

Young people to study canal heritage

07/02/2011

Young people will be helping to keep the traditions of the North West's canals alive, thanks to a project awarded a grant of £20,500 by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

A wide range of educational activities including helmsmanship, boat restoration, craftwork and filmmaking will be organised by the Norris Green based young people's charity Action for Achievement.

Two dozen young people from the Sparrow Hill area, aged 13 to 21, have expressed the wish to focus on canal life and narrowboats and to develop traditional skills through the project Culture on the Canal. They will also share what they learn with other young people as part of a 'peer mentoring' programme.

Working with the National Waterways Museum at Ellesmere Port the young enthusiasts will take part in a range of traditional craft workshops including rag rugging, narrowboat painting and ropework. They will also work alongside experts in a boat restoration yard, learn the skills needed to assist in canal conservation work in the future, and some will be involved in a residential course on a canal boat organised by Wirral Narrowboat Trust. There will be a chance to obtain an accredited helmsmanship certificate and the entire project will feature in a short film to help inspire other young people to take an interest and become involved in canal life.

The project, which runs until September this year, has received its grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund's Young Roots programme. Head of the HLF North West, Sara Hilton, said: "The younger generation have an important role to play in conserving our heritage. The interest they have already shown in this project will help protect the traditions of the inland waterways while providing them with a range of skills."

Action for Achievement's Manager, Lyn Wakefield said: "The project will be a really innovative way to help young people learn and take care of their environment through heritage work. It will give the young people skills, confidence and experience which will help them become pro-active community volunteers."

Notes to editors

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 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK.

Further information

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