HLF West Midlands welcomes new committee



Marion Blockley

The HLF Committee for the West Midlands is made up of leading figures in the heritage sector across the region chosen for their wide range of experience and local knowledge. Responsible for making decisions on regional applications to the Fund from £100,000 to £2million, the committee are supported by the regional HLF team for the West Midlands who operate from Birmingham-based offices.

Izzy Mohammed and Marion Blockley will join the existing six members of the committee made up of local people through open advertisement. Their expertise widely reflects and compliments the range of heritage applications that HLF receives.

Izzy Mohammed, was born and educated in Birmingham and currently works as a cultural engagement practitioner at the Library of Birmingham. He was awarded an MA in Museum Studies from the University of Leicester in 2002, and is currently undertaking Doctoral Research (PhD) at the University of Birmingham. He was until recently a trustee of the Group for Education in Museums.

Commenting on his appointment to the West Midlands Committee, he said: “I have been fortunate to have been able to work in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund in recent years. This has enabled me to develop a great appreciation for the work they do – of their expertise, their caring interest in difficult social issues and their diligence. I am delighted to

join the Committee and hope to assist in whatever way I can to support their efforts and enhance the cause of greater cultural engagement and participation."

Marion Blockley has worked as an archaeologist, heritage consultant and interpretive planner since 1974. She was Senior Lecturer in Heritage Management at the University of Birmingham and Director of the Ironbridge Institute. She was also a founder member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and was previously a member of the West Midlands Regional Committee of the National Trust.

She said: "I am really looking forward to joining the HLF Regional Committee, it is a real honour and a privilege to be involved with so many fascinating projects throughout the region."

Reyahn King, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund West Midlands, said: "We are extremely pleased to welcome these two new members to the committee. They bring a wealth of experience to what is already a very strong team of decision makers. Their wide ranging expertise and strong regional awareness will be of great benefit to both HLF and the heritage of the West Midlands."

HLF funds an amazing array of projects that encompass all aspects of the UK's rich and diverse heritage. The West Midlands committee covers Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall and Wolverhampton. 2014 is the 20th anniversary of the National Lottery during which time HLF has supported more than 3,300 projects in the West Midlands awarding nearly £434million.

The projects range from restoration of historic buildings, improvements to museums and galleries, makeovers for town parks, purchasing works of art and treasured artefacts, helping to conserve the natural environment, and promoting community involvement in conserving local social histories. HLF is also actively involved in supporting a wide range of projects marking the centenary of the First World War. The projects are both large and small ranging from multi-million pound building refurbishments to local youngsters tracing the history of their local town and filming a DVD or producing a play.

Notes to editors

The other HLF Committee members are: Les Sparks (chair), Sue Beardsmore, Ian Grosvenor, Alan Taylor, Jude Walker and Dr.Tom Tew. Dr Tew joined the committee in January and also serves as a Trustee on the HLF Board.

Biographies
Izzy Mohammed
Izzy Mohammed was born and educated in Birmingham. He was awarded an MA in Museum Studies from the University of Leicester in 2002, and is currently undertaking Doctoral Research (PhD) at the University of Birmingham.

Izzy's personal experiences have shaped his interest in using Culture – Heritage, History and the Arts – towards community development, self-realisation and better understanding the potential for social transformation through culture. He currently works as a cultural engagement practitioner at the Library of Birmingham, where he applies and continues to develop his experience in cultural engagement, participation and representation. He is also deeply interested in helping to develop the services and programmes of the Library of Birmingham within the evolving context of the city of Birmingham. Previously, Mr Mohammed was a Trustee of the Group for Education in Museums (2006 – 2012).

Marion Blockley
Marion Blockley first came to Shropshire in 1985. She has worked as an archaeologist, heritage consultant and interpretive planner since 1974. She was Senior Lecturer in Heritage Management at the University of Birmingham and Director of the Ironbridge Institute.

A founder member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists she also served on its council. She was also a member of the ICOMOS UK World Heritage Sites Committee and Cultural Tourism Committee. She also edited the periodical Interpretation for the Association for Heritage interpretation (formerly SIBH) and was a committee member of that organisation.

She has carried out consultancy for Unesco and Icomos in Burma, Leipzig and Jordan. She has also been invited to speak at a number of international heritage conferences in India, South Africa, USA, Spain, Germany, Jordan and Peru. She has taught heritage management to postgraduates and young professionals in Madrid, Lima, Cusco and Delhi.

Whilst working for Buckinghamshire County Museums she obtained an MA from the Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester. In 2012 she received a bursary from the Group for Education in Museums to look at best practice in Swedish Museums. She has published numerous articles and books on community heritage, archaeology, museums and interpretation. She was also a member of the West Midlands Regional Committee of the National Trust and a Member of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Steering committee.

She works nationally as a heritage consultant for a number of organisations and has assisted the development of a number of successful local HLF projects including: the Saracen's Head and Old Grammar Schoo,l Kings Norton; Grange Court, Leominster; Upper Wye Valley AONB; Weoley Castle Monument; Warley Woods Community Trust; Newman Brothers Coffin Fittings Works; Tamworth Castle; Ditherington Flaxmill Maltings; Middleport Pottery, Burslem.

Dr Tom Tew
Dr Tom Tew is a nature conservationist, currently Chief Executive of the Environment Bank, a private sector company that works with planning authorities, landowners and developers to deliver sustainable development that produces a net gain in wildlife. After a zoology degree from UEA and a DPhil from Oxford, Tom spent over 20 years in the public sector, leading teams and programmes at local, regional, national and international scales. He led the UK Scientific Authority on International trade in endangered animals; was a Regional and then National Director at English Nature, with responsibility for England's SSSIs; and lastly was Executive Director and Chief Scientist at Natural England.

Further information

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