

PRESS RELEASE: Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

HELP FOR HERITAGE AS CARTMEL PRIORY RECEIVES LIFELINE FROM GOVERNMENT'S CULTURE RECOVERY FUND

- More help for heritage in need with £14 million investment in England's historic sites
- **Cartmel Priory** among 162 organisations receiving lifeline grant from the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund
- Culture across the country benefits as 70 per cent of latest Culture Recovery funding awarded outside London

Lifeline grants from the latest round of the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund will protect a further 162 heritage sites to ensure that jobs and access to arts, culture and heritage in local communities are protected in the months ahead, the Culture Secretary announced today.

Historic sites including **Cartmel Priory** will receive help to meet ongoing costs and support to restart activity when it is possible to do so safely.

More than £9 million has been allocated by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which builds on £103 million awarded to more significant historic places last month. Grants between £10,000 and £1 million have been awarded to stabilise 77 organisations.

In addition, £5 million will go to construction and maintenance projects that have been paused due to the pandemic.

Historic England has allocated £3,971,513 in awards from the Heritage Stimulus Fund, part of a £120 million capital investment from the Culture Recovery Fund, to restart construction and maintenance projects facing delays or increased costs as a result of the pandemic and save specialist livelihoods in the sector.

Cartmel Priory has been awarded a welcome grant which will be used to support approved overheads and other essential maintenance costs; re-establishing income streams damaged by the prevention/reduction of visitor footfall and creating new digital attractions in addition to an existing Virtual Reality experience to secure its heritage and make it accessible to a wider community.

Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, said:

"These grants will help the places that have shaped our skylines for hundreds of years and that continue to define culture in our towns and cities.

From St Paul's and Ronnie Scott's to The Lowry and Durham Cathedral, we're protecting heritage and culture in every corner of the country to save jobs and ensure it can bounce back strongly."

The Reverend Nick Devenish, Vicar of Cartmel Priory, said:

“We are thrilled to receive this magnificent award which will give us a vital financial breathing space as we seek to maintain this magnificent Grade 1 listed building, carry out our day to day work at the heart of a busy community and congregation as well as steward and preserve this historically important building for future generations and further develop our ground-breaking digital offering. The abrupt and instant loss of our income from our many visitors was a shock I know we shared with so many others at the start of this pandemic and many people not only now but in the future will be thankful for this timely and essential support.”

The Priory Church of St Mary and St Michael has stood proudly in the village of Cartmel on the southern fringe of the Lake District since its foundation by the great William Marshal in 1189. Described by Simon Jenkins (England’s Thousand Best Churches) as the most beautiful church in the north-west it has survived many threats including its potential destruction by Henry VIII while managing to preserve much early stonework and glass together with its grand perpendicular 600-year old East Window, 14th century misericords and unusual 17th century screen. There is much which has been added since for worshippers and visitors to enjoy right up to a Virtual Reality telling of its survival at the Dissolution. Those currently responsible for the Priory are conscious of their responsibility in stewarding this place. Provisions have already been put in place to re-open the Priory for regular services, as a visitor attraction to the area when the lockdown eases and it is already Visit England Good to Go accredited. This grant will not only be used to cover immediate and urgent maintenance costs and costs incurred in the provision of a safe space but to enable planning for the establishment of greater resilience for the future and the creating of additional digital attractions to make our heritage accessible to a much wider community.

74 organisations are also receiving grants of up to £25,000 from the Covid-19 Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund, launched by Historic England and almost quadrupled thanks to the Culture Recovery Fund, to cover maintenance and repairs urgently needed on historic buildings and sites up and down the country.

Duncan Wilson, Historic England Chief Executive said:

“Historic places across the country, from Durham Cathedral embodying more than a thousand years of history to the Crystal Palace dinosaurs, much loved by children and grownups alike, are being supported by the Government’s latest round of grants awarded under the Culture Recovery Fund. This funding is a lifeline which is kickstarting essential repairs and maintenance at many of our most precious historic sites, so they can begin to recover from the damaging effects of Covid-19. It is also providing employment for skilled craft workers who help to keep historic places alive and the wheels of the heritage sector turning. Our shared heritage is an anchor for us all in these challenging times and this funding will help to ensure it remains part of our collective future.”

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the National Lottery Heritage Fund said:

“The Government’s £1.57bn package for culture is unprecedented and it’s important to acknowledge how valuable this has been for our heritage organisations and visitor attractions. Although we are not able to support everyone facing difficulties, today’s funding package helps a diverse range of heritage organisations from across the country survive, adapt and plan for a brighter future through the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage.”

“By the end of this financial year we will have distributed almost £600m of Government and National Lottery Funding to heritage organisations. Investing in heritage remains vitally important, creating jobs and economic prosperity, driving tourism, supporting our wellbeing and making our towns, cities, and rural areas better places to live. There is a lot more work to do to address the ongoing challenges, but this funding has provided a future for much of our heritage and the organisations that care for it, when it might otherwise have been permanently lost.”

All four nations are benefiting from the UK Government’s £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, with £188 million barnetted to the Devolved Administrations to run their own process - £97 million for Scotland, £59 million for Wales and £33 million for Northern Ireland. This funding will enable them to increase the support already available to the arts and cultural sectors in each nation.

Over £18 million in funding will go to 8 arts and cultural organisations around the country in the second round of grants between £1 million and £3 million awarded by Arts Council England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, it has also been announced today. This funding builds on £75 million in grants over £1 million for iconic venues like Shakespeare’s Globe and the Sheffield Crucible last month.

Notes to editors

A full list of organisations receiving funding is available from Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

For more information:

The Reverend Nick Devenish, Vicar Cartmel Priory
nickdevenish@mac.com
07733 260090

Annabel Hunt
ahpriory@gmail.com