**St Leonard Middleton Parish Church has received £3,000 National Lottery support to help address the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on heritage**

St Leonard Middleton has received £3,000 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to assist with the necessary costs of cleaning and tidying the Church and Churchyard in readiness for the resumption of regular worship.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown began St Leonard Middleton has been unable to hold physical services, which are a life-line of support and encouragement to many people. Instead the church, with its neighbouring parish within the Benefice of Middleton & Thornham, has been holding online services to support those able to attend.

Revd David Brooks, OLM Curate at St Leonard Middleton said: “Thanks to the National Lottery and its players we can now ensure this historical living building can continue to be used when additional funding from visitors and tourists has been denied due to the essential lockdown process. We’re grateful that The National Lottery Heritage Fund is supporting us at this crucial time – it’s a lifeline to us and others who are passionate about sustaining heritage for the benefit of all.”

The funding, made possible by National Lottery players, was awarded through The National Lottery Heritage Fund’s Heritage Emergency Fund. £50million was made available to provide emergency funding for those most in need across the heritage sector.

The UK-wide fund aimed to address both immediate emergency actions and help organisations to start thinking about recovery.

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “Heritage has an essential role to play in making communities better places to live, supporting economic regeneration and benefiting our personal wellbeing. All of these things are going to be even more important as we emerge from this current crisis.

“Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players we are pleased to be able to lend our support to organisations such as St Leonard Middleton during this uncertain time.”

Like St Leonard Middleton other charities and organisations across the UK that have been affected by the unprecedented impact of the coronavirus outbreak are being given access to a comprehensive package of support of up to £600 million of repurposed money from The National Lottery. This money is supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our communities and span the arts, community, charity, heritage, education, environment and sports sectors.

Thanks to National Lottery players, £30 million is raised every week for good causes, including heritage of local and national importance. By playing The National Lottery, people up and down the country are making an amazing contribution to the nationwide-response to combatting the impact of COVID-19 on local communities across the UK.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund’s Heritage Emergency Fund is now closed for applications.

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