



Blackpool

Priority Area Development Work

April 2003 - March 2007

Foreword

From voices in the mills to illuminated trams, the past is coming alive in Blackpool, Bolton, Halton, Knowsley and St. Helens. People of all ages have been exploring their heritage and exciting new partnerships have been built to breathe new life into the areas' historic roots.

This is fantastic news because a few years ago the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) set about working to bring a more equitable spread of grants across the UK. In 2002 HLF Development Teams were set up. One of their roles was to encourage applications from those areas that had received little funding. In the North West, Blackpool, Bolton, Halton, Knowsley and St. Helens were identified as priorities for support.

Since then we have been working hard to get more HLF grant money into these key areas. Each area had a four-year Development Delivery Plan, which set out what we were trying to achieve, and provided a strategic framework for our work.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of local groups, partners and a wealth of heritage to explore, we've now funded some great projects.

This booklet is a celebration of all that has been achieved. In the following pages you'll see the huge range of heritage schemes and get a glimpse of some of the fantastic results. You'll also read about the impact that these schemes have had on the people and communities involved, such as a renewed sense of identity and a sharing of cultures.

Of course, no one can say our job is done and there is always potential for new schemes. Anyone inspired by our recent awards can get in touch to discuss ideas. As you'll see from the examples within this publication, we can fund not-for-profit groups who want to run projects involving historic buildings, natural heritage, records, archives, culture, local traditions, oral histories, museums and collections.

I hope this booklet gives you an inspiring snapshot of what we can do together.

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Work in Blackpool

From April 2003 HLF development staff time was dedicated to working in Blackpool to promote our grant programmes, and to encourage and support applications. This work, which has relied on the support of many local partners, continued until the end of March 2007. Over the four year period a wide range of events and training sessions, publicity work, and face to face meetings with potential applicants were organised, with support from Blackpool Wyre and Fylde CVS and Blackpool Council.

These included a heritage celebration in the Winter Gardens in May 2004, work with the Community Development Unit and Arts team, and Young Roots sessions.

In the 4 year period grants totalling £1,860,200 were awarded to 11 projects. These have covered themes from stained glass to trams, and from natural wildlife to the story of the LGBT community in Blackpool, reflecting the breadth and richness of the town's heritage.

The increased promotion of HLF funding within the Borough has brought forward some great projects, with benefits to communities and for regeneration. It has also helped to raise awareness of Blackpool's heritage, placing it firmly in the spotlight.

Some of our local partners and grantees are now working actively as champions on our behalf. We hope to see continued heritage activities and new heritage projects, from all sections of Blackpool's community.

Karen Ziesler

Development Officer

Shirley Little

Development Officer

How to access HLF funding

If you have a heritage project that requires funding, please contact us on **0161 831 0850** or visit our website at www.hlf.org.uk



Your Heritage

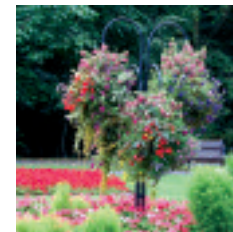
Rock Garden's Woodland Walk

Devonshire Road Rock Gardens is an important local wildlife resource containing a number of rare species. 25 years ago the park's woodland area was well used by local families and wildlife flourished. The woodlands are now rarely used and badly neglected. A grant of £20,800 to the Friends group will safeguard wildlife, create a new resource and help people look after it.

'The design for the walk includes a story telling ring, disabled-friendly winding paths, a sculpture display area and a mosaic. We look forward to realising these designs in the months ahead' (Sarah Burgess)

Stanley Park Volunteering Project

Stanley Park was laid out in the 1920s by leading landscape designer Thomas Mawson, in the Arts and Crafts style. A grant of £49,700 to Volunteer Centre Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde will unlock the potential for volunteers to assist park staff in looking after the Grade II*-listed site. This project will build on the work being done to restore the park with a previous HLF grant of nearly £4 million. It will help secure the future of the park and create new opportunities for the people taking part.



Ashfield Road Pond – Community Heritage Project

Ashfield Road pond was originally a 'marl pit' excavated in the 1890s for fertiliser surrounded by open farmland. Now it is the only green area left on a built-up estate. Kincaig Pond Heritage Group was awarded £22,800 to research the ecology and history of the pond and local area. Community groups and the local school are working together to collect information from archive records and people's memories. The work will be published in a CD-ROM, a booklet and a series of exhibitions in the school. People are also learning how to look after the pond in the future.

