

Cossington Church and Village Centre

Project Group Update: Spring 2019

Building for Cossington's Future

We are aiming to improve the fabric & facilities of All Saints Church in order to:

- Serve the whole community of Cossington as a community centre for all.
- Enable and equip the growing Cossington church family to thrive.

HERITAGE Lottery Funding (HLF) was the focus of our last news update of 2018 when we were awaiting the outcome of our grant application in the run up to Christmas. We now have a mix of news to report which seems par for the course in our development journey!

The disappointing news first – basically our application was refused; but we were pleasantly surprised to be invited to a special audience with HLF officials who encouraged us to make a fresh application!

HLF said they recognise there is a case for an award for the conservation of the heritage in and around and associated with our Grade II* listed buildings. However they pointed out that our previous application case included justifications for our new village centre which would account for around 60% of total project expenditure. These *new* works seemingly were considered disproportionate for the *heritage* orientated HLF.

We also reflected on the success of our 2016 application for £120,000 from the lottery-backed Listed Places of Worship (LPOW) Roof Repair Fund and noted how that 'roofing project' was actually carved out from our overall Church & Village Centre project. Could we similarly carve out and present a new 'conservation project' application which HLF felt could qualify for a £250,000 HLF award from a new faster-tracked 2019 HLF award scheme.

Notably our 2018 application was a first round application within context of a two-year 2-phase process. So a successful award under this new 2019 scheme might actually be secured before the award under the original scheme!

So we have been very fortunate to have had this opportunity to discuss a *'new'* application and to better understand what HLF is looking for. We feel very encouraged at the moment especially since we have already done the necessary research and design work to support such a carved out 'conservation project'.

With such a significant £250,000 grant award being suggested we feel it would indeed be prudent and worthwhile for us to carve out a 'project' that would meet the declared HLF criteria, whilst at the same time delivering a significant next step of our overall project for the village namely a warm dry church with a new floor, new electrics and a toilet.

I look forward to being able to share more details as they develop including anticipated scheduling for the remaining steps especially the annexe which will contain the planned kitchen, village meeting rooms and cloakroom facilities.

Paul Dearson