

**\*Embargoed until Tuesday 15 January 2019\***

# Funding raised by The National Lottery

and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

## PRESS RELEASE

### BRISTOL PROJECT MARKING 100 YEARS OF COUNCIL ESTATES WINS FUNDING FROM HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND



Images: Hillfields Park, 1920s, Bristol Archives; Sea Mills Community by the Addison Oak, 2018, Annie Crossman

**A group of Bristol projects marking 100 years of council estates has been awarded funding from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HFL). *Homes For Heroes 100* is a programme of activity working with communities in Sea Mills, Hillfields, St Judes and Knowle West to explore the history of these areas and the people that have lived and worked there over the last century. There will be a new book written by people who have grown up on council housing estates, artists engaging with communities led by the Knowle West Media Centre and the Architecture Centre, the story of council housing in Bristol told in comic-book style, walking tours around the estates, a day event as part of *Festival of the Future City*, the planting of an oak tree at a new council housing site, commemorating 100 years since the building of the new housing at Sea Mills and the planting of the Addison Oak and much more.**

*Homes For Heroes 100* is being coordinated by the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, who have been responsible for a number of citywide partnership programmes, including Bristol2014, which marked the centenary of the start of the First World War, and the arts projects which ran alongside Bristol's year as European Green Capital. The programme will not only look at homes – their layout, how and why they were

built – but also other buildings on the estates, including schools, libraries and pubs, and the differences that they made to the communities who lived there. It will also support two community projects which have already received funding from the National Lottery – Sea Mills 100, who are using a refurbished telephone box to share stories from the past; and a new project in Hillfields being run by Local Learning.

The 1919 Housing and Town Planning Act, known as The Addison Act after the then Minister of Health and Housing Christopher Addison, introduced the start of the first significant era of council house building in the UK. It came in the wake of a speech delivered by Prime Minister Lloyd George regarding British troops returning from The Great War in which he called for ‘a country fit for heroes to live in’.

*“The 1919 Addison Act was not just about building homes; it was about creating communities and changing the social fabric of the country. Originally promoted as homes for the returning heroes of the war and as fresh starts for those displaced by slum clearance, in recent decades council housing - and the social housing that has partly come to replace it - has attracted an unwarranted stigma. Council house residents have been marginalised for generations and the culturally important heritage that lies within their estates is little-known. Through community-based research and hands-on activity leading to high-profile showcases in the estates involved, the city-centre and online, the Homes for Heroes programme will celebrate the council estate past, present and future.”*

**Andrew Kelly, Director, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership**

Bristol’s first post-war council house tenants moved into Beechen Drive, Hillfields in 1919 where there is now a commemorative plaque. In September 1920 over 87 per cent of the 676 applicants for houses on the Hillfields estate were from ex-service personnel.

*“We are very excited about working with the Hillfields community to celebrate this important event in both the city’s and nation’s housing history. We are looking forward to finding out more about the impact of Addison’s Housing Act and having fun re-enacting the architectural competition with local residents in the style of a Reality TV Gameshow.”* **Pete Insole and Ruth Myers, Local Learning**

Other estates across the city were soon completed. The first sod at Sea Mills was cut by Addison himself in a ceremony that took place on 4 June 1919: an oak tree was planted in Sea Mills Square to mark the occasion and remains today. In 1937 John Betjeman referred to Sea Mills as ‘that magic estate’ and in 1981 it became one of the first council estates in the country to be designated a conservation area.

*“We are delighted that the National Lottery is supporting our project which has already begun to bring the community together in Sea Mills and give us a new appreciation for where we live.”*

**Mary Milton, Sea Mills 100**

Together, the whole programme of activity has been awarded over £80,000 raised by National Lottery player, making it the largest celebration of the centenary of social housing happening anywhere in the UK.

