

Funding of £6.1million to restore UK's historic churches

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The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is today announcing £6.1million of funding for historic churches across the UK, securing the future of 42 places of worship that are in urgent need of repair.

Among those receiving grants are:

- A church built by the family of Magna Carta rebel William Marshall
- A church adopted by a squadron before they flew to join Operation Market Garden during the Second World War
- Portsmouth's first Anglican church, built by shipbuilders from the dockyard who had no place to worship in the 18th century

The funding will allow vital repair works to these important buildings, help them provide better facilities and make the churches more suitable for wider community use.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said: "Places of worship are among the UK's most historic buildings, with fascinating stories behind them. This money will pay for urgent repairs, whilst also helping to tell the stories of these special places to visitors. As a result the buildings themselves will be used more by the whole community, and properly cared for into the future."

HLF Grants for Places of Worship announced today include:

St Mary's Church, Long Crendon in Oxfordshire

A grant of £136,800 has been awarded to the Grade I listed St Mary the Virgin Church in Long Crendon, Oxfordshire. The church dates back to at least the 13th century when it was thought to have been rebuilt by the Marshall Family. William Marshall the elder, Earl of Pembroke, was the Lord Manor of Long Crendon and a trusted intermediary of King John's. His son, William Marshall the younger, was one of the 25 rebel barons who signed the Magna Carta at Runnymede in 1215. The grant will now enable a programme of urgent repairs to make the building secure. In addition, a new guidebook and website will be produced to showcase the church's historical connections.

St Vincent's Church, Caythorpe in Lincolnshire

A grant of £194,800 has been awarded to the Grade I listed St Vincent's Church in Caythorpe, Lincolnshire. The church was adopted by the 216 Parachute Regiment Signals Squadron as their mother church following 'Operation Market Garden', the daring but ultimately unsuccessful attempt by Allied troops to capture bridges in the German-occupied Netherlands during the Second World War. The squadron was billeted in the village prior to the drop and two stained glass windows in the church are dedicated to the regiment. The grant will help pay for urgent works and a programme of activities to help villagers research the church's historical links.

St George's Church, Portsea, Hampshire

A grant of £158,000 has been awarded to the Grade II* listed St George's Church in Portsea. Known as the 'Shipwrights Church', it was built in 1754 by shipwrights from the dockyard and was the first Anglican Church to serve the new town of Portsmouth. 'Three gentlemen, one carpenter, one tallow chandler and one grocer' joined them in the construction. Without urgent repair works the church will be placed on English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' register. The grant will fund vital works to the church's roof as well as a programme of education and training, helping local school pupils to learn more about its historical importance.

Notes to editors

Grants for Places of Worship scheme

Listed places of worship in the UK of all denominations and faiths are eligible for HLF grants which support urgent repairs to the fabric of the building with a focus on projects costing less than £250,000. There is a two stage application process with development funding available at the first-round to help work up proposals.

Under the programme, applications can now be submitted for new capital works but these should cost no more than around 15 per cent of the total overall budget.

Funding for Places of Worship in England

Until 2010, the Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England Scheme was jointly funded by the HLF and English Heritage (EH). Since then, HLF had provided the majority of the funding whilst English Heritage had continued to administer the fund on behalf of both organisations. This scheme is now closed for new applications.

HLF's new Grants for Places of Worship programme is funded and administered solely by the HLF with the exception of Scotland. However English Heritage will continue to provide expert advice in

England.

Funding for Places of Worship in Scotland

As with the Repair Grants for Places of Worship programme, the new Grants for Places of Worship programme in Scotland is jointly funded by the HLF and Historic Scotland.

Funding for Places of Worship in Scotland in Wales and Northern Ireland

As with the Repair Grants for Places of Worship programme, the new Grants for Places of Worship programme in both Wales and Northern Ireland is funded solely by the HLF.

Further information

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