Grant awarded to St Mary Magdalene’s in Paddington

08/10/2013

A consortium of the Diocese of London, St Mary Magdalene’s Paddington PCC and Paddington Development Trust, with the support of Westminster City Council (WCC), has been awarded a first-round pass and development funding of £263,000 from the HLF for the restoration of St Mary Magdalene’s Church as a new heritage centre in Paddington, as well as continuing as a parish church in one of the most deprived wards in Westminster and Greater London.

The project will involve the restoration of the Grade I listed church, which is widely regarded as an outstanding example of neo-Gothic architecture and design, but has been largely closed to the public, and on the English Heritage’s ‘at risk’ register.

The funding will also go towards the construction of a new ‘Heritage Wing’ at St Mary Magdalene’s, with the aim of allowing full access to the building and engaging residents and visitors with the heritage stories of St Mary Magdalene’s and Paddington. In aid of this, it will offer a major learning, training and activity programme for residents and visitors in which these heritage stories will be told and explored.

The consortium expects the project to have a transformative impact on Westbourne Green, a key regeneration area within the City of Westminster, potentially attracting an upfront £4m in external investments into Paddington and complementing Westminster council’s plans for significant housing renewal and economic development in the area.

Neil Johnston, Chief Executive of Paddington Development Trust, commented: “This HLF grant now means we have a serious chance to turn our ideas for this beautiful historic building into reality; connecting people with Paddington’s dynamic physical and cultural heritage, but also with new experiences and possibilities in their own lives.”

Father Henry Everett, the Vicar of St Mary Magdalene’s, added: “This project is about honouring the intention of the original founders of St Mary Magdalene's to bring joy, light, colour and a sense of pride to this very deprived area of Westminster.

"Through the restoration of the church and delivery of a major heritage learning programme, we will be able to share this important building with the community and those visiting the area, and bring it to life with their own stories and heritage discoveries."

Sue Bowers, Head of HLF London, said: “St Mary’s is an impressive Victorian Gothic structure at the very heart of Paddington’s community. This project will restore the church and give the building a new lease of life by connecting local residents with its fascinating back story. We look forward to working with PDT and the church as they develop their plans further.”

Notes to editors

Diocese of London

The Diocese of London (2nd-century origins, reorganised in 604AD)
• Relating to 18 boroughs north of the River Thames
• Serving 3.9m people in 277 square miles

Key facts about the Diocese of London:
• 500+ worshipping communities
• 1,000 clergy and ministers
• 200 men and women in training for ministry
• 70,000 adults on electoral rolls
• 100,000+ regular worshippers
• 149 church schools
• 50,000+ pupils
• 150+ chaplaincies in schools, colleges, hospitals, the Met Police, Heathrow, railways, the Olympics, prisons, theatres, the forces, football clubs, Canary Wharf, livery companies, shops and City institutions
• Millions of pounds raised each year for charities around the world
• 1,500,000+ visitors and worshippers in St Paul's Cathedral each year

Churches around the Diocese operate over 1000 community ministry activities aided by over 10,000 volunteers, benefiting over 700,000 Londoners. These projects include work with children, youth and families, homeless people, the elderly and those experiencing problems with health or addiction.

In addition, there are thousands of groups working with countless community-based activities take place all across the Diocese, such as mother and toddler groups, youth clubs and Guides and Scouts groups.

About Paddington Development Trust
Paddington Development Trust (PDT) was formed by local people in 1997; since when, working with residents and statutory partners, it has directly raised over £30m and levered in an additional £100m into Paddington. Its mission is: "To ensure all Paddington people have access to opportunities leading to social and economic independence". PDT delivers three key areas of work - community and neighbourhood development, youth activities, skills training and employment and enterprise activities. For information about PDT contact Neil Johnston on 07973 817 148, email: neil@pdt.org.uk.

Further information

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