

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators
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MEDIA RELEASE

Wimbledon Windmill Wins Heritage Lottery Support

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators are delighted to announce that their bid for Heritage Lottery Funding, made in conjunction with the Windmill Museum Trustees, has been successful. A grant of £100,000 has been made available for an exciting project not only to restore the Wimbledon Windmill but also to extend the programme of activities to engage with visitors, volunteers and the local community.

Wimbledon Windmill is a Grade II* listed structure located at the heart of Wimbledon Common. It is an important building of local significance but is in great need of repair and reinvigoration.

Water penetration over recent years has resulted in degradation of the building's structure and this was found to have contributed to the dramatic collapse of one of the sails in August 2015. The funding from National Lottery players will enable the necessary extensive restoration of the Windmill's sails and wooden tower to be achieved over the summer of 2016.

The funding also provides a timely opportunity for the Windmill Museum to develop and increase its engagement both with the volunteers who run it and the people who visit it. This project will include a major celebration of the Windmill's bicentenary in 2017.

The Conservators are contributing from their own funds to the overall costs of this initial project which is likely to reach at least £138,000. A generous donation has been received from a local benefactor, but further donations (which can be gift-aided) would be welcomed. Plans for the celebration in 2017 and to develop the museum's displays will form the second stage of the project that will be announced shortly.

Prue Whyte, Chairman of the Conservators stated: "We are delighted to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund which will enable us to start the urgent and necessary renovation works, including restoring the sails to this iconic Wimbledon landmark."

Andrew Simon, Chairman of the Windmill Museum Trustees said: "The Windmill is a fragile treasure made mostly of timber and the museum is run entirely by volunteers. The support of the Heritage Lottery Fund in taking the museum forward to a new stage in its life is hugely appreciated."

The Windmill Museums opening season for 2016 starts at 2.00pm on Saturday, 26th March 2016. There will be "windmill making" activities for children as we get the season underway.

The museum always needs volunteers and we have a new range of exciting roles, including education, running events as well as room stewarding. Do please get in touch if you would like to know more: wimbledonwindmill@gmail.com

Stuart Hobley, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund London, said: "This project offers a fantastic opportunity for local people to get more engaged with this significant structure in the heart of their community. The project will not only rescue this distinctive landmark, but will also encourage visitors, volunteers and the local community to explore and learn more about it."

March 2016

ENDS

NOTES for Editors

The Windmill has been a distinctive landmark since it was built in 1817 to serve the local community. It only operated until 1864, when Earl Spencer bought in the lease. The machinery was then removed and it was later converted to residential accommodation.

Wimbledon and Putney Commons is a charity managed by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators. It was established under the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act of 1871. The Commons comprise some 1,140 acres across Wimbledon Common, Putney Heath and Putney Lower Common.

Wimbledon Windmill Museum CIO is a charity that manages the Windmill museum that has exhibits for both the young and old, covering windmills and milling as well as local history and the Scouting/Guiding movement.

About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk @heritagelottery @HLFLondon

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