

In Downpatrick, a project to restore a soon-to-disappear piece of our railway heritage is one of those to benefit.

The plans to restore an original signal cabin and locate it within Downpatrick and County Down Railway Museum received a £9,540 grant. With the only two working mechanical signal boxes in Northern Ireland scheduled for closure by 2015, this project will give visitors a unique opportunity to view a fully operational signal box in situ. Demonstrations and displays will be used to give people the opportunity to learn more about its history and use.

Ranging from the preservation of traditional skills, to the exploration of our maritime and industry heritage, the grants awarded today will help local communities get actively involved in heritage projects that matters to them.

Announcing the awards, Paul Mullan, Head of HLF Northern Ireland, said: “These five grants are the latest to be awarded in support of smaller or more modest projects that really help local people to dig into their past to explore, record, or share their heritage. We are delighted to support this project in Downpatrick which will preserve such an iconic piece of our railway heritage for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

“With HLF’s investment in Northern Ireland reaching a huge £184million, we are proud of our role in helping to protect and celebrate our heritage over the last 20 years and look forward to supporting many more local projects.”

Welcoming the award, David Crone from Downpatrick and County Down Railway, added; “This award will allow us to bring back to life part of the long lost railways from the far west of the province and allow our visitors the opportunity to

see a part of Victorian railway infrastructure normally hidden in remote or inaccessible locations from public view."

Notes to editors

Since 1994 the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded £184million to over 1,000 projects across Northern Ireland.

Further information

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