£2.3m for region's historic places of worship

17/02/2011

The grants have been awarded under the organisations' joint Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme.*

The news means that regionally over £18m has been awarded to 138 at Grade I and II historic places of worship under the partnership scheme since 2002 – a vital life-line for hard-pressed congregations.

Grants will be used to help fix problems like badly leaking roofs, crumbling masonry and decaying windows. Offers include:

West Yorkshire
Holy Trinity, Ossett, £94,000.
St Wilfrid's, Halton, Leeds, £498,000.
St Peter's, Felkirk, £85,000.
St Peter's, Birstall, £199,000.
Church of the Epiphany, Gipton, Leeds £189,000.
St Peter's Huddersfield, £174,000.
St Michael and All Angels, Haworth, £115,000.

South Yorkshire
St Leonard's, Thrybergh, £139,000.
St Michael's and All Angels, Great Houghton, £180,000.
St Mary, Sprotbrough, £103,000.
St Mary, Tickhill, £61,000.

North Lincs
St Andrew, Wooton, £81,000.
St Martin, Owston Ferry, £111,000.
St Lawrence, Thornton Curtis, £68,000.

North Yorkshire
St Mary's, Bolton-on-Swale, £118,000.

East Yorkshire
St Nicholas, Wetwang, £49,000 (emergency grant, previously announced).

Trevor Mitchell, English Heritage Planning Director, explained: "Being able to make timely repairs is vital if much bigger bills are to be avoided further down the road. Leaking roofs for example can cause damp interiors which creates a host of new and even more dire problems. We want our historic places of worship to have a secure future. Not only are they places of prayer and hubs of the community, but they are also amongst this region's greatest architectural treasures. But without the vital safety net of the Repair Grants scheme, many congregations would be faced with watching their beloved churches and chapels falling into ruin."

The largest grant regionally - £498,000 - has been earmarked for Grade II St Wilfrid's Church, Halton, Leeds. Built in 1937 by the celebrated Arts and Crafts architect Arthur Randall Wells, it needs a major overhaul of leaking roofs with total projects costs estimated at £708,220. Audrey Sugden, Church Warden St Wilfrid's, said: "The roof is leaking so badly that dampness has caused the paint to peel inside the church, justing adding to the problems. We are very proud of our building, which is very spacious and light and which was designed by a gifted architect. But over the past 25 years its condition has deteriorated. Now we will be able to tackle the root problem and get the roof repaired. When we told we were being offered such a big grant it was a tremendous feeling and a real boost to our fundraising efforts. Without this vital support we wouldn't be able to get this project off the ground."

Elsewhere, St Peter's in Birstall, receives £199,000 and St Michael and All Angels, Great Houghton, near Barnsley, has been offered £180,000. The Brontë family's church, St Michael and All Angels, Haworth in West Yorkshire, has also been allocated £115,000 towards re-roofing costs.

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "Historic places of worship are one of our most treasured cultural assets. They occupy a unique position at the heart of communities up and down the country, and are a focus for so many civil and social activities in addition to their central purpose as a place for prayer and contemplation. Places of worship are one of the most instantly recognisable features of our cultural landscape, and they continue to inspire people to get involved with and learn about their shared history. This is at the very core of what the Heritage Lottery Fund wants to achieve and the reason we have substantially increased our investment to the programme."

Despite the challenging economic climate, HLF and English Heritage have been able to maintain the planned level of funding and support for places of worship in the current financial year. The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided an extra £9 million to maintain the £25 million value of the total grants budget for 2010 – 11 (further funds will be offered to Grade II places of worship in March). HLF has also confirmed that it will continue its increased level of support in future years. This means that despite English Heritage having to withdraw most of its contribution for new awards from now on, the scheme can continue in its current form. There will be no reduction in expert advice English Heritage staff and local support officers give to congregations all over Yorkshire and the Humber.

Notes to editors

Full details of grants offered in Yorkshire and the Humber:

Holy Trinity, Ossett: Grade II
Contact: Paul Maybury on 01924 217 379.

Repairs to west nave window - masonry found to be unstable during a recent attempt at glazing works. Re-pointing west elevation, renewals to buttress stones, plinth cappings and stringcourses.

