History of 'Old Belfast' opened up

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The three year ‘Old Belfast’ project will help local communities learn more about their heritage by providing training in historical research and publication techniques for at least three hundred people. The participants, including community groups, history groups and individuals with an interest in the history of Belfast, will select and research an aspect of local history that is important to them. They will undertake a series of training modules and site visits that will equip them with the skills to identify, access and evaluate historical materials such as archives, documents and images contained within libraries, the Public Records Office, universities and other heritage institutions.

Their findings will be used to produce a historical publication that will be written and designed by the groups themselves, and it is expected that ten local heritage publications will be produced each year.

Glenravel Local History Project was established in 1991 to explore the history of the area which contained the Belfast Poor House and Clifton Street Cemetery. Numerous projects and publications later, Glenravel is now a registered historical charity whose advice is sought from groups throughout Ireland.

By providing training and support through the various stages, from research to publication, the group hope that this latest project will inspire more local communities to become involved in learning about where they come from.

“This is one of the most interesting schemes which we have ever put together,” said Joe Baker of the Glenravel Project. “Our overall aim is basically to show people how to become local historians and what a fascinating subject it really is. To top it off there will be a local historical publication almost every month which will be compiled by those taking part.”

Funding for the project was awarded through the HLF Your Heritage programme, which provides grants of up to £50,000 for projects that help people to learn about, conserve and celebrate their own or other people’s heritage.

Head of HLF Northern Ireland, Paul Mullan, said: “We are delighted to be involved in this project which will provide local communities with the skills and know how to enable them to open up and explore their heritage. The knowledge sharing between Glenravel and the participants will help local history groups to flourish, creating a last impact and widening the numbers of those who will benefit from the project.”

Further information

HLF Norther Ireland on 028 9031 0120.