

Colourful beach huts are staple of seaside towns

Heritage is at the heart of challenging perceptions of towns along the Essex coast, thanks to National Lottery players.

Essex County Council, in partnership with The Cultural Engine, has been awarded £316,400 of National Lottery funding to boost tourism and reignite local pride in Jaywick, Clacton, Frinton, Harwich, Dovercourt and Walton-on-the-Naze.

[quote=Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England] "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, volunteers and communities are set to take the lead in reigniting love and pride for their seaside heritage." [/quote]

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: "Seaside towns are integral to our tourism offer and a much-loved part of our culture, but sometimes critical perceptions mean their incredibly rich and diverse heritage is underappreciated."

Reconnecting with seaside days gone by

Over the next two years, residents and tourists can take part in a variety of traditional and contemporary seaside activities:

- Traditional seaside entertainment and activities for people of all ages
- Theatrical performances, with volunteers working alongside professionals

- Collecting memories and stories
- Investigating the history of seaside structures including bandstands, piers and holiday camps
- Creating town trails linking to the Tendring Coastal Path route.

Inspiring the future

Essex's long coastline and accessibility from London enabled the towns to develop as resorts, each with its own distinctive character – from the relative exclusivity of Frinton to Jaywick's reputation as a weekend retreat for the working classes of the East End.

These social histories, and the stories of the buildings and landmarks they grew around, will form a key part of exploring the towns' enduring roles as resorts and what the future holds for them.

Working with the University of East London, the project will involve two conferences and a website to share the findings.

Robyn Llewellyn concluded: "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, volunteers and communities are set to take the lead in recognising the value of their towns, strengthening their economies and tourism for the future, and reigniting love and pride for their seaside heritage."

A Seaside Heritage Day, with traditional seaside entertainment and activities, will be the grand finale for the project in 2019, bringing together the success of the community engagements and all that the project will have discovered.



Summer to make a welcome appearance?