

Full steam ahead for Kirkwall regeneration project

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The Kirkwall Townscape Heritage Initiative will run from this autumn for five years until 2019.

Under the scheme, grants will be made available within the Kirkwall Conservation Area for:

- historic repairs and reinstatement to private properties
- bringing vacant properties back into use for economic gain
- public realm improvements, or 'place making'
- training and complementary initiatives

The award from the Heritage Lottery Fund is in addition to £1.2m secured from Historic Scotland under their Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme. Orkney Islands Council (OIC) is contributing £600k to the project.

OIC Convener, Steven Heddle, said: "We're delighted to have all the funding components for the Kirkwall THI now firmly in place.

"I very much look forward to seeing the project follow on from the success of the Council's Stromness THI."

With the final funding in place for the Kirkwall project, and the Stromness THI now formally coming to a close, the team for the Kirkwall THI is setting up an office in Kirkwall over the next few weeks.

Kirkwall THI Project Manager, Miriam Frier, said: “Over the summer we’ll be busy with the move and getting everything in place to open our doors for enquiries and start engaging with the public in the autumn.”

Colin McLean, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund Scotland, said: “HLF is delighted to support Kirkwall in its ambitions to give the historic character of the town a new lease of life.

“The regeneration of town centres is an obvious way in which we as an organisation can make an important contribution to improving the economy of an area and the standard of living for the people resident there.

“Investing Lottery money to revitalise historic buildings will not only make Kirkwall a more attractive place to live, visit and invest in, it will also provide jobs and training opportunities for local people.

“With the project team bringing with them award-winning experience from their work on the Stromness THI, we are confident that today marks the beginnings of a brighter future for the town.”

The THI team will be based at 15 Victoria Street, Kirkwall, in the Housing Centre (Orkney Islands Property Developments Ltd premises) and are contactable from Mon-Thu on 01856 886 468 or by email KTHI@orkney.gov.uk.