

## Heritage

The Heritage Lottery Fund grants support for the conservation of a unique and wide range of the United Kingdom's diverse heritage. From historic buildings to public parks, from specialist libraries to community oral history records, from our natural environment to museum collections, Heritage Lottery Fund investment has had a major impact on the way our shared inheritance is cared for, presented and opened up to ever-wider audiences. The Heritage Lottery Fund also assists people to appreciate and enjoy their heritage, increasing involvement and ensuring its future for new generations to come.

Over 7,500 projects have been supported, representing local heritage initiatives and activities in towns and villages throughout the United Kingdom, together with major national projects, of a size and scale inconceivable without Lottery funding.

- By September 2001 the Heritage Lottery Fund had awarded more than 7,500 grants worth a total of over £1.77 billion.
- Over 1,000 nature and conservation projects have been supported protecting 50,000 hectares and delivering 72% of the United Kingdom's biodiversity Action Plan target for heathland restoration.
- Work has been done to restore the historic built environment of our many towns and cities, including more than 300 historic parks.
- Hundreds of bright new Lottery-funded schemes have revitalised our local and national museums, galleries and historic archive collections.
- More than 90% of grants awarded have been for smaller projects of under £1 million and 60% of grants for under £50,000, enabling many small local community grants to be provided around the country.



## Case Study

**The American Air Museum, Duxford, Cambridgeshire.**

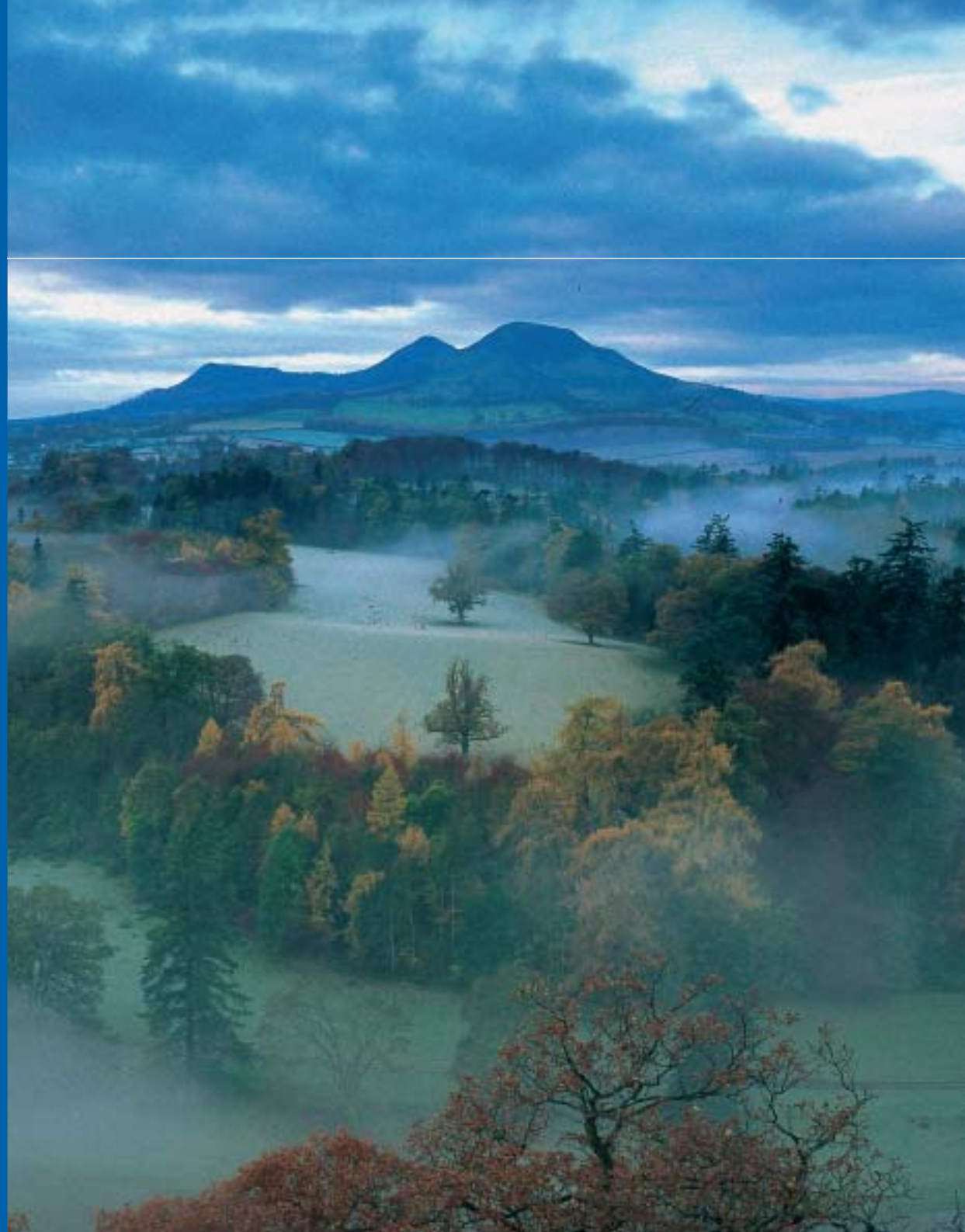
A grant of £6.5 million enabled the Imperial War Museum to provide housing for their collection of American aircraft at Duxford airfield. The new displays range from a First World War biplane to the giant B-52 jet bomber and have transformed the former RAF fighter station into Europe's largest aircraft museum. The opening of the stunning new exhibition building initially saw visitors to the airfield increase by 30% and have since settled at around a 16% increase.



