

Aerial view of Seaton Jurassic

This second stage award – £56,500 was given to the project in 2012 – will be used for interpretation inside the centre taking the visitor on a unique journey back in time to experience the story of evolution, wildlife and geology. People of all ages will then find themselves the size of a shrimp as they enter a giant rockpool and enjoy the marine life under the sea under different tidal conditions. Finally, visitors will go outside to explore a number of exhibitions at their own pace as water cascades above them.

Councillor Ian Thomas, East Devon District Council's cabinet member for economy, said: "This is tremendous news for Seaton Jurassic, for the town and the region. This HLF grant is the final piece of the complex funding jigsaw and means we can move ahead on our exciting interpretation plans. The centre will be highly engaging and interactive with the visitor learning more about the area's natural and marine heritage. We hope people of all ages will touch, collect, watch, learn and laugh during their visit. I would like to congratulate the team who worked so hard to achieve this significant grant and thank the HLF for showing such confidence in the project."

Work will start on the site at The Undercliffs, Seaton next month with the centre opening late in 2015. Seaton Jurassic has now secured almost £4million of funding with contributions from East Devon District Council, Devon County Council, Seaton Town Council, Coastal Communities Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, Fine Family Foundation and Garfield Weston Foundation. A number of other charitable donations are pending. Planning consent for the project was approved in June 2013.

Nerys Watts, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said: “Seaton has a terrific marine environment which, thanks to the displays and information to be included in this centre, as well as enthusiastic support from local volunteers, can be showcased and explained to an increasing number of visitors.”

Seaton Jurassic has benefited from tremendous support locally with the Seaton Visitor Centre Trust campaigning for many years. Local people will be key to the centre’s success going forward with opportunities to be involved as volunteers, fundraisers and ambassadors.

Notes to editors

About the Seaton Jurassic project
East Devon District Council is the lead partner, budget holder and main funder, contributing £1.9m to the project. The council is managing the capital budget for the project and will own and build the centre. East Devon District Council also agreed to underwrite a possible £165,000 shortfall in the funding.

Devon County Council is also a funding partner contributing £600,000 along with Seaton Town Council who have contributed £25,000.

Other key funding partners are the Heritage Lottery Fund (£650,000) and Coastal Communities Fund (£300,000).

The Fine Family Foundation and the Garfield Weston Foundation have both pledged significant grants.

Devon Wildlife Trust was selected following a competitive procurement process as the centre operator.

Ward Williams Associates is the project manager for the build and consultant to the project team having been appointed following a competitive, OJEU compliant tender process.