

Watercolor of Newbiggin's Rocket House Mick Smith

From sea rescue to ospreys, four projects saving and exploring Northumberland's diverse heritage have been awarded funding thanks to National Lottery players.

Kielder’s wildlife, memories of sea rescue in Newbiggin and a mission to save a 15th-century tower from ruin are among the projects.

[quote=Ivor Crowther, Head of HLF North East]"Community efforts and personal stories play such a vital role in these projects and we’re delighted to support them thanks to National Lottery players.” [/quote]

Celebrating 150 years of sea rescue memories

In Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, one of the North East’s oldest rocket houses is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year as well as a grant of £153,200 which will help to secure its future, open it to the public and collect memories from generations of families who volunteered there until the 1970s.

Alongside volunteer life brigades, rocket houses were used to store equipment needed when lifeboats could not be deployed. Two or four wheeled carts would be used to haul coastal rescue equipment to the shipwreck including a rocket launcher that fired rocket rescue lines with rope and a breeches buoy to haul people back to shore.

Living wild at Kielder

Osprey road shows, an annual wildlife festival and new nature hubs will encourage visitors to Kielder Water and Forest Park to venture further and explore the area's diverse natural heritage. The £336,300 grant will also the see the recruitment of volunteers, young ecologists and wildlife ambassadors – creating a positive and lasting legacy for people and wildlife.

Saving a 15th-century landmark

Cresswell Pele Tower near Ashington, has been a focal point for the area for over 500 years, but today it has no roof, is closed to the public and is on Historic England's 'At Risk' register. Now the local community's decades-long ambition to restore the tower has taken a major step forward as Cresswell Parish Council secures support for a £770,500 grant for vital repairs, a heritage skills training scheme and, of course, a new roof.

Raising the roof at St George's

St George's Church in Mickley is also set to be taken off Historic England's 'At Risk' register after gaining support for an £84,000 grant. As well as vital repairs to the roof the project will also explore the possibility of a water and drainage system which would allow the future installation of toilet and kitchen facilities.