

Inside Upton Hall, base for the British Horological Institute

As British Summer Time ends, we've made a timely investment that will ensure the country's historic clocks keep ticking for many years to come.

The British Horological Institute (BHI) has been awarded £2.8million to train a new generation in clock restoration and repair skills.

It's in response to a nationwide shortage of trained horologists – people who make, repair, collect and sell clocks, watches and other timepieces – numbers of which have declined dramatically over the past 50 years.

The BHI is one of the only organisations left that train people in these traditional skills but their current base at the Grade II* listed Upton Hall in Nottinghamshire does not have adequate facilities to meet the demand.

Thanks to our investment, a currently derelict stable block and glass house at the hall site will be transformed into a state-of-the-art new National Centre for Horology, allowing the BHI to double the number of students it trains each year. That's over 1,000 people trained on 175 different courses over three years, all thanks to National Lottery players.

The new centre will be open daily and people will be able to visit, watch the new horologists in training and take part in workshops. The BHI is also planning to open up and display its fascinating collection which is currently kept behind closed doors for most of the year. It includes the first two speaking clocks and the pocket watch carried by Captain Scott on his ill-fated expedition to the Antarctic.

HLF’s Chair and clock enthusiast, Sir Peter Luff, said: “From Big Ben's tower and the Liver Building to the pocket watches and timepieces carried by great explorers, clocks and clockmaking have a long and proud history in the UK. Even as demand for these traditional skills rises, the number of people trained has gone into steep decline. That is why we saw a pressing need for this National Lottery investment which will ensure timepieces are made, serviced, repaired and conserved in this country for many years to come.”



Horology tutor John Murphy and his students British Horological Institute

As the clocks fall back, the British Horological Institute steps forward