



INSTITUTE  
OF HISTORICAL  
RESEARCH

University of London  
School of Advanced Study



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**A The National Archives**

\*Embargoed until 08:00 on 20 January 2016\*

## **The Layers of London: Mapping the city's heritage**

### **Institute of Historical Research wins Heritage Lottery Fund support**

The Institute of Historical Research, part of the University of London's School of Advanced Study, has received initial support\* from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the 'Layers of London: mapping the city's heritage' project, it was announced today. The multi-partner project, starting on 1 May 2016, will develop a new interactive website for London's heritage which will be at the heart of extensive public engagement and schools programmes across London's diverse boroughs. Work will initially focus on the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, working with the borough archives, schools, and with local community groups.

Development funding of £103,100 has also been awarded to help the Institute progress its plans to apply for a full grant at a later date. The total cost of the project is £943,900.

Thanks to National Lottery players, the 'Layers of London' project will bring together, for the first time, digitised heritage assets provided by key partners across London: the British Library, London Metropolitan Archives, Historic England, The National Archives, and MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology). These will be linked in an innovative new website and a mobile app, which will allow the public to create and interact with many different 'layers' of London's history from the Romans to the present day. These include historic maps, images of buildings, films as well as information about people who have lived and worked in London over the centuries. Volunteer, internship and schools education programmes in the London boroughs will allow individuals and groups to create and upload new content, including photos, film clips, personal memories, and audio recordings. There will be opportunities to learn new skills with the project partners, including digital techniques for studying historic buildings and places, and the project will act as a hub for new and existing heritage projects across London.

The heritage assets contributed by the partners are incomparable sources of evidence and knowledge of all aspects of the history of London; they provide aesthetic, architectural, historic and scientific information on the city and its people; and they have unique social and community value as records of everyday life, work and culture in the capital. The project seeks to unlock the potential of this heritage for stimulating large-scale heritage engagement across London at a time of unprecedented change for the city, whether in its communities, its economy or in the physical environment.

## **Quotes**

Commenting on the award, Professor Matthew Davies of the Institute of Historical Research said: "We're delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us this support. The project has huge potential to transform engagement with London's heritage across the city and beyond through digital tools and through the work of volunteers, schools and local groups. The project partnership allows us, for the first time, to join together key digital heritage collections for London, make them accessible, and promote new content creation and local heritage projects."

The Leader of Barking and Dagenham Borough Council Cllr Darren Rodwell a proud Londoner with a passion for the history and heritage of the capital said: "We are absolutely thrilled the HLF has recognised the importance of recording the history of our great city in this way and that Barking and Dagenham has been chosen to take part in the pilot project."

Explaining the importance of the HLF support, Stuart Hoble, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund London, said: "From maps to 'apps'! If you enjoy exploring London's history then this fascinating project will allow people to delve into the past, and bring fresh perspectives to the streets and buildings we see every day. We are delighted to be part of this innovative project, and look forward to seeing the more detailed proposals in due course".

Geoff Pick, Director of London Metropolitan Archives, said: “In a year when we commemorate the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London, one of the most dramatic events in the capital’s history, we are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has made this grant so that people of all ages will have the opportunity to explore more deeply and creatively in the historical layers of London”.

Director Research and Education at MOLA, David Bowsher said: “MOLA is extremely proud to be associated with this innovative project and to be part of the team widening access to and appreciation of our heritage”

Tom Harper, Maps Curator at the British Library commented “As evidenced by the success of the British Library’s own geo-referencer tool, digitising historic maps can bring them to life in completely new ways, transforming them from flat physical objects to multi-layered containers of historical information. We are thrilled that the British Library’s world-class map collection will be included in Layers of London, and we hope that it inspires people of all ages and backgrounds to learn about the social topography of the past.”

Mike Evans, Head of Archives at Historic England said: “We are excited that the “Layers of London” project has won funding support. The project will allow people of all ages to delve deeper into London’s history and we are looking forward to making our archive’s unique collections of aerial photography more accessible through the project.”

Jeff James, Chief Executive and Keeper of The National Archives said: “The National Archives is delighted to be involved in a project which reaches out to new audiences through the nation’s incredibly rich and diverse archival collections to help understand what it was to be a Londoner. Digital technology has changed forever what it means to be an archive and this innovative and collaborative project allows us and our partners to showcase how digitised records enable researchers to rediscover the past in a way that’s relevant to life in the 21st century”

## **Notes to editors**

### **About the Institute of Historical Research**

The Institute of Historical Research was founded in 1921 and is one of nine institutes that comprise the University of London’s School of Advanced Study. The Institute’s mission is to promote the study of history and an appreciation of the importance of the past among academics and the general public. It offers a wide range of services both onsite and remotely which promote and facilitate excellence in historical research, teaching and scholarship in the UK, by means of its library, events programmes, fellowships, training and publications. It is a leading centre for the creation of digital resources for historians, and promotes the study of London history through its [Centre for Metropolitan History](#) and the [Victoria County History](#).

