

## COASTAL REVIVAL FUND APPLICATION FORM

### What are the key priorities for your coastal area?

The key document is the Fylde Coastal Strategy 2015-32 <http://www.fylde.gov.uk/business/fylde-coastal-strategy/> which sets out to create a unique, high quality visitor destination for residents and visitors which is based on the conservation and enhancement of the natural landscape and heritage assets. The Strategy has created six character Zones, and Lytham Hall falls into Zone 5 “Lytham Heritage Coast”.

In order to achieve this vision, the priorities in the Strategy are divided into key themes: coastal flood protection; water quality; green infrastructure; visitor economy; sport & recreation; nature conservation; conserving heritage assets; access and transport. A series of high level priorities are identified for each theme and “restoring Lytham Hall” is a key action for Zone 5.

Other selected priorities for the Fylde coast are coastal flood protection and the Council has secured funding towards flood defence schemes; supporting a vibrant day and night time visitor economy through creating visitor attractions, supporting cultural and sporting events and maintaining a high quality offer; implementing the new Bathing Water Directive; integrating the nature reserve, SSSI and biological heritage to create a significant nature reserve; achieving Green Flag Status for the local parks in the coastal area; improve footpath and cycle links between the coastal assets.

Our project, as well as being identified in the Fylde Coastal Strategy, contributes towards the vision for the Fylde coast through helping to create a high quality visitor attraction by utilizing an untapped heritage asset.

### What does your project involve?

This involves the second phase of the Restoration of a Grade I Listed Georgian House. The first phase included the commission of research and architects plans and tender documents for the restoration works. This provided some very useful information. Unfortunately, as we were unable to find all the match funding we had to put the plans on hold and investigate other methods of delivery (see section 7.2 and 8.3 also). We have come up with an intriguing solution. Our professional advisors, (one of the key ones is a volunteer), suggested we could do the work in-house, using our own volunteer craftspeople (a result of the establishment of the Joinery Workshop that was funded by the previous Coastal Revival Bid). This has enabled us to make a start, painting the elevations one by one, at a fraction of the costs. It has also enabled our visitors to see what is going on and engage in the activities. We have appointed a Conservation Advisory Panel comprising three professional conservation officers and other experts in horticulture and museum management to monitor the work and ensure it meets the highest conservation standards commensurate with the Hall’s Grade I status.

Secondly, we wish to take the Conservation Management Plan, funded by the Coastal Community Fund, a step further forward with a Feasibility Study and research into planting schemes for the parterre, herbaceous border and woodland areas to make the Parkland more attractive to visitors. The Feasibility Study will address the costs of the long term maintenance, the need to appoint an appropriately skilled member of staff to care for the Parkland, and provide direction for volunteers and training opportunities for students of arboriculture, horticulture and woodland management.

### How will your project meet the criteria for the Coastal Revival Fund

#### The value, importance or local regard for the site, structure or asset

Lytham Hall is Grade I listed (At Risk). The Hall and estate are of national significance and include a number of Grade II listed buildings including the Stables (18<sup>th</sup> Century), Dovecote (18<sup>th</sup> Century), Paradise Wall (1718) and Paradise Garden with Prospect Mount (date unknown), Causeways, Edward Kemp Entrance Lodge with Gatehouses in winged walls and carriage drive (1864), Lily Pond created from former horse

and cart washing pond (c 1850s). Recent archaeological excavations have revealed the site of 2 canals, summer house, early 18<sup>th</sup> Century glasshouses and parterres. The Parkland is Grade II Registered and on the Lancashire County Council Biological Heritage Site with Tree Preservation Orders.

The long-term future of the Hall has been a concern to the local community since the end of the Second World War. A proposal to acquire the site in 1944 was unsuccessful. In 1996 the community raised funds (including a donation of £1 million from British Aerospace) to acquire for the benefit of the community what remained of this huge estate that once stretched from Preston up to Blackpool.

The Georgian Hall was built in 1764 by one of the leading architects of the Georgian period John Carr of York, adjoining an earlier Jacobean Hall. He built the Hall for the Clifton family, who were granted land following the dissolution of the Benedictine Lytham Priory and built the Jacobean Hall. Later generations of Clifton's squandered money on travel, horses, and yachts and eventually the last Squire was forced to sell to Guardian Insurance Company in 1963. The Clifton's owned and built much of Lytham and neighbouring St Anne's and there are many people in the community with links to the Hall, whose family once worked on the estate or live in houses built by the Clifton's.