'Feedback highlights the importance of this project to sustaining and developing community capacity' (Joanne Westwood)

There is a rainbow over Blackpool Tower

Blackpool has one of the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities in the country. A grant of £48,100 to Drugline Lancashire Ltd helped to capture the history of the LGBT community in Blackpool over the last 50 years.

A series of workshops, community events and interviews gave people the opportunity to share their memories. These were recorded and used to produce a booklet and a DVD.

An exhibition combined those memories with artefacts, memorabilia, costumes and specially commissioned photos, to document the social history of the community.

'The project supported community cohesion and celebration, but also offered a legacy, ensuring that Blackpool recognises the past, present, and future strength of the town's largest minority community' (Kath Talboys)



Restoration of Stained Glass Window

An unusual blue and white George Wragge stained glass window in Blackpool Town Hall shows images based on Blackpool's 19th-century maritime heritage.

The window had previously been painted over, and then neglected. Blackpool Civic Trust was awarded £31,600 to restore the George Wragge window. The project also involved stained glass workshops, volunteer-led tours of the Town Hall, and a photographic exhibition created by local college students.

'The stained glass workshop held at a local college made a big impact on the art department. Students and staff were very impressed and are looking to add it as an extra part of their curriculum' (Elaine Smith)



Young Roots

Blackpool Rocks!

This project, funded by a £14,400 grant to Blackpool Council Arts Team, explored the dance heritage of Blackpool, with an emphasis on the Tower Ballroom. Young people carried out research in archives at the Grundy and the Tower Ballroom. They interviewed elderly people, and watched demonstrations by a senior citizens' dance group. They then worked with CO3 Dance Company to create dance works, performed live at an Evening of Dance. A documentary of the project and an original piece of dance film, "Golden Day Waltzing", were made.

'The project brought together elderly ladies and young people, and enabled them to work together on a subject of mutual interest. For the young people it gave them a sense of what their town is about, and how it came to be what it is today' (Jacqueline Greaves)

Elkes, Elves and Others

Blackpool has many myths and legends. Marton Mere has in the past been linked with mermaids and water dragons. Other stories include The Lost Village of Singleton Thorpe and tales of smugglers, shipwrecks and pirates. Millennium Volunteers helped young people from diverse backgrounds get involved in a drama production to act out these stories. Thanks to a £25,000 grant, they have explored the past through research and museum visits, and devised scripts. They have experienced the full rehearsal and production process, learning new skills as they go.



Getting Our Heads Together

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Mind Association were awarded £9,300 for a project involving young people in gathering oral testimonies from older people who have experienced mental health problems. The project looked at changing attitudes over the last 50 years, and explored the stigma attached to mental illness in the past.

'The book has been incredibly well-received; several people have fed back that they were moved to tears by the stories, and we had to have a second printing to keep up with the demand!' (Margaret Wilson)

Heritage Grants

Western Train Tram Restoration

The Western Train Tram is one of Blackpool's best known illuminated trams, modelled on a train from a Western film. Blackpool Transport Services Ltd was given a grant of £278,000 to restore the tramcar. The project will give new opportunities for apprentices, while local students will record the restoration. An audio commentary will include clips of memories and music from 1962.

'The Western Train tramcar is an icon, both in terms of the world renowned Blackpool Illuminations and the much loved Blackpool Tramway Experience. It will provide an exciting and tangible link for future generations from all walks of life to enjoy their heritage. With the Western Train, history really will come to life!' (Steve Burd, MD)

St. John the Evangelist conservation and redevelopment project

St. John the Evangelist is a Grade II-listed church in the heart of Blackpool, a reminder of the town's Victorian heritage. A grant of £360,500 was given to restore the church tower and to create a heritage centre within it. Volunteers were trained to deliver an education programme exploring the history of the church and town.

The project has created enormous interest from both local residents and visitors to Blackpool. The centre has been open throughout the year with over 3,000 people viewing the changes and the heritage centre' (Carole Tyler)

Townscape Heritage Initiative

Talbot Square THI

The Talbot Square conservation area provides the setting for 10 listed buildings. A £1million grant will allow Blackpool Council to revive and restore the historic buildings and street scene.

'This project will help us breathe new life into Blackpool town centre – restoring the beauty of the town's Victorian architecture for the benefit of local people and millions of visitors'(Cllr Eddie Collett)

