

Government offers £10m for historic towns and cities

£10 million funding boost for Scotland's historic towns and cities

Communities across Scotland are invited to apply for funding from the latest round of Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) funding announced today.

The Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop MSP announced the fund of £10million available to historic towns perhaps like Linlithgow where she was speaking at the Built Environment Forum (BEFS) Annual Congress this morning. Although Linlithgow has not featured on the fund's list of awards before, Leith has having received £468,285 from Historic Scotland. The explanation of what the money can be used for is on the Historic Scotland website:-“The scheme provides financial assistance, over a five year period, for Conservation Area based regeneration and conservation initiatives undertaken by Local and National Park Authorities, community groups and other 3rd sector organisations experienced in delivering multi-funded projects.”

This is the sixth round of CARS funding, with £26 million having been invested by the Scottish Government in projects across Scotland since the first grants were made in 2007. Applications for this round will open early in the new year with a closing date of 31 August 2014.

CARS specifically targets conservation areas with social and economic disadvantages that make it difficult to attract investment in sustainable regeneration. The scheme assists these areas through channelling funding towards opportunities to enhance sustainable economic growth and help support projects that develop an area's sense of place.

Ms Hyslop told BEFS delegates that the scheme has clearly demonstrated it is a catalyst to attract funding from other sources. In the scheme's first year, £6.7 million was invested through CARS, delivering improvements to 28,000 sq m of public realm, and the rejuvenation and reuse of 15,000 sq m of vacant floor space. This investment attracted a further £18.6 million from other sources – a leverage of extra funding of 3 to 1.

The Cabinet Secretary said:- “This investment will build on the considerable benefits that CARS is already delivering for communities across Scotland since 2007. It will help reinvigorate our villages, towns and cities and give people a sense of place and pride in their surroundings.

“Investment in our historic environment is key to contributing to an improved quality of life for many people across Scotland. Not only does CARS breathe new life into our communities it is instrumental in stimulating economic growth through new employment opportunities and promoting traditional skills as well as boosting the local tourism industry.”

Ms Hyslop added:- “Today's announcement demonstrates that we are committed to delivering for Scotland's historic environment and placing it at the heart of our communities.”

Councillor Stephen Hagan, COSLA spokesperson for Development Economy & Sustainability commented: “COSLA welcomes the announcement of a new round of funding for CARS and the support it gives to regeneration of our historic areas. Since 2007, a large number of communities across Scotland have already benefitted from this funding stream and I look forward to seeing the impact this latest investment will help deliver.”

John Pelan, Director of the Built Environment Forum Scotland said: “BEFS welcomes the news of the Scottish Government's continued support for CARS which our Small Towns Initiative Report highlighted as playing an important role in the

regeneration of places such as Campbeltown, Kilsyth and Stornoway. BEFS is pleased that the Cabinet Secretary continues to focus on the issue of 'mainstreaming' the historic environment as an integral part of the fabric of Scottish society and welcomes her participation in its Annual Congress."

CARS is open to Local and National Park Authorities, community groups and other third sector organisations delivering multi-funded projects. The funding can be utilised for a number of purposes from priority repairs and small grants to homeowners and retailers, to providing traditional craft training opportunities.

Today's funding announcement comes on the back of an independent analysis of Historic Scotland's investment across all its funding streams between 2007-12. The analysis shows that Historic Scotland's financial support has generated an additional £166 million of investment in the historic environment.

The full independent analysis of the Historic Scotland's grant streams can be viewed [here](#).

For further information on the CARS scheme and to view previous funding recipients click [here](#).