

Tilbury on the Thames Trust Secures National Lottery Heritage Funding for Riverside Station Restoration

Tilbury on the Thames Trust in Partnership with The Port of Tilbury is celebrating the achievement of securing an incredible £4.5m in funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver its ambitious plans to fully refurbish Tilbury's Grade II listed historic Riverside Railway Station to bring the historic landmark back to life as a vibrant community location.

The funding for the Back on Track* project marks a milestone in the Trust's efforts over a number of years to secure major funding to transform the railway station into an exciting space for community events, studios for local artists, and a place to enjoy a cup of coffee in a new riverside café while watching the ships go by along the Thames. The transformation will celebrate the building's rich heritage, from the arrival of the Empire Windrush to its legacy as a key stop for cruise liners today and from a bygone era.

Commenting on the funding achievement, Paul Dale, Chair of Tilbury on the Thames Trust and COO of Forth Ports, said: "The Port of Tilbury is a gateway to the world along the River Thames, and we are proud of our maritime heritage and trade. The news that we have received National Lottery funding is very exciting, Tilbury on the Thames Trust have had a vision for the Tilbury Riverside Station in partnership with the Port for many years, and now this funding will bring the station back to life ensuring the local stories are told and preserving the rich history of the Riverside Station for generations to come."

Scott Sullivan, co-founder of Tilbury on the Thames Trust, said: "Tilbury has literally won the Lottery! Back on Track shows how Lottery players really can make dreams come true, with this award enabling us to safeguard this remarkable building for the nation whilst also celebrating the personal stories and connections local people have. We hope our project demonstrates how residents and businesses can come together to realise something special for their community."

Lucy Emma Harris, Board member of Tilbury on the Thames Trust said: "Our successful application for the funding has been years in the making, driven by the dedication of the Tilbury on the Thames Trust, in close partnership with the Port of Tilbury. The Trust are extremely grateful to the many community stakeholders who rallied behind this project, including local schools Tilbury Towns Fund and local heritage groups. Their commitment to preserving this important local landmark along the River Thames highlights the station's significance in our national story as a place of arrivals and departures, with countless stories woven into its past.

"We look forward to welcoming the community back to Tilbury Riverside Station and invite everyone to be part of its exciting regeneration journey."

Designed by Sir Edwin Cooper and built in the 1920s, Tilbury Riverside Station forms the core of the historic Port of Tilbury, a gateway to the world for almost 100 years, through which goods, people and their stories have passed to and from the UK. Most famously perhaps, this includes members of the British Caribbean Community who arrived with the SS Empire Windrush in 1948. Tilbury has also been interconnected with the River Thames and the defence of London for centuries made stark by Queen Elizabeth's 'heart and stomach of a king' speech in the face of the Spanish Armada.

Back on Track is a partnership between local people and Forth Ports, which will place the building back at the heart of the local community. The restored Riverside Station will form part of the exciting redevelopment of the Tilbury waterfront, complementing Tilbury Town Fund developments, with a new café, event space, along with direct access to the River Thames. The former railway station will also

include artist studios to support local business, education and investment, while permanent exhibition space will explore the history of Tilbury and its role in major national and international events. A four-year programme of engagement will explore personal histories through community research, exhibitions and events, bringing Tilbury's rich and multi-faceted history to life.

The £4,478,310 in funding will revitalise Tilbury and create a thriving and vibrant community hub, boosting the local economy and reestablishing the town as a cultural destination. Funding will allow a full regeneration of the station building, creating 8 studio lets for local artists, a new café to offer a stop for thousands of travellers and open up the main ticket hall for community events. The project will facilitate training and learning opportunities within the community providing 6 volunteer roles, 302 volunteering opportunities and 9,000 volunteer hours, as well as almost 18,000 heritage engagement opportunities including exhibitions, community markets and workshops for locals and tourists.

'Back on Track' will be delivered by Tilbury on the Thames Trust in partnership with the Port of Tilbury as owners of the Riverside Station. Both will be jointly accountable for the grant.