Lottery money to address urgent repairs to historic places of worship in the North West

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced £3.7million of Lottery funding to help secure the future of 25 of the North West's most historic places of worship.

This vital money is helping congregations address a back log of urgent repairs to listed churches and chapels at risk across the North West including St Clement's Church in Ordsall, Salford; the Parish Church of St Mary in Stockport; St John the Baptist In Cumbria; St Paul's in Seacomber in Chester; and All Saints Church in Wigan.

The Church of SS Peter, Paul and Philomena in New Brighton is amongst the first of 35 churches across the UK to be awarded a grant through HLF's new Grants for Places of Worship programme.

Launched in March, it supercedes the Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme. In addition to providing money for urgent repairs, the programme is now also funding new works that support and encourage greater community use and engagement, helping to increase the number of people who take an active interest in these historic buildings and who will care for them in the future. As well as much needed conservation work, today's grants will support the provision of new toilets and kitchens; create historical exhibitions, leaflets and guide books; commission skills training for volunteer tour guides; and develop digital marketing tools including websites and web-based tools such as apps.

Sara Hilton, Head of HLF North West, said: "There is a place of worship in almost every ward, village and town across the North West of England, providing a very powerful visual connection with our past. Not only will our awards secure the immediate future of these particular buildings, it will also empower congregations to adapt them, where necessary, so they can be enjoyed more widely throughout the community and in turn enable them be more sustainable for the future."

Henry Owen-John, Planning and Conservation Director for the North West at English Heritage, which provides expert advice for the programme, said: "The continuing commitment of the Heritage Lottery Fund to historic places of worship, coupled with our specialist knowledge of these buildings and their repair needs, has helped to underpin the commitment of congregations facing costly yet urgently necessary repairs. This vital work marks an important step towards ensuring a sustainable future for these cherished buildings at the heart of their communities."

Grants for Places of Worship announced today include:

Church of SS Peter, Paul and Philomen, New Brighton, Wirral
Dubbed the Dome of Home by returning sailors to the Port of Liverpool following the Battle of the Atlantic during the Second World War, the Church of St Peter, Paul and Philomena's hill top basilica is a striking landmark on the Mersey coastline. Built during the 1930s, this Grade II listed building now requires urgent repairs including the mending of damaged rainwater goods, repointing and repairing brickwork, repair of the roof; along with plaster and decoration repairs. In additional, HLF's grant of £169,200 will fund a new accessible toilet and a range of activities to extend the buildings use amongst the wider community including a new activity coordinator; training for tour guide volunteers; a new leaflet and guidebook and an improved website.

St Clements Church, Ordsall, Salford
Built between 1877 and 1878 to the designs of Lancaster architects Paley and Austin, St Clements Church in Ordsall in Salford is Grade II listed. This grant of £249,900 will enable urgent timber repairs, repairs to the terracotta sections and glazing of the northside widows and fund improvements to the current toilet and kitchen facilities. In addition, HLF's grant will ensure the buildings is available for more social groups and activities such as bingo and advice sessions. Along with creating a heritage room in the church, it will deliver a programme of exhibitions, talks on local social history including interviews with local people and historical research, genealogy workshops using the parish records and create short films about the church to be made available online.

Other grants awarded through Grants for Places of Worship scheme and announced today include:

- St Mary of Furness Church, Barrow in Furness (grant £82,400)
- Waterhead Parish Church (Holy Trinity), Waterhead, Oldham (grant £165,200)
- Holy Trinity, Shaw (grant £167,800)
- The Parish of St Mary Church, Stockport (grant £200,800)

The remaining 19 grants announced today are from the final round to be awarded under Repair Grants for Places of Worship, a joint scheme funded by HLF with expert guidance from English Heritage:

- Wycliffe Congregations Church, Stockport (grant £206,000)
- St Stephen and All Martyrs, Oldham (grant £178,000)
- St John the Baptist, Eden (grant £154,000)
- St Leonard's Church, Copeland, Cumbria (grant £11,000)
- St Cuthberts, Copeland, Cumbria (grant £69,000)
- Holy Trinity Church, Blackpool (grant £182,000)
- St Cuthberts, Blackburn (grant £85,000)
- St Thomas Church, Bury (grant £195,000)
- St Paul's Church, Stockport (grant 145,000)
- Saint Margaret of Antioch and Saint Chad, Oldham (grant £158,000)
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and St Patrick RC Church, Oldham (grant £41,000)
- Preston Seventh Day Adventist Church, Preston (grant £197,000)
- All Saints Church, Wigan (grant £134,000)
- All Saints Parish Church, Manchester (grant £187,000)
- Christ Church, Manchester (grant £193,000)
- Bolton Methodist Church, Bolton (grant £105,000)
- St James Church, Birkdale, Sefton (grant £101,000)
- St John the Evangelist Church, Thornham, Rochdale (grant £207,000)
- St Paul's Seacomber, Wirral (grant £174,000)

For more information about applying for HLF's funding for places of worship visit the Grants for places of worship programme page.

Notes to editors

New 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 Round One to help work up proposals.

Under the new programme, applications can now be submitted for new capital works but these costs should cost no more than around 15% 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 Heritage Lottery Fund (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 Heritage Lottery Fund 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 Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Scotland.

Funding for places of worship 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 Heritage Lottery Fund.

Further information

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