

News release

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Independent art charity The Art Fund announces that the campaign to save the Staffordshire Hoard has reached £1million

As the end of February fast approaches, the fundraising total for the Staffordshire Hoard campaign has reached £1million.

So far, the total raised towards saving the most valuable treasure found on British soil is **£1,080,000**. Of this, almost **£500,000** comes from members of the public.

The Art Fund is spearheading the campaign to save the Staffordshire Hoard for the West Midlands. The charity is delighted to have reached this landmark figure, just seven weeks into the campaign, which began on 13 January.

The Art Fund's Director Stephen Deuchar commented: "This is really excellent news, furthering our conviction that if the campaign continues to gather steam, we still can make the £3.3million by 17 April. However, there is much work to be done and we need as many public donations as possible – so if you've been inspired by the Hoard but haven't yet donated, now is the time."

Until Sunday 7 March, visitors to the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery will be able to admire 118 items of the hoard, including 40 artefacts that have never been seen before. The exhibition at the Potteries will run between 10am – 5pm every day up to and including 7 March.

Donations have ranged from £10 from a nine-year old girl to £50,000 from the Charles Henry Foyle Trust. The Potteries Museum also had a £50,000 cheque from an anonymous donor on the eve of their exhibition opening on 12 February. Donations have come in from as far afield as the US and Japan - but about one-third of donors are from the West Midlands.

We are an independent charity committed to saving art for everyone to enjoy. Since we began in 1903, we have helped to save over 850,000 works of art. Today, some 80,000 members fund our work. In return, they receive free or reduced-price admission to many museums and galleries in the UK. This is not the only reason they join: they support us because they love art.

So far, the Stoke-on-Trent displays of the Hoard is exceeding all expectations. 20,000 visitors turned up in the first nine days, beating all previous records at the museum. So far visitors to the Potteries exhibition have donated £90,000 to the campaign. The exhibition is open until Sunday 7 March.

Plans are currently under way to display the items in Birmingham, once the exhibition in Stoke closes.

Working together with the Staffordshire Hoard partnership, The Art Fund is leading the campaign to raise the £3.3m. All the money must be raised by 17 April in order to save the treasure.

The Art Fund urges more members of the public to step forward and donate, by visiting www.artfund.org/hoard or by calling 0844 415 4004.

Ends

Note to editors

The Art Fund is leading the campaign to jointly acquire the treasure for Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery and the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in Stoke-on-Trent. The Art Fund is working in partnership with the councils of Birmingham, Lichfield, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Tamworth as well as Advantage West Midlands, Staffordshire University, British Museum, Museums Libraries and Archives Council and the Government Office for the West Midlands. If successful, the hoard will go on show in Birmingham as one of the proposed highlights of the UK City of Culture Bid Programme of events in 2013. A series of other displays will also be planned across the region, as part of a Mercian Trail that will explore the history of the Hoard. The exhibition at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery is one of the first events to mark centenary celebrations in 2010 of the federation of Stoke-on-Trent's six towns.