Complete with an impressive spire, Holy Trinity Church was built between 1862 and 1865 to the designs of William Henry Crossland of Halifax. When it was consecrated by the Bishop of Ripon it was described as Ossett's little cathedral.

St Leonard's, Thrybergh, Rotherham Grade II
Contact: Keith Hanson on 01709 854 304.

Repairs to nave, south porch and vestry roofs, drainage, masonry and plaster. The original church is thought to date from the pre-Norman period. The period of greatest building activity was after 1430 when the spire was added and the church received its first bell. Extensive restoration took place in the Victorian period.

St Michael & All Angels, Great Houghton Grade II
Contact: Trevor Tindle on 01226 753025.

Repairs to roofing, rain water goods and masonry. The chapel is reputed to have been built in 1650 by Sir Edward Rodes, whose father Sir Godfrey Rodes was the first to occupy Great Houghton Hall (built 1580 – demolished 1960). The chapel had a tradition of use by dissenting ministers, but by 1868 it had passed out of nonconformist use and became a chapel of ease to the parish church of Darfield.

St Mary, Sprotbrough Grade I
Contact: B A Perry on 01302 853 031.

Repairs to chancel and aisle roofs, masonry, glazing and drainage. The parish of Sprotbrough was formed during the latter part of the tenth century, when the Mercian Wulfric Spott took control of lands along the River Don and brought peace and stability to an area which had been dominated by conflict. A fragment of an Anglo-Saxon sculpture is built into the buttress alongside the chancel south door. The Norman part of the church was built in the 12th century, with later bouts of rebuilding. Last year extensive repairs to the nave roof structure and roof covering were completed, together with masonry repairs to the tower.

St Mary, Tickhill Grade II
Contact: Gordon Taylor on 01302 742 224.

Repairs to statues, monuments, masonry and glazing. The Domesday survey indicates that Dadelsey, later called Tickhill, was a prosperous settlement, part Anglo Saxon village and part Norman new town, benefiting from the trade, merchants, craftsmen and officials drawn to the castle of Tickhill. The Church of St. Mary, built as part of the new town, with a tower, nave with narrow aisles and a chancel. Re-building of the church took place over a long period, but the period between 1370 and 1440 was most significant. Nicolas Pevsner described St Mary's as 'The proudest parish church in the West Riding'.

St Wilfrid's, Leeds Grade II
Contact: Audrey Sugden on 0113 225 1803.

Repairs to roofs and windows. St. Wilfrid's was built between 1937 and 1939 and was one of the last buildings to be designed by the Arts and Crafts architect Arthur Randall Wells (1877 to 1942). Nicolas Pevsner described the building as 'completely modern, that is, non-period." In the south transept is a carving of St Wilfrid by Eric Gill dated 1939. The church has been altered very little since the time of its construction, which cost £10,000.

St Andrew, Wootton Grade 1
Contact: Valerie Morris on 01469 588993.

Repairs to tower, nave, aisle and rewiring. The church comprises three-bay aisled nave with south porch, south and north arcades dating from the 13th century. The chancel was rebuilt in 1851 when the whole building underwent a restoration and was reroofed.

St Martin, Owston Ferry Grade 1
Repairs to nave, chancel and south aisle roofs, rain water goods and masonry.

St Martin's lies within the bailey of a 12th-century castle of Roger de Mowbray and is thought to be on the site of the lord's private chapel. The village has grown up to the east of the church on the River Trent. Later rebuilding included north arcade, west tower, south aisle, chancel and north aisle windows in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Church of the Epiphany, Gipton Grade 1
Contact: Jean Baum on 0113 294 0939.

Repairs to pointing east gable and stabilise turret. Works to high level roofs including spire and slot fill repairs to lower roofs and insulation.

The church dominates the site at the junction of Amberton Road and Beech Lane. During the 1930 Leeds City Council embarked on a project to clear slum housing from the city centre. Gipton was chosen as the site of a garden suburb. In 1935 the first new council houses were completed and the following year a temporary mission church, known as the 'tin hut' was opened. The present church was built in 1937 at a cost of £15,000.