*“This year marks not only the centenary of the Addison Act but also the centenary of the communities it helped to create. Thanks to National Lottery players, those communities in Bristol will take the lead in putting their own history on record for the first time, challenging perceptions and coming together to celebrate their future”* **Nerys Watts, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West.**

As well as looking to the past, the *Homes For Heroes 100* will also try to help to change the image of council housing and returning to the utopian ideas and hopes that the first council houses represented in the lives of their tenants. The programme has strong backing from Bristol City Council, who will be contributing a further £80,000 to the programme, as well as Arts Council England, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership and Heritage Schools. Planning issues and debates around the nationwide shortage of housing will be raised and the new areas of social housing being created by Bristol City Council will be celebrated. The most significant of these occasions will be the planting of a ceremonial oak tree at one of the new estates on the centenary of the planting of the oak tree at Sea Mills.

*“Not enough new homes are built each year in Bristol to meet the demand and this results in high rents and escalating house prices. We want to show that providing affordable homes can be done. Taking the time to celebrate and be inspired by the first waves of Homes for Heroes is a great way of helping us plan for the future.”* **Cllr Paul Smith, Bristol City Council**

Follow the project on Twitter using the hashtag #HomesForHeroes100

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## Notes to Editors

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### Homes for Heroes 100

Homes for Heroes will celebrate Bristol's council estates and their residents, past, present and future. Community-based heritage research, hands-on activities and sharing of relevant memories, mementos and archival material will be showcased in estates across the city and online. The project runs until the end of 2019 and includes:

- The planting of a commemorative oak tree at a new city social housing site, marking the anniversary of the Addison Oak in Sea Mills
- A book of experiences of those who have grown up on council estates in Bristol and across the UK.
- The story of council housing in Bristol told in comic-book style
- Walking tours of estates, with stories from residents past and present
- Artists working with local communities, through the Knowle West Media Centre and the Architecture Centre.
- A new poem specially written by the City Poet, Vanessa Kisuule

- A day event exploring the past, present and future of council housing as part of Festival of the Future City (<https://www.futurecityfestival.co.uk/>)
- Special events across the city as part of Bristol Open Doors (<https://bristolopendoors.org.uk/>)
- More activity and events will be added to the programme as it is developed over the coming months.

Twitter: #HomesForHeroes100

### **Bristol Cultural Development Partnership**

Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP) was formed in 1993 by Arts Council England, Business West and Bristol City Council. BCDP projects include At-Bristol; Encounters Festivals; Digital Arts Development Agency; South West Arts Marketing; Brunel 200; the Great Reading Adventure; Darwin 200; the Bristol Festival of Ideas; BAC 100; Bristol 2014; Bristol Legible City; Bristol 2016. In addition to projects, BCDP has been involved in partnership building and management; marketing; campaigning. BCDP runs the very popular Festival of Ideas, which aims to stimulate people's minds and passions with a wide-ranging and inspiring programme of discussion and debate throughout the year. Further details are: <http://www.ideasfestival.co.uk/>

### **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](http://www.hlf.org.uk). Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and use #NationalLottery

### **The Architecture Centre**

The Architecture Centre is Bristol's centre for design and the built environment. It inspires people to shape better places through exhibitions, events, learning and live projects.

### **Knowle West Media Centre**

Knowle West Media Centre is an arts centre and charity in Knowle West, Bristol, supporting people to make positive changes in their lives and communities, using technology and arts to come up with creative solutions to problems and explore new ways of doing things.

### **Local Learning**

Myers-Insole Local Learning is a not for profit Community Interest Company established in Bristol in 2005. It works in partnership with other specialists to create engaging and inclusive learning experiences for all participants, incorporating a variety of elements including street theatre, storytelling, art, film, radio, archaeological investigations and digital technologies.

### **Sea Mills 100**

The highlight of the project in Sea Mills will be the special events around the estate's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June 2019. Information collected by volunteers will form the basis of a history trail around the estate and the Sea Mills mini museum. To find out more about the project, visit [www.seamills100.co.uk](http://www.seamills100.co.uk) or email [info@seamills100.co.uk](mailto:info@seamills100.co.uk). Twitter @SeaMills100