

Carole Souter at the topping out ceremony at the Whitworth Art Gallery

Carole Souter CBE, Chief Executive of the National Heritage Memorial Fund / Heritage Lottery Fund (NHMF/HLF), has announced that she will be stepping down at the end of April 2016.

“I have been very privileged to lead the wonderful team at the Heritage Lottery Fund and National Heritage Memorial Fund since 2003. By the time I leave I will have been here for 13 years – over half the organisation’s lifetime – during which time we will have committed more than £4.8billion of National Lottery funding to over 28,000 projects across the UK.

I have released a red kite chick, stood on the top of York Minster, had Magna Carta explained to me by primary school children, and seen the interpretation of Stonehenge transformed. I have walked the Belfast Hills, seen Dylan Thomas celebrated in Swansea and the great museums and galleries of Scotland rejuvenated to welcome the next generation of new visitors. I have worked with three great Chairs in Liz Forgan, Jenny Abramsky and Peter Luff. As we begin to think about our next Strategic Framework, this feels like the right moment to wrench myself away and to start planning my own new projects.”

[quote=Sir Peter Luff, Chair of NHMF and HLF]"It is impossible to overstate the contribution that Carole has made to the heritage of our nation."[/quote]

Sir Peter Luff, Chair of both NHMF and HLF, said: "It is impossible to overstate the contribution that Carole has made to the heritage of our nation through her inspirational leadership of both funds. Working with her has been a total pleasure.

Her professionalism, her collaborative approach and her extraordinary concern for every member of the Funds' wonderful staff will be greatly missed by people across all heritage sectors and organisations."

"Before becoming Chair, I was aware of her outstanding reputation. Working with her has been an unqualified delight. The huge impact that 21 years and £6.6bn of National Lottery investment in heritage has had owes much to Carole’s tireless commitment over many of those years. I do, though, respect and understand her wish to explore new ventures. Our loss will be someone else's gain. I wish her every success and happiness in whatever she decides to do."

Carole joined NHMF/HLF in 2003, having previously been Director of Planning and Development at English Heritage. With over 30 years’ experience of policy development and operational management in the public sector, she worked in the Departments of Health, Social Security and the Cabinet Office, before moving out of the civil service.

Carole has degrees in Politics and Philosophy and Victorian Studies. She currently sits on the Boards of Creativity, Culture and Education, the Kent Wildlife Trust and the National Communities Resource Centre. She was made a CBE in 2011 for services to conservation and was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 2014. She is also an Honorary Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford.

The process for recruiting Carole’s successor will begin in the next few weeks.