£1million to restore the East of England’s historic



Restoring the East of England's historic churches

The Heritage Lottery Fund is today announcing £1million of funding for the East of England’s historic churches, securing the future of six places of worship that are in urgent need of repair.

The funding will allow vital repair works to these important buildings, help them provide better facilities and make the churches more suitable for wider community use.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: “Places of worship are among the UK’s most historic buildings, with fascinating stories behind them. This money will pay for urgent repairs, whilst also helping to tell the stories of these special places to visitors. As a result the buildings themselves will be more used by the whole community, and properly cared for into the future.”

HLF Grants for Places of Worship announced today include:

St. Botolph, Stow Bedon, Grant: £239,900
Grade II* listed St Botolph's Church in the rural village of Stow Bedon in the Breckland district of Norfolk has been awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £239,900. Stow Bedon Parochial Church Council will use the funding to undertake a range of urgent structural repairs to the nave, vestry, roof, windows, floors, parapet and flintwork.

The church is the village's only community building, and the repairs, as well as a new toilet and kitchen, will allow it to be used by a wider range of people. Activities to engage the community with the heritage of the church will include new guidebooks and historical research with local people and a nearby school, a heritage open day and display. Tourists using the nearby Peddars Way and Great Eastern Pingo Trails will also be encouraged to visit the church.

St Peter and St Paul, Knapton, Grant: £206,000
A Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £206,000 will help to secure the structure of the Grade I listed church of St Peter and St Paul in Knapton, Norfolk. Urgently needed repairs to its south nave roof and tower will protect its historic features including a double hammerbeam roof and painted medieval and Victorian angels.

The HLF award will also improve access to the church for disabled people. Internal walls will be redecorated and a toilet and kitchenette will be installed to improve community use. Local people will undertake research into the history of the church and produce new guides and a website. With the new facilities and activities, the church is expecting to attract many more visitors and to increase its use by local groups.

St Edmunds, Thurne, Grant: £181,500
This unique thatched church in Thurne, Great Yarmouth, has been awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £181,500. Grade II* listed St Edmund’s Church requires urgent structural repairs to make it weatherproof, repair the tower parapet and to secure its roof structure, including re-thatching. Disabled access to the building will also be improved and heating and lighting will be upgraded.

Thurne Community Archive Group will create a dedicated website on the history of the church including an archive of its gravestones and memorials that can be used by people researching their ancestors and family history. There will also be a new display focusing on St Edmund’s heritage and including information on the local materials and traditional thatching skills used in the repairs to the roof.

St Mary the Virgin, Sedgeford, Grant: £235,000
Grade I Listed St Mary's Church in Sedgeford, North Norfolk, has been awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £235,000 for urgent repairs to the roof, windows, pews and plasterwork, that will allow it to come off the English Heritage 'at risk' register. The church houses a square Norman font and a wall-painting of St Christopher, as well as ornate stained glass windows.

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin will carry out structural repairs to the church, as well as making improvements to the heating system and creating new community facilities. New activities will include regular exhibitions by local groups including the school, the history group and the archaeological project; youth groups and community uses to attract more visitors; new guides to the church and regular tours for children and adults.

All Saints Church, Grant: £150,200
The 14th-century church of All Saints in the village of Stibbard, North Norfolk, has been awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £150,200 for repairs to its tower caused by water damage. Work to the Grade II* listed church will also include re-glazing the chancel east window and replacement of the asbestos cement boiler house roof. Local residents and the village school will be involved in researching the history of the village over the last 200 years and will produce displays for visitors to enjoy.

All Saints, Great Braxted, Grant: £47,000
Next year All Saints' Church in Great Braxted, Essex will celebrate its 900th anniversary. A Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £47,000 for repairs to the Grade II* listed church will ensure that it is structurally stable and weather-tight. Damage

caused by woodpeckers to the cladding of the spire will be repaired, and extensive masonry repairs will be carried out including the repointing and replacement of damaged stones and bricks.

The church website will include information about the history and architecture of the church to encourage more people to visit. Local schoolchildren from the villages of Tiptree and Great Totham will make educational visits to the church, while adult courses on masonry, stained glass, carpentry techniques and landscape archaeology will be offered.

Further information

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