

PRESS RELEASE/RESPONSE

The Heritage Lottery Fund has announced it will no longer be funding the restoration and repair of the historic Milton Abbey church near Blandford Forum.

The decision has been met with disappointment by those involved in the £1.2 million project.

The Archdeacon of Dorset, The Ven Antony MacRow-Wood, who is the Chair of the Milton Abbey Standing Committee said:

“The Diocese is very disappointed in the decision to withdraw funding for ‘The Great Stare’ project which was a great opportunity to carry out vital repairs and develop Milton Abbey as a visitor attraction within its Capability Brown setting.

We will be investigating all options to safeguard the future of this beautiful building.”

Representatives from the Standing Committee hope to meet with representatives of the Heritage Lottery Fund later in the month to discuss the decision.

Milton Abbey Church is a 14th Century gem which had been partially repaired by the Diocese of Salisbury, but funding was sought from the HLF to complete the restoration and create a visitor centre, along with woodland walks.

The HLF grant was to be used to repair the key features of the Abbey including internal and external masonry, the tower windows, ceilings and vaults. While oak-clad pods were to be installed to host toilets, a kitchen and office and storage facilities.

The building and grounds are owned jointly by Milton Abbey School, the Diocese of Salisbury and the Forestry Commission.

ENDS

Further information

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