Vital £1.5m for North West'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 the region these vital grants will help repair places of worship at risk including St Lawrence's in the Eden Valley, Cumbria and Church of St John the Baptist in Chester.

Sara Hilton, Head of HLF in the North West, 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 North West to safeguard them for future generations."

Henry Owen-John, English Heritage's Planning Director for the North West, said: "We are delighted that these important buildings will benefit from HLF funding and English Heritage's expert advice. Many of these places of worship are only maintained through the hard work of small and hard-pressed communities. Today's grants will fund essential repairs and go a small way to helping the people who care for these wonderful buildings on behalf of us all"

St Lawrence's, Eden Valley, Cumbria
Grant: £118,000
St Lawrence's is Grade I listed; the crossing dates from 12th century, although the church was subject to a major rebuild by Robert Smirke in early 19th century. Works will incorporate roof repairs, including slate and timber repairs, the replacement of rain water goods, masonry repairs along with repointing and plaster and lime wash repairs.

Church of St John the Baptist, Chester, Cheshire
Grant: £65,000
This is a significant Grade I listed church - for a short period in the late 11th century it was the fist cathedral in Chester - although building continued until the end of the 13th century. The majority of the east end was demolished at the Dissolution of the Monasteries and it became the parish church. There were restorations to the church in 1859–66 and 1886–87 by R. C. Hussey and the porch was rebuilt in 1881–82 by John Douglas. Funding will reroof the nave, choir and chancel.

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

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