Vital £2.8m for East of England's most important places of worship

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The money comes from the Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme*, which is funded by HLF and administered by English Heritage.

Across Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk these vital grants will help repair places of worship at risk including St Mary Roman Catholic Church in Great Yarmouth and St Mary the Virgin's Church in Westmill, Hertfordshire.

Robin Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: "Historic places of worship are an irreplaceable part of our heritage that continues to play a vital role within local communities today. In the last ten years, the Heritage Lottery Fund has invested £155million into these wonderful buildings and I am delighted we are able to continue supporting congregations across the East of England to safeguard them for future generations."

Greg Luton, Planning Director for the East of England, English Heritage, said: "We are pleased that these important buildings will benefit from HLF funding and English Heritage's expert advice. We know that maintaining places of worship and developing them sensitively is a major challenge and we are glad to work with the inspiring volunteers who make repairs and enhancements happen. Such fine buildings are a great resource, as places of spiritual discovery, landmarks, events venues, places of solace and architectural treasures. These grants celebrate both what they are and can be, whilst supporting the people who care for them on behalf of us all."

St Mary Roman Catholic Church, Great Yarmouth
Grant: £130,000
A knapped flint Grade II* listed church built between 1848 and 1850, internally St Mary Roman Catholic Church is little altered. It was designed by John Scoles, who was one of the Jesuits' favoured architects. Notably the church has more than 800 carved wooden bosses, beautiful stained glass in the Lady Chapel and a 112 year old organ with 1032 pipes. The upper levels of the church are in a very poor condition and this great will enable significant repair works to falling flints from the tower and clerestorey, and address leaking roofs.

St Mary the Virgin's Church, Westmill, Hertfordshire.
Grant: £99,000
This Grade II* church is of Saxon origins. It has a long history of subsequent additions and alterations including an impressive 15th century tower. This grant will enable urgent repairs and re-tiling of the nave roof and north aisle roof, which will prevent further water ingress and deterioration.

Notes to editors

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

Until 2010, the scheme was jointly funded by HLF and EH. Since then, HLF has provided the majority of the funding to ensure that the scheme continues in its current form until 2013.

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.

To be eligible for the next round of funding, applicants need to apply by 30th June for Grade I and II* and 30th September for Grade II listed places of worship. www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage is the Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment. It provides advice on how best to conserve England's heritage for the benefit of everyone. While most of England's heritage is in private hands, it works 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.

It is 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.

Further information

Natasha Ley or Lydia Davies, HLF Press Office on 020 7591 6143/6035 or 07973 613 820 or natashal@hlf.org.uk