

Croydon Airport

CAS has been awarded £10,000 to recruit and train volunteers to meet growing demand at the Croydon Airport Visitor Centre, help keep it open and research the Society's extensive archives, making them more accessible through new displays and an online platform.

London’s historic Croydon Airport was Britain's first major international airport and during the early 20th century was a hotbed for record-breaking flights and technical innovation, laying the foundations of today's worldwide air transport network. The magnificent Grade II listed airport terminal, built in 1928, was a global first and features the world’s oldest air traffic control tower.

Croydon Airport Visitor Centre (CAVC) is volunteer-run by CAS and is open on the first Sunday of every month; it is Croydon's most popular visitor attraction as reviewed on Trip Advisor. CAS needs more volunteers to fulfill growing demand, help keep the CAVC open, and help local schools with learning about the airport’s history and the significant historic figures associated with it such as Amy Johnson and Charles Lindbergh. In addition, CAS has a large paper and photographic archive and a collection of items relating to the history of Croydon Airport. Much of this material is in storage and needs digitising and interpretation so that a wider number of people can explore the Society's rich archive.

The Society is looking for volunteers to join the CAVC team and make the collection more accessible. There are a range of opportunities which will shortly be advertised. Full training will be provided on welcoming visitors, giving talks, the history of the airport and working with the archives at meetings to be held in early evenings or at weekends from May to

July. If you haven't quite got the time to get directly involved but would still like to contribute, the Society would also like to hear your stories and memories of the Croydon Airport and its impact on the local area so please get in touch.

Commenting on the award, CAS Chair Ian Walker said: ”We are delighted to have been selected by HLF to receive funding under their Sharing Heritage programme. This is a really exciting project and it’s the first time that the Croydon Airport Visitor Centre has received any form of funding. It’s a great initiative, giving the local community a unique opportunity to get involved with a fantastic part of our national heritage. We are seeing more and more people visit every year and this HLF Sharing Heritage funding will give us the opportunity to exhibit unseen works and meet growing public demand.”

Sue Bowers, Head of HLF London, said: “Croydon Airport holds a wealth of information relating to our nation’s aviation heritage. This project will not only improve the conservation and accessibility of the archives, but also offers some fantastic opportunities for volunteers, the local community and visitors. Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players we’re pleased to play a funding role.”

Notes to editors

About Croydon Airport Society (CAS)

Founded in 1978, The Croydon Airport Society (CAS) is an independent registered charity (Charity Commission number 287303) funded by member's subscriptions and working to conserve the history and heritage of the airport for the benefit of the community. CAS took over the responsibility for running Croydon Airport Visitor Centre from Croydon Council in 2001 and is entirely volunteer-run. The Centre now has a total of 2700 visitors per year. In addition CAS shares information about the airport and early aviation history with schools and other organisations, and has a 100,000 document archive.

Further information

For further information, images and interviews, please contact: Ian Walker via email: cas.cavc@hotmail.co.uk ,or Debbie Challis via email: volcoordcas@gmail.com.