



St Peter & St Paul's Church Watford Roof Repair and Drainage

St Peter & St Paul's Church Watford in Northamptonshire has received initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a roof repair and drainage project, it was announced today (19th July 2017). Made possible by National Lottery players, the project aims to make the church wind and weather tight so that it is available for future generations to appreciate. It also aims to encourage people to engage with the history associated with the church. The initial phase of the project should be completed by July 2018. Development funding of £13,400 has been awarded for this purpose. If successful, repairs should be completed by July 2019, meaning that the total grant awarded could be up to £218,500. We anticipate the church remaining open throughout this project.

We aim to re-cover the temporary roof covering with a steel-based alternative, repair the stonework of the chancel windows, overhaul the gutters and drains, and provide a toilet. We also aim to develop a range of activities to enable the public to engage with the history of the church, developing a dedicated website, printed information, exhibitions about the history of the church, and run workshops to train volunteers in promoting the church's heritage, and offer educational visits for schools.

The church has rich historical connections which go back to the time of William the Conqueror (Gilbert 'The Cook' c1066-c1110). Of particular interest are links with The Pilgrim Fathers, whose four hundredth anniversary is in 2020. Thirty-five million people can now claim ancestral lineage from them, that's twelve percent of the American population. Thomas Rogers and his wife Alice Cosgrove were from Watford village families, generations of who had their baptisms, weddings and funerals in the church. Other history represented in the church includes Sir George Clerke, a Royalist at the nearby Battle of Naseby (1645), and links with the Henley, Eden and Peel families who have had important roles or connections as ministers and Prime Ministers in government from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries.

Jonathan Platt, Head of HLF East Midlands, said: "Historic places of worship like St Peter and St Paul's have fascinating stories to tell, and are often at the heart of local communities. Thanks to National Lottery players' we can help to address the church's urgent conservation needs and share its heritage widely"

Commenting on the award, The Revd Graham Collingridge said "We're delighted that we've received this support thanks to National Lottery players. The church has connections with Watford Village going back almost 1000 years, and it's great to know

that we are a step closer to preserving it for future generations, and increasing awareness of its rich historical connections, particularly the Pilgrim Fathers as we approach their 400th Anniversary”.

Notes to editors

About St Peter & St Paul's Church Watford, Northamptonshire.

St Peter and St Paul's Church is located in the small village of Watford in rural Northamptonshire (not to be confused with the larger town of Watford in Hertfordshire). It is grade 1 listed, and is on Historic England's Heritage At Risk Register in a condition rated 'very bad.' In 2016 it was also subjected to removal of lead from the roof by thieves. It has a small congregation of worshippers (approximately fifteen), and is part of four churches in the Benefice of Long Buckby with Watford and West Haddon with Winwick, whose Vicar is Revd Graham Collingridge. Local villager and historian Dan White has promoted a new interest in the history of Watford Village and its church.

About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Grants For Places of Worship applications are assessed in two rounds. A first-round pass is given when HLF has endorsed outline proposals and earmarked funding. A first-round pass may also include an immediate award to fund the development of the project. Detailed proposals are then considered by HLF at second-round and as long as plans have progressed satisfactorily and according to the original proposal, an award for the project is confirmed.

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and use #NationalLottery and #HLFsupported.

Further information

For further information, images and interviews please contact Revd Graham Collingridge (Vicar) on (01327 842204, vicar.longbuckby@btinternet.com), or for information on Watford's local history contact Dan White (Tel. 07554178727).