Peterborough Cathedral wins Heritage Lottery Fund support for Heritage & Education Centre

27/01/2012

The award includes development funding of £320,900 to help Peterborough Cathedral progress its plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

This project will form part of the Peterborough 900 Development Project, which aims to ensure the Cathedral plays an increasingly important role in the life of the city as an iconic place where thousands of people can come for all kinds of reasons: to worship, to understand their heritage, to develop musically or simply enjoy a wonderful event.

The ambitious plans for the Heritage & Education Centre will give visitors the opportunity to experience a fresh & exciting interpretation of the Cathedral and its faith story.
Based at 25 Minster Precincts, the new Heritage & Education Centre will make learning about our heritage more accessible for all visitors, new and old, and will share the Christian faith story more widely. The capacity and location of the Centre will help us work with a larger number of schools and young people. It will offer greater access, both physical and intellectual, including enhanced facilities for the disabled and high-tech interpretation.

The Centre will also enable us to continue and develop our work with vulnerable people in our community. Additionally this will provide a welcome and orientation point for visitors. It will also benefit staff and volunteers who will be able to create more opportunities to work in the shop, welcome & exhibition areas. Other activities will include Blue Badge (Heritage) training for new and existing guides.

All of this should attract more visitors, thereby contributing to the local economy and levels of tourism in the City in partnership with other heritage sites.

In 2018, Peterborough Cathedral celebrates the 900th anniversary of the start of the present building – hence the “Peterborough 900” Development Project. As an Anglican Cathedral it is a place of worship but its role extends well beyond that. People of all faiths, and indeed no faith, in Peterborough and the surrounding region identify with the Cathedral – the iconic symbol of the City.
Cathedrals are of great importance in celebrating events of historical significance. Peterborough is no different.

Housing Catharine of Aragon’s tomb and the initial burial place of Mary Queen of Scots, our Cathedral has a wealth of history and heritage that can be shared and enjoyed by all.

The Very Reverend Charles Taylor, Dean of Peterborough stated how delighted he was at this news: ‘I am delighted to learn that we have secured first round funding from HLF today. This is a public vote of confidence in our plans to develop the Cathedral’s work in the City, the Diocese, the region and beyond. It is all the more appropriate that the news is announced today when the Cathedral full of several hundred school children marking the Commemoration of Katharine of Aragon. This is Heritage & Education in action in the most accessible and enjoyable way. We look forward to doing more of it!’

Alice Kershaw Heritage Regeneration Officer, Opportunity Peterborough and Peterborough City Council continues: 'I am really pleased with the decision by HLF to give Peterborough Cathedral a First-Round Pass. This project will help highlight how strong the heritage of Peterborough is. The Cathedral is the heart of the City centre and the reason Peterborough is here today. This will help to make the most of this phenomenal asset. This news is great for the City as a whole, because the investment into our most significant building will pay dividends culturally, economically and educationally.'

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said: 'We at HLF are delighted to be able to support the development of Peterborough Cathedral's plans. The Heritage Centre has the potential to provide fantastic insight into the rich and varied heritage of the Cathedral and its Precincts, making this fascinating story will be more accessible to the wider community. It will also help celebrate the Cathedral's role at the heart of the ongoing regeneration activity for the city. There is still work to be done in developing the project but HLF will be offering their full support in taking their application further.'

Over the last few years, the East of England Development Team has been working closely with organisations from across Peterborough to help increase funding for schemes across the city. This investment in the Cathedral follows earlier awards to the Museum (re-opening in the Spring), the City Archives, the Environment City Trust and Peterborough & Stamford NHS Trust. In total HLF has awarded over £7.5million to projects which have had a transformational affect on the city and its heritage.

Notes to editors

About Peterborough Cathedral
Peterborough Cathedral is the seat (Cathedra) of the Bishop of Peterborough. His Diocese covers Peterborough north of the river, all of Northamptonshire and Rutland – more than 300 parishes and churches with an estimated population of 842,000.

The Cathedral is open daily and is currently enjoyed by around 100,000 visitors and pilgrims annually. In addition to the regular services, the Cathedral is a venue for ecumenical and interfaith meetings and events, and is a focus for civic occasions and festivals. It hosts an active musical programme for a variety of choirs, orchestras and musicians, both amateur and professional, together with artists of regional, national and international acclaim.
www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk

Further information

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