Success for Shropshire Heritage Volunteers

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Working in partnership with Shropshire Council's Archives and Museums Service over the course of a three year project, 250 people will have the opportunity to work on some of Shropshire's outstanding heritage collections. The money will mean that thousands of items from the museum's and archive's collections, will be opened up and made accessible to the public – whilst offering the volunteers the chance to gain valuable skills and experience in conservation, cataloguing and digitisation, and creating new online resources, events, exhibitions and displays.

Incorporating Shrewsbury Museum, Shrewsbury Castle, Coleham Pumping Station, Much Wenlock Museum, Acton Scott Historic Working Farm, Ludlow Museum and Ludlow Museum Resource Centre, Shropshire Museum Service contains over 280,000 objects and attracts over 100,000 users per year.

Featuring a massive five and half miles of archives relating to Shropshire's heritage - including over 45,000 photographs dating back to the 1840s, the famous Wenlock Borough collection associated with the life of Olympic pioneer William Penny Brookes, and vast accumulations of early modern and medieval records dating back to the 14th century - this new project will enable new light to be shed on the lives of ordinary people across Shrewsbury hundreds of years ago.

Anne Jenkins, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the West Midlands, said: "This project will not only breath life into the amazingly rich and diverse heritage of Shropshire, but it will enable so many new people to get involved in the heritage around them. Indeed, the Much Wenlock records will provide fresh context for the life of William Penny Brookes and the development of the Wenlock Olympics – very topical as we move towards 2012."

Further museums collections to be revealed include fascinating geological specimens of which Shropshire has an internationally significant collection, as well as Roman finds from Wroxeter, and beautiful 18th and 19th century ceramics and art works.

Councillor Mike Owen, Portfolio Holder Economic Growth and Prosperity, said: "This project will provide wonderful opportunities for volunteers to work on our incredible collections. I am particularly pleased that three apprentices will be taken on as part of the project, as developing young people's skills is a key objective for Shropshire Council. We are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their continuing support to Shropshire's heritage."

Notes to editors

The HLF grant to the project Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage is for £206,000 (48% of project costs) and is a confirmed award.
To date, HLF have made 453 awards in Shropshire amounting to just over £37million.

Further information

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