards, Head of HLF Northern Ireland, Paul Mullan, said: “It is wonderful to award these grants which will support so many heritage projects and people right across the country. This latest investment illustrates the breadth of heritage – from our historic buildings, green spaces and biodiversity to our industrial past and cultural traditions – that is supported by HLF and valued by our local communities.

“We are delighted to support Northern Ireland’s rich and varied heritage and would encourage anyone interested in running a heritage based project to take a look at our website for more information about our new Sharing Heritage and Our Heritage small grant programmes.”

The eight projects to receive funding are:

Be there for Barn Owls – Community Barn Owl Project, Ulster Wildlife Trust. Awarded grant of £89,500
Over the next three years local communities will be encouraged to get involved in a range of Barn Owl conservation activities to safeguard the future of this threatened species. The project will raise awareness of the importance of the birds to our cultural and natural heritage and will build capacity for local action through a network of community-led local Barn Owl groups. Public community information sessions, conservation workshops, school talks and specialist training events will be held to improve knowledge of the birds and equip volunteers with the skills required to become Local Barn Owl champions. A survey will be conducted to monitor the birds, their productivity and diet and at least 10 Barn Owl boxes will be erected to provide suitable nest sites in areas of need throughout Armagh, Derry~Londonderry and Tyrone.

Our Pitt Park, Ballymac Friendship Trust. Awarded grant of £49,900
Young people will be creating a digital archive of oral histories, photographs and film footage connected with the history of the Pitt Park area of Belfast, which is between the Lower Newtownards Road and Ballymacarrett Road. The project will cover material from the late 19th century to the present day and themes such as living conditions, military history, cultural traditions and the Troubles will be explored. The young people will take part in monthly lectures, workshops and practical sessions to learn more about the heritage of the area. They will also receive training in oral history collection, historical research and digital photography to enable them to lead the project activities.

Voices from the North, MultiMedia Heritage. Awarded grant of £17,800
The rich and colourful memories and experiences of the last generation to work in the once thriving industrial heartlands of North Belfast will be recorded. The areas to be explored include Gallaghers Tobacco Factory, the docks families and the experiences of women and the people of the Cliftonville Road and their connection to the Poor Clares, an enclosed order with a long history in the area.

Handheld History: 275 years of the Newry – Portadown Canal, The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI). Awarded grant of £9,900
The Newry to Portadown canal stretches for 25 miles from Carlingford Lough to Lough Neagh. It is the oldest summit level canal in the UK and Ireland, marking the beginning of both the industrial revolution and the age of bulk transportation. While it is derelict as a navigable waterway much of the architectural infrastructure remains intact and there are lock-keepers cottages and stable ruins, impressive lock chambers and aqueducts, traditional bridges and culverts along its route. This project will design a computer app with a digital GPS linked map to show the towpath user exactly where they are along the route. The map will highlight hotspots at various strategic locations, allowing the user to access more information, both historical and cultural, gathered from historical maps, original surveys and engineer's drawings.

Iveagh Pony Club Intergenerational History Preservation Project, The Pony Cub. Awarded grant of £22,400
World champions and Olympic competitors are amongst those who have in the past been fostered by Iveagh Pony Club. Now celebrating its 50th anniversary, this project will enable the club to preserve its existing archive of equine sport, create a new oral history archive and use all this material to produce a commemorative book and DVD to celebrate and share the club's heritage with new and wider audiences.

Eamhain Mhacha Heritage Apps, CAIRDE. Awarded grant of £52,500
The archaeological and cultural importance of Eamhain Mhacha (Navan Fort) will be brought to a wider, more youthful audience via a new mobile phone app. Twelve young people aged between 16 and 19 will be involved in creating and developing the free to download mobile phone app which will enable others to learn more about one of the most important prehistoric sites in Ireland. The participants will learn about the history and mythology of the site and will receive training in software development and multi-media operations. The app and supporting materials which include a website, blog, leaflets and postcards will be produced in both English and Irish and distributed to local historical, cultural and tourist bodies to promote the app.

Belfast Orange Hall, Clifton Street - History in Action; Belfast Orange Hall. Awarded grant of £100,000
The grant will support the repair and conservation of the historic Clifton Street Orange Hall which was built in 1883 and is an important local focal point for the Unionist community. An associated oral history project and educational booklet will be produced to help open up the heritage of the building and the artefacts it houses which include materials and objects of William III's personal belongings, items dating to Home Rule, the Confederate Wars, the Reformation, the Ulster covenant, the Williamite wars and other periods in the history of both Ireland and the British Empire.

Foundation of Belfast, Kabosh. Awarded grant of £13,000
The heritage surrounding the 400th anniversary of Belfast city’s charter status will be researched, recorded and shared through a series of activities. A theatre production exploring the foundation of Belfast and commemorating the 400th anniversary of the city's charter will be staged as part of the Belfast Festival at Queens in late October/early November 2013. It will be staged at St George's Church in High Street, a Grade A listed building whose restoration was also funded by HLF and who are celebrating their bicentenary this year. Historical research will be undertaken to record the musical history and an oral archive of musical heritage and local history will be created. To share this heritage with others a mobile phone app will be developed, a theatre programme produced, historical tours of the Tennent Street area offered and a documentary created on the process involved in staging the performance.