
Grant Application Now Focus For Ledbury Places

Alex Clive, Chairman of the Ledbury & District Civic Society and a member of the Ledbury Places steering group, has today given the latest update on the Ledbury Places project and the progress being made.

He explained that currently the main focus for the steering group is completing the grant application process and ensuring the best possible bid for funding is registered with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) by the end of August.

Mr Clive explained it will then be January 2015 before Ledbury Places finds out whether its application has been successful and whether the project can progress to the next stage.

Giving the latest update, Mr Clive said:

“We have not said a lot publicly of late but a huge amount of work has been going on behind the scenes to ensure we put in the best possible grant application. Although nothing that you include in your application for funding at this stage is set in stone, you do need to include any work you feel is a realistic possibility as the project develops. This means getting the grant application right is absolutely vital.

“It is important to emphasise that even if the grant application is successful, further consultation about the various options will take place with the local community during the first stage of the development plan process to ensure Ledbury Places creates the best possible outcome for the town itself.

“Over the course of the summer we had hoped to carry out a consultation exercise relating to the possible installation of a lift at the Market House. This proposal is being considered not only to improve access, but, equally significantly, to potentially allow this iconic building to be used for a much wider variety of events or even as the town’s main heritage centre and focal point for visitors and local people alike.

“However, after taking advice and asking our possible funders for their thoughts, we have been advised that this type of detailed consultation - about more specific issues - is not necessary prior to the grant application and their belief is that it is actually best carried out once the result of the grant application is known.

“So that it remains an option, we will go ahead and apply for funding to install a lift in the Market House. However, I would like to reassure the local community that we will consult about this fully if our grant application is successful and that there is no definite commitment to the installation of the lift just because it is included in the grant application.

“In relation to the grant application itself, on behalf of the Ledbury Places steering group I’d also like to place on record our thanks to the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) for a four figure grant they recently gave us to ensure we could continue to use an experienced Project Organiser to lead this process.

“This grant will make a huge difference to the quality of the application we are able to put together and also helps ensure as much time as possible is being spent on the process.”

Finally, Mr Clive has once again reminded people that there are many elements to Ledbury Places and that the project as a whole is a great opportunity for the town to take advantage of substantial grant funding towards protecting and providing a sustainable future for some of its most beautiful assets – the Barrett Browning Institute, the Heritage Centre, the Town Council offices, the Butcher Row House Museum, Burgage Hall and the Market House.

“This project provides a unique opportunity for our town to protect some of its most beautiful assets by taking advantage of significant grant funding that could be made available to us. Many of the buildings are in urgent need of restoration work while as a community we must try to make better use of them to ensure their long term viability and sustainability.

“Thanks to the expert research and specialist advice we received during the feasibility study over the past year we believe we have put forward innovative ideas relating to all six buildings – which can still be seen on the Ledbury Places website - so we would still ask that people give us feedback on these and any additional thoughts or suggestions they have.

“Although our priority is completing the grant application at the present time, if there are any further updates we can release we will do so as soon as we can.

“Therefore I’d ask people to keep their eyes on our website (<http://www.ledburyplaces.org/>), our social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter) and also the local press for any further updates on how the grant application process is progressing.”

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