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Harcourt Arboretum awarded National Lottery support for new Visitor and Learning Centre

Harcourt Arboretum in Nuneham Courtenay, Oxford, has received initial support* and development funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop a new Visitor and Learning Centre, it was announced today. Made possible by National Lottery players, the project aims to unlock the site's unique natural heritage, landscape and collection of threatened trees.

Development funding of £191,420 has been awarded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund to help Harcourt Arboretum progress their plans to apply for a full National Lottery grant at a later date.

The project aims to build partnerships with local communities, and work with Oxford University's Department of Psychiatry and social prescribing partnership to increase wellbeing from access to nature. The aim is to create new all-weather education facilities, café and shop and transform the visitor experience. A key benefit of the project will be an increased awareness of the importance of plants and biodiversity in addressing global challenges, heritage landscape, and crafts, through inspiring interpretation.

Harcourt Arboretum comprises 130 acres of Grade One listed heritage landscape. It sits within a wider Capability Brown-crafted landscape and includes a pinetum with some of the UK's oldest giant redwoods, a Picturesque Serpentine Ride designed by William Gilpin, a native woodland and a wild flower meadow.

Commenting on the award, **Professor Simon Hiscock (Director of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum)** said: "We are delighted to receive this support thanks to National Lottery players. The Arboretum, which consists of a nationally important collection of trees, native woodland, and wildflower meadows has so much to offer people as a haven of biodiversity and wellbeing. A new Visitor and Learning Centre will open up this potential to new visitors and diverse audiences and allow us to share the importance of plants and biodiversity to people's lives and the future of our planet at a time when this message has never been more important."

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Notes to editors

About Harcourt Arboretum

Harcourt Arboretum is a part of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum (OBGA), a department of the University of Oxford. OBGA's mission is to 'share the scientific wonder and importance of plants with the world' and plant conservation is a core strategy.

About The National Lottery Heritage Fund

* National Lottery Heritage Fund grant applications over £250,000 are assessed in two rounds. The Harcourt Arboretum project has initially been granted round one development funding of £191,420 by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, allowing it to progress with its plans. Detailed proposals are then considered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund at second round, where a final decision is made on the full funding award of approximately £3 million.

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK's heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future. www.heritagefund.org.uk.

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Since The National Lottery began in 1994, National Lottery players have raised over £43 billion for projects and more than 635,000 grants have been awarded across the UK.

Further information

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Images can be downloaded at the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/eipvp8mwpporffb/AABBfER7g-WzGC66bpbzprqsa?dl=0>

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