

St. Paul's Church, Woodhouse Eaves, Leicestershire, is to be rescued from partial collapse as the Chancel subsides: Local Generosity and incredible support from National Lottery players saves the day!

A confirmed and truly amazing Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) award of nearly £100,000 will allow the repair of the chancel of St Paul's Church and a heritage project around the building and its history. In 1837 when St Paul's Church in Woodhouse Eaves was built at a total cost of £1200, it was funded by "subscription" and the "Incorporated Society,



Now, in 2017, it is to be saved from collapse through the generosity of many donors. The money to restore the subsiding chancel has been raised from incredible local donors, donations from 3 marvellous charities and, of course, the overwhelming award from the HLF and those who buy National lottery tickets - once again a joint funding effort! We hope that work to restore the chancel will be starting this Autumn and last around 16 weeks. The church should be able to remain functional throughout.



The project, having established through HLF-funded investigations that inadequate foundations are the cause of the subsidence of the chancel, has a plan of repair agreed. The intriguing restorations have been approved by both the HLF and Historic England and should ensure the position of St Paul's as an iconic building in our glorious village for future generations. Multiple activities to enjoy the heritage of this 180-year old church are planned in the near future. We are hoping to involve everyone in the locality in this exciting venture.

We are thrilled that, as part of this project, the HLF have contributed funding towards building an enlarged chancel with a ramp to allow access for all to the chancel. You are all invited to come and enjoy the numerous and varied church open days that will include exhibitions of part village life and its characters. There will be a photographic competition with prizes, starting shortly, look out for notices around the church. On this theme we are planning a "bring your wedding album" open church afternoon later in the year. We hope that as many people as possible will come to the church with their memories and albums to share with others. We will provide refreshments. A heritage exhibition, with linked quizzes for children and adults, is to be mounted from June 2018. This will cover the heritage of the church, its parishioners, architect etc. If you have an interest in anything to do with the church building or local families with any historic connection with it then we would be very pleased to hear from you. If you have any skill or time at all you can offer to the project then we would give you a warm welcome as we need lots of both!



We hope to involve not only our linked St Paul's primary school but also other local young persons groups and establishments with the project. We will offer starting, as required, to those who volunteer with us so please feel free to join us and learn new skills! Next year we will be running a series of talks in the church on many of the topics covered in the exhibition as well as the Church restoration process.

St. Paul's Church, known as the "church on the hill", has been seen by many as a jewel of the heart of our community for 180 years. It is a lovely uncluttered and light building designed by Architect Wilson Robison who also designed Beaumont Hall and Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square. The extended chancel (now subsiding) was added as a memorial in 1871. In 1924 two windows by Theodoros Stahouris, a famous, locally born Arts and Crafts artist, were installed in the church.

Reverend Lisa Temperley-Barnes, Rector of St Paul's Church said of the award "This is wonderful news for the whole community of Woodhouse Eaves, as well as the congregation of St Paul's Church. We hope that everyone will feel welcome to visit this beautiful church and see what reports are being undertaken and what a fantastic legacy they have inherited".

The Hon. Jonathan Pott, Head of HLF East Midlands, said: "Historic places of worship like St Paul's have fascinating stories to tell, and one often at the heart of local communities. Thanks to National Lottery players' we can help to address the church's urgent conservation needs and share its heritage widely."

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