Although Guardian Insurance Company saved the Hall from dereliction in 1963, the restoration they carried out was poor by today's standards, using modern unsympathetic materials in places. With high maintenance costs, the Hall was sold in 1997 and is in need of sympathetic conservation and modernisation. Electrics, plumbing and heating are sub-standard causing damp, paint is peeling and the 250-year-old windows are rotting. The building is on the national Heritage At Risk register due to the backlog of maintenance which is causing a lack of active use.

#### **Delivering a community benefit from the revival fund**

Prior to being acquired by Lytham Town Trust, Lytham Hall was in private commercial ownership and closed to the public. The Trust acquired the site in 1997 for the benefit of the local community and signed a 99 year lease with Heritage Trust for the North West to maintain and manage the site as a heritage attraction on its behalf.

As a result of this arrangement, the parkland is now open 6 days/week all year round free of charge to the public and is enjoyed by many dog walkers and families (especially during school holidays) as a quiet and safe environment to play, picnic and explore. The site is managed by Heritage Trust for the North West with support from an enthusiastic team of volunteers. Currently 140 volunteers from the local community work in the grounds, tea room, tour guide and event steward which provides new experiences, skills, training and social contact. Volunteer numbers will grow as we restore more of the site to active use.

Our visitor numbers are growing as a result of the investment we have made in marketing and publicity and creating an all-year events programme. Visitor numbers continue to increase. We forecast 50,000 by 2017 and there were actually 62,052 last year.

This growth in visitor numbers illustrates the latent demand from the community on our doorstep and by visitors from further afield for access to Lytham Hall. Lytham Club Day (local carnival) which we hosted for the first time in 2014, continues to use the Hall for the annual carnival (last year 2017, 3000 people attended, this year 2018 this figure rose to over 5,000.)

The future availability of this facility depends on making it financially sustainable. We need to restore the Hall buildings to make more commercial use of the space for weddings, conferences, exhibitions and visitor tours, and improve the parkland to make it a safe and inspiring place to visit. Meanwhile we have expanded our catering and hospitality services increasing the turnover from £52,000 in 2016 to £321,000 in 2017/18.

This investment in the site, and growth in the number of visitors and unrestricted income, is essential to the Business Plan to make the Hall self-financing by 2020. Our business plan has been updated on a regular basis to reflect the changes, and we are able to report it is moving in the right direction and making significant headway.

#### **Delivering an economic benefit from the revival fund**

Leisure, culture and tourism make up an important industry in Fylde Borough, accounting for 1 in 10 jobs, attracting over 3 million visitors each year, generating £220 million spending in the local economy. The three authorities on the Fylde coast (Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde) are working strategically to develop and promote a diverse and broad cultural tourism offer. Tourism trends have not been kind to traditional resorts and the area suffers from abundance of low quality attractions.

There are two Grade I Listed buildings on the Fylde coast; the world famous Blackpool Tower, and Lytham Hall which is often described as a 'hidden gem'. Lytham Hall has untapped potential to contribute to the visitor economy on the Fylde coast, appealing to audiences who enjoy this type of activity and setting, offering more to existing frequent visitors to the area, and attracting new visitors and corporate business to Fylde. With no direct competition from other historic house and gardens, Lytham Hall has potential to compliment and diversify the existing leisure and tourism offer on the Fylde coast.

Lytham Hall is on the national Heritage At Risk register, and the obstacle to its revival is securing sufficient funding to conserve and restore the hall buildings, and introduce modern visitor facilities to cater for conferences and weddings, improved toilet facilities and food and beverage offer for visitors.

As forecast we have been able to take on 4 additional staff in the past two years, including a General Manager and Deputy, catering and tour guides, and in doing so support the local leisure and hospitality employment sector. We receive no grants to meet the cost of the 12 Full Time and Part Time staff employed by the Trust. We have recently recruited a Full Time Apprentice in conjunction with Blackpool and Fylde College.

The Trust continues to be involved in the promotion of traditional building skills and now has a fully equipped Joinery workshop (funded by the Coastal Revival Fund). The Trust is working with Blackpool and the Fylde College School of Construction and the University of York Conservation Centre to provide further training opportunities in building construction. The restoration of the only Grade I building in Fylde is a huge opportunity to maximise training in traditional building skills. The Trust has also established a partnership agreement with Myerscough College to provide training opportunities in woodland management and horticulture.

#### **Local support**

Local support for Lytham Hall became galvanised in 1997 when Lytham Town Trust campaigned to raise funds to buy it from Guardian Insurance Company for the benefit of the community. As a result of their efforts Lytham Town Trust was able to buy the Hall with funds raised including a large donation from British Aerospace. In the same year a Friends of Lytham Hall was formed. They continue to raise money each year towards upkeep and restoration projects.

