

Caring for Places of Worship

02/07/2010

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), welcomed English Heritage's 'Caring for Places of Worship' report, and said that HLF would be considering how it might respond to the challenges set out in the report in the light of its expectation of increased funding in future years.

She said: "HLF welcomes English Heritage's publication of the 'Caring for Places of Worship' report. This valuable research comes just at the perfect time. It increases our understanding of current need and will influence how we distribute the additional money we expect to receive as a result of the change in Lottery shares, on which the Government is currently consulting.

"We've always seen places of worship as absolutely central to our national heritage, identity and culture and have already committed considerable investment through both the joint scheme with English Heritage and our wider investment across the UK.

"The report reveals considerable progress but also highlights the huge scale of investment needed to protect the one in ten historic places of worship that are at still risk in England."

Notes to editors

A copy of the English Heritage report 'Caring for Places of Worship' can be found at www.english-heritage.org.uk

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

In 1996, an HLF scheme was set up in partnership with EH to fund the repair of places of worship of all faiths. 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 are eligible to apply for a grant under the Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme. The programme supports urgent repairs to the fabric of listed places of worship and priority is given to single repair projects costing less than £250,000.

In May this year, HLF increased its commitment for the Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England programme by £1m. This takes HLF's annual investment to £16m with the full amount offered as grants. HLF is a UK-wide funder and also funds places of worship outside England.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK.

Further information

Katie Owen or Alison Scott, HLF Press Office on 020 7591 6036 / 07973 613 820