Christmas cash boost secures future for seven historic churches

20/12/2013

The money will make vital repair work possible and help to ensure they remain at the heart of the communities they serve. The grants have been awarded though HLF's Grants for Places of Worship (GPOW) programme.

All Saints Church, in Sisted, Braintree, has been awarded £197,700 so that urgent repairs can be made to its roof. With woodpeckers chipping away at the spire and crows nesting in the bell chamber it is sadly representative of many places of worship today and has been described as a 'sieve' by experts.

Now, the Grade I listed church will be made watertight so that the future of the building can be secured. Wet pews will dry out so the congregation can sit comfortably once more, while HLF will enable a specialist buildings archaeologist to research the church's history. A community learning programme will involve people in the history of the church and its surroundings and stain glass workshops offered. All Saints is used regularly by bell ringers, a mother and toddler group, and the local primary school.

Other local churches receiving grants today include:

- Holy Trinity Church, Southchurch, Essex, £55,800 grant
- St Margaret's Church, Drayton, Norwich, £57,500 grant
- St Mary's Church, Rougham, Suffolk, £35,900 grant
- All Saints Church, East Winch, Norfolk, £193,800 grant
- St Peter and St Paul Church, Griston, Norfolk, £150,400 grant
- St George, Tombland, Norwich, Norfolk, £65,100 grant

GPOW was launched in March 2013 and provides money for urgent structural repairs to the UK's listed places of worship. In addition, the programme will also fund new works that support and encourage greater community use and engagement, helping to increase the number of people who take an active interest in celebrating these historic buildings and who will care for them in the future.

For more information about applying for HLF's funding for places of worship visit our Grants for Places of Worship page.

Notes to editors

Grants awarded through the Grants for Places of Worship scheme in this round of funding for the East of England are as follows. For further information, interviews, photography and press visits please contact the projects directly.

All Saints Church, Stisted, Braintree, Essex: £197,700 grant
Contact: Patricia Bash on 07710598636, email: pbash57@hotmail.co.uk.
All Saints' Church in the Essex village of Stisted is Grade I listed and needs urgent repairs to its roof. Described as a 'sieve' by experts, the leaking roof and steeple will now be repaired thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Woodpeckers have chipped away at the church's spire and crows are nesting in the bell chamber. The leaking roof has also soaked the pews, rendering them uncomfortable for the congregation and staining their clothes. As well as carrying

out urgent restoration work, HLF's grant will allow historical research by a specialist buildings archaeologist, liaison with Natural England about the potential presence of bats, and improved access for future inspection and maintenance of the tower and spire. There will also be a project to increase community understanding of the history of the church and its surroundings, and stained glass workshops will be offered. All Saints is regularly used by bell-ringers, a mother and toddler group, coffee mornings and the local primary school, all of whom will no doubt welcome the roof being fixed.

Holy Trinity Church, Southchurch, Essex: £55,800 grant
Contact: M Penry on 01702 469799, email: p.schurer@btinternet.com.
Damage caused by woodpeckers and squirrels to a 15th century church spire will be repaired following a grant of £55,800 from HLF. Urgent work on Holy Trinity Church, Southchurch, which is Grade II* listed, will make the spire weather-tight and upgrade the ironwork in the Victorian stained glass windows to prevent damage and improve security. A research project about the history of the church will focus on the building and the role of the church in the community. Local schools and groups such as local history societies will be encouraged to visit Holy Trinity and to learn more about its local and historical context from a new website and pamphlet.

St Margaret's Church, Drayton, Norwich: £57,500 grant
Contact: Mrs Sylvia Barwick on 01603 260851, email: blackpoplar@btinternet.com.
The thatched roof of St Margaret's Church, Drayton will be repaired following an award of £57,500 from HLF. Grade II* listed St Margaret's is in urgent need of repairs, not only to its thatching but also to its roof timbers and rainwater drains to prevent surface flooding in the church grounds. As part of the project, Drayton CofE Junior School will produce a heritage trail around the village and there will be activities focused on the uses of Norfolk reed. A heritage open day will invite local people to share their memories and photographs of events such as weddings held in the church over the years, with displays exploring the history of the building and its place in the community. Local residents in the First World War whose family names are shown on the War Memorial in the churchyard may also be involved.

St Mary's Church, Rougham, Suffolk: £35,900 grant
Contact: Brian Coley on 01284752201, email: coleybse@aol.com.
A Grade I listed Suffolk church will receive a new roof thanks to HLF. St Mary's Church, Rougham has been awarded £35,900 for the retiling of its chancel roof after experts from English Heritage advised that the work should be carried out quickly to prevent serious structural defects. The award comes just in time as leaks were starting to penetrate the roof timbers and risked damaging the church's interior. As part of the project, local schoolchildren will learn about the construction of St Mary's and the different roof coverings used throughout the church. Volunteers will create a model of the roof construction and a new guide book on the heritage of the church will be produced for visitors.

All Saints Church, East Winch, Norfolk: £193,800 grant
Contact: Revd Jane Holmes on 01553 636227, email: jmh200@btinternet.com.
Urgent structural repairs will be carried out on All Saints Church, East Winch as a result of an HLFgrant of £193,800. The Grade II* listed church will benefit from work including repairs to its tower walls, the fitting of bird netting to the belfry, repair of the tower west door and upgraded heating. There will also be a dedicated heritage website for the church, new guide books and a heritage trail. Local schools will be able to visit the church on themed trips including Ghoulish Graveyard (looking at old gravestones), Stories in the Windows (pictures in the stained glass that tell stories about people), Animal Magic (looking at the medieval pew ends that depict animals including a spitting cat), Have A Go (in the pulpit, up the tower, ringing bells, playing the organ) and Stone Me (looking at the geological aspect of the church).

St Peter and St Paul Church, Griston, Norfolk: £150,400 grant
Contact: Mrs Suzanne Callingham on 01953 889325, email: suecallingham@live.co.uk.
Essential structural work on St Peter and St Paul Church, Griston will be carried out thanks to a grant of £150,400 from HLF. Repairs to the tower and roof will make the Grade I listed church weather-tight, while internally there will be electrical re-wiring and repairs to the decayed floor. Other work will include the installation of longer rainwater spouts on the tower roof, repairs to flintwork and stonework and the installation of new belfry and silence chamber louvres. Griston Archive Group will help to set up a dedicated website for the church, create a heritage display and produce a new children's guide book and heritage trail, all aimed at encouraging the local community to learn more about the church and its surroundings.

St George, Tombland, Norwich, Norfolk, £65,100 grant
Contact: Nicholas Paul Dennis on 01508491857, email: paul_dennis558@yahoo.co.uk
The historic church in the centre of Norwich has been awarded more than £50k to help restore the tower and windows. In addition, the project will develop proposals for displays and interpretation helping to celebrate the stories of this unique church.

Further information

HLF press office: Vicky Wilford on 020 7591 6046 or 07973 401937, email: vickyw@hlf.org.uk.