

Nicolas Poussin painting worth £19 million at risk of leaving UK

- Export bar is to allow time for a UK gallery or institution to acquire the painting
- Confirmation is one of Poussin's most ambitious work and has been in Britain for almost 240 years

Confirmation, a painting by Nicolas Poussin dating to c. 1637-40, is at risk of leaving the UK unless a buyer can be found.

Worth £19 million, Confirmation is part of Poussin's series titled The Seven Sacraments which is widely regarded as the artist's most important commission. The series marked a turning point in Poussin's career at the birth of the French classical tradition and at one point had its departure from Rome blocked by the Pope.

Confirmation is arguably the most significant of Poussin's paintings from this series and is notable for its sophisticated composition woven together by glance and gesture. The painting has been in Britain for almost 240 years hanging, on several occasions, on the walls of some of the UK's most prestigious museums, including Dulwich Picture Gallery and the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Arts Minister Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay said:

The unprecedented Seven Sacraments series is an example of Nicolas Poussin's extraordinary inventiveness and 'Confirmation' stands out as the most sophisticated work in the commission.

The painting has had a profound impact on British art over the last 240 years and I sincerely hope a buyer comes forward to save it for the nation.

The minister's decision follows the advice of the [Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest](#). The committee agreed that this is an extraordinary painting with a fascinating British history and that its importance could not be overstated. Poussin was a seminal European artist and Confirmation epitomises his technique of visual expression, intense emotion and harmony of design based on abstract form. In addition, the committee noted that the profound story in the painting is carefully articulated in a masterful way, making this painting the most interesting and beautiful of The Seven Sacraments series.

Committee Member Christopher Baker said:

Nicolas Poussin's cycle of paintings each depicting one of the

Seven Sacraments of the Church was revolutionary: no artist had treated the theme in this way before. He transports you to the early years of Christianity and depicts solemn rites with a profound knowledge of archaeology and a supreme artistic sensitivity. 'Confirmation' is arguably the most accomplished in the sequence: it shows children quietly affirming their faith before a priest, watched by their families, with every gesture and glance carefully calibrated. Such a moving painting would represent a powerful addition to the artist's works in U.K. collections.

Poussin's Sacraments, which have been in Britain since the 1780s, were painted for the important Roman polymath and collector Cassiano dal Pozzo and their restrained classicism had a profound impact on many later artists. This fascinating context adds further weight to the desirability of Confirmation becoming an inspired acquisition. Every effort should be made to support this endeavour.

The committee made its recommendation on the grounds that the departure of the painting from the UK would be a misfortune owing to its outstanding significance to the study of Nicolas Poussin's work and its influence on British art and culture.

The decision on the export licence application for the painting will be deferred for a period ending on 9 January 2023 inclusive. At the end of the first deferral period owners will have a consideration period of 15 Business Days to consider any offer(s) to purchase the painting at the recommended price of £19,000,000. The second deferral period will commence following the signing of an Option Agreement and will last for six months. Offers from public bodies for less than the recommended price through the private treaty sale arrangements, where appropriate, may also be considered by the Minister. Such purchases frequently offer substantial financial benefit to a public institution wishing to acquire the item.

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the painting should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.
2. Details of the painting are as follows: Nicolas Poussin (Les Andelys 1594–1665 Rome) Confirmation, about 1637–40 Oil on canvas, 95.5 x 121 cm The painting is in good condition. There is a compound tear just left of centre, through and above the kneeling child in red, with old retouchings visible. Some of the blues have sunk, notably in the woman to the left. Although the painting has been relined, passages of quite thick impasto remain intact, for example in the yellows and the white turban
3. Provenance: Commissioned as part of a series of seven sacraments in Rome by Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588–1657); by inheritance to Cosimo Antonio dal Pozzo (d. 1739), grandson of Cassiano's younger brother, Carlo Antonio (d. 1689), and then to Cosimo's daughter, Maria Laura Boccapaduli (d.

1771); by inheritance to the Boccapaduli family, Rome, who sold the series to Sir Robert Walpole (1676–1745) before its export from Italy was denied by the Pope; sold in 1785 by James Byres (1733–1813), Rome, on behalf of the Boccapaduli family to Charles Manners, 4th Duke of Rutland (1754–1787), Belvoir Castle, Grantham, Leicestershire; thence by descent to the present owner.

4. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by Arts Council England (ACE), which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.
5. [Arts Council England](#) is the national development agency for creativity and culture. Its strategic vision in [Let's Create](#) is that, by 2030, England should be a country in which the creativity of everyone is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. ACE invests public money from the government and the National Lottery to support the sector and deliver the vision. Following the [Covid-19 crisis](#), ACE developed a £160 million Emergency Response Package, with nearly 90 per cent coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. It is also one of the bodies administering the government's unprecedented £1.96 billion Culture Recovery Fund.

[Commission appoints Interim Manager to Kantor Foundation and Kantor Charitable Foundation](#)

Press release

The Charity Commission has exercised its power to appoint an Interim Manager to the Kantor Foundation (1173549) and Kantor Charitable Foundation (1173550) to the exclusion of the trustees.



The Kantor Foundation and Kantor Charitable Foundation were registered in 2017 and are grant-making trusts, applying funds to charitable causes around the world and in the UK respectively. The charities' current trustee is a corporate entity, the Kantor Trustees, of which Dr Viatcheslav Kantor is a director.

The Commission opened statutory inquiries into the two charities in April 2022, following the sanctioning of Dr Kantor under the UK's Russia Sanctions regime. The Commission's position is that individuals subject to UK financial sanctions cannot discharge their duties as a trustee.

As part of its inquiries, the Commission is considering whether the charities are viable and can continue to operate, following sanctions imposed on Dr Kantor. The inquiries are also examining the conduct of the trustees and whether they have discharged their legal duties and responsibilities in their management and administration of the charities.

On 31 May 2022, Tom Murdoch and Tony Pidgeon of Stone King LLP were appointed by the Commission as Interim Manager of both charities. They will act to fulfil a number of tasks, including managing the assets and assessing the future viability of the charities. The regulator has frozen the charities' bank accounts, but under the General Licence issued by the Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation, the Interim Manager is allowed to act as receiver and manager of the charities' assets.

The Commission's inquiry into the charities remain ongoing. It is the Commission's intention to publish an inquiry report upon its conclusion.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
2. Further information about the Commission's inquiries into these charities can be found here:
 1. [Kantor Charitable Foundation](#)
 2. [Kantor Foundation](#)
3. Section 76(3)(g) of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission power to appoint an interim manager to a charity to act as receiver and manager in respect of the property and affairs of the charity.
4. On 30 May 2022, OFSI issued [General Licence INT/2022/1834876](#) under Regulation 64 of the Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 which allows for Interim Managers and trustees appointed by the Commission to act as receiver(s) and manager(s) in respect of the property and affairs of a charity.'
5. Interim managers are appointed where the Commission has identified misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of a charity, or where it is necessary or desirable to protect a charity's property. It is a protective measure.

[Digital Secretary attends Royal Cornwall Show to champion £5 billion boost for rural broadband](#)

- Nadine Dorries showcases plans to connect rural South West communities to lightning-fast gigabit broadband at leading agricultural show
- Comes as rural areas in Cornwall and Dorset set for £47 million broadband boost from Project Gigabit benefitting up to 26,000 hard-to-reach premises
- Up to 345,000 South West rural premises set to benefit from Project Gigabit, including as many as 159,000 in Devon and Somerset

Nadine Dorries is calling on broadband firms to play their part in the biggest internet upgrade in British history by bidding for up to £47 million to rollout lightning-fast gigabit broadband in rural Cornwall and Dorset.

The Digital Secretary visited the opening day of the Royal Cornwall Show this afternoon to champion the government's £5 billion broadband scheme.

She told an event hosted by the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) that thousands of people in rural parts of Cornwall are a big step closer to getting much faster broadband thanks to Project Gigabit – the biggest government-funded broadband roll-out ever seen in the UK.

Broadband companies have been invited to bid for Project Gigabit contracts to bring fast connections to up to 26,000 homes and businesses in many of the hard-to-reach areas of Cornwall (19,000) and North Dorset (7,000). Work will commence on getting the infrastructure rolled out across areas – including rural communities in Land's End, the Lizard Peninsula, Shaftesbury, Gillingham and many others from August this year.

This is on top of plans to invest as much as £667 million to connect up to 345,000 rural homes and businesses across the South West as part of Project Gigabit, including an estimated 159,000 in Devon and Somerset, 84,000 in Wiltshire and South Gloucestershire, 44,000 across the rest of Gloucestershire and an additional 56,000 premises in Dorset.

