£3million National Lottery boost for Norfolk's



How the Wells Maltings transformation will look

Major work will greatly increase space for their collections and maximise visitors' access and enjoyment of the two popular North Norfolk heritage sites.

Norman Lamb, MP for North Norfolk, said: "I am absolutely thrilled by this news. I want to congratulate everyone who has worked so hard to put the bids together. The funding will give a great boost to much valued local amenities; the success of the grants is a real tribute to the efforts of the teams of people who have been involved."

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players we are delighted to support these wonderful projects which will transform two of North Norfolk's heritage sites, while keeping the community at heart and providing a range of opportunities for people of all ages to get involved in the future of their heritage."

Mo Sheringham Museum - £1,098,700

Since the opening of The Mo in 2010, the museum has gone from strength to strength and has seen an incredible increase in the number of people coming to see its historic fleet of life boats and fishing vessels.

The museum is now also the proud owner of an Atlantic 75 lifeboat which completes the timeline of the town's 160-year lifeboat evolution from wooden rowing boat to semi-rigid inflatable inshore boats.

However, after being stationed in the town from 1994 to 2007, the Atlantic 75 is currently stored in a local farmer's barn.

This million-pound project will add a rooftop extension, increasing space and allowing the Atlantic 75 to be housed safely at the museum. Other items in the collection will also be able to return to the museum, including a number of objects currently stored at the town hall and a recently discovered canon and anchor which are in urgent need of conservation work.

Volunteers and visitors will also greatly benefit from the work. As well as better access to a growing collection, a history hub will be created to tell the story of the town and its seafaring heritage and there will be a space dedicated for events, exhibitions and educational activities.

Three University of East Anglia students will take part in year-long placements to gain skills and experience in museum education, operation and conservation.

Simon Holland, Chairman of the Board of Directors at the museum, said: "We are delighted and incredibly grateful to have received our full grant award from the HLF which will allow us to transform the Sheringham Museum building this winter. We have been working hard for nearly three years on this project and we are all excited at the opportunities that this new space will now bring us. We look forward to welcoming our first school groups into the new education centre in 2016 and seeing the Atlantic 75 Lifeboat go on permanent public display, finally completing our unique collection of eight historic Sheringham vessels all preserved under one roof."

Wells Maltings - £1,917,600

Once one of 11 malthouses in Wells-next-the-Sea, the Wells Maltings is the only one remaining with any resemblance to its original function and stands in the heart of the town's conservation area.

Now it is set to start the next exciting chapter in its historic story. With a grant of nearly £2m, the building will be restored and reconfigured to increase the capacity of its popular Granary Theatre from 69 seats to 100 and create a brand-new, immersive Heritage and Learning Centre at its heart. A new two-storey extension will provide space for the tourist information service, improve the community rooms and add a new shop, café and toilet facilities.

Along with restoration of historic elements of the building such as its kilns, grain hoppers and roof cowls, the heritage of the town and its community are also at the heart of the project.

The project aims to create a year-round cultural destination staffed by skilled local people and volunteers who will be involved at every stage, including the building phase.

Seventy volunteers will work alongside heritage professionals to learn new skills and actively help plan and deliver the content of the heritage and learning centre.

An exciting heritage events and activities programme will run throughout the town including the creation of a heritage art trail and digital and traditional community banners.

A new promenade outdoor performance celebrating the life of local historical characters will be developed and oral histories and recordings gathered to create a new heritage audio installation featuring the changing sounds from town,

port and sea.

The new Heritage and Learning Centre will bring together existing collections with interactive new interpretation to explore the themes of ‘Coast’, ‘Port’, ‘People’ and ‘Maltings’ and bring to life stories from the town’s rich maritime history.

A flexible gallery space and community room will open up the building for events, exhibitions and community use.

Peter Lynn, Wells Maltings Trust Chairman, said: “We’re delighted and very grateful that the Heritage Lottery Fund has shown us this generous support. The Maltings has given Wells-next-the-Sea a place for live entertainment and community activites for more than 30 years. We can now go ahead and carry out the work to preserve it for another century and we look forward to hearing from local people interested in getting involved with the exciting events and activities we have planned.’’

Becky Jefcoate, Wells Maltings Trust Project Development Manager, said: “This is fabulous news for the Maltings, for Wells, and for the whole of North Norfolk. There are so many fascinating stories from the local area that we look forward to bringing to life at the new heritage and learning centre and we’re thrilled to be able to provide our community and visitors with such an exciting new cultural destination.’’

Ben Francis, Wells Maltings Community Manager, said: ‘‘This news is another resounding success for the charity responsible for the award winning Wells Pirate Festival, the successful Sackhouse business centre, rapidly growing Wells Granary Theatre and Wells Tourist Information Service.”

Notes to editors

About The Mo, Sheringham Museum

The Sheringham Museum was set up by Sheringham Town Council and a group of local enthusiasts in 1988. Originally housed in five former fishermen’s cottages, the museum featured collections relating to local maritime and social history.

In 1999, the museum’s then Executive Committee decided to merge the two elements of the museum collections, ‘maritime’ and ‘local and social history’ - in one location – ‘The Mo’, on Sheringham seafront. The subsequent redevelopment of The Sheringham Museum was funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund Grant and through the museum’s own funds raised from the sale of the original museum cottages and from fundraising activities.

The Mo, which is located on Sheringham’s beautiful seafront, was originally a house named after Morag, born in 1881, daughter of Sir Thomas Digby Pigott, a member of the Upcher family. The house was pulled down in 1946 following damage caused during the war. In 1996, the present building was constructed on the site by Anglian Water as an amenity building for North Norfolk District Council, but the building remained out of use until it was leased to the museum, opening in 2010 as the Sheringham Museum.

The museum is open seven days a week until the end of September 2015.

About Wells Maltings

The Wells Maltings Trust was set up in 2010 to restore, repair and develop the Maltings and Sackhouse in Wells-next-the-Sea, a rural coastal town in North Norfolk. Its main aim is to restore and repair a Grade II listed former maltings building and sackhouse in the centre of the town to provide a new heritage and learning centre, improved community facilities, auditorium, new café, TIC, transforming the site into a sustainable, exciting year round enterprise, cultural and community destination for local people and visitors.

Phase one of the project – the conversion of the Sackhouse into business units and community space was completed in 2014 and the space now fully occupied with seven small local business plus a wide range of community users.

Further information

For more information contact Rebecca Lamm, Heritage Lottery Fund press office, on 020 7591 6245 or Rebecca.Lamm@hlf.org.uk.

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Wells Maltings Trust wins Heritage Lottery Fund support