

£1.5m cash boost for famous gallery

27/09/2010

Home to the family of William Morris from 1848 to 1856, the Gallery is devoted to England's greatest designer and houses superb collections illustrating Morris' life, achievements and continuing influence, including woven and printed fabrics, ceramics, wallpaper, furniture and his political works.

This HLF award - matched by £1.5m from Waltham Forest Council - will go towards a refurbishment and extension of the much-loved building, providing more exhibition space, a new tearoom, a learning centre with school space, library and meeting room, all of which should serve to bring the Gallery's collections to life and provide an invaluable resource for generations to come.

Waltham Forest's Cabinet Member for Leisure, Arts and Culture, Cllr Geraldine Reardon, said: "This is the culmination of a great deal of hard work on the part of Gallery staff and the Friends of William Morris Gallery and the whole borough owes them a debt of thanks.

"With a new exhibition and events programme, more people are already visiting the Gallery, but this award will enable us to transform it into a more beautiful and useful art gallery, museum, learning centre and meeting place we can be even more proud of. This work will dovetail with the HLF-funded redevelopment of Lloyd Park, providing a first-class attraction for residents and visitors alike."

Sue Bowers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the London region, said: "The William Morris Gallery is one of outer London's historical treasures. We are delighted that this grant will enable both the fabric of the building to be restored, and the important collections, together with fascinating personal items relating to William Morris' life, to be preserved and imaginatively displayed for visitors of all ages."

Bill Measure, Chair of the Friends of William Morris Gallery, said: "This is great news and will give the Gallery the things that are needed to expand and develop its already important role as a unique asset for our local community and as an international centre of excellence. I would like to thank and pay tribute to all the staff at the Gallery who have worked so hard to achieve this."

The funding application, part of our continuing fundraising campaign, was submitted by Waltham Forest Council. This major success follows earlier good news that the Gallery has been given grants of £500,000 and £150,000 by two other charitable trusts, showing just how highly regarded the country's only public gallery dedicated to the life and work of William Morris truly is.

Notes to editors

A confirmed award means that money had already been earmarked by HLF for the project in question and that the full amount has now been secured.

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 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK.

The William Morris Gallery (Lloyd Park, Forest Road, Walthamstow E17 4PP) is open to the general public from Wednesday - Sunday, 10am-5pm and admission is free.

The William Morris Gallery is the only public gallery devoted to William Morris - designer, craftsman, writer, socialist and conservationist - and displays an internationally important collection illustrating his life, achievements and influence.

Further information

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