

SUBJECT:	LINCOLN'S GREEN MUSEUM
DIRECTORATE:	COMMUNITIES & ENVIRONMENT
REPORT AUTHOR:	CAROLINE BIRD , COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER (PROGRAMME)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To draw to Members' attention a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which if successful will enable a three-year programme of community engagement across our heritage parks and open spaces.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 A bid has been submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for funding of £249,925 to enable a three-year programme of community engagement focused on heritage, community and wellbeing.
- 2.2 If successful, the funding will create a Community Engagement post and part time project support to deliver a creative programme of activities with special focus on attracting new people to heritage through the city's heritage greenspaces.
- 2.3 The project will also build on the existing digital archive for Boutham Park, curating the information already held on all of our heritage green spaces, to create an archive for each of the spaces, with the help of members of the public, volunteers, students and partner organisations.
- 2.4 The outcome will be benefits for people (health and wellbeing, learning skills and developing knowledge, engaging with and enjoying open spaces in new ways) and for our heritage green spaces (increased volunteering and stewardship, archives developed and available for future use).
- 2.5 The open spaces included in the project are:
 - West Common
 - South Common
 - Cow Paddle
 - Hartsholme Country Park
 - Arboretum
 - Boutham Park
 - Birchwood Nature Park

All of which have heritage designations and / or have played an important role in the history of their community and the wider city.

3. Background

- 3.1 In recent years, the Council has seen the significant benefits to people, our communities and the park, of having a focused and resourced activity plan centred on the Boultham Park Lake Restoration. This has been supported by existing permanent staff including the Volunteer Coordinator and the Conservation Ranger (Education and Promotion), but led by the Community Engagement Officer, a post funded by the Boultham Park Lake Restoration Project. The outcomes in terms of health and wellbeing, positive engagement in our parks, building community, skills and the many benefits related to volunteering have been witnessed, evidenced and recorded as a part of the formal evaluation of that project.
- 3.2 The project ends in July 2023. Officers have endeavoured to ensure the sustainability of activities post project, wherever possible, and the impacts of the project in terms of capital works and activities will be felt for many years to come.
- 3.3 However, it will not be possible to continue with the same level of focussed activities without dedicated staff and budget. This, coupled with a need to broaden community engagement across the city's open spaces, has led to the proposed project 'Lincoln's Green Museum.'

4. Lincoln's Green Museum - Proposal

- 4.1 The benefits of spending time in well-managed green spaces are well documented. Our public open spaces are free to use, available to all, places to destress and unwind, to play and exercise, to meet people, to walk the dog, to enjoy nature, to enjoy events, to learn more about and build appreciation of our natural environment, to volunteer, building skills, confidence and employability.
- 4.2 For our heritage open spaces, the benefits are multiplied: heritage promotes personal and community wellbeing, it gives a sense of place and identity, it provides links to the past, a sense of perspective and a better understanding of today.
- 4.3 As custodians of these important assets, we are in the unique position of being able to encourage people to use and enjoy these places, and in so doing, to build on our wider understanding of them, thus helping in our management and maintenance decision. This is an opportunity to curate our heritage before it is degraded or even lost, gathering memories and information into an online publicly accessible archive.
- 4.4 The programme of activities would be carefully designed, flexible and constantly evaluated, so that opportunities to engage with a broad range of people are maximised. It would seek to understand barriers to engagement and to break them down, with the aim of involving people who would not normally visit these places or engage in heritage related activities.
- 4.5 The project would run for three years, with the new Community Engagement Officer post leading on activities and evaluation, supported by a part time support officer, and answering to the Community Services Manager. It is hoped that, if successful, the project would start in the summer of 2023.

- 4.6 The Chairs of the Arboretum, Hartsholme Country Park and Boultham Park Advisory Groups all support the proposal, and have provided a letter of support to accompany the bid.
- 4.7 The Chair of the Commons Advisory Panel has also been consulted and is supportive of the project.
- 4.8 The total value of the project is £299,925. In addition to the £249,925 requested from the NLHF, a further (equivalent value of) £35,000 would be provided through volunteer works and in-kind contributions, and £15,000 would be found through other external funding. That £15,000 if not achieved by external funding, would be found from grounds maintenance budgets over the three years of the project.

