

Plym Valley HLF Bid – Briefing Note for Local Access Forum Meeting Monday 2nd September 2013

Introduction

This briefing provides a summary of the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund that has recently been submitted by Plymouth City Council on behalf of a Partnership of other organisations. The bid was submitted at the end of May and will be determined by October 2013 as part of a two stage grant application under the Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership Programme.

Project Summary

The Plym Valley Connections Project is a partnership of local authorities, conservation organisations, land owners and community groups that have come together to coordinate and deliver enhancements to the Plym Valley. The key ambitions of the project are to protect the rich built and natural heritage of the valley, enhance the ability of the landscape to support biodiversity and maintain the distinct landscape character of the area. The project aims to increase public access to the landscape and re-connect Plymouth's communities with the history and heritage of the valley.

The partnership intends to submit a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for grant assistance of up to £2.3m to deliver enhancement projects over a 5 year period.

The partners include Plymouth City Council, South Hams Council, the National Trust, the Environment Agency, Devon Wildlife Trust and Natural England who will deliver the project by agreement.

Why is this project important?

Plymouth is embarking on a period of rapid expansion, with an intention to grow the population by 50,000 in the period to 2031. This significant population expansion offers a number of challenges and opportunities to providing a high quality of life for residents and encouraging visitors to the city.

Although Plymouth is a relatively 'green' city, with a large proportion of public green space, its residents have relatively limited access to rural and semi-natural landscapes. The barriers to access are partly due to the city's geographic location and partly due to physical, social, economic and cultural reasons.

The city lies in close proximity to some of the country's most celebrated landscapes, including Dartmoor, secluded river valleys and the coastline. However, access to these resources is primarily by private car with only limited access through public transport or walking and cycling. The socio-economic profile of the city means that many residents are prevented from enjoying these resources through not having access to private transport.

This project seeks to un-lock the physical, social and cultural barriers that prevent city residents from accessing the wider landscape and enjoying the range of benefits that outdoor activities can provide.

The Opportunity

The Plym Valley plays a hugely important part in the story of Plymouth and the partnership considers that it offers an excellent opportunity to develop a significant resource for residents and visitors alike. The rich history of the valley, coupled with the varied pattern of landscape and mosaic of habitats provides a range of interests to attract an equally diverse range of visitors. The social, cultural and industrial heritage of the valley can provide not only the physical infrastructure to open up the landscape but also the incentive to encourage new visitors to access the space.

Parts of the valley are already well used and during the summer key destinations such as Saltram House, Plym Bridge, Cadover Bridge and Plym Woods are busy with visitors. Many believe that these locations are at their full capacity and greater numbers of visitors could lead to degradation and a reduction in the quality of the visitor's experience, together with pressure on vulnerable heritage features. The key ambition of this project is to restore the valley's vulnerable heritage features, provide greater access to the wider valley to relieve pressure on these 'honey pot' sites and create a better network of recreational opportunities that appeal to a wider audience, through enhancing people's understanding of the valley's heritage .

Effective planning and the delivery of key enhancement projects will ensure that valley is able to adapt to meet the needs of the growing population and continue to function as a valuable resource for Plymouth and the surrounding communities.

Programme

If the bid is successful and the partnership receives funding from HLF, this is the approximate timeline for the project:

Submit Stage 1	End of May 2013
Decision	October 2013
Commence Development Stage	November 2013
Submit Stage 2	October 2014
Stage 2 Decision	April 2015
Delivery Team in place	July 2015
Activities commence	July 2015
Capital works start	October 2015
Project completion	March 2020

Public Consultation

As part of the Stage 1 bid, Plymouth City Council commissioned an online consultation map. The partnership is asking members of the public where they go in the valley, what

they enjoy doing and where they feel there are opportunities for improvements. These comments will continue to feed into the project and help shape the proposals that will be developed during Stage 2.

The website can be accessed through the link below and full video instructions are provided on the home page.

<http://plymvalleymap.org.uk/>

If you find any offensive or inappropriate comments please click the 'report' button under the comment which will alert Plymouth City Council to your concerns.

If you need further help or have any comments on the mapping system please contact: info@plymvalleymap.org.uk

Please help us to promote this exciting project and encourage everyone who uses or could use the valley add their comments and express their views.

Decision making

The Partnership proposes to make decisions by consensus among the main partners, receiving advice and taking on board consultation with a wide range of other organisations as detailed on the attached diagram. The Local Access Forum and constituent members will form part of these other organisations. In this way decision making is intended to be open, transparent and not led by the main partners.

Appendices

Plym Valley HLF Bid Boundary
Governance arrangements

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