

From miner to Major: HLF to support the real story of Sherwood Forest

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The From miner to Major: the real Sherwood Forest project aims to reflect the diverse heritage of the area, which encompasses coal mining and internationally important wildlife, as well as the legendary Robin Hood.

A development grant of £119,000 will enable the Sherwood Forest Landscape Partnership to develop ideas that will rebuild Sherwood Forest's sense of place, reconnecting its ancient woodlands, heathlands, and cultural heritage.

The bid has been submitted by Nottinghamshire County Council on behalf of a growing partnership of organisations from the heritage, conservation and community sectors.

Success represents completion of the first part of HLF's two-stage process and means that a further phase of development work can now go ahead. This development phase is expected to take 18 months and will prepare detailed proposals for a series of schemes to be implemented on the ground from 2017.

If the second stage of the application is successful, the value of the final scheme is expected to be worth around £3.7m. Projects would be supported over an area of around 200 square kilometres and managed by a range of public and private landowners.

Local people and community groups would be encouraged and supported to take part in projects in their community, aimed at learning about, conserving or celebrating their area's heritage.

Councillor John Knight, Chairman of the Culture Committee at Nottinghamshire County Council, said: "We are overjoyed to hear of the bid's success as there were many applicants and a lot of competition. It reflects well on the hard work that was put in by many partners. We recognise that this is only the first step in our aspirations to make more of Sherwood's heritage, but it is a very important step as it will enable us to carry out careful study and consultation to make sure that we have got the best possible programme of proposals."

John Everitt, Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Chair of the Sherwood Forest Regional Park Board, said: "This is excellent news, which confirms the national importance of Sherwood Forest and will help us to realise the vision of a Regional Park. Extra funding from HLF will offer great opportunities to restore industrial areas to wildlife-rich heathland and woodland. We also want to use the richness of the area's built and cultural heritage to connect with local communities and to stimulate a visitor economy."

The Friends of Moor Pond Wood is one local group that is supporting the bid. Stephen Walker, chairman of the Friends, said: "Thanks to HLF, we have already been able to find out more about our own site. We know that there are lots more groups interested in the heritage of their biodiversity, archaeology or built heritage and this scheme should enable lots more projects to get off the ground. We are looking forward to sharing our experience and ideas with other local groups so that they can get under way."

Drew Bennellick, Head of Landscape and Natural Heritage, HLF said: "On the eve of The National Lottery's 20th birthday, this is the perfect moment to thank Lottery players for helping make possible our Landscape Partnership programme. We couldn't have done it without them.

"Ten years ago we developed Landscape Partnerships so that we could deliver conservation on a truly landscape scale. With so many habitats and species in decline and people becoming less and less connected to nature and the land, the programme was the first of its kind to allow conservationists to work at a cross-landscape scale. The programme has grown rapidly and is now leading the way in allowing many of our most treasured landscapes, as well as some of our most damaged, to be managed for the future in a sustainable way.

"Involving people as volunteers, training them as guides or helping them learn new skills has enabled local people to appreciate, value and speak up for the countryside. Our funding has led to new strategic partnerships between private, public, charitable and community bodies. It has also ensured that the UK's most precious resource, our landscape, will be protected for future generations. Thank you, Lottery players!"

Notes to editors

Preparation of the minor to Major bid has been led by a partnership board made up of the following organisations:

- Nottinghamshire County Council (chair)

- The Forestry Commission
- The Friends of Moor Pond Woods
- Groundwork Creswell Ashfield & Mansfield
- The Greenwood Partnership
- Natural England
- Newark & Sherwood District Council
- Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
- Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire
- RSPB
- Sherwood Forest Trust

A number of other organisations and community groups have helped to shape the bid. The partnership is expected to expand further over the next stage, to include further community consultation and engagement.

Miner to Major represents Sherwood partners' second attempt to seek funding for a Landscape Partnership Scheme. A submission in May 2013 was unsuccessful but HLF encouraged partners to reapply this year.

Further information

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