5. Strategic Priorities

5.1 Let's Enhance our Remarkable Place

By increasing stewardship and volunteering, digital archives and our own understanding of these heritage sites, we will further conserve and protect them for people and for wildlife. This will broaden the appeal and further enhance Lincoln's reputation as a heritage city.

The activity programme will encourage more people to visit and enjoy our public green spaces, to the benefit of their physical and mental health.

5.2 Let's Reduce all Kinds of Inequality

Our parks and open spaces are free to use, well managed spaces for everyone's use. They are places to enjoy fresh air and nature, to de-stress, get exercise, meet people, play, build skills, knowledge and employability, to take part in community events and volunteering. They are wonderful city assets that provide mental and physical health benefits for all. There are similar, and complementary, benefits to wellbeing through engaging with heritage. This project aims to connect more people, and a wider range of people, to heritage and green space in ways that are easily accessible.

6. Organisational Impacts

6.1 Finance

There are no capital works planned as part of the project, although it is possible that activities may result in permanent or semi-permanent interpretation at one or more of the sites. All of the spend is therefore expected to be revenue funded.

The project budget is made up of:

Staff costs	£141,100
Recruitment	£ 1,000
Publicity / promotion	£ 3,500
Evaluation (5% of cash budget)	£ 11,700
Activities	£ 72,000

Staff training / development	£ 3,750
Volunteer training	£ 3,000
Staff travel	£ 3,000
Volunteer travel / expenses	£ 1,300
Volunteer time	£ 35,000
Contingency (10% of costs excl volunteering)	£ 24,575
TOTAL	£299,925

The staff budget is estimated based on gross pay, NI, pension and potential redundancy costs at the end of the project. If there is any shortfall at the end of the project this would be borne by Community Services staff budget.

The funding plan is made up of:

National Lottery Heritage Fund	£249,925
Volunteer hours	£ 35,000
City of Lincoln Council	£ 15,000
TOTAL	£299,925

The £15,000 committed by the City Council would, if possible, be covered wholly or in part by external funding. Any balance not covered by other funding would be met by grounds maintenance budgets of the sites over the three years of the project.

6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

There are no capital works included in the project and no expected procurement implications. The £72,000 activities budget will be spent through a series of separate, small purchases for equipment and services. In the unlikely event of larger spend (one-off or a series of spends to one provider) this will be in accordance with the Council's Procurement policies.

6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

The purpose of this project is to broaden engagement within our heritage open spaces. This will include listening to what (currently dis-engaged) people tell us, removing barriers and encouraging wider community 'ownership' of these places. The activity plan will focus on creative ways to do this, and all activity planning will consider our equality duty.

6.4 Human Resources

There are two fixed term posts funded by the project.

Recruitment will be in accordance with the City Council Recruitment Policy and NLHF Terms and Conditions.

In accordance with NLHF policy and current City Council arrangements, any recruitment during the project would be by way of concurrent internal and external advertising. This would be dependent on a business case to Trade Unions if the simultaneous advertising trial has expired by that point.

7. Risk Implications

- 7.1 If the bid is successful, the maximum financial commitment by the Council is £15,000 over three years. Some or all of this may be covered by external funding bids, but in the event that isn't possible, it can be covered by the revenue maintenance budgets of the various sites, over the three-year project, minimising the impact on any single site or in any single year.
- 7.2 With regard to the volunteer hour commitment, this is not a cash contribution but is a commitment to around 2,700 hours of volunteer works over the three years. This is substantial, and challenging, but based on project experience in recent years, and the experience of our Volunteer Coordinator, is achievable.
- 7.3 There will be a requirement to abide by the NLHF's terms and conditions, and to deliver against agreed Approved Purposes. The risk if this isn't achieved is that the NLHF would withhold payment for those outcomes not achieved. This is a very low risk, as we have experienced officers who are well-versed in the NLHF terms and conditions, have good relationships and ongoing communications with the NLHF, operate close project management and regular updates where any potential issues are flagged and dealt with, and a carefully designed and closely monitored Activity Plan which ensures delivery of all of the required outcomes.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 Members are asked to support the funding bid and to delegate acceptance of the funding and the related Terms and Conditions to the Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? None

List of Background Papers: None

Lead Officer: Caroline Bird, Community Services
Manager (Programme)
E mail:caroline.bird@lincoln.gov.uk