

Wells Maltings Trust wins Heritage Lottery Fund support

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The project will transform the Maltings into an exciting sustainable year round cultural destination with a new heritage and learning centre at its heart allowing a wide range of local people and visitors to learn about and engage with the rich heritage of Wells.

Development funding of £75,400 has been awarded to help Wells Maltings Trust progress their plans to apply for a full grant of £1.84million at a later date. The project will bring local heritage to life in an interactive, fun and accessible way. It will undertake the major repair, restoration and development work on the maltings building to preserve it from further deterioration and safeguard it for years to come. Volunteers will work alongside heritage professionals to learn new skills, actively help develop the content of the heritage and learning centre and plan and deliver its events and activities programme.

Wells Maltings and Sackhouse are owned by North Norfolk District Council and since 2011 they have been held on a 99 year lease from the council by Wells Maltings Trust. In an exciting initiative led by NNDC and members of the local community, and recognising the potential of the site for community involvement, the trust itself was formed in 2010 with the intention that it should manage the Maltings site, and take forward the Wells Maltings Project.

The Maltings building is a focal point for the local community and is currently used by dozens of different community groups and hosts hundreds of events every year.

Peter Lynn from Wells Maltings Trust said “We’re delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has shown us this support. The Maltings has given Wells next the Sea a place for live entertainment, public meetings and community activities for more than 30 years. It’s great to know that we are a step closer to preserving it for another century and providing our community and visitors with an exciting new cultural destination celebrating the rich heritage of Wells.”

Tom FitzPatrick, Leader of North Norfolk District Council, said “This is fantastic news, for the Maltings, for Wells and the surrounding area and for the whole of North Norfolk. Everything that goes on at the Maltings is driven by the local community, contributes to the local economy and to tourism in general. Given its importance, the district council is contributing a further £100,000 towards this excellent project and we will continue to help all that we can in the future.”

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said; “This project aims to create a vibrant focus for the village and its community with opportunities for learning and volunteer involvement. We look forward to receiving the detailed proposals in due course.”

Becky Jefcoate, Wells Maltings Project Development Manager, said: “This is fabulous news – there are so many exciting stories from local area that we look forward to bringing to life at the new

heritage and learning centre. Our project relies heavily on hands on support from volunteers so if anyone is interested in getting involved in the next exciting phase of the project we would love to hear from them."

Ben Francis, Wells Maltings Community Manager, said: "This news is another resounding success for the charity responsible for the award winning Wells Pirate Festival, rapidly growing Wells Granary Theatre and Wells Tourist Information Service.'

Notes to editors

A first round pass means that the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

On occasion, an applicant with a first round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of the scheme.

About Wells Maltings Trust

The Wells Maltings Trust was set up in 2010 to restore, repair and develop the Maltings and Sackhouse in Wells next the Sea – a rural coastal town in North Norfolk. Its main aim is to restore and repair a Grade II listed former Maltings building and Sackhouse in the centre of the town to provide a new heritage and learning centre, improved community facilities, auditorium, new café, TIC, central box office and reception, retail units, business units and hot desk workspaces, transforming the site into a sustainable, exciting year round destination for local people and visitors. Conversion of the Sackhouse to business units and community space is currently nearing completion.

Further information

For further information, images and interviews, please contact:

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