Plans progress for Llancaiach Fawr Manor

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Plans include developing the attics as the servants quarters, increasing access for visitors with disabilities and creating a more authentic interior for day visitors and school groups to enjoy, it was announced today.

The HLF first-round pass* means that the project team at Llancaiach Fawr Manor can now progress to the second stage of the HLF application process. They have up to two years to submit more detailed plans and apply for the £943,200 of HLF support that they are seeking for their £1,064,100 project.

Llancaiach Fawr has been a landmark in the local landscape since c.1550 and has seen many changes over the centuries. Perhaps the biggest change came when Rhymney Valley District Council purchased the building and restored it as a heritage attraction which opened to the public in 1991. Since then the building has been enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people from the locality and those visiting Wales to explore our fascinating heritage. The Manor is presented to visitors through live interpretation whereby the staff are the servants of the Household in 1645 - the year that Charles I came to the Manor to try and drum up more support from the men of Glamorgan during the Civil Wars.

The team at Llancaiach Fawr want more people to be able to enjoy more of the historic Manor House. The plans are to recreate the servants quarters in the attics so that the sense of exploring hidden corners of the building for behind the scenes glimpses is realised. They also plan to remove all the modern heating and lighting in the Manor, open up all the fireplaces and introduce discreet and energy efficient heat and light sources that capture the atmosphere of a 17th-century interior. The team plans to remove the emergency staircase in the north wing and replace it with a sympathetically designed external staircase tower with a platform lift for wheelchair users and those with mobility difficulties to be able to get to the upper floors of the building for the first time.

The project team also feel that it is important that the public have the opportunity to see the works in progress. Special tours will run at lunchtimes and practical sessions highlighting the traditional building trades and crafts will be run for day visitors and school groups. Partnerships with local schools, colleges and universities will give opportunities for practical training and work placements in conservation building skills, photography and filmmaking.

Commenting on the award, Diane Walker, General Manager of Llancaiach Fawr and project leader said: “I am delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given its initial support for this project. We have called our project ‘Developing the Past’ because we want to develop the way in which we present the past to a modern audience and to recreate an interior which uses the best of traditional skills and techniques blended with the best that modern technology can achieve to address issues of energy efficiency and sustainability.”

Jennifer Stewart, Head of HLF Wales, said: “Llancaiach Fawr Manor is one of the most important gentry houses of the 16th and 17th century period to survive, and a well established, much-loved heritage attraction. As well as opening up parts of the house which have not been seen by the public before, this project aims to deliver an innovative range of training opportunities from traditional skills to multimedia production.

“We have awarded a first round pass in recognition of the project’s potential and the benefits it could bring to the local area. There is huge competition for our grants so Caerphilly County Borough Council now needs to develop its plans fully in order to compete for a firm award.”

Further Information

For further information, please contact Diane Walker, General Manager, Llancaiach Fawr Manor on 01443 412 248 or you can also email Diane.

Notes to editors

*A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals.

However, a first-round pass does not guarantee the applicant will receive a grant as the second-round application will still be in competition for funding, and no money is set aside at this stage. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.’

On occasion an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.