

The Lansdowne Monument was proudly erected in 1845 by the 3rd Marquis of Lansdowne to commemorate his grandfather, Sir William Petty the 1st Marquis of Lansdowne. Petty was the 14th Prime Minister of Great Britain and Leader of the House of Lords, between 1782 and 1783, under King George III.

The monument was owned by the Lansdowne family and rumour has it that the monument was erected in this location so that the Lansdowne's could see the extent of their land from their home at Bowood House. It was subsequently sold in 1955 to a local farmer before it's purchase by the National Trust in 1988.

The monument has now been designated as a Grade II* listed monument and Historic England have listed this as a 'Monument at Risk'. For the last **EIGHT** years the monument has been hidden under unsightly scaffolding.

The National Trust conducted a condition survey in February 2018 but have yet to complete their report. Despite this they have already stated that they do not have the funds to restore the monument (Estimated cost of repair is £1.2 to £1.5 million) and they are subsequently looking for Fund Matching to assist with these costs.

We have been trying to engage with the National Trust for over two years, with a view to assisting them with this project but they have categorically refused to allow us to carry out fund raising activities. We have several ideas on how to raise funds and have expressed this to the Trust, but they are still ignoring any communication with us. We are still hopeful that the National Trust will come to us as we just want to help them.

We would like to get the local community involved in this project. It is important that children learn about their local history and this project would be a perfect way to get the Trust and the Community together. There is also an opportunity to educate people who walk, run or mountain bike to the summit of this hill by providing story boards with the history of the area, as this is lacking at the moment.

The Monument is important to the local area, it can be seen for miles and it is an iconic feature of our landscape and part of our heritage. The Cherhill White Horse, Oldbury Castle Iron Age Fort and the Monument form part of the Great West Way (A4 Tourist Route London to Bristol) People travel from all over the World to visit Wiltshire, especially Stonehenge, Avebury and to follow the White Horse Trail, and our monument is part of this trail.

The plinth at the bottom of the Monument was a wonderful place to sit and look at the stunning views of the surrounding countryside from all directions, but the scaffolding covers this plinth and makes that impossible. What used to be a pleasure and a nice reward for an invigorating walk to the top of the hill is now a sad and depressing experience.

Unless we start making a fuss, ***our*** Monument will not be restored. It is not a priority to the National Trust as it is *not an income generator*.

On the 1st of March we will be launching our ‘Make a Fuss’ campaign and our petition aimed at getting the Trust to see how strongly we feel about this project. EIGHT years is too long and we have NO intention of waiting another eight years for them to take action.

We would like the Trust to have the restorations completed by 2020 as this is the date when the Monument celebrates it’s 175th birthday and as such it should be presented in all it’s glory.

Please MAKE A FUSS – sign our petition online at 38degrees.org.uk ‘Lansdowne Monument - make a fuss’, or visit one of the Town Heritage Centre’s: Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Devizes or Marlborough and PLEASE sign today.