Lottery money to address urgent repairs to Yorkshire and Humber historic places of worship

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced just over £2million of Lottery funding to help secure the future of 14 of the Yorkshire and Humber'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 Yorkshire and Humber including St Charles Borromeo in Hull; Church of St Stephen Bradford; St Mary's Church Walkley in Sheffield; and the Church of St Michael and All Angels in Todmorden, Calderdale.

St Charles Borromeo in Hull 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 supersedes 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. 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.

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and Humber, said: "There is a place of worship in almost every ward, village and town across the Yorkshire and Humber region, 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."

Trevor Mitchell, Planning and Conservation Director, Yorkshire, at English Heritage, which provides expert advice for the programme, said: "We welcome the HLF's funding to support historic places of worship in Yorkshire. These funds will help the local congregations keep their buildings viable and help us keep our heritage alive. By providing money for visitor facilities, exhibitions, books and tour guides, as well as essential repairs the grants will help the public enjoy and appreciate these buildings."

Grants for Places of Worship announced today include:

St Charles Borromeo, Kingston-Upon-Hull
A grant of £246,000 has been awarded to the Grade II* listed St Charles Borromeo Roman Catholic Church in Hull. As one of the first major Catholic churches to be built at the time of the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, this church is hugely significant. Designed by local architect John Earle in 1829 in a classical style, it has one of the most opulent and dramatic interiors of any English 19th-century church. The building is essentially Baroque Roman in design but with a heavy touch of the Austrian Rococo and much of the internal painting focussing on icons of English saints. Its roof will now undergo major repairs to prevent water ingress and damage to the interiors. In addition to repairs, a new guidebook is being produced about the history of the building alongside a website.

All Saints Parish Church, Sherburn-in-Elmet
A grant of £42,900 has been awarded to the Grade I listed All Saints Parish Church to enable urgent repairs to the glazing and stonework to the nave south clerestory and the severely decayed tower spiral staircase. This grant will also produce an updated guidebook; enable the church to be opened up more widely to visitors; and provide volunteer guides.

St Mary the Virgin, Mirfield
A grant of £207,700 has been awarded to the Grade II* listed Church of St Mary the Virgin in Mirfield. It was built in 1871 by Sir George Gilbert Scott, the renowned English architect known for his work designing Battersea Power Station, Liverpool Cathedral, Waterloo Bridge and the iconic red telephone box. It is now in need of urgent repair to its tower and stocks and the serious deterioration of its external fabric and stonework. Other repair works include those to the vestry roof, where water ingress threatens external masonry, electrics and the pipe organ, and the tower windows. In addition, the side chapel will be re-ordered to enhance accessibility to the heritage artefacts for educational groups of all ages; the church's existing website will be developed to expand on the detail of its heritage; a guidebook aimed at schools and visitors will be produced; and educational packages will be developed and there will be talks, special events and activity days.

The remaining 11 grants announced today are 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:

- All Saints Church, Saxby All Saints, Lincolnshire (grant £124,000)
- St Margaret's Church, Hawes, Richmondshire, Yorkshire (grant £229,000)
- Church of St James, Clapham, Clapham, Craven (grant £81,000)
- Church of St Stephen, Bowling, Bradford (grant £198,000)
- Church of St James, Thorton, Bradford (grant £26,000)
- Church of St Michael and All Angels, Todmorden, Calderdale (grant £85,000)
- The Parish Church of St Paul, Drighlington, Leeds (grant £199,000)
- New Life Community Church (Church of St Andrew), Leeds (grant £157,000)
- St Mary's Church, Walkley, Sheffield (grant £80,000)
- St John the Evangelist, Whitby, Scarborough (grant £164,000)
- St Alban, Hull (grant £171,000)

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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