



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Chris Heaton-Harris MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

3 December 2014

Dear Chris

**£15 million roof scheme for vulnerable listed church buildings**

I am writing following the Chancellor's announcement in his Autumn Statement today of a special £15 million fund for the repair of roofs and guttering on vulnerable listed church buildings.

This scheme has the potential to make a significant difference for communities around the country and I hope that you will encourage parishes in your constituency to apply.

There is a place of worship in almost every village, ward or neighbourhood, and 85 per cent of the population visit at least once a year. Our historic church buildings are places of worship but also hubs of wider community activity. They are often the most distinctive building in an area, providing a symbol of local identity and a powerful visual connection with our past.

Sadly, many church buildings are in need of urgent repair. You may be aware that English Heritage recently published its annual *Heritage at Risk* Register, which identifies listed buildings at risk of rapid deterioration. 887 places of worship appeared on the 2014 Register, with deterioration of roofs, gutters or high-level stonework as the most common cause of problems. This new fund will therefore offer a real solution for many of these church buildings. It is open not only to those on the *Heritage at Risk* Register, but to any listed church buildings where roof and gutter repairs have been identified as urgent and necessary.

Eligible parishes can make applications for grants between £10,000 and £100,000. Awards have to be allocated by 31 March and so **the deadline for submissions is 30 January 2015**. This is a tight timeframe but the application process has been kept simple and straightforward. The National Heritage Memorial Fund ([www.nhmf.org.uk](http://www.nhmf.org.uk)) is administering the scheme and details about the roof fund will also be available via the ChurchCare website ([www.churchcare.co.uk](http://www.churchcare.co.uk)).

I hope that you will encourage parishes in your constituency to take up this opportunity. This fund will deliver a lasting legacy, helping some of our most significant church buildings to remain open as safe and sustainable places in our communities.

If you have any queries about how best to respond to this opportunity in your consistency, please contact:

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As we  
Tony

Rt. Hon. Sir Tony Baldry MP  
Second Church Estates Commissioner