



All Saints Ilkley



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All Saints Ilkley secures Heritage Lottery Fund support

All Saints Ilkley has received initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for their project to tell the stories of the parish church, Saxon crosses and Roman fort, it was announced today. The project aims to improve access to and open up the interior of the church to reveal the exciting heritage within. Visitors will learn about All Saints through the eyes of the people it has been important to over the years, from the Roman governor Agricola who chose Ilkley as the site for one of his forts, to the 'donkey man' whose beasts ferried people up Ilkley moor in Victorian times, to the stories of the church ministry to officers in World War II.

Development funding of £22,700 has also been awarded, to help All Saints Ilkley progress their plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

Thanks to National Lottery players the project aims to create a light, welcoming, attractive building which is fully accessible and which can be used by the community for a wide range of purposes. Exciting displays, guided walks and digital media will interpret more than 2,000 years of history and will enhance Ilkley's offer to visitors to the town. An educational programme is planned to share our heritage with local school children. New volunteers will provide a warm welcome to visitors and will be trained to share our heritage, and a new staff post will be created to support us to develop our plans.

All Saints Ilkley represents one of the most historic places in Ilkley, standing on the site of the former Roman Fort of Olicana, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, founded in 80AD. When the fort was abandoned, Anglo-Saxon settlers re-used the stone to build a church. The current Grade II* listed building is partly medieval and was substantially enlarged by the Victorians. The 15th Century tower houses three Grade I listed Saxon Crosses and several Roman altars of great regional importance.

The church and the adjacent Church House are a focal point for the local community, currently being used by over 30 community groups for meetings, concerts, theatre productions and exhibitions.

Revd Patrick Bateman said "We're delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us this support and encouragement. Our church has been an important part of Ilkley's Christian heritage and wider community for nearly 1,400 years. It's great that we are a step closer to preserving it for another century, and to widening access to this special place for even more people to appreciate, enjoy and share."

Explaining the importance of the HLF support, Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "This initial investment will support All Saints Ilkley in developing their plans to open up the church and share its long and varied history with the wider community. This significant site tells the story of over 2000 years of history and is an important part our local and national heritage. We look forward to receiving a second round application in the future."

For further information, please contact:

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