## **About the Heritage Lottery Fund**

\*Heritage Grant applications are assessed in two rounds. A first-round pass is given when HLF has endorsed outline proposals and earmarked funding. A first-round pass may also include an immediate award to fund the development of the project. Detailed proposals are then considered by HLF at second-round and as long as plans have progressed satisfactorily and according to the original proposal, an award for the project is confirmed.

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) @heritagelottery @HLFLondon

## **About the project partners**

### **The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Heritage Services**

Barking and Dagenham has excellent connectivity and is London's next big growth opportunity. The Council and partners are unlocking potential, playing a key role in supporting London's growth and delivering for our community. There are plans for over 35,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs over the next 20 years. The borough has some of the best value land for development and very affordable premises for businesses large and small. We have ambition and aspiration to become a destination of choice, where people stay and feel welcome. With a proud history of manufacturing, industrial and sporting excellence, strategic transport links and a location close to major markets in the South East (and on to Europe), Barking and Dagenham really is London's Growth Opportunity.

Heritage Services manage the sites at Valence House Museum (including the Archive & Local Studies Library) and Eastbury Manor House. The service promotes and makes accessible the historical and cultural heritage of the Borough, safeguarding, maintaining and preserving the sites and collections and raising the profile of the Borough's heritage sites locally, regionally and nationally. An education service for schools is delivered at Valence House and Eastbury Manor House and there is also a volunteer programme at both sites.

**The British Library** is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's greatest research libraries. It provides world class information services to the academic, business, research and scientific communities and offers unparalleled access to the world's largest and most comprehensive research collection. The Library's collection has developed over 250 years and exceeds 150 million separate items representing every age of written civilisation and includes books, journals, manuscripts, maps, stamps, music, patents, photographs, newspapers and sound recordings in all written and spoken languages. Up to 10 million people visit the British Library website – [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk) - every year where they can view up to 4 million digitised collection items and over 40 million pages.

## Historic England

We are Historic England (formerly known as English Heritage), the public body that champions and protects England's historic places. We look after the historic environment, providing expert advice, helping people protect and care for it and helping the public to understand and enjoy it. [www.historicengland.org.uk](http://www.historicengland.org.uk)

**London Metropolitan Archives (LMA)** is a public research centre which specialises in the history of London. LMA cares for and provides access to the historical archives of businesses, schools, hospitals charities and all manner of other organisations from the London area. The 100 km of books, maps, photographs, films and documents dating back to 1067 in its strong rooms in Clerkenwell form one of the finest city archives in the world - you could call it the memory of London. LMA's users have a wide range of interests, including family, community and local history, and it provides services to wide variety of researchers including students, artists and architects. It's an essential destination for anyone interested in the history of London. Visit LMA's webpages at [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma) to find out more about its fascinating collections and the exhibitions, workshops and events which it offers.

**MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology)** provides independent advice and professional services in archaeology and built heritage. With offices in London, Northampton and Birmingham, MOLA's 250 staff help to discharge planning conditions expertly and swiftly. MOLA works in partnership to develop far-reaching research and community programmes. Find out more at [mola.org.uk](http://mola.org.uk), on Twitter [@MOLArchaeology](https://twitter.com/MOLArchaeology) or on Facebook [MOLArchaeology](https://www.facebook.com/MOLArchaeology). For more information please contact Nicola Kalimeris, Communications Manager at [nkalimeris@mola.org.uk](mailto:nkalimeris@mola.org.uk) or on 07985169774, or Richard Lewis, Communications Assistant at [rlewis@mola.org.uk](mailto:rlewis@mola.org.uk) or on 02075669356.

**The National Archives** is one of the world's most valuable resources for research and an independent research organisation in its own right. As the official archive and publisher for the UK government, and England and Wales they are the guardians of some of the UK's most iconic national documents, dating back over 1,000 years. Their role is to collect and secure the future of the government record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come, and to make it as accessible and available as possible. The National Archives brings together the skills and specialisms needed to conserve some of the oldest historic documents as well as leading digital archive practices to manage and preserve government information past, present and future. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>. For the latest stories, follow the Press Office on Twitter @TNApressofficer.

## Further information

For further information, images and interviews please contact Professor Matthew Davies at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, on 020 7862 8698 or [matthew.davies@sas.ac.uk](mailto:matthew.davies@sas.ac.uk)