

HLF and Ben Gummer MP announce award of £968,300 to Red Rose Chain in Ipswich

14/05/2012

The announcement was made by Inga Grimsey, Chair of HLF committee for East of England, accompanied by local MP Ben Gummer, who has been a long term supporter of [Red Rose Chain](#).

Gippeswyk Hall is a Tudor building, situated on the corner of Birkfield Drive and Gippeswyk Avenue. At the rear of the building is a 1960s annexe, which is no longer fit for purpose.

The new development will see the annexe being replaced with the creation of a sustainable, environmentally friendly and innovative building, providing a purpose built space for community drama workshops, heritage events and performances. The new building will inspire the public to engage with the fascinating heritage of Gippeswyk Hall and the building's significance in the history of Ipswich.

Once completed, the community will be invited to explore and learn about the history of the hall through weekly open days, workshops, tours and performances.

To accompany the works to the building itself, Red Rose Chain will be carrying range of activities targetting vulnerable groups who will attend workshops about the history of the hall and the area and contribute to performances.

Inga Grimsey, Chair of the East of England Heritage Lottery Fund committee, said: "We at HLF are delighted to be able to support Red Rose Chain in this wonderful project. This 17th century building is a tangible link with Ipswich's past, whilst providing a base for the fantastic work of Red Rose Chain. Thanks to this award Gippeswyk Hall will be restored, and new studio, performance and rehearsal space created, offering a safe and stimulating environment for this innovative company to further its work with overlooked or hard-to-reach groups, including prison inmates, young people in care and single parents."

Joanna Carrick, Artistic Director at Red Rose Chain, explains: "The new development will allow Red Rose Chain to build on its programme of work, engaging with the community. At present we work with a wide range of people at Gippeswyk Hall; we run a youth theatre company, we work with people whose lives have been affected by drug addiction, we run creative drama workshops with young people with disabilities and additional needs and we work with people affected by mental health issues. This new building will allow us to connect with more people; offering a wider range of projects and activities for all members of the public to be involved in.

"This funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund will allow Red Rose Chain to develop Gippeswyk Hall into a safe and stimulating environment for the community to express themselves through creative projects, acquire new skills and focus their attention on creative projects about their own heritage. The project will specialise in providing a facility for all members of society to access heritage at Gippeswyk Hall; regardless of whether they have ever accessed heritage venues or creative arts before."

Ipswich-based Nicholas Jacobs Architects and Charles Curry-Hyde LLP won a national competition held by Red Rose Chain to find an Architectural team who could deliver the company's vision.

They were successful in winning the competition over highly prestigious national companies, through the strength and quality of their commission.

Ben Gummer MP for Ipswich expressed his excitement for the new development at Gippeswyk Hall: “This is a really exciting project and I cannot wait to see Red Rose Chain's show.”

The announcement comes as Red Rose Chain prepares for its latest heritage project, Different Buttons. This new play is currently rehearsing at Gippeswyk Hall and will perform at St Clement’s Hospital in Ipswich to commemorate the hospital’s 140 year history following its closure last year.

Find out more about the work of [Red Rose Chain](#).

Notes to editors

Red Rose Chain is a dynamic theatre and film company based in Suffolk. Entirely independent and self-sustaining, we create original productions that confront social concerns, often working with overlooked or hard-to-reach groups to create powerful and insightful stories that demand to be told.

Further information

Michael Linge, Assistant Producer, on 01473 603 388 or michael@redrosechain.com.