

Dover Bluebird Heritage Trail

Derek Leach - Project Manager

At long last the Bluebird Heritage Trail is well on its way. Dover Castle attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, but with this popular attraction requiring a whole day visit, the vast majority do not venture into the town. Way back in January 2014 the newly-formed Port and Community Forum decided upon a joint project to promote the fantastic heritage assets of the town and port in some coordinated way to attract more visitors.

A group was formed to develop the idea and from this was born the concept of a heritage trail linking the many sites, building and monuments of the town and port. Bronze pavement markers would direct people along the route running from the War Memorial by the Town Hall, through the town centre, along the seafront and out to the Gun Turret on Admiralty Pier. There would also be a free guidebook including a route map with details of the sites, plus a

dedicated website and a smartphone app.

The estimated cost was £64,000, excluding the time of volunteers valued at £29,000. It was clear that most of the funding would have to be from grants and it was felt that a grant application would have a better chance if submitted by a community organisation rather than Dover Harbour Board (DHB) or a statutory authority such as Dover Town (DTC) or District (DDC) Councils. So it was that The Dover Society submitted the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and is responsible for expenditure and successful delivery of the project. We are also providing the volunteer Project Manager and Finance Officer.

Whilst it is forbidden by the Heritage Lottery Fund to start any project before funding is offered, it took over a year to obtain all the necessary detailed information and estimates required to



Dover's Bluebird Heritage Trail takes flight (DHB).