

PRESS RELEASE: NORTON PRIORY – 29 June 2020

NORTON PRIORY REOPENS ON SATURDAY 4 JULY

Norton Priory, Halton's much-loved historical visitor attraction, will open its doors to the public again on Saturday 4 July.

The visitor centre, historic monastery and walled garden will join other museums and galleries across Merseyside and Cheshire to take a giant leap into the 'new normal' and welcome back people out of lockdown, just in time for the peak summer season.

Visitors are being asked to book timed slots in advance on the Norton Priory's website to control the number of guests at any one time, particularly at the busier weekend periods.

Staff have completed a thorough Covid 19 risk assessment of the entire 42 acre site and introduced a range of measures to keep people safe. These include a one way system in certain areas of the museum and grounds, hand sanitisers, more space in the shop and regular cleaning.

The public toilets will be open and the café will be serving a wide ranging menu of takeaway food which can be enjoyed outside.

Norton Priory enjoys an international reputation as the most excavated monastic site in Europe. Boasting medieval ruins, a 12th century undercroft and a beautiful 18th century walled garden, the visitor attraction is located in an oasis of tranquil woodland and wildflower meadows on the edge of Runcorn. A new museum displays thousands of artefacts from Norton's 900 year history, including a rare 14th century statue of St Christopher.

Rob Sanderson-Thomas, CEO, says, "We've been on an unexpected journey since we closed in mid-March, and have to thank Arts Council England for their emergency funding support. Thank you also to all our friends and members for supporting us, and to everyone who has donated to our emergency appeal, which is still running.

"We're one of the first museums to reopen, and we're looking forward to welcoming people back through our doors. The measures we have put in place to keep everyone as safe as possible are a key part of our reopening plans. The team and I work really hard to create a welcoming environment, and it's important to us that every visitor feels safe and enjoys their day with us.

"With 42 acres of incredible woodland and grounds, including our 2.5 acre walled gardens, picnic- perfect medieval ruins and fascinating exhibitions that span 900 years of history, we're the perfect place for a socially distanced, but fun, day out for visitors of all ages. Please come and support us!"

To guarantee a time slot, please book in advance on the Norton Priory website. You can also check out the new visitor safety arrangements and the public risk assessment at www.nortonpriory.org.

Note to Editors.

To arrange a media interview, please contact Norton Priory chief executive Rob Sanderson-Thomas on is 01928 242022.