East of England churches full of the joys of spring



St Wendreda church in March, Cambridgeshire

The churches, six of which provide a vital resource at the heart of rural communities in the region, will now see crucial repairs made possible in addition to exciting programmes of activities for people of all ages, ensuring the future of these wonderful buildings.

The grants, all made to Grade I, II or II* listed churches, have been awarded though HLF's Grants for Places of Worship (GPOW) programme.

St Wendreda in March, Cambridgeshire is one of the rural churches to receive a grant, having been awarded £36,900. Grade I listed, the church dates back to the 14th century with fine architectural features of the period.

The south parapet is currently in a dangerous condition due to disintegration of the mortar between the stone work and the HLF grant will allow crenellations to be recorded, removed and rebuilt to match existing ones, using lime mortar and existing stone stored on the site. Specialist repairs will also be made to the west window in the tower, as well as timber treatment within the clock enclosure. As part of the project, the church plans to work closely with its neighbouring school, the Neale-Wade Academy, and guided tours will be offered.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of East of England Region, said: “Churches have been at the heart of our communities for hundreds of years. We are delighted that St Wendreda has been awarded a grant to address the urgent repairs needed to its structure. Not only are the wider Fens an area of Focus for us, the church itself is a very important building, both architecturally and to its community, and epitomises the type of rural church deserving preservation and protection for future generations.”

Other local churches receiving grants today include:

- St James’ Church, Dunwich, Suffolk: £160,300 grant
- All Saints Church, Ramsholt, Suffolk: £70,900 grant
- St. Margaret’s Church, Shottisham, Suffolk: £66,300 grant
- St George Colegate, Norwich, Norfolk: £85,900 grant
- All Saints Church, Cockthorpe, Norfolk: £240,000 grant
- St George, Great Bromley, Essex: £54,800 grant

The GPOW grant scheme was launched last year and provides money for urgent structural repairs to the UK’s listed places of worship. In addition, the programme will also fund new work that supports and encourages 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 (England) page.

Notes to editors

Visit the East of England page for more information about HLF priority development areas in The Fens.

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. HLF spokesperson available upon request:

St Wendreda, March, Cambridgeshire: £36,900 grant.
Contact: Rosemary E Fuller on 01354652520, email: h7dgfuller@googlemail.com.

St James’ Church, Dunwich, Suffolk: £160,300 grant.
Contact: Angela Abell, Secretary of the Parochial Church Council on 01728 648107, email: angelacabell@lineone.net.
St James’ Church in Dunwich is Grade II listed and requires urgent repairs to its west tower, nave and chancel roofs. Dating from 1832, the church has an unusual Victorian tiled roof. Heritage Lottery Fund’s grant will enable the essential repairs to be done and will allow the church's heating system to be updated and electrical wiring to be checked. A range of activities for the public, including talks, concerts and improved learning resources will be developed in partnership with Dunwich Museum. This will include support for teachers and local schoolchildren to learn about the church.

All Saints Church, Ramsholt, Suffolk: £70,900 grant.
Contact: Barry Vincent on 07785247767, email: bvincent@lighthouseifa.com.
Parts of Grade II* listed All Saints Church date from around 1330, but its tower has a much earlier history, with Norman or even possibly Saxon origins reaching back to the 9th century. Indeed, the tower is believed to have served as a watch-tower to warn villagers of Viking raids. Urgent work is now needed to repair the tower which is in a bad condition,

partly as a result of cement pointing that was done in the 1970s and is now cracking. The lead work on the tower roof also needs repair to improve its effectiveness in keeping the rain out. As well as meeting the cost of these urgent works, Heritage Lottery Fund's grant will also support activities for the local community and visitors, including an oral history project which will be accessible on the church's website and Debden Radio. A Heritage Day, schools' visits, historical nature walking and retirement groups will also be on offer to encourage people to learn more about All Saints' history and importance to this part of the Suffolk coastline.

St. Margaret's Church, Shottisham, Suffolk: £66,300 grant.
Contact: Nicholas White on 01394 410064, email: nick.white01@btinternet.com.
St Margaret's is a Grade II listed church dating mainly from the 14th century, with a 15th century tower and a Victorian aisle and porch. Recent expert reports have shown that many parts of the church are in need of repair, including the walls and buttresses of the tower and the east gable of the nave. The facework, masonry and pointing has deteriorated in many of these areas, leaving open joints and allowing rainwater into the building. The belfry interior also has full-height vertical cracks. In addition to the essential repairs, Heritage Lottery Fund's grant will support a programme of activities to engage the community in the church's heritage including a Heritage Day with music, drama and poetry performances, a permanent exhibition, reminiscence projects, schools workshops and volunteer training.

St George Colegate, Norwich, Norfolk: £85,900 grant.
Contact: Anne Duarte on 01613 618811, email: anne@stgeorgesmusic.co.uk.
St George Colegate is a Grade I listed church in Norwich dating back to medieval times, with a mostly Georgian interior remodelled by local wealthy merchants. The church is noted for its historic monuments from the mid-16th century, a memorial to John Crome, founder of the Norwich School of painters, 18th century pulpit and organ made by G.P England, one of the leading organ builders in England in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Today St George Colegate is used for musical performances and as a 'teaching tower' for bell ringing. Heritage Lottery Fund's grant will pay for urgent repairs to the flooring and pews, the installation of under floor heating, and activities to engage the community with the church's heritage, including extending opening hours and being part of the Norwich Georgian heritage trail. The church's website will include a focus on Georgian history, and master classes will be developed in partnership with the Cambridge Academy of Organ Studies.

All Saints Church, Cockthorpe, Norfolk: £240,000 grant.
Contact: Malcolm Fisher on 01986798777, email: secretary@norfolkchurchestrust.org.uk.
All Saints Church is a 14th century Grade I listed church that is in need of urgent repairs to make it watertight and structurally stable. Heritage Lottery Fund's grant will ensure that the nave, porch and chancel roof is repaired and the collapsing chancel wall will be saved. Roof tiles and slates will be re-laid and replaced and a new rainwater drainage system will be installed. While this work takes place, the church's important wall paintings will be protected. New guidebooks will give people a better understanding of the church and its social history, while improved signposting from the road will help to raise the church's profile and attract more visitors.

St George, Great Bromley, Essex: £54,800 grant.
Contact: Gregory Frostick on 01473 424469, email: gj7@btinternet.com.
Grade I listed St George's Church, Great Bromley, Essex dates largely from the 14th and early 15th centuries. It is famed for its knapped flint exterior stonework, double hammer beam roof, carvings and interior decoration. Heritage Lottery Fund's grant will support essential structural repairs to the porch, repointing stonework, replacing missing flints, rebuilding buttresses and repairing parapets. The project will also renew the disabled ramp at the porch threshold, with new lighting in the porch and entrance area. There will be activities to engage people in the heritage of the church including educational programmes for children and adults, with new guidebooks, materials, displays and a website.

Further information

HLF press office: Vicky Wilford on 020 7591 6046 or 07968 129241, email: vickyw@hlf.org.uk.