



Press release

Heritage Lottery Grant to Enhance Keswick Museum and Art Gallery

A project to enhance Keswick Museum and Art Gallery is all set to begin, following confirmation of a grant of £1,779,800 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), it is being announced.

This award will fund the renovation of the Victorian building, to provide better visitor facilities and to create a new gallery for the Mountain Heritage Trust to display its nationally important collection.

Allerdale and Town Councillor, Martin Pugmire said "this wonderful award will enable a much loved local museum that has had huge support from local people to open all year and will complete the renaissance of Fitz Park. This began with the development of the Lottery funded destination play area and continued with the recently completed community multi use games area."

Keswick Museum was built in 1898 and the enhancement project will bring the Arts and Crafts style building into the 21st century whilst retaining the charm and character of a Victorian museum.

The museum will have adequate heating and environmental controls for the first time and the new entrance, shop, improved disabled access and café and toilets will provide the facilities expected of visitor attractions today. Keswick Museum has been described as a museum of a museum with many quirky and fascinating items, but it also has in its collection objects of national and international importance.

The award from the Heritage Lottery Fund is 83% of the total cost of £2,168,000. Allerdale Borough Council has committed £290,000 to the

development and the project is also part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas (delivered through the North West Development Agency with Defra as the Managing Authority). In addition many local organisations and individuals have donated or pledged money towards the match funding.

Commenting on the award Tricia Kerr, chair of Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Ltd, said "We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given this award. Many people have been working for a long time so that the museum can become self-sustaining and the provision of a café, shop and education facilities will provide the income needed to run the museum. It will hopefully mean that we will not be reliant just on the local authority for funding in the future."

Sara Hilton, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North West, said: "Keswick Museum and Art Gallery is a fantastic cultural resource for local people and visitors who have come from further afield. With the support of HLF, this project will restore and revitalise the museum itself, creating new opportunities for visitors to explore the museum collections, giving more people the chance learn about the fascinating social and cultural history of the local area."

Councillor Barbara Cannon, Allerdale Borough Council's Executive member with responsibility for assets, said: "We believe that an enhanced Keswick Museum and Art Gallery will help us in our aim to improve access to cultural activities for residents and visitors and I am delighted that the project is to benefit from this significant award, alongside the funding committed by the Council.

Although it has been hard work for all the partners concerned over a long period of time to get to this point, it has all been worth it."

Mrs Audrey McKinnon the Chair of the Friends of Keswick Museum commented "It is now 9 years since the future of the Museum appeared bleak with closure a distinct possibility. We are absolutely delighted at this successful outcome of all the work. Special thanks must go to KMAG Management Ltd, all the volunteers, the Friends of the Museum and the many local groups and individuals who have provided such loyal support."

ENDS

Notes for Editors

- For further press information contact Tricia Kerr Chair of KMAG Ltd or Charlotte Stead Curator at Keswick Museum and Art Gallery, Station Road, Keswick. Tel 017687 73263. Email:

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- Please find two logos attached to the email that must be used at the end of the article
- We are available if you need images
- Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 30,000 projects, allocating £4.7billion across the UK, including over £528million to the North West alone. Website: www.hlf.org.uk

