

# Liverpool's Lister Drive Library wins at Heritage Dragons

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The Heritage Dragons - Ian Marcus, George Ferguson and Clive Dutton

On 3 October, Lister Steps, which is looking to develop Liverpool's Grade II listed former Lister Drive Library, triumphed when they pitched their proposal to the Heritage Dragons.

Lister Steps, a community-based childcare charity, secured the top prize of 180 hours of tailored pro bono professional support when they pitched their plans alongside local groups from across the UK with similar proposals for heritage-led regeneration projects to a panel of leading regeneration experts, the 'Heritage

Dragons’.

The Dragons comprised of Clive Dutton, the Executive Director for Regeneration at Newham Council responsible for delivering the London 2012 Olympic legacy in the borough; leading architect and Bristol mayoral candidate George Ferguson; and Ian Marcus, Managing Director of leading private investment firm, Evans Property Group and Chairman of The Prince’s Regeneration Trust.

Gaynor McKnight, from Lister Steps, said: “We are delighted to have won the Heritage Dragons. We really didn’t expect to win because the standard of the other competing projects was so high. At Lister steps, we passionately believe in our plans to revive Lister Drive Library and now we feel we are in a much stronger position to make this project succeed.”

Heritage Dragons was organised by the **Heritage Investment Working Group (HIWG)** - a cross-sector collaboration of leading heritage-regeneration agencies and national organisations representing commercial and social enterprise. The Group includes the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, The Prince’s Regeneration Trust, the Architectural Heritage Fund, British Property Federation, Heritage Alliance, Historic Houses Association, the Churches Conservation Trust and Locality. They have come together to form a coalition of shared ideas and resources to push and persuade investors and communities that working together makes heritage-led regeneration viable, sustainable and of benefit to all.

Clive Dutton, Dragon and the Executive Director for Regeneration at Newham Council, said: “It will raise the profile of the project and help them forge productive connections particularly with the local authority.”

Ian Lush, Chairman of the HIWG and Chief Executive of The Architectural Heritage Fund, said: “Talking to the project leaders, all of them have benefited from the event and what I really hope is that we can build on it, both in terms of supporting the projects moving forward and running the event again next year.”

Lister Drive Library is a Grade II listed former library in Tuebrook, Liverpool. It is owned by Liverpool City Council and has been closed to the public since 2006 due to safety concerns. Lister Steps is looking to develop the former library into the new site of their operations and provide more facilities for the community. The project faces challenges relating to ownership, funding and the building’s state of repair.

Other participating projects at Heritage Dragons included:

#### **The Hill Primary School, Blairgowrie, Perth and Kinross**

Hill Primary School in Blairgowrie is a Grade B listed former school site, built in 1878, and owned by Perth & Kinross Council. The Ericht Trust intends to regenerate the building into a vibrant and self-sustaining community asset including a working print museum, a multi-functional hall, a small cinema, a climbing wall and conference/training rooms. The Trust faces challenges relating to funding, ownership and ensuring they have the right skills to complete the project.

#### **The Old Black Lion Pub, Northampton, Northamptonshire**

The Old Black Lion pub is a Grade II listed building in the Saxon and medieval area of Northampton, currently owned by the Wellington Pub Company. It is located in the same area as the former Northampton Castle, which was demolished in 1662, and St Peter’s Church, which is Grade I listed and dates from 1130. The Churches Conservation Trust (CCT), in partnership with the Friends of Northampton Castle and The Friends of St Peter’s, envisage refurbishing the Old Black Lion into a working business, which will at the same time act as a heritage hub for the local area and attract visitors to what is currently a seldom visited part of Northampton. The challenges faced relate to obtaining capital investment, creating a sustainable business to support the other elements of the project and managing the needs of multiple stakeholders.

#### **Northern Counties Club, Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland**

24 Bishop Street is a 3-storey listed building within the historic walled city of Derry-Londonderry, and the

site of the former Northern Counties Club, which acted as an iconic base for the business and civic leaders of the city for many years. Having lain vacant for 15 years, it is now owned by the Inner City Trust, which plans to refurbish the building and open it up to all the residents of the city. The project proposes to provide a restaurant and coffee facilities, exhibitions space and a unique spaces for formal events, such as weddings. Challenges include obtaining funding and dealing with planning and restoration issues.

## Notes to editors

**The Heritage Investment Working Group (HIWG)** was set-up in 2011, following on from the work of its predecessor, the Heritage At the Heart of Communities working group (HATHOC), established in 2007. The purpose of HIWG is to encourage greater investment into the adaptive re-use of historic buildings.

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 more than 33,000 projects allocating £4.9billion across the UK.

**The Prince's Regeneration Trust (PRT)** works with communities across the UK to ensure that historic buildings, facing demolition or decay, are rescued and reused. Our projects give redundant buildings a sustainable future, acting as a catalyst for wider regeneration.

**The Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF)** supports charities which are finding viable and sustainable new uses for historic buildings at risk throughout the UK, with advice, small grants and large, low-interest loans.

**English Heritage** is the Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment. We provide advice on how best to conserve England's heritage for the benefit of everyone. While most of England's heritage is in private hands, we work with all who come into contact with it - landowners, businesses, planners and developers, national, regional and local government, the Third Sector, local communities and the general public - to help them understand, value, care for and enjoy England's historic environment.

We are also entrusted with the custodianship of over 400 sites and monuments which together form the national collection of built and archaeological heritage. These include some of the most important monuments of human history such as Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall. For further information about our work, please visit the [English Heritage website](#).

**Locality** is the UK's leading network of development trusts, community enterprises, settlements and social action centres, we support some of the most ambitious and enterprising community-led organisations. [The Locality website](#)

**The British Property Federation** is a membership organisation devoted to representing the interests of all those involved in property ownership and investment. It aims to create the conditions in which the property industry can grow and thrive, for the benefit of our members and of the economy as a whole.

**The Heritage Alliance** brings together nearly 90 independent heritage organisations working in England. Alliance Members range from specialist advisers, practitioners and managers, volunteers and owners, to national funding bodies and organisations leading regeneration and access projects. Their specialist knowledge and expertise across a huge range of issues – including planning, regeneration and place-making - is a highly valuable national resource, much of which is contributed on a voluntary basis for public benefit. [Heritage Alliance website](#)

**The Historic Houses Association (HHA)** represents historic houses, castles and gardens in independent ownership throughout the UK. We have 1,500 members, representing a significant variety of our cultural

heritage from intimate family homes to some of Britain's most iconic buildings. A third are open to the public. Many HHA members are the key players in their local economies, contributing £1.6 billion annually and employing 30,000 people directly and in associated businesses.

## **Further information**

Natasha Ley, HLF press office on 020 7591 6143 or [natashal@hlf.org.uk](mailto:natashal@hlf.org.uk). Out of hours mobile: 07973 613 820.