

£1.6m for Bromsgrove Townscape Heritage Initiative

17/05/2011

An award of £50,000 in development funding, plus £16,700 of match funding from Bromsgrove District Council, has been secured to work up the application that will access a further £1.2m under the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). An additional £400,000 for the scheme from Worcestershire County Council brings the total fund to £1.6m.

The heritage project will look to undertake works to the town centre's Conservation Area where a number of distinctive 18th and 19th century historic buildings are located.

With the first-round pass awarded, a more detailed bid will be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund in the coming year. If successful, it will see a range of heritage and conservation works take place on historic buildings in the High Street together with a series of events to highlight Bromsgrove's heritage. It will also help support other town centre upgrades such as new paving, landscaping and street furniture in the High Street.

HLF's investment comes through its Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)** programme which fosters effective partnerships between local organisations enabling repairs and other essential works in historic but often run-down areas bringing high streets back to life. The funding, integral to wider conservation and regeneration strategies, will also help stimulate employment opportunities, volunteer training and heritage days to help actively involve local residents in the project.

Rex Carson, Casework Manager for the Heritage Lottery Fund in the West Midlands, said: "City and town centres form a large part of our urban landscape and are the backdrop to millions of people's daily lives. We're determined to help regenerate areas that are currently struggling and in need of additional encouragement and an injection of much-needed cash. The Heritage Lottery Fund set up its THI programme to help exactly the sort of local projects like this one in Bromsgrove."

Leader of Bromsgrove District Council, Roger Hollingworth, said: "We are over the moon that the Heritage Lottery Fund supported our proposals and made this decision. Bromsgrove's heritage needs our support to ensure future generations can continue to enjoy it, and I'm delighted that a substantial Townscape Heritage Initiative will now complement the ongoing work to regenerate the town centre."

Worcestershire County Council's £400,000 contribution is part of the £500,000 that the authority's cabinet earmarked for improvements to Bromsgrove High Street in October 2010, re-using capital receipts from the town's new health centre that opens its doors this summer.

Cllr Anthony Blagg, Worcestershire County Councillor for Bromsgrove Central, said: "This is really good and exciting news for the town. I'm sure this funding will be of great benefit for residents and businesses in the area. It's also a good example of local authorities and organisations working together for the good of communities. Like many others in Bromsgrove I'd like to say thank-you to all those involved."

Notes to editors

The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area is currently on the national Heritage at Risk register and contains

an assortment of notable historic buildings, predominantly from the 18th and 19th centuries but with some earlier surviving timber framed buildings. The variety of architectural styles and surviving historic features demonstrates high quality traditional craftsmanship and are tangible reminders of the town's past prosperity. Through the THI programme and wider regeneration initiatives, Bromsgrove District Council aims to recreate an attractive and sustainable town centre for residents and visitors, with heritage as its centrepiece.

The Bromsgrove Town Centre Regeneration Programme is working towards "the regeneration and revitalisation of the town centre of Bromsgrove" to create "an attractive and vibrant town centre at the heart of a thriving market town". It is backed by a public sector partnership of Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service and West Mercia Constabulary.

*A Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) earmarked first-round pass means that money has been set aside by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the scheme in question. Competition at this stage is tough, and while it does not guarantee funding, it is an indication of positive support. The applicants can then progress to the second round and submit a further, fully-developed application to secure the full award. This early level of strong financial commitment means that THIs can build strong partnerships with the assurance that funding for their scheme is in place provided their final proposals fully meet the programme criteria.

**HLF's Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) encourages partnerships of local organisations to carry out repairs and other works to a number of historic buildings, structures or spaces. Grants range from £500,000 to £2m. To date, HLF has invested over £200m regenerating towns that have suffered serious social and economic decline.

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 more than 30,000 projects allocating £4.5billion across the UK including more than £319million in the West Midlands alone.

Further information

For Bromsgrove THI please visit the [District Council's website](#) or contact Judith Carstairs, Conservation Officer on 01527 881 326 or by email at conservation@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.

For the HLF Press Office please contact Vicky Wilford, 020 7591 6046 / 07973 401 937, email vickyw@hlf.org.uk.

Find out more about [Conservation Areas at Risk](#).