Hartlebury Castle's future secured with help of



Exterior view of Hartlebury Castle

The Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust (HCPT), with partners Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and Museums Worcestershire (MW), have been awarded £5m by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to preserve the historic Castle and its valuable assets.

The trust can now buy Hartlebury Castle with its surrounding 43 acres of parkland and embark on programmes for conservation and activities.

The trust and Museums Worcestershire will make the castle, Hurd Library, Collections of the Museum and Castle, as well as the gardens into an integrated visitor destination that will benefit the local area and serve as a major attraction for visitors from around the UK and beyond. This will continue a thousand years of public access to the former home of the Bishops of Worcester.

Detailed business, conservation and activities plans were developed with the help of a round one HLF award of £413,700 in support of the ongoing efforts to secure the future of this important heritage site.

Reyahn King, Head of HLF West Midlands, said: "I'm very pleased that Heritage Lottery Fund is able to support this project with £5million of Lottery player's money. The purchase will ensure that Hartlebury Castle with its distinctive

architecture and the Hurd Library is saved for future generations. We applaud the trust's vision to welcome more visitors and bring the stories and site to life."

Robert Greenwood, Chair and HLF project sponsor at HCPT, commented: "We are delighted with this £5m award from HLF that together with the generosity of so many organizations, authorities and individuals who have pledged £2.25m in matched funding, revenue support, individual gifts and time will now enable us to go ahead with our project."

For centuries, Hartlebury Castle was Worcestershire's powerful centre of influence, and it's great to know that we are now able to achieve the dream of the founder trustees, members and volunteers"

Councillor Lucy Hodgson, Chairman of the Joint Museums Committee and County Council Cabinet Member for Localism and Communities, said: "It has been a pleasure to work with the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust and Museums Worcester-shire to secure the long-term future of this fabulous building steeped in the county's history. We look forward to working as a partnership to deliver a first class visitor attraction which will be a wonderful asset to World Class Worcestershire."

The trust plans to complete the purchase from the Church Commissioners by early December this year.

The Rt. Revd Dr. John Inge Bishop of Worcester said: "I am delighted that several years of anxiety about the future of the castle and its great library have been re-solved so positively, and that HLF has been able to support the project so generously. It is very good news for the people of Worcestershire and beyond. It the result of a great deal of hard work and constructive collaboration by the many friends of the Castle, the County Council and the Church Commissioners. I look forward to the next phase in the life of this great building: it will be an exciting one."

Angela Brinton DL, President of the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust, said: "I am thrilled by this news. The future of the castle and its wonderful library has been secured after a long period of doubt and anxiety. The support of the HLF has been magnificent and we and our partners can ensure that Hartlebury Castle is established as a great resource for the people of Worcestershire and beyond".

Rosemarie Jones, Deputy Surveyor for the Church Commissioners, said: "The Church Commissioners welcome the news that The Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust (HCPT), and its partners can now buy Hartlebury Castle and its parkland. We have worked closely with the trust and are delighted that they have been awarded this grant which will enable them to take over the castle, former home to the Bishop of Worcester, and work on plans to preserve the property for education and as a tourist attraction, open to all."

About Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust

HCPT was formed to help preserve the historic castle and its valuable assets – in particular, the Hurd Library.

About the Hurd Library

The Hurd Library was purpose built for Richard Hurd, Bishop of Worcester, in 1782 and houses a nationally important collection of books, including a New Testament which was given to Alexander Pope by Jonathan Swift, and a 1611 edition of Spenser's works, which was owned by John Dryden and then Alexander Pope.

About Museums Worcestershire

Museums Worcestershire is the joint museum service of Worcester City and Worcestershire County Councils.

Further information

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