St Peter's, Felkirk Grade 1
Contact: John Dean on 01977 614741.

Repairs include reslating roofs on the chancel, nave, south aisle, north aisle and organ chamber. Overhaul of rainwater goods. Investigate stone vestry roof. Masonry repairs to the belfrey and minor repairs to the clevestory.

A church has probably occupied this site since before the Norman Conquest. The present building retains the elaborately carved responds of a Norman arch. Rebuilding took place throughout the 15th century. There are a number of marble mural monuments, including one to the wife of John Carr, the York architect.

St Peter's, Birstall Grade II
Contact: Paul Knight on 01924 473 715.

Repairs include replacing temporary felt roof covering to south aisle with terne-coated stainless stell roofing (to match north side). External stone repairs to boiler house chimney and attached buttress. Internal repairs. Urgent repairs to stained glass.

The church was re-built between 1490 and 1520 and the tower raised to its present height. In 1851 it was repaired at a cost of £1,000 but by 1865 it was considered that the condition of the building was beyond further repair and the church was again rebuilt between 1863 and 1870 at a cost of £18,000 to the design of the architect W.H. Crossland.

St Mary's, Bolton-on-Swale Grade II
Contact: Julien Bookey on 01748 811 175.

Repairs include renewal of roof slopes to south aisle, chancel and south porch, including ridging, verges, abutments, renewal of defective valley gutter to nave / south aisle. Overhauling cast iron rainwater goods, clearing drains etc. Removal of defective internal render areas, making good and redecoration throughout. Reduce ground levels around south side of the building.

The earliest parts of the church date to the 14th century and it was restored in 1857. Monuments in the church include one of 1743 to commemorate the death the previous century of one Henry Jenkins who is reputed to have been 169 years old.

St Lawrence, Thornton Curtis Grade 1
Contact: M Weightman on 01469 535 086.

Repairs to tower and west window. The earliest part of the church is 1200. A major restoration took place in 1884. Furnishings include a Jacobean altar table and a pulpit of similar date and the south door has good ironwork of c.1200

St Peter's, Huddersfield Grade II
Contact: Arthur Nightingale on 01484 603427.

Repairs to external fabric to clergy and choir vestry roofs and also drains and church glazing. The present building is the third church to have stood on the site, built in 1836, and designed by a nonconformist chapel builder with the original internal layout of a Georgian preaching house.

St Michael and All Angels, Haworth Grade II
Contact: Averil Kenyon on 01535 642 264.

Repairs include reroofing the south nave, side aisle and tower. The church's modern fame is chiefly due to its connections with the Brontë family. The Revd Patrick Brontë was the incumbent from 1820 to 1861. Members of the family, including Emily and Charlotte, are buried in the family vault adjacent to the present south-east chapel. A decision to rebuild the church in 1879 provoked a national outcry from admirers of the novels of the Brontë sisters. The objections failed and the foundation stone of the new church was laid on Christmas day that year. The church was entirely rebuilt, except for the tower.

Averil Kenyon, Honorary Treasure at St Michael and All Angels, Haworth, said: "The church roof is leaking badly and that in turn is causing serious damage to 19th century wall paintings inside. Overall we will need about £240,000 to complete the project, which will be the first large scale repairs carried out on the roof since the 19th century. But getting this grant under our belts is a tremendous lift and will give us more leverage with other grant giving bodies. Today is a very good day for our historic church, which is visited by people from across the globe because of its Bronte connection. This grant from the HLF and English Heritage will go a long way in protecting it for future generations."

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

The scheme, in a slightly different form, began in 1996. Before then it was difficult to secure funding on the scale required to help a place of worship facing closure or demolition because of high repair costs.

Listed places of worship in England of all denominations 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.

The Listed Places of Worship Scheme
The listed places of worship grant scheme makes payments equivalent to the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed

buildings primarily in use for public worship. In the 2009-10 financial year, 3,745 claims were paid UK-wide, with a total value of £14,963,412.67, giving an average grant of £3,996. Since last Autumn's Comprehensive Spending Review, works on clocks, pews, bells, organs and professional services such as architects' fees are no longer eligible and the future of the scheme beyond March this year is under review.

Further information

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