



Having had an ambition - we waited and hoped

The National Lottery Resilient Heritage Fund has awarded a grant of £189,200 to HCTG, who will lead on the project:

Virtuous Circles 2 – Sustainable Tourism for Sustainable Churches

This is a **GREAT** opportunity for all our members. This will only happen if everyone gets involved positively in the project.

We will be working in partnership with:

- Shropshire Churches Tourism Group - our sister organisation
- Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust
- Churches Conservation Trust
- National Churches Trust
- Churches Visitor and Tourism Association

There are two distinct but closely related parts of the project:

1. The development of accommodation “pods” in an open under-used church at Turnastone in Herefordshire. A national blueprint will be created for future churches to use, in partnership with CCT, who have experience with “champing” or church camping!. A development officer will be appointed to work on this element.
2. A Churches Tourism Development Officer will be appointed for 3 days a week to work on helping us to raise the profile and value of church tourism in Herefordshire and Shropshire. As with Turnastone, a national blueprint will be created for future church tourism groups to use, in partnership with the NCT. Guidance will be provided for our church members to increase their expertise and knowledge of where our historic church buildings fit into the tourism offer to visitors. We will use innovative technology as well as developing unique ‘bookable’ visitor experience and a series of themed trails, which we hope will encourage more visitors to our churches to help sustain a resilient long term future. By intentionally and professionally engaging with tourism we aim to demonstrate an increase in visitor numbers. Also included in the project is adding all our Church Tourism Group members to the National Churches Trust ‘Explore Churches’ website.

We will be seeking volunteer member churches to take part in the development of the project over the 2 years. The criteria for this will be available after the official launch of the project in:

Leominster Priory at 2.00pm TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER, 2019.

All members are warmly invited to this launch where you will be able to find out more about what is planned.