Lottery cash for historic buildings in Cliftonville

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A first round pass from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), giving the green light for a £1.89m* Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) award, includes £35,100 in development funding so that Thanet District Council can work up the application.

The money will be used for works to the Dalby Square Conservation Area in Cliftonville, Margate, including Dalby and Arthur Roads. The area dates from the mid-19th century and formed part of the wider expansion of Margate through the development of Cliftonville. Cliftonville was a highly exclusive resort from the 1870s until the First World War and remained a popular one until the 1970s.

HLF's investment comes through its Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)** programme which fosters effective partnerships between local organisations enabling repairs and other essential works in historic but often run-down areas bringing high streets back to life. The funding, integral to wider conservation and regeneration strategies, also aims to help provide employment opportunities, volunteer training and heritage days to help actively involve local residents projects in their area.

Stuart McLeod, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the South East, said: "City and town centres form a large part of our urban landscape and are the backdrop to millions of people's daily lives. We're determined to help regenerate areas that are currently struggling and in need of additional encouragement and an injection of much-needed cash. The Heritage Lottery Fund set up its THI programme to help exactly the sort of local projects like this one in Margate."

The project will reinstate many lost historical features such as chimneys, parapets and roof coverings. It will also focus on energy conservation issues and, by bringing empty floor space back into use, strive to re-instate some of the high quality hotels that once lined the square. Local people will have the chance to get actively involved and engage with the project through a range of events and activities relating to the town's history.

Thanet has already had two successful THI schemes. The first ran from 2003 until 2008 in Margate Old Town and the second, which focuses on Ramsgate Waterfront, is still running. The THI programme aims to promote and financially assist the conservation, regeneration and enhancement of historic buildings in particular areas which have high historic value. The new scheme in Cliftonville will also look at improvements to public areas, providing high quality hotel accommodation and making properties more energy efficient.

In Margate Old Town, over 25 buildings were brought back into use, some after many years of neglect and dereliction. In addition, many more buildings were repaired or had architectural features restored. The Ramsgate THI scheme, which still has eighteen months to run, has to date offered 52 grants and work has been completed to 25 buildings. It is expected that by the end of the scheme, the full budget of £1.5m will be spent.

Heritage Development Advisor, Nick Dermott, said: "Thanet is fortunate in being incredibly rich in historic buildings and environments and the Dalby Square area in Cliftonville is a fine example of this. THI schemes in Margate and Ramsgate have already made a real difference, bringing many properties, that were previously derelict, back into use and helping to significantly improve the appearance and economic viability of the area. This award from the Heritage Lottery Fund will allow us to do the same in Dalby Square and I'm sure it's something that everyone in the area will warmly welcome.

We appreciate the Lottery's strong and continuing support for the Thanet District."

Thanet District Council has up to a year to secure match funding for the scheme and to agree details with the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Notes to editors

• *A Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) earmarked first-round pass means that money has been set aside by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the scheme in question. Competition at this stage is tough, and while it does not guarantee funding, it is an indication of positive support. The applicants can then progress to the second round and submit a further, fully-developed application to secure the full award. This early level of strong financial commitment means that THIs can build strong partnerships with the assurance that funding for their scheme is in place provided their final proposals fully meet the programme criteria.

• **HLF's Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) encourages partnerships of local organisations to carry out repairs and other works to a number of historic buildings, structures or spaces. Grants range from £500,000 to £2m. To date, HLF has invested over £200m regenerating towns that have suffered serious social and economic decline.

Further information

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