£2.8m to Torre Abbey

25/01/2011

This award will fund the second phase of the Torre Abbey's restoration programme, which will extensively conserve the medieval ruins, cloister wall and other key parts of the building - essential to prevent further deterioration of the historic fabric. The work will include repairing and stabilising the roof structures, repairing the masonry and restoring lime stucco.

The project will also include the creation of new learning spaces, including a new educational activity zone to be built in the south-east wing, transforming opportunities for students of all ages to get involved and explore the history of the site.

The project will be delivered by the local economic development company, Torbay Development Agency (TDA) which is also spearheading a number of renaissance projects within the English Riviera.

As part of the scheme, the Abbey's top floor will become a dramatic and dynamic gallery based around the 800 years of history of Torre Abbey. State of the art displays and viewing stations overlooking the stunning marine vista of Tor Bay, will show how the building evolved against the history of the local area.

Local people will have the chance to get directly involved in a volunteer group, which will be recruiting and training new volunteers to lead guided tours of the Abbey, amongst other activities.

Nerys Watts, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said: "We at HLF are pleased to be able to support the next phase of restoration works. Torre Abbey is one of the regions heritage treasures, and this restoration project is essential in preserving this wonderful site for future generations. Through the creation of new interpretation and education facilities, more people will have the chance to learn about and explore the history of the site and the local area."

Dating back 800 years, Torre Abbey is one of the best preserved medieval monasteries in Devon and Cornwall. The site is home to the famous 'Spanish Barn' – a medieval tithe barn originally built to store taxes paid to the Abbey in the form of grain and hay. The Abbey, also a museum and art gallery, houses an impressive art collection including pieces by William Blake and Edward Burne-Jones.

Steve Parrock, Torbay Development Agency Chief Executive, said: "We are delighted to have secured the £2.8million grant, which will enable us to safeguard Torre Abbey's future by restoring its architectural features and creating a state-of-the-art interpretation space overlooking one of Europe's finest marine vistas.

"Albeit challenging, we thoroughly enjoyed completing the popular first phase on time and budget, and we are now thrilled to be able to complete the project as envisaged in 2005.

"With HLF's support Torre Abbey can now continue to enjoy its rightful place as one of Torbay's greatest assets, enhancing the quality of the visitor destination, whilst providing great facilities for local people throughout the year."

Notes to editors

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 30,000 projects allocating £4.5billion across the UK.

Further information

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