Lottery money to address urgent repairs to North East historic places of worship

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced £364,000 of Lottery funding to help secure the future of four of the North East's most historic places of worship.

This vital money is helping congregations address a back log of urgent repairs to listed temples, churches and chapels at risk across the North East including Guru Gobind Singh Gurdwara in Sunderland; the Life Transformation Church in Newcastle; St Anne's Church in Bishop Auckland; and Emmanuel Church in Saltburn by the Sea in Redcar and Cleveland.

These four grants are the last to be awarded through the Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme, which has now been superceded by HLF's new Grants for Places of Worship programme, which launched in March. In addition to providing money for urgent repairs, the new programme is now 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, the new 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.

Ivor Crowther, Head of HLF North East, said: "There is a place of worship in almost every ward, village and town across the North East of England, 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 be more sustainable for the future."

Carol Pyrah, Planning and Conservation Director, North East at English Heritage, which provides expert advice for the programme, said: "I applaud the HLFs continuing commitment to our historic places of worship. These funds will help all 96 beneficiaries to remain viable buildings reflecting our past and contributing to our future. There is so much more to this project than just making the physical structures safe and sound. By providing money for visitor facilities, exhibitions, books and tour guides, the grants are going to help the public enjoy and appreciate these buildings. This is a vital part of keeping our heritage alive."

The final Repair Grants for Places of Worship announced today are:

Guru Gobind Singh Gurdwara, Sunderland
A grant of £71,000 will enable urgent repairs to the Grade II listed Guru Gobind Singh Gurdwara, in particular its tracery windows, stone mullions, surrounds and stained glass, roof timbers, slates, flashings and water tabling. Work will also repairs the rainwater goods including replacements and repairs to cast iron.

Life Transformation Church, High Elswick, Newcastle upon Tyne
A grant of £170,000 has been awarded to the Grade II listed Life Transformation Church. Built between 1856-9 and designed by John Dobson, this church was vacant for a number of years but has now been reinvigorated by new and

enthusiastic congregation. This grant will enable urgent roof repairs, the eradication of wet and dry rot and will deal with a timber infestation.

St Anne's Church, Bishop Auckland
A grant of £90,000 has been awarded to St Anne's Church, a Grade II listed church dating from 1846-48. This grant will enable urgent works including the re-roofing of the west gable above the north aisle and replacement of rainwater goods.

Emmanuel Church, Saltburn by the Sea
A grant of £33,000 will now enable a programme of urgent works to revive the Gothic Revival-style, Grade II listed Emmanuel Church which primarily dates from 1867-9. Urgent works will include repairs to its tower leadwork and masonry repairs; alongside investigative work to determine the condition of the roofs and the scope of further repair work necessary.

Today HLF announced the first 35 churches across the UK to be awarded a grant through its new Grants for Places of Worship programme.

For more information about applying for HLF's funding for places of worship visit our Grants for Places of Worship programme page.

Notes to editors

New Grants for Places of Worship scheme
Listed places of worship in the UK of all denominations and faiths are eligible for HLF 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. Under the new programme, applications can now be submitted for new capital works but these costs should cost no more than around 15% of the total overall budget.

HLF's new Grants for Places of Worship programme is funded and administered solely by the Heritage Lottery Fund with the exception of Scotland; however English Heritage will continue to provide expert advice in England.

Funding for places of worship in Scotland
As with the Repair Grants for Places of Worship programme, the new Grants for Places of Worship programme in Scotland is jointly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Scotland.

Funding for places of worship in Wales and Northern Ireland
As with the Repair Grants for Places of Worship programme, the new Grants for Places of Worship programme in both Wales and Northern Ireland is funded solely by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Further information

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