



23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017

## **Sharing Heritage: Connecting Schoolchildren in our diverse town with their shared history, celebrates £10,000 Heritage Lottery Fund grant.**

Luton Parish Church of St. Mary has received a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Sharing Heritage<sup>1</sup> grant. This exciting project at St. Marys Church Luton, led by St. Marys Children's Worker, has been given £10,000.

St. Mary's Parish Church Luton is a beautiful Grade 1 listed building in the centre of Luton. Schools from Luton and the surrounding area have requested School visits to St. Mary's as part of the History and Religious Education National Curriculum. This funding now enables St. Mary's to open the doors of the building more frequently to schools allowing more children and schools to come through the building and gain historical insight about the church building and town.

The visits will also aid and support the schools with their curriculum. There are many schools within Luton and the surrounding areas that will benefit from a schools programme at St Mary's Parish Church.

St Mary's has so much Historical value and links with the town, including the links with royalty, eg.

- The Queen's seat in The Wenlock Chapel,
- The Wolsey Door, Given by cardinal Wolsey (500 years old),
- The Baptistry given by royalty in the 14th century.

The Church is graced with stained glass windows and many features and details. The Project will include school tours of the building, highlighting the history and features of the building and how these have been used in worship over the centuries. There is plenty of scope and opportunity to sketch and record information within the church on a school tour. Luton is a multicultural town, this project will give more opportunity for different faith schools to be invited to visit St Mary's.

Commenting on the award, Rev Mike Jones said "St Mary's has been called a hidden jewel in Luton. We are delighted that we have been awarded this grant which enables schoolchildren from our town to find out about Luton's heritage. We love Luton and there is so much to discover about our past. We are delighted to share our heritage and history with them".

Emma Cook, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said: "Sharing Heritage is a wonderful opportunity for communities to delve into their local heritage and we are delighted to be able to offer this

grant so that St. Marys Luton can embark on a real journey of discovery. Heritage means such different things to different people, and HLF's funding offers a wealth of opportunities for groups to explore and celebrate what's important to them in their area."

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to editors**

#### **Sharing Heritage**

<sup>1</sup>Sharing Heritage is for any not-for-profit group wanting to explore their community's heritage. With a commitment from HLF of £3m each year, Sharing Heritage grants between £3,000 and £10,000 are available to groups who want to discover their local heritage. Projects can cover a wide spectrum of subject matter from exploring local archaeology and a community's cultures and traditions to identifying and recording local wildlife and protecting the surrounding environment to managing and training volunteers, and holding festivals and events to commemorate the past.

#### **Heritage Lottery Fund**

From the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife, we use National Lottery players' money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk).

#### **For further information, images and interviews, please contact**

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