Project Gigabit is giving rural areas unlikely to be reached by commercial roll out access to internet connections capable of download speeds of one gigabit, providing the speeds and reliability needed to future-proof homes and businesses for decades to come. The nationwide scheme will boost regional productivity, economic growth and level up by helping to close the digital divide.

Speaking at the Royal Cornwall Show, Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

“ Up and down the UK, we’re spending £5 billion to connect homes and businesses onto one of the fastest networks on the planet.

“ We have pinpointed 19,000 homes and businesses across Cornwall, in places that are hard to connect. And we’re inviting broadband companies to bid for £36 million worth of contracts to connect those communities.

“ This will make a real, fundamental difference to people’s lives. It means that a person can start a business anywhere they like, knowing that they get the exact same opportunities as someone in London or Manchester. And that’s what this government is all about. Backing businesses, and backing communities, wherever they are.”

Many areas in Cornwall are already able to access top quality connectivity thanks to government investment. Ninety-five per cent of premises can access superfast speeds – which is more than enough to meet most people’s connectivity needs – thanks in part to the government’s £2 billion investment in superfast broadband since 2012.

In a further broadband boost for the South West, the government continues to run the Gigabit Broadband Vouchers Scheme (GBVS) by providing up to £210m worth of voucher funding to support rural communities across the country with the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections. So far, more than 1,000 premises across hard-to-reach areas in Cornwall are in line for connections thanks to £2.3 million funding through this scheme.

Secretary of the Royal Cornwall Agricultural Association Christopher Riddle said:

“ We are very pleased to have had Nadine Dorries join us at the Royal Cornwall Show and for her to have had the opportunity to meet some of our incredible local businesses, as well as discussing investment in gigabit broadband. As a rural area, it is vitally important that we can connect, in what can be very isolated communities in some parts of Cornwall.”

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Notes to editors

Project Gigabit

Project Gigabit is the government’s flagship £5 billion programme to connect hard-to-reach communities unlikely to be connected through commercial rollout, meaning families no longer having to battle over bandwidth and people in rural areas can have the freedom to live and work more flexibly, helping businesses to grow and vital public services to thrive.

The faster connections delivered by the scheme have been levelling up rural communities across the UK: enabling businesses to grow by using digital technology to boost their productivity and giving people living in more remote areas better access to good jobs.

The **Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (GBVS)** is an initiative under Project Gigabit offering rural homes and businesses up to £1,500 or £3,500 towards the cost of a gigabit-capable broadband connection. The value can be much higher in many areas thanks to top-up funding from local authorities.

[Teaching Vacancies helps save time and money on recruitment](#)

Wales High School Academy

Wales High School Academy is a single-academy trust based in Sheffield. The school was spending a considerable amount on recruitment, using an advertising package that cost around £1,000 per advert. They were keen to increase the coverage and visibility of their vacancies to encourage a more diverse range of suitable applicants, to improve choice for the final selection.

The school signed up to [Teaching Vacancies](#) because it is a free platform provided by DfE, aimed at qualified teachers. The school was confident that using Teaching Vacancies would find professional people for their teaching roles. Wales High School Academy describes the benefits of using the service as the ease of use and how quick it is to upload their information.

Teaching Vacancies has enabled the school to extend their reach for candidates and save money as they now only spend between £1,000 and £2,000 a year on additional advertising.

Between 2019 and 2021, Wales High School Academy successfully hired over 20 teachers with the majority of candidates having applied through Teaching Vacancies. This included subjects more difficult to recruit for, such as geography and maths. Through the savings made, the school could afford to employ an additional teacher.

Backwell School

Backwell School is a secondary school which is part of a multi-academy trust based in Bristol. The school found it challenging recruiting teachers for subjects such as maths and IT and wanted to extend recruitment advertising to attract a more diverse pool of teachers.

The school signed up to use [Teaching Vacancies](#) which allowed them to reach a broader range of teaching staff with the necessary skills in maths and IT.

They found Teaching Vacancies simple and quick to use and liked the feature of being able to provide additional information about the school. Edits to

job listings can easily be made without having to begin the process again to refine the applications.

By using Teaching Vacancies, the school has reached a wider demographic of candidates and extended the visibility of their vacancies beyond the Bristol area. The school successfully hired two teachers who applied through Teaching Vacancies.