Other local groups such as the Lytham St Annes Civic Society, Lytham Heritage Group, Lancashire Gardens Trust and Decorative & Fine Arts Society are keen supporters and we host their regular coffee mornings and meetings at the Hall.

The Hall hosts many events each year, such as outdoor theatre, car shows, plant fairs, snowdrop walks, Heritage Open Days to name but a few. All these are well attended by the local community and visitors from afar with our social media streams capturing positive feedback, and helpful comments. Many of our social media followers and Trip Advisor comments frequently mention the sorry state of the outside of the Hall, and often ask '*when are they going to paint the Hall?*'.

Fylde Borough Council continues to be very supportive at officer and Member level, recognising that Lytham Hall is a huge asset to the community, and it is listed as a priority project in Council strategic documents such as the Fylde Coastal Strategy (2015-2032), a 16 year vision to bolster the area as a visitor destination underpinned by its natural and historic environment. The Council has made a grant of £300,000 towards the restoration project.

#### **Proposed Outputs and Project Delivery**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Date of expenditure</b>
<b>Georgian Hall East Elevation</b>	<b>£32,000</b>	<b>March 2019</b>
<b>Parkland Research &amp; Feasibility Study</b>	<b>£10,500</b>	<b>March 2019</b>

#### **Further investment**

In the previous application, we expected a contribution of £1 million from Lancashire County Council. Due to cutbacks, this support never materialized. We attempted to negotiate a smaller bid with both Lancashire County Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund but these bids were unsuccessful. This led the Trustees to review the programme of works and they have concluded that there are other less expensive ways of delivering the project using local craftspeople and volunteers. This approach has been very well received. For example scaffolding costs (which were in the region of £68,000) have been eliminated due to a national company lending a scissor lift for an indefinite period, which is ideal for a two-man team restoring the roof and elevations of the Georgian Hall.

The work is slower and therefore will take longer to complete, but it is of a higher standard and provides many training opportunities. Also the public becomes more involved in the work, learning about and caring for historic buildings, and also helping with fundraising.

A presentable hall and parkland is much more marketable, which in turn increases visitor numbers and turnover, therefore making the project more sustainable for the future.

#### **Unlocking further investment**

The external restoration of the Georgian and Jacobean Halls was costed at £950,000. In Section 6 we explained that by doing the restoration work in-house, starting with the Georgian Hall, we could do the work at a fraction of the cost (i.e. £234,000). To date we have completed the restoration of the courtyard of the Jacobean Hall and the North Elevation of the Georgian Hall at a cost of £42,000. We have raised nearly £75,000 to cover these costs plus completing one further elevation. A contribution of £32,000 from the Coastal Revival Fund would allow us to complete the third of the three principal elevations of the Hall and complete Phase II of the decorating works.

As anticipated, the work is attracting much interest and offers are coming forward to help raise funds for the next phase (£128,000). For example the Rotary Club last year raised £10,000 and this year have offered to double it. Success builds on success and provides an incentive for the public to contribute once they can see something happening.

A contribution from the Coastal Revival Fund will be a significant boost to encourage further investment for the next phase.

#### **Project delivery**

Heritage Trust for the North West will be responsible for delivery of this project. The Trust is one of the most established and active building preservation trusts in the UK and has an extensive track record of

acquiring, conserving and reusing redundant and at-risk historic buildings. The Trust has two trading companies and profits from these are reinvested into the charitable objectives and core costs of the Trust thus creating a sustainable operating model.

The Trust has appointed a General Manager, supported by a Building Manager and Volunteer Co-ordinator, who together will deliver these projects, working alongside the 140 volunteers, many with specialist skills.

**Transparency**

Lytham Hall is open to the public free of charge 6 days per week all year round, and on Sunday when we charge £1 admission. The Hall external restoration will therefore be immediately visible to the public during and after the project. We expect the full project to be complete by December 2019 but the Coastal Revival Fund element to be spent by March 2019.

The parkland Feasibility Study and research will be made publicly available as part of future public consultation on restoration and development proposals, within 12 months.

**8.6 Confirmations**

Please write 'yes' in the sections below to confirm that:

A) Details of the projects and progress will be made available to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government: **Yes**

B) All Coastal Revival Fund grants would be spent by 31 March 2019: **Yes**

C) The letter from your local authority has been included with your application: **Yes**

D) You are aware that you will be required to report on your projects progress and achievements. **Yes**