# Lottery money to address urgent repairs to West Midlands' historic places of worship

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced £715,500 of Lottery funding to help secure the future of six of the West Midlands' 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 West Midlands including the Church of St Peter, Warwickshire; The Assemblies of the First Born, Birmingham; St George of Cappadocia, Shrewsbury; and St James the Great Church, Dudley; Holy Trinity Church, Malvern in Worcestershire.

The Church of St Peter in Grandborough, Warwickshire 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 supersedes 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. 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.

Reyahn King, Head of HLF West Midlands, said: "There is a place of worship in almost every ward, village and town across the West Midlands, providing a very powerful visual connection with the past and our sense of place. 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. The award to the Church of St Peter will enable people, including primary school children, to learn about heritage and develop specific conservation skills."

Tim Johnston, West Midlands Planning and Conservation Director at English Heritage, which provides expert advice for the programme, said: "I am delighted at the HLF's continuing commitment to our historic places of worship. These funds will help all six churches undertake vital repair work to make sure the buildings are safe and sound; and make sustainable changes so they can continue to be used by their local communities. Places of worship are often the most prominent historic buildings in a local area – this scheme is essential to maintaining these important buildings, which reflect our past, and ensuring they play a role in our future."

Grants for Places of Worship announced today include:

**Church of St Peter, Grandborough, Warwickshire**
A grant of £159,500 has been awarded to the Grade II* listed Church of St Peter which will enable urgent repair works to its belfry openings, tower staircase and external elevations. In addition, the grant will fund a conservation lime and stone skills training day; a one week foundation training programme for six building skills students; research into the history of the church; the production of an updated guide for visitors and wall mounted plan; training for four volunteer

tour guides; plus a primary school project on its history, art and geography.

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

- Assemblies of the First Born, Lozells, Birmingham (grant £100,000)
- Light and Life Mission Church, Willenhall, Walsall (grant £149,000)
- St George of Cappadocia, Shrewsbury, Shropshire (grant £60,000)
- St James the Great Church, Dudley (grant £165,000)
- Holy Trinity Church, Malvern, Worcestershire (grant £82,000)

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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