Knoll Mead Primary School

Knoll Mead Primary School is a single-form entry school based in Surrey, part of the Coombe Academy Trust. The school has SEN provision for hearing impairment and autistic spectrum disorder pupils.

The school had encountered problems with attracting candidates as it is not well known and needed to reduce the amount spent on recruitment.

Knoll Mead Primary School signed up to use Teaching Vacancies as it is a free service and there is a direct connection between schools and potential candidates. The school appreciates that the service is quick and simple to use when advertising jobs and gives access to a broad range of suitably qualified teachers.

They recently filled a vacancy, with the successful candidate applying through Teaching Vacancies and will continue to use this service as their preferred option for recruitment. Using Teaching Vacancies has freed up budget for investment in other services.

You can register for the service at:

If you have any questions, you can contact the [Teaching Vacancies team](#).

[DfE's benchmarking tools for schools improve financial management](#)

The schools financial benchmarking service

The schools financial benchmarking service is a public-facing tool that everyone from school business professionals, to governors and parents can use to support school resource management. It allows users to compare a school's spending with that of other schools and trusts, and to contact those with similar characteristics to share information and learning.

River Learning Trust

River Learning Trust has grown rapidly over the last seven years with on average four new schools joining a year. It now comprises almost 30 schools including some sponsor schools which joined in a challenging financial position.

In 2018, their three-year projection showed that they would be looking at a sharp reduction of the overall reserves, leading to a substantial deficit in some schools. They wanted to establish a culture of financial efficiency across all their schools, making them accountable for their future spending. This included ensuring efficient staffing deployment, while keeping staffing costs to a maximum of 78% of income (except in exceptional circumstances) and keeping sufficient funding for learning resources and premises spending. The remaining balance would support investment in areas that would have a long-term effect on the education of the pupils.

The Trust introduced the ICFP process to all schools and used the schools financial benchmarking self-assessment dashboard to review each of the school's budgets to highlight systemic overspending. The Trust brought the finance, governance, and school improvement teams together to implement a shared goal and to instigate an action plan to reduce costs efficiently and effectively.

The Trust saw real benefit by making sure that all governors were trained to understand ICFP and able to use the benchmarking site, meaning that they could make well-informed decisions and hold school management to account appropriately. The Trust also familiarised staff at various levels with the tools, creating an improved culture of financial awareness, and efficiency, whilst maintaining and improving student outcomes.

This early and interactive budgeting process was further enhanced recently with the development of the Trust's own ICFP tool and the appointment of a curriculum planning adviser allowing greater consistency and monitoring at Trust level.

"Our Trust has improved its financial position through this process with the support of both ICFP and schools financial benchmarking tools, but also by ensuring that the diagnostic is used at the early planning stage and followed up by actions, with active engagement of all stakeholders. All the schools that were in deficit are now recovering and gradually building their target reserve. The ICFP process allowed redirection of resources to meet strategic and educational priorities, in particular to top up high needs funding, invest in IT and build central capacity and expertise while preserving a broad and balanced curriculum."

Benedicte Yue, chief financial officer, River Learning Trust.

View my financial insights (VMFI)

The view my financial insights (VMFI) tool provides more nuanced school-specific insights. VMFI sits behind a password, meaning it can tailor the information so users can instantly identify areas of their spending that they should investigate further. For example, the tool produces a prioritised list of areas to investigate based on comparisons with the 30 most similar schools nationally and pulls this together in one place for trusts and local authorities. It then matches the data with relevant advice, guidance and commercial frameworks offered by DfE to help schools spend their resources efficiently.

One finance director found:

“I have used the VMFI tool with governors and finance committee to spot opportunities for financial improvements, specifically in checking cost categories where there might be over or underspending. To be able to share this information in graph format was a lot easier for some of the non-financial governors to understand how economical the school had been on spending compared to others in the comparable category. It was also a very good tool to use to compare to local schools in the same area who have the same funding per pupil as ourselves. This gave a better understanding of expenditure outcomes compared with those who were in areas with more funding than our authority.

Continued support from the VMFI tool by supplying the data to compare against is essential for understanding how areas in a school can be improved, either by increasing spend against certain areas or trying to decrease spending. Being able to compare against other similar schools to ourselves is already helping reassure the trust and the governors that in the main the school is spending its budget in the correct way.”

You can access these tools at:

If you have any questions, you can contact the [School Resource Management team](#).