



to help them engage with their communities through imaginative outreach,

Today Leicester, Lichfield, Newcastle and Worcester Cathedrals announce awards from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for a wide range of creative community-focussed projects, including bringing Worcester's 12th century undercroft into public use as an imaginative learning hub and new city venue, and creating a sacred space for all to enjoy in Newcastle's city centre.

The news follows a huge international reaction to the fire at Notre Dame which showed something of the value of cathedrals to local and wider communities, as well as their vulnerability, and the need for securing long-term funding for repairs and restoration. Development projects like those funded through The National Lottery Heritage Fund, remain crucial for all of the Church of England's cathedrals.

Becky Clark, the Church of England's Director of Churches and Cathedrals, said: "Creating positive and lasting change for people and communities is a vision The National Lottery Heritage Fund shares with cathedrals, so this is tremendous news for these four cities and their wider communities.

"The value of our cathedrals is clear to the ten million people who visit each year, and to the hundreds of thousands who regularly attend worship.

"The cities and wider communities which Lichfield, Leicester, Newcastle and Worcester serve are at the heart of these projects, and these funding awards highlight the enduring importance and appeal of cathedrals, and their ability to maintain traditions of worship and openness whilst also pioneering new ways of inviting everyone to enjoy all they have to offer,' she added.

The Very Revd Adrian Dorber, chair of the Association of English Cathedrals, and the Dean of Lichfield said: "Our cathedrals are one of our country's greatest assets and at the heart of our history, our culture, and our social fabric, and a testament to our faith.

"This funding will help some of our cathedrals better realise their ambitions to tell their stories, raise aspiration, create new opportunities to meet their communities, and to be a constant in the changing and precarious world in which we live," he added.

Case Studies

Worcester Cathedral has been awarded a grant of just over £1 million towards the creation of a unique historic venue to facilitate learning, arts and heritage for the whole community in its 12th century Undercroft and to install a lift to provide access for all. During development, Worcester Cathedral sought audiences with those who do not currently engage with the life of the building to develop new and inspiring activities, and the project is aligned with national and regional priorities to contribute to the prosperity of the county by attracting more visitors, developing the skills of local people and boosting the local economy.

Leicester Cathedral's ambitious £11.3m project to restore the city's historic cathedral and build a new Heritage Learning Centre beside the main building has secured its full grant of £3.3m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The Heritage Learning Centre, on the site of the former Song School, will be a two-storey stone building with some terracotta and glass features.

The Dean of Leicester, the Very Revd David Monteith said: "*Leicester Cathedral Revealed* is very important because it will transform what we will be able to do. It will protect the historic setting of the Cathedral, free up the sacred spaces, provide inspirational interpretation and learning facilities, and be a safe place of hospitality and refuge for those in need. In every respect it will transform the individual experience of being inside the Cathedral.

Leicester has now raised £8m towards this project and hopes to raise the remaining £3m throughout 2019 and begin on site in 2020 with a completion date of 2022.

Newcastle Cathedral's exciting heritage project, *Common Ground in Sacred Space*, has been awarded £4.2 million. The project will see the Cathedral re-established as a dynamic community hub and a key attraction in Newcastle city centre with significant improvements to the public space outside and an overhaul of its interior to accommodate more visitors, activities and events.

Common Ground in Sacred Space project will revive and transform the historic fabric of the unique and beautiful building and its churchyard, to revitalise the medieval church's civic role throughout the centuries as the centre of city life for locals, families, tourists and pilgrims alike.

The Dean of Newcastle, the Very Revd Geoff Miller said: "We are thrilled to have received this once-in-a-lifetime support.

"We have a passionate and highly committed team who are really excited to be delivering such a big project in the Cathedral's history. After years of careful planning, we are confident that our project will embrace and meet the needs of the people of Newcastle and the region, including the vulnerable, residents, and tourists, by making sacred space common ground."

Physical work will begin in early 2020 with the launch of the redeveloped Cathedral and grounds at Easter 2021. The *Common Ground in Sacred Space* project is expected to create seven new jobs, one hundred new volunteer opportunities, and attract over 100,000 visitors to the Cathedral every year.

Lichfield Cathedral has been awarded a grant of £156,400 by The National Lottery Heritage Fund for essential research, planning and assessment work on the Cathedral's future needs – including an environmental sustainability policy – and possible capital building projects around the medieval building and the Close. This 12 month project aims to come up with a strategic plan to better meet the needs of its congregation, visitors, schools and learning groups, civic and community stakeholders and commercial hirers, and improve its visitor experience.

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