Christmas comes early for ‘forgotten’ Watford



The museum is home to Watford Football Club's first ever trophy Watford Museum

Plans to shed light on hidden artefacts and stories at Watford Museum have taken a vital first step.

Initial support for a £1.7million grant has been awarded to redevelop the museum and increase space, bring its collections out of storage and add the community’s voices and memories to its exhibits.

Karen Collett, Watford Borough Council Portfolio Holder for Community, said: “Watford is a young, forward-thinking, dynamic place but we have a fascinating past and in recent years our museum has been forgotten. National Lottery funding is a welcome Christmas present for our town.”

New displays will particularly focus on Watford’s diversity and a programme of activities, volunteering opportunities and space for communities will enable people of all ages to get involved in the transformation.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: “This project will not only allow a treasure trove of hidden collections and untold stories to finally be brought to light, but also put communities at the heart of discovering the town’s history and ensure Watford Museum is no longer forgotten.”

Why Watford Museum should not be forgotten

- Housed in a Grade II listed 18th-century mansion, Watford Museum opened in 1981
- It has more than 30,000 items charting the town's history from prehistoric artefacts and Tudor paintings to the printing press that printed the first *Watford Observer* – but only a fraction of these are currently on display
- Visitors can see the internationally renowned Cassiobury collection of watercolours and oil paintings as well as a huge collection of costume, textiles, printing and sporting exhibits
- It is also the official museum of Watford Football Club and is home to the club's first ever trophy

Priority area for funding

Robyn Llewellyn added: "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players we're delighted to support this vital first step towards a bright future for Watford's museum and heritage – particularly as the town is currently a priority area for our funding."

Watford is a priority development area for HLF, which means development teams work closely with organisations in the town to help them develop good projects and apply for funding.

If you have an idea for Watford's heritage take a look at our Do you have an idea in mind? page.