Lottery support to address urgent repairs to London’s historic places of worship

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced almost £1million of Lottery funding to help secure the future of eight of the capital’s most historic places of worship.

This vital money is helping congregations address a back log of urgent repairs to listed churches and chapels at risk across London including Holy Trinity Church in Kentish Town; St Andrew in Holborn; Church of St Leonard in Streatham; St Mary’s Cable Street in Stepney; and St Martin’s Church in Gospel Oak.

Holy Trinity in Kentish Town is amongst the first of 35 churches across the UK to be awarded a grant through HLF’s new Grants for Places of Worship programme.

Launched in March, it supercedes the Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme. In addition to providing money for urgent repairs, the programme is now also funding new works that support and encourage greater community use and engagement, helping to increase the number of people who take an active interest in these historic buildings and who will care for them in the future. As well as much needed conservation work, today’s grants will support the provision of new toilets and kitchens; create historical exhibitions, leaflets and guide books; commission skills training for volunteer tour guides; and develop digital marketing tools including websites and web-based tools such as apps.

Sue Bowers, Head of HLF London, said: “There are places of worship peppered across the capital, providing a very powerful visual connection with our past. Not only will our awards secure the immediate future of these particular buildings, it will also empower congregations to adapt them, where necessary, so they can be enjoyed more widely throughout the community and in turn enable them to be more sustainable for the future.”

Dr Nigel Barker, Planning and Conservation Director for London at English Heritage, which provides expert advice for the programme, said: “I applaud the HLF’s continuing commitment to our historic places of worship. These funds will help all eight beneficiaries remain viable buildings, ensuring they are in the best physical state both to reflect our past and to contribute to our future. The grants are used to undertake vitally important work to make the structures safe and sound, putting them in the best position to contribute to their communities. Parts of the grants also help the public enjoy and appreciate these buildings by providing money for visitor facilities, exhibitions, books and tour guides. This is a vital part of keeping our heritage alive.”

Grants for Places of Worship announced today include:

Holy Trinity, Kentish Town
The design for Holy Trinity, which was exhibited in the Royal Academy, was drawn-up by the architects Thomas Henry Wyatt (1820-1877) and David Brandon (1813-1897). Now Grade II listed, it was built of Kentish ragstone in the 14th-century style from 1849-50. Its west tower used to have a spire which was destroyed by bombing during the Second World War. This grant of £126,200 will now enable urgent repairs to the stonework of tower, restoring its structure and fabric to sound condition. Following repairs, the opening hours of the church will be extended and a guidebook will be developed which will focus on the history and architecture of the church.

St Martin's Church, Gospel Oak
Grade I listed, St Martin's was designed by architect Edward Buckton Lamb and is on English Heritage's At Risk Register. This grant of £152,100 will enable urgent works including repairs to the church tower; the reinstatement of three tower pinnacles, which were removed during the Second World War due to bomb damage; the reinstatement of the turret to the tower stair, which was removed in 1955 along with an overhaul and repair of belfry louvres and clock dials.

St Andrew, Holborn
St Andrew, Holborn can trace its roots back to 951AD, but the Grade I listed church situated on the site today was built by Sir Christopher Wren following the Great Fire of London 1666. During the Blitz in 1941, the church was gutted by bombs leaving only the exterior walls and tower standing. Rather than being demolished, it was restored 'stone for stone and brick for brick' to Wren's original designs. This grant of £177,200 will now enable vital repair works to stabilise the tower internally using structural steel. In addition, portions of the asphalt roof will be repaired; repairs to the spalling and cracked stone cladding on the tower will be undertaken, and the removal, cleaning and refixing of statues to West elevation of the tower will allow stone repairs.

The remaining grant announced today is from the final round to be awarded under Repair Grants for Places of Worship, a joint scheme funded by HLF with expert guidance from English Heritage:

- Church of St Leonard, Streatham, Lambeth (grant £130,000)
- St Mary's Cable Street. Stepney, Tower Hamlets (grant £57,000)
- St Clement Church, Notting Dale, Kensington and Chelsea (grant £191,000)
- Celestial Church of Christ, Southwark (grant £131,000)
- St Mary's Church, Kilburn (grant £35,000)

Notes to editors

£999,500 of grants have been awarded to London

Further information

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