## Case Study

### **Tweed Rivers Heritage Project, Scotland**

Area schemes, such as Tweed Rivers Heritage Project, Scotland have enabled partnerships of local bodies to take an innovative approach to heritage. By working together in implementing a programme of conservation and interpretation of this area of outstanding natural beauty in the Scottish borders the partnership is creating employment and recreational opportunities for local people.



## Supporting museums, libraries and archives

The many successful major museum schemes which have recently opened around the country herald a popular renaissance for our national and regional collections and a significant improvement in how they are housed, displayed and interpreted after years of neglect. Heritage Lottery Fund projects have received awards for the quality of design, such as Segedunum Roman Fort in Tyne and Wear and the Ruskin Library in Lancaster.

Nationally the Heritage Lottery Fund is supporting all 10 of the United Kingdom's most popular museums and galleries, from London's Science Museum to the Royal Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, while across the country it has awarded grants to over 1,200 museums, galleries, libraries and archives. These projects are attracting new visitors now and will offer enjoyment for generations to come. The grant to the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle, for example, has resulted in a 74% increase in visitors and a 55% increase in income. Similarly the Museum of Scotland, fitted out with money from the Heritage Lottery Fund, has led to 57 new jobs and an 87% increase in visitors in its first year of operation. At the Linen Hall Library in Belfast, an outstanding reference library containing major collections of cross-community Irish studies dating from 1788, a dramatic new extension has created 50% more space for readers, collections and public events. Such institutions, at the very core of our towns and cities, make a vital contribution to regeneration and civic pride.

## Revitalising our historic environment

Conservation of the historic hearts of our towns and cities can kick-start the process of regeneration and deliver other educational and social benefits. The Heritage Lottery Fund's strategic Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme, delivered by local partnerships, meets present-day local regeneration priorities while conserving historic urban environments for the future.

The Initiative has so far benefited 194 communities with over £44 million, leveraging in a further £90 million of matching funds. Over £128 million of funding has also gone to refurbish and regenerate our coastal resorts, including £10 million to nine piers; perhaps the most evocative of British seaside icons.

Alongside this, the green spaces in our cities have also been revitalised; the Urban Parks Programme has already injected £178 million towards a need established by recent research sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund amounting to over £1.3 billion. Lister Park in Bradford and the formerly decaying Norfolk Park in one of Sheffield's most deprived inner city areas are examples of park restoration projects that are not only improving the physical landscape but have had a catalytic effect on wider social and urban regeneration in the immediate areas.

Individual projects give a beneficial new life to hundreds of neglected buildings. These range from New College of further education, Nottingham, a formerly derelict Lacemarket building, to St Francis Priory, in the Gorbals, Glasgow, now sheltered accommodation for the elderly. Other examples include the former Methodist Church at Carlisle Circus in Belfast, now an active centre for the city's Indian community, as well as the Tabernacle Community Centre in Haverfordwest, where a nineteenth century church hall has been repaired and converted to provide community facilities for young and old, providing an important resource for small voluntary groups in the Pembrokeshire region. The rejuvenation of each of these buildings is a symbol of local investment, identity and new life.

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## Preserving our natural environment

The Heritage Lottery Fund is unique among heritage bodies in spanning all sectors across the historic environment. Our natural and designed landscapes are a great inheritance which the Fund is helping to preserve and open up to the widest audiences. Independent evaluation has shown that Lottery funding has not only expanded the scale of conservation, with benefits to biodiversity, but it has also brought about a more integrated approach, delivering wider public benefits in terms of improved access, education, community involvement and volunteering.

The Heritage Lottery Fund is also supporting national and local nature conservation bodies to help them acquire and manage the landscape to protect endangered birds, animals and insects and provide better access to the countryside through the repair of footpaths in the Lake District, Snowdonia and the Scottish Highlands.

## Remembering our industrial past

Over £125 million has been invested in the industrial, maritime and transport sectors of our heritage which have limited access to other sources of public funding. Restoration projects, whether of ships, steam railways or vintage buses, attract volunteers on a significant scale, passing on dying skills and insights. For example, in Northern Ireland a series of Heritage Lottery Fund grants to the Downpatrick and Ardglass Railway has significantly increased visitor numbers to this historic working steam railway, a major visitor destination in the area. Heritage Lottery money also enables communities to revisit their industrial past in a very literal way, through hands-on experience. Funding at the Big Pit Mining Museum, Blaenafon, Wales, will maintain access to the underground workings, thus creating an important educational resource and a link to an important part of the nation's identity.

## Sharing our cultural past

The recording of oral history is playing an increasingly important role in documenting and sharing our cultural past and in cementing a sense of identity. Partly in response to interest generated by Millennium Year, the Heritage Lottery Fund has committed over £1 million to a variety of projects. These range from a £89,000 grant to Refugee Action to enable a group of Vietnamese refugees record their collective experiences of rebuilding their lives in London to the East Midlands Oral History Archive to make 30 years of unique regional oral history accessible by CD-ROM.

## A diverse heritage

The diversity of grant support from the Heritage Lottery Fund has already significantly broadened the concept of heritage to include community assets of a more intangible kind. These include cultural traditions, skills and crafts, languages, as well as activities which increase people's involvement with history or heritage and make the funding increasingly inclusive and relevant to all communities. Exploring these areas will enable every community in our increasingly diverse society to develop its own heritage interest and assets in a unique way.