Heritage Lottery Fund to help safeguard the tombs and memorials at West Littleton church

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The beautiful little church in the village of West Littleton has a collection of 18th and 19th-century wall memorials and tombs in urgent need of conservation. The award will go towards funding this highly specialised work which will see vital repairs to the four memorials and the nine intricate and stylish chest tombs.

The project is expected to cost over £50,000 in total. The project will get underway in March 2010 and is expected to take five months to complete. During that time visitors to the church will be able to see demonstrations of these important heritage skills, including masonry, archaeological recording and conservation.

Around 80 pupils from Marshfield School have already made a visit as part of their creative curriculum.

Kay Pettifer, Head Mistress of the school, said: “This is an interesting project for the children; we’re looking forward to seeing it develop."

The Marshfield and District Local History Society is also supporting the project.

A number of other organisations and trusts have also given their support, including the Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust. Donations have come from visitors to the church and supporters of village events like the popular ‘Gardens Open’ held every June. Local genealogist, Ann Ballard, has contributed her time to research those families commemorated on the memorials and tombs.

David Adams, Project Co-ordinator, said: “We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has helped to make this project possible. We believe it is vital to conserve our village heritage and make sure that future generations can enjoy the church and its surroundings for many years to come. The support and interest for the project has been most encouraging.”

Explaining the importance of the award, Nerys Watts, Heritage Lottery Fund’s Head of Region for the South West, said: “We are delighted to support the community of West Littleton with this project. It will not only ensure that important memorials to past generations are preserved for the future, but will also enable local people and visitors alike to learn more about the lives of those living in the village in previous times, and to record their findings for generations to come.”

Notes to editors

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about our diverse heritage. From our great museums and historic buildings to local parks and beauty spots or recording and celebrating traditions, customs and history, HLF grants open up our nation’s heritage for everyone to enjoy. Since 1994 it has supported more than 26,000 projects, allocating over £4 billion across the UK.

Further information

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