Monkwearmouth Station Museum receives investment

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The project will focus on two key items in the museum's important collection, a covered carriage truck built in 1939 and a goods break van built in 1915. The covered carriage, the earliest surviving example of its kind, was originally designed to carry cars but at times was also used to carry a range of other things from parcels to circus animals. The goods break van is of equal significance and was mainly used as a coal train between Wearmouth and Hylton collieries.

Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the North East, Ivor Crowther, said: "These carriages and the museum give us a great insight into the North East's rich travel and transport history. This project will open up the musuem so that many more people can appreciate and learn about this aspect of their heritage. The Heritage Lottery Fund is pleased to have been able to support this worthwhile project and everyone who has worked hard to make it happen."

The museum focuses on the history of travel and transport in Tyne and Wear and is a Grade II listed building that was built in the 1840s. The station, now the museum, is of huge historical importance in the area: the goods yard was once the largest on Wearside and was used until 1977 and with this funding; its collections can be shared with many more people and be enjoyed and appreciated for years to come.

Once the two carriages have been restored, they will be housed in a new purpose built building to protect them from future damage. They will also be accessible to the public for the first time since 2005, offering the opportunity get up close and see inside and learn about the fascinating transport history of the North East.

The investment will provide more learning resources for young people, and encourage local people and visitors to get involved events and activities for schoolchildren and adults will be introduced including storytelling, educational talks and,workshops and a blog will be created that will chart the progress of the restoration project as it happens.

Monkwearmouth Station Museum is managed by Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) on behalf of Sunderland City Council. Helen White, TWAM's Senior Manager for Sunderland and Gateshead, says: "We are thrilled that the HLF has decided to give a new lease of life to these important survivals from the North East's railway history."

Councillor Denny Wilson, Sunderland City Council Portfolio Holder for Safer City and Culture, says: "Our industrial heritage is an asset that needs to be understood by today's young people, and the development of sites such as Monkwearmouth Station Museum for the enjoyment of both residents and visitors to the city is part of our strategy to make Sunderland a really attractive place to live, work and learn."

Notes to editors

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 with £209 million in the North East alone.

Monkwearmouth Station Museum is open Monday – Saturday 10am – 5pm and Sunday 2pm – 5pm.

Further information

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