

PRESS RELEASE

WINNERS OF THE ENGLISH HERITAGE ANGEL AWARDS ANNOUNCED

- Andrew Lloyd Webber Awards for Local People who Save Their Heritage-

The winners of the first English Heritage Angel Awards, founded earlier this year by Andrew Lloyd Webber to celebrate the efforts of local people in rescuing their heritage, were announced at a gala ceremony in London's West End today (Monday 31st October). The award scheme is run by English Heritage and based on its *Heritage at Risk Register*.

The ceremony, held at The Palace Theatre, was hosted by TV presenter Clare Balding, with Graham Norton, Michael Winner and Danielle Hope helping to present the awards.

The six winners chosen from a shortlist of 16 were:

Westenhanger Castle and Mediaeval Barns for the repair of The Smythe Barn at Westenhanger, Hythe, Kent - winner of the English Heritage Angel Award for the best craftsmanship employed on a heritage rescue

Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust and Bristol City Council for its efforts with Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol

and

The St Stephen's Restoration and Preservation Trust for the repair of St Stephen's Rosslyn Hill, Hampstead, London - joint winners of the English Heritage Angel Award for the best rescue of any other entry from the *Heritage at Risk register*.

The Friends of Pleasley Pit for their restoration of Pleasley Colliery, Mansfield, Derbyshire - winner of the English Heritage Angel Award for the best rescue of an industrial building or site

Left Bank Leeds for rescuing The Former Church of St Margaret of Antioch, Leeds, West Yorkshire - winner of the English Heritage Angel Award for the best rescue of a historic place of worship

The National Trust in partnership with the City of Bath College and Nimbus Conservation for their collective rescue of Tyntesfield Orangery in Somerset - winner of an English Heritage Angel Award as the Telegraph Subscribers' and English Heritage Members' Favourite.

Andrew Lloyd Webber chaired the judging panel which comprised Simon Thurley, Chief Executive of English Heritage, author and broadcaster Melvyn Bragg, Charles Moore of the Telegraph, historian Bettany Hughes and the Bishop of London, the Right Revd Richard Chartres.

Andrew Lloyd Webber said: "All 16 shortlisted groups were exceptional and the judges had a hard time deciding between them. But in the end the winners stood out for their passion, perseverance and imagination, for the scale of the challenges they had taken on and for the legacy they leave behind – a secure future for beautiful historic buildings which without them could so easily have simply disappeared.

"I am delighted that this first year of the award scheme has brought so many heritage Angels into the spotlight and look forward to many others joining their ranks in the years to come."

Simon Thurley said: "More than 200 local groups applied to win an Angel. Each group was fighting to save an important slice of our nation's heritage. The 16 shortlisted groups were all outstanding and if we could have made them all prize winners we would have. Yet it was a competition and the six winning groups brilliantly showed how local people with a passion can rescue some of the most important parts of England's history."

Bettany Hughes said: “The real joy of these awards is that we are recognising the value of the human spirit; our Angels are all men and women who have battled against the odds and who with flair, tenacity, sympathy, and sometimes wild inspiration have never taken 'no' for an answer and have instead laboured to make the world around them richer and better. If I wore hats, I would be in a perpetual state of taking my hat off to them all. We owe them much.”

The Bishop of London, the Right Revd Richard Chartres, said: “Like the other judges, I was impressed by all the contenders for the places of worship Angel, particularly by the efforts of the congregation of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Nottingham who have restored a crumbling concrete 1960s Catholic church which many would have just let go, and by the winners, Left Bank Leeds, who have brought enormous energy, creativity and life back to their vast red brick hulk of an inner city church.”

The Telegraph is the media partner for the English Heritage Angel Awards and BBC 2's Culture Show has been showing a series of films about the shortlisted candidates. Highlights from the awards ceremony will feature on the Culture Show on Friday 4 November.”

The English Heritage Angel Awards are co-funded by the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation. www.andrewlloydwebberfoundation.com

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To read Andrew Lloyd Webber's article describing why he decided to found The English Heritage Angel Awards visit www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/angel-awards

Or www.english-heritage.org.uk/heritageangelawards

Images of the winners and their projects can be downloaded from Picasa: <https://picasaweb.google.com/101554616913588617820/EnglishHeritageAngelAwardWinners?authuser=0&authkey=Gv1sRgCKv74MXu7r2UgAE&feat=directlink>

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