Awards over £75,000 to projects across South Holland

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From young people learning about some of Donington's most famous sons and daughters, to the creation of DVDs telling the story of the development of fenland across the region, the full range of South Holland's local history will be explored. These projects will also give local people more opportunities to learn about and get involved in their heritage.

These awards are the result of a programme of activities undertaken in partnership with South Lincolnshire CVS and South Holland District Council to assist local organisations in making applications to HLF.

Emma Sayer, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East Midlands, said: "At HLF, we believe that everyone should have the opportunity to identify, care for and enjoy their heritage. We have been working to make sure that local people in areas that have previously received less funding know what opportunities are out there. This is just the first step, however, and we look forward to offering support to more organisations in the future to help fund more of these wonderful local projects."

The 8 projects have each been awarded grants of between £5,000 and £10,000 to fund activities that focus on a specific aspect of local heritage.

HLF will also provide a mentor for many of the projects, to offer advice and guidance on making their plans a reality, with projects that requested a mentor being allocated a further £1,000 to cover these costs.

In one project, Spalding and District Civic Society will work with local residents and young people to explore key landmarks through photography, comparing pictures from the local archives with contemporary views. Exhibitions of their work will give visitors the chance to see for themselves how the local area has changed over the last 50 years.

Sneath's Mill Trust will be leading another project that will offer local people the chance to learn about the history of the mill, and give them a voice in developing plans for future conservation. As part of the project they will also make archived archaeological research accessible through the web. Through these activities they aim to raise awareness about the importance of the mill and the need for urgent repair.

Since 1994 over £23billion – that's £25million each week – has been raised by Lottery players for the arts, sport heritage, environment, education, health, charity and voluntary sectors.

In that time the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded nearly £227million of grants to projects across the East Midlands. From museums, parks and historic buildings, to archaeology, traditional skills and the environment, HLF has supported every part of the region's diverse heritage.

Notes to editors:

The HLF Small Grants for South Holland Initiative invited applications for up to £10,000. All projects were also offered the services of an HLF mentor to be paid for out of the grant award. Projects that requested a mentor were allocated a further £1,000, meaning a maximum possible grant award of £11,000.

The heritage of the Thomas Cowley High School
Awarded £9,800

Led by young people at the school, this project will explore the lives of the four most famous students after whom the school's houses are named - Cowley, Bass, Flinders and Swift.

Thomas Cowley was a landowner who decided in 1719 to give the benefit of his wealth to charity by establishing a school in the village. The School's most famous student was Matthew Flinders, who sailed to Australia in 1795. With his friend George Bass - another Thomas Cowley High School student - he circumnavigated Tasmania, returning in 1801 to make a full survey of Australia. The final house is named after Dame Sarah Swift who, after a long career in medicine, founded the Royal College of Nursing.

This project will create an exhibition detailing these students' lives, alongside recordings of local people's memories of the school and surrounding area. Pupils at the school will work with local primary school children to produce a book celebrating the life of Matthew Flinders.

The History of the Draining of the Fens (Long Sutton and District Civic Society)
Awarded £9,800
The local history of South Holland is entwined with the development of the Fens, and the impact this has had on local agriculture. Long Sutton and District Civic Society will create a DVD combined with education packs to give young people the chance to learn about how the development of 'Sea defence banks' brought agriculture and wealth to the area.

Visual Archive Spalding 1960 – Spalding 2010 (Spalding and District Civic Society)
Awarded £5,200
Working with local residents and young people, the Spalding and District Civic Society will be exploring the local area through photographs. The project will compare pictures from the local archives with current views of key landmarks. Exhibitions of the work will then be hosted in local venues, giving visitors the chance to see for themselves how the local area has changed and developed.

Spalding Maritime Heritage (Spalding and District Civic Society)
Awarded £10,000
This award will fund the development of maritime heritage trail along the River Welland. The Spalding and District Civic Society will research the history of the river, creating leaflets and interpretation panels which will raise awareness of this little known but significant part of Spalding's heritage.

Donington Heritage Trail (IDEA)
Awarded £10,600
IDEA are planning to create a heritage trail around Donington, highlighting sites in the village associated with the life of Matthew Flinders. Physical works will be undertaken to make the heritage trail accessible to all, including improving paths to and around the churchyard. A downloadable audio guide will also be created, giving visitors and local people alike the chance to learn about the fascinating history of the village.

The Fraiser Room Education Project (Surfleet Parish Council)
Awarded £8,400
Surfleet Parish Council will be working with local primary school children to learn about education in the 18th and 19th centuries, by researching the history of the Fraiser Room. They will then work together on creating a written account of

the historic schoolroom.

Sneath's Mill Community Information Access Project (Sneath's Mill Trust Ltd)
Awarded £9,900
This award will support a number of activities giving local people the chance to learn about the history of the Grade I listed mill, and give them a voice in developing plans for future conservation. These will include making archived archaeological research accessible through the web.

This project is a first-step towards the longer term ambition of restoring the mill, for which the Trust is currently fundraising. Through producing information and educational packs and delivering talks at local exhibitions, fetes and to local groups the trust hopes to raise awareness about the importance of the mill and the need for urgent repair.

Surfleet Living Archive (South Holland Enterprise for the Disabled)
Awarded £11,000
The local history of Surfleet will be explored and recorded through this project that will produce a website detailing local heritage. The South Holland Enterprise for the Disabled will interview older residents from the village, so that their memories and experiences can be included on the website. Primary school pupils will also interpret these stories and recollections through painting, sculpture and collage, with their work being displayed for the local community.

Further information

For photographs of projects available on request, please contact Roland Smith, HLF Communications on 020 7591 6047 / 07713 48 64 20, email: rolands@hlf.org.uk.