

Wakefield Cathedral wins first bid for regeneration

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The ambitious plans to regenerate and restore the city's landmark were boosted last night with the news it has been awarded a development grant of £50,000 from Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The HLF has given the green light to the cathedral to work up plans to make the city's largest public space fit for the 21st century with essential repairs and conservation work, improved lighting, heating systems and a creative education programme.

The HLF first-round pass* means that the cathedral can now progress their plans to the second round of the HLF grant award process. They have up to two years to submit more detailed plans and apply for the further £950,000 of HLF support that they are seeking for their project.

The Dean of Wakefield, the Very Revd Jonathan Greener, said: "This news from HLF is a marvellous boost for our redevelopment. It's great to have their support for both the building and a really creative education project. But of course it's just the first step. We know we need the people of our city and diocese to pull together to turn these exciting plans into reality.

"And our dream is to complete the project in time for 2013, the 125th anniversary of our cathedral, our city and our diocese," he added.

Last night the Bishop of Wakefield, the Rt Rev Stephen Platten also welcomed the news.

"The future of the cathedral is essential to the regeneration of the city. This is truly excellent news – and a first step towards that renewal. Spiritual regeneration is key for human flourishing – which has to be the basis for all forms of regeneration," he said.

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Yorkshire and the Humber region, said: "This award allows Wakefield Cathedral to develop their plans to open up this iconic building for everyone from the diocese and beyond to enjoy and appreciate. We look forward to working with them as they progress their plans and ideas."

Notes to editors

* A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

On occasion an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK, including over £341million to 2,500 projects in the Yorkshire and the Humber region alone.

Further information

Jane Bower, Wakefield Cathedral on 01924 371 802 or jane.bower@wakefield.anglican.org