Funding of over £37,000 for NWT’s Living Coast project

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‘Cley and Salthouse: A Living Coast’ combines two exciting new ventures for the Trust: the unexpected opportunity to purchase land which will connect Cley and Salthouse Marshes together (for which an appeal was launched in July); and the building of a new flagship wildlife education centre alongside the current visitor centre, in memory of naturalist, Simon Aspinall.

The development funding of £37,600 has been awarded to help NWT progress plans to bid for a major lottery award next year. The initial funding will help NWT develop the project through essential building surveys, reports and the creation of land management plans, amongst other costs, to give the Trust the best possible chance of securing the full grant of over £1.5million.

The project will also enable NWT to introduce a fascinating and informative programme of coastal and marine education, and manage the existing nature reserves and new land to create a Living Landscape of habitats for wildlife and people to enjoy.

Chief Executive of NWT, Brendan Joyce, said: “We are delighted to have support from HLF for our new project. The Simon Aspinall Wildlife Education Centre will meet an existing and growing demand for opportunities for people of all ages - schools, community groups and visitors to the nature reserve - to learn about the North Norfolk Coast, one of the UK's most important coastal and marine environments.

“We are extremely grateful for the response from our membership and the public to our land purchase appeal, and the total donated now exceeds £270,000. If we are successful next year, the grant of over £1.5million from HLF will make a significant contribution to achieving our ultimate total of £2.5million. We still need people to support us by donating whatever they can, whether they want to put it towards the land purchase, the building of the centre or across the whole project as this will help to give us the match funding we will need to unlock the HLF grant if we are successful.”

NWT Cley Marshes is an important visitor destination, attracting people from around the world. Visitors range from birdwatchers and wildlife enthusiasts, specifically visiting the area because of its wildlife significance and reputation, to holidaymakers staying in Norfolk and exploring the coast. The visitor centre acts as a gateway to the North Norfolk coast, providing a range of fascinating information on coastal features and wildlife.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the East of England, said: “We’re extremely pleased to give initial support to this project. The Salthouse Marshes on the North Norfolk Coast is an exceptionally important area of coastline, which this conservation plan and visitor centre will help bring to life for the local community and visitors alike. We shall watch the developing plans with interest."

NWT will submit the final bid for £1.5million in May, with a decision from HLF due in September 2013.

Notes to editors

1. A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project 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. 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.

2. NWT Cley Marshes is one of the best birding sites in the country, with a history of rarities including 'firsts for Britain'. Its breeding birds include avocet, marsh harrier, and bearded tit and it is nationally and internationally renowned as a flyway for migratory and resident birds, supporting thousands of wintering, migrating and breeding wildfowl and waders. The mosaic of wetland habitats also encourages a diversity of nationally and regionally scarce flora.

3. Norfolk Wildlife Trust was established 85 years ago and now manages over 50 nature reserves and other protected sites around the county including ten kilometres of coastline, nine Norfolk broads, nine National Nature Reserves and five ancient woodlands. We seek a sustainable environment for people and wildlife: where the future of wildlife is protected and enhanced through sympathetic management; and people are connected with and inspired by Norfolk's wildlife and wild spaces. Norfolk Wildlife Trust website.

Further information

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