Over £420k for Nottinghamshire’s historic places of worship

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The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and English Heritage are today announcing more than £421,000 to three Grade I and II listed places of worship across the county. The grants were awarded under the organisations’ joint Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme*.

Nationally, since 2002, almost £140 million of grants have been awarded for more than 1,500 projects at Grade I and II historic places of worship through the joint scheme, which is the largest single source of funds to help congregations to care for historic churches, chapels, synagogues and other historic places of worship.

Despite the challenging economic climate, HLF and English Heritage have been able to maintain the planned level of funding and support for places of worship in the current financial year. The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided an extra £9 million to maintain the £25 million value of the total grants budget for 2010 – 11 (further funds will be offered to Grade II places of worship in March). HLF has also confirmed that it will continue its increased level of support in future years. This means that despite English Heritage having to withdraw most of its contribution for new awards from now on, the scheme can continue in its current form. There will be no reduction in expert advice English Heritage staff and local support officers give to congregations all over Nottinghamshire.

The East Midlands grants was announced today (Thursday 17 February) at the oldest Unitarian Church in the country. The Old Meeting House in Mansfield, a 17th century church, is receiving the largest grant in the region; £175,000 for essential repairs to the leaking slate roof which is putting the historic interior of the church with its William Morris glazed windows at risk.

Dr Anthony Streeten, English Heritage Regional Director for the East Midlands, said: “Thanks to the generosity of the Heritage Lottery Fund, and ultimately therefore of Lottery players, our historic places of worship in direct need still have the vital safety net of the Repair Grants scheme. Without it, many brave but struggling congregations would be faced with watching their beloved churches and chapels falling into ruin. Instead, the combination of Heritage Lottery Fund money and English Heritage advice is seeing these wonderful buildings revived and restored and becoming ever more central to their communities as places of prayer and celebration and as a hub for local services.”

Emma Sayer, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East Midlands, said: “Historic places of worship are one of our most treasured cultural assets. They occupy a unique position at the heart of communities up and down the country, and are a focus for so many civil and social activities in addition to their central purpose as a place for prayer and contemplation. Places of worship are one of the most instantly recognisable features of our cultural landscape, and they continue to inspire people to get involved with and learn about their shared history. This is at the very core of what the Heritage Lottery Fund wants to achieve and the reason we have substantially increased our investment to the programme.”

Reverend Patrick Timperley from The Old Meeting House, said: “We are so delighted to hear that the Unitarian Church will be receiving this grant. Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage the church’s future is now secure.

“The funding will go towards fixing the leaking roof, which has damaged the interior and overflowing gutters. The church is a hidden treasure within the centre of Mansfield, and people who step inside soon discover its beauty and importance to the community.”

Notes to editors

Below are details on the seven places of worship receiving grants in Nottinghamshire.

Grant offers to Grade I & II churches in the East Midlands - total new offers £1,753,000, as follows:

Derbyshire
Church of St Mary and St Barlok, Norbury - £136,000
Parish Church of St Mary and St George, Church Gresley - £16,000

Leicestershire
Church of St Denys, Goadby £20,000
Church of St James the Greater, Ad Kettleby - £153,000
Church of St Peter, Shackerstone - £40,000
Church of St Michael, Appleby Magna - £89,000
Church of the Holy Trinity, Normantone le Heath - £33,000
Church of St Michael and All Angles, Wartnaby - £81,000
Church of St Mary, Sileby - £18,000

Lincolnshire
Church of St Mary, Weston - £90,000
Abbey Church of our Lady, St Bartholomew and St Guthlac, Crowland - £85,000
Church of St Andrew, Cranwell - £49,000
Church of St Chad, Welbourn - £120,000
Church of St Peter and St Paul, Kirton-in-Holland - £96,000
Church of All Saints, Wellingore - £23,000
Church of Oswald, Blankney - £24,000
Church of St Mary, East Barkwith - £129,000
Church of St Cuthbert, Brattleby - £130,000

Nottinghamshire
Church of St Andrew, Langar - £91,000
Church of All Saints, Weston - £155,000
The Old Meeting House Unitarian Church, Mansfield - £175,000

***The Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England Scheme** is funded mostly by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and administered by English Heritage (EH) on behalf of both organisations.

The scheme, in a slightly different form, began in 1996. Before then it was difficult to secure funding on the scale required to help a place of worship facing closure or demolition because of high repair costs.

Listed places of worship in England of all denominations and faiths are eligible for 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 Stage One to help work up proposals.

The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme makes payments equivalent to the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings primarily in use for public worship. In the 2009-10 financial year, 3,745 claims were paid UK-wide, with a total value of £14,963,412.67, giving an average grant of £3,996. Since last year's Spending Review, works on clocks, pews, bells, organs and professional services such as architects' fees are no longer eligible.

English Heritage is the Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment. We provide advice on how best to conserve England's heritage for the benefit of everyone. While most of England's heritage is in private hands, we work with all who come into contact with it - landowners, businesses, planners and developers, national, regional and local government, the Third Sector, local communities and the general public - to help them understand, value, care for and enjoy England's historic environment. We are also entrusted with the custodianship of over 400 sites and monuments which together form the national collection of built and archaeological heritage. These include some of the most important monuments of human history such as Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall. www.english-heritage.org.uk

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