# Enfield gets the heritage habit

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But there is much more happening locally than at first meets the eye, thanks to support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) which has identified Enfield as one of just a handful of priority boroughs in London*.

**Borough's treasured landscapes**

With £100,000 HLF development funding now secured, detailed planning for restoring the Grade II listed Forty Hall parkland – described as one of London's most historically significant cultural landscapes – will begin with a view to achieving a full £1.3 million grant award.

Forty Hall itself is already on track for an HLF-funded restoration and, together with its 18th century park and gardens, is set to become one of outer London's finest visitor destinations.

Not only has the estate been associated with a bevy of English monarchs, including Elizabeth 1st, Edward VI, and Henry VII, but the park offers visitors an ornamental lake, a magnificent avenue of lime trees and one of the oldest cedars of Lebanon in the country, not to mention the remains of a 12th century Royal palace.

The work planned will not only restore the parkland and gardens to their former glory, it will also reveal the fascinating history of the estate to a wider audience providing local people with learning, training and volunteering opportunities.

Another example of HLF support for local garden history comes in the form of a grant of almost £500,000 given just over a year ago to the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority to open up public access to Myddelton House Gardens and the work of legendary plantsman EA Bowles.

The project, due for completion next year, will complement the planned work at Forty Hall park by providing Enfield with two superb historic landscapes.

**Local community projects**

But away from the grand royal connections and sumptuous landscapes, HLF has also been actively encouraging a diverse range of smaller, community-based projects around the borough engaging local people of different ages and backgrounds in finding out more about their town's and their own cultural histories. Forgotten buildings, traditional country dances, and the stories of different migrant communities all feature in projects that have received grant aid.

Supported with a £38,800 HLF grant in 2009, local organisation Art Start has embarked on a project to re-discover the Lost Treasures – Cinemas, Theatres, and Music Halls of Enfield. Children from seven local primary and one secondary school are tracking down the locations and histories of these former leisure facilities and creating mosaic panels depicting each of the eight buildings identified. The panels, with an accompanying information plaque, will mark the site of the vanished buildings, such as the Edmonton Empire, and a DVD and booklet are also being produced with help from the Enfield Museum Service.

The Council's PE and School Sport Partnership meanwhile is running a project, backed by a £27,800 HLF grant, that looks at the history of English Folk Dance from the mid-17th century to the present day. Beginning with a festival in the grounds of Forty Hall that involved 600 children from 20 local schools, the project will now delve into the social history of English folkdance as well as discovering dance traditions from other parts of the world. A community dance manual and DVD will be created for distribution to local schools and folk dance groups, and a mass folk dance display is planned for the Go Enfield Go event this summer.

Enfield's multi-cultural community is also reflected in a range of recent or current projects. The experiences of the black and minority ethnic communities for the period from the 1950s to the 1970s is being studied by Niburu Recordings Ltd, with the aid of a £48,500 HLF grant. Focusing on the arrival of African-Caribbean migrants in the Edmonton and Ponders End areas, the project involves young people interviewing and recording the memories of older members of their community.

Meanwhile, Polish migrants to the borough have been undertaking a similar oral history project with the help of a £45,000 HLF grant. Volunteers, teachers and pupils from the Adam Mickiewicz Saturday School have been tracing the histories of three generations of immigrants from Poland who settled locally at the end of World War Two, in the 1970s and 1980s to escape the Soviet regime, and those who arrived after Poland joined the EU in 2004. Among the activities so far, young people taking part in the project have visited the RAF Museum and the Sikorski Museum to learn about Polish soldiers' and pilots' contribution to the Second World War.

A further project that was completed last year saw members of the Ugandan community researching musical instruments from their homeland that are conserved in museums in and around London. Supported by a £43,000 HLF grant, members of the Ugandan community worked with the British Library Sound Archive, not only to increase their own knowledge of their cultural traditions, but also to provide valuable additional details to the museums themselves, in some cases correcting information on display.

In all cases, these projects have produced booklets or DVDs to share the findings of their research with others.

For the HLF, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund London, Sue Bowers, says: "While Forty Hall and its parkland are rightly recognised as the jewel in Enfield's heritage crown, there are many more aspects of significant historical and cultural note in the borough that are now being discovered anew or revealed for the first time, thanks to the support we have been able to provide.

" A fundamental aspect of so many projects is the involvement of local people, giving them the opportunity to find out for themselves, through research or by interviewing others, the many individual stories that come together to make up the borough's rich history. By providing people, young and not so young, with the chance for a hands-on connection with their heritage, we help guarantee its conservation for future generations to learn from and enjoy."

**Notes to editors**

*In London HLF has identified places that to date have received less Heritage Lottery funding. HLF's Development Officers work with local groups and organisations in these areas to promote our funding schemes and help develop project proposals.

HLF welcomes applications from community groups and other organisations seeking to fund heritage projects. How to apply for funding.

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 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK. In the London Borough of Enfield HLF has supported 63 projects, allocating more than £8.6million.

**Further information**

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