



## Selby Abbey: The Origin Stories

Selby Abbey: The Origin Stories is a £1.4m project that will allow us to complete essential repairs to our Grade I listed building and deliver a public engagement programme centred around the creation of a Monastic Garden within the Abbey grounds.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded Selby Abbey a grant of £150,000 in March 2023 to support the development of our project. We have worked with a team of professional specialists to develop the detail of our project. In November 2024 we will submit a delivery phase application to the Heritage Fund to secure funding that will enable us to complete the project, subject to us securing the required match funding.

Our target audiences for this project are:

Local families with children (particularly from Selby East and Selby West)  
Local older adults and couples  
Tourists and day trippers  
Primary School children  
Young people  
Local community groups  
Selby College students  
Secondary school students  
People with well-being needs

The project will begin in June 2025 and finish in October 2027.

The main project activity and outcomes are:

- Appointment of 3 project staff that will focus on project management, volunteer engagement and community engagement.
- Essential repairs to the north transept and St Germain window that will ensure the protection of this significant heritage building for our visitors and local communities.
- Creation of a Monastic Garden on the south side on the Abbey, where the original cloisters were located, and which will provide opportunities for long-term volunteering and community engagement.
- The delivery of new interpretation and wayfinding, telling the story of the Abbey, within the Monastic Garden, Abbey ground, within the Abbey building, including family-friendly activities (e.g. Jigsaw of the St Germain window), and as part of our 'Abbey on Tour' outreach activity. We aim to increase the use of our site by local people and increase knowledge about the history of the Abbey.
- Partial upgrade to roof insulation to reduce energy costs and reduce negative environmental impact.

- Launch of or new branding to increase our profile and position Selby Abbey as a destination for visitors, helping to drive visits to our town and local area.
- A comprehensive engagement plan, based on consultation with partners, stakeholders, target audiences, staff and volunteers will promote greater access, inclusion and participation.
- Our engagement plan will be delivered through the project and will include:
  - Staff and volunteer training to build capacity and develop skills to meet the needs of our target audiences.
  - Opportunities for people to learn about the repair and conservation works including hard hat tours and training for staff and volunteers about caring for heritage.
  - Opportunities for volunteering to support the development and delivery of guided tours, support education programmes, help look after heritage collections, and develop health and wellbeing provision at the Abbey.
  - The creation of a gardening club to develop and maintain our Monastic Garden, including researching plants and stories to support the planting and interpretation.
  - A series of creative sessions including willow weaving; fused glass making; knitting and crafting.
  - Activities targeted for young people including choral music; gardening; crafts; ECO DIY and bushcraft.
  - A new primary schools' programme to be launched in September 2026 and developed by an education specialist, in addition project activities for schoolchildren.
  - A family activity programme including a children's trail, drop-in activity days, activity stalls, gargoyle trail, story sacks and gardening activities.
  - Health and wellbeing activities including slow looking and mindful movement, gardening for wellbeing and a memory box for use by local care homes and dementia cafes, to include sound recordings of the choir and organ, dried herbs and plants from the Monastic Garden and images of the Abbey.
  - Delivery of events and activities in partnership with Up for Yorkshire and North Yorkshire Council.