Home of Wordsworth’s golden decade to be



Dove Cottage and the Wordsworth Museum provide great opportunities for learning Wordsworth Trust

The Wordsworth Museum’s world-class collection will be reinvigorated and expanded, historic buildings will become a hub for visitors and the exploration of themes such as the human mind, democracy and our relationship with nature - bringing the Wordsworth story into the 21st century.

Known as the global centre for British Romanticism, Town End is home to Dove Cottage and the Wordsworth Museum, where Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy lived from 1799 to 1808, the period celebrated as his golden decade.

It was during this time that Wordsworth penned the immortal line ‘I wandered lonely as a cloud’, inspired by the daffodils he and Dorothy saw on the shores of Ullswater.

In fact, the majority of his most famous work was written in the cottage and the museum houses an internationally important collection, alongside Dorothy’s Grasmere Journals and other work from the Romantic period. The project will allow more of this collection to go on display and be brought to life with multimedia features and interpretation.

Existing buildings will be sensitively converted into a central visitor centre providing a much-needed place for people to begin their visit. Other changes to this historic site will ensure that visitors from across the world can have a better and more memorable experience.

Across the site, larger windows, landscaping and greater public access to gardens and woodlands will demonstrate to visitors how the countryside inspired one of the nation’s greatest poets.

The original manuscripts of Wordsworth’s poetry will become a key element in involving people in the world of Wordsworth so that they can understand how he worked to perfect thoughts and ideas that are still so relevant today.

HLF's grant will transform Dove Cottage and The Wordsworth Museum from an attraction to a destination, drawing more visitors to Grasmere and benefiting the local economy.

The news comes as the Wordsworth Trust celebrates its 125th anniversary since it formed to save Dove Cottage for the nation. On its first day, the cottage had four visitors, including a lady from Chicago who stumbled upon it by chance. Today, Town End welcomes around 50,000 visitors each year from all over the world. The Trust hopes this project will enhance the Wordsworth story for even more people to enjoy.

Wordsworth Trust Director, Michael McGregor, said: “No visit to the Lake District is complete without a visit to Grasmere, to experience inspirational poetry in, as Wordsworth wrote, 'the loveliest spot that man hath ever found.'

[quote=Michael McGregor, Director at the Wordsworth Trust]"The Wordsworth Trust is 125 years old this year - I can’t think of a better birthday present!"[/quote]

"Thanks to the support of HLF, over the next four years we can reimagine Wordsworth, bringing his life and work to an even wider audience. The Wordsworth Trust is 125 years old this year - I can’t think of a better birthday present!”

The grant has been made possible by National Lottery players. Sara Hilton, Head of HLF North West, said: “Wordsworth’s very name epitomises just how integral he is to the British literary story, and Town End offers a unique opportunity to explore his works within the beautiful setting that inspired them. We are delighted to support these plans which promise to transform the Wordsworth story for a modern audience to enjoy. We look forward to seeing the plans take shape.”

Further information

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