



### **Historic Middle Street Synagogue a step closer to securing its future**

Closed for regular services for over two decades, the Grade II\* listed Middle Street Synagogue located in the heart of Brighton's historic Lanes is of significant heritage importance not only to the Jewish community but Brighton's broader history as a city shaped by migration, diversity, creativity and sanctuary.

Today, it's been announced that its future is one step closer to being secured after a £112,740 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund was announced. It will form part of a £130,000 project to look at what is needed to bring the historic building back to life and celebrate the building's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Thanks to the vision of the Board of the Brighton & Hove Hebrew Congregation, owners of the building and the Foundation for Jewish Heritage, the project will enable the necessary detailed survey work, urgent repairs and outreach activities to be undertaken.

This project builds on work in 2024 that looked at an 'Options Appraisal', supported by the Heritage Fund, Pilgrim Trust, and Architectural Heritage Fund funding, that identified a new use for the site as a Brighton and Hove Hebrew Congregation vibrant cultural and educational centre.

Middle Street, opened in 1875, was added to significantly over the next 40 years, giving it its richly decorated interior and stained-glass windows. These offer a rare insight into the religious and communal life of the Jewish community in late 19th and early 20th century Brighton. It has recently been described as 'jewel-like' but the physical fabric, historic and public value of this synagogue is at risk.

The current planned works will help to secure the building and lay the groundwork for a future larger project which will transform this iconic Synagogue, becoming a lively hub for culture, education and heritage for the local community and visitors. It will also be retained for occasional religious services including weddings.

Susan Conway, Chair of the Congregation said "We are very grateful to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for their continuing very generous support of this exciting project to preserve Middle Street Synagogue. We are also delighted to be continuing our partnership with the Foundation for Jewish Heritage. This project is very timely given that this year we are celebrating the Synagogue's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary."

Michael Mail, Chief Executive of the Foundation, commented, "The stunning Middle Street Synagogue is a hugely significant building and we deeply appreciate the interest that National Lottery has shown in our project to find a solution for the building which is currently closed to the public. We aim to preserve and re-imagine the site to enable Middle Street synagogue to once again play a meaningful role in Brighton and the South Coast."

Stuart McLeod, Director of London & South at The National Lottery Heritage Fund said: “Middle Street Synagogue is an extraordinary part of Brighton’s heritage and we’re proud to continue to support the Foundation for Jewish Heritage find a fitting future for it. Thanks to National Lottery players, this funding will help lay the foundations for its next lease of life to become a vibrant cultural and educational space for the whole community.”

For further information, please contact -

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### **Note to Editor**

The Foundation for Jewish Heritage works in the UK and internationally on the preservation of Jewish heritage in danger. Website - <https://www.foundationforjewishheritage.com/>

### **About The National Lottery Heritage Fund**

As the largest dedicated funder of the UK’s heritage, The National Lottery Heritage Fund’s vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future as set out in our strategic plan, Heritage 2033.

Over the next ten years, the Heritage Fund aims to invest £3.6billion raised for good causes by National Lottery players to bring about benefits for people, places and the natural environment.

The Heritage Fund helps protect, transform and share the things from the past that people care about, from popular museums and historic places, our natural environment and fragile species, to the languages and cultural traditions that celebrate who we are.

The Heritage Fund is passionate about heritage and committed to driving innovation and collaboration to make a positive difference to people’s lives today, while leaving a lasting legacy for future generations to enjoy.

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