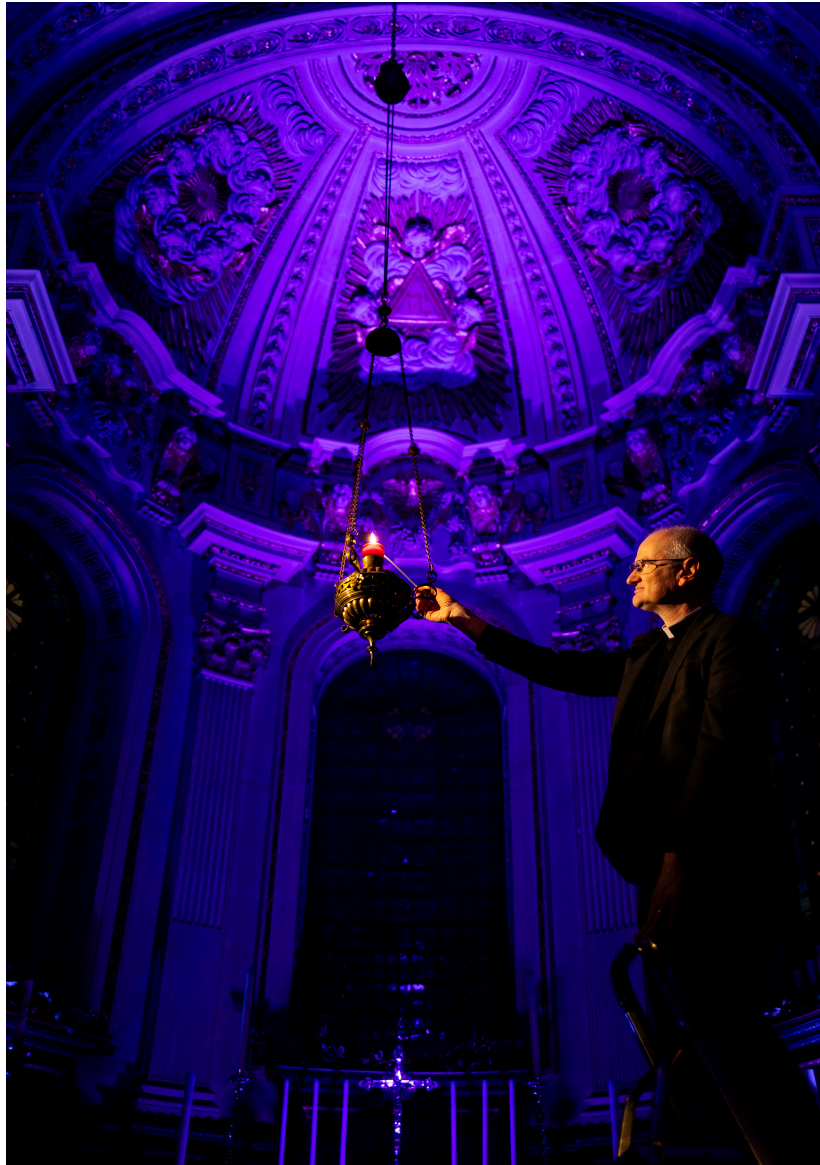


Historic churches awarded £7.4m National Lottery funding

St Mary le Strand, London among four historic churches celebrating funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund



Canon Peter Babington, Priest in Charge, lights a lantern at St Mary le Strand, London which has been awarded £4.6m by The National Lottery Heritage Fund (c) David Parry

Imagery is available for download, [here](#).



- London's St Mary le Strand has been awarded £4.6m to transform the Jewel in the Strand
- Three other communities will see their churches' spire secured, buildings saved and histories revealed
- Since 1994, The National Lottery Heritage Fund has invested over £1 billion for places of worship across the UK and launched a targeted initiative last year to tackle sector-wide issues for places of worship of all faiths and denominations and former places of worship

Today, 22 December, The National Lottery Heritage Fund has announced £7.4m of funding for four historic churches, and former churches, to secure their futures, share their heritage and create opportunities and much-needed spaces for communities.

In London, the £4.6m funding marks a significant milestone for the Jewel in the Strand project which will restore and redevelop the 18th century building and gardens of Grade I Listed St Mary le Strand.

In the heart of London surrounded by galleries, theatres and restaurants and in a newly pedestrianised area, St Mary le Strand has millions of passersby each year. The project will enable the church to welcome more of these people through its doors and become a focal point of Westminster's growing cultural hub.

The National Lottery funding will help to open up accessible spaces for communities and groups of all faiths and backgrounds to use the historic building. It will enable partnerships to be built with neighbouring Somerset House, Strand 180 and Kings College London. It will also create opportunities for volunteers, students and young people to get involved in the future of St Mary le Strand.

The 300-year history of the church will be a golden thread throughout the project. As well as restoring the historic building, the project will explore the stories of the people who have passed through its doors and lived or worked on its doorstep. Activities will include researching those who are buried in the Crypt, exploring its role as the official church of the Association of Wrens and Women of the Royal Naval Services and following in the footsteps of those who have walked the historic processional route (which includes St Mary le Strand) between Westminster and the City.

Canon Peter Babington, Priest in Charge of Mary le Strand said: "We are hugely grateful to the players of the National Lottery. This generous grant will help transform St Mary le Strand for generations to come and to become once again the Jewel in the Strand."

Ruth Duston OBE, OC, Chief Executive of London Heritage Quarter said: "St Mary le Strand is a much-loved landmark at the heart of the Northbank district and the transformed Strand Aldwych, and we are delighted to see this wonderful funding awarded. This investment will not only help secure the church's future but will also enrich the cultural life of the area for everyone who lives, works and visits here."



The other places receiving funding today are:

- **St Mary Magdalene in Stockland Bristol, Somerset.** The Grade II Listed church has been awarded just over £2m to make vital structural repairs to its tower and roof as well as improving facilities and accessibility for visitors. The 'Parallel Lives' project aims to remove the building from Historic England's 'At Risk' register. National Lottery funding will enable the church to deliver a wide range of community outreach and activities including: tackling social isolation with Talking Cafes and wellbeing activities; learning opportunities including stone masonry and glass conservation; outdoor activities in partnership with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. The project will launch a research programme into the church's historical links to the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, ensuring this part of its story is shared.
- **St John the Baptist Church in Nash, South Shropshire.** The Grade II* Listed church has been awarded £561,305 to repair its tower, south nave roof and its rare early Reformation spire which dates to 1562. The vital restoration work will remove the church from Historic England's 'At Risk' register and secure its future in the community. Activities will include making bird and bat boxes out of the spire's redundant cladding, botanical art workshops of the churchyard flowers and a community needlework project to repair the embroidery on its Victorian altar frontals.
- **St Monans Auld Kirk in Fife.** St Monans Auld Kirk Enterprise (SMAKE) has been awarded development funding* of £115,841 to develop plans to restore the Category A-listed medieval church, one of the oldest in Scotland, and transform it into a social hub, café and heritage destination. SMAKE was formed by six local residents to acquire the Auld Kirk when the Church of Scotland announced its plans to sell it. This development funding is a key step towards SMAKE's ambitions to keep St Monans Auld Kirk at the heart of community life.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: "Places of worship are among the UK's most treasured historic landmarks, serving as gateways to our shared heritage and vibrant community life. Thanks to National Lottery players, these grants will allow each place of worship to take ambitious steps to reimagine how these spaces can inspire and benefit the people around them.

"The festive period is a time when many people come together, and the funding for these four places of worship will truly put community at their heart and secure a sustainable future. This investment ensures their heritage will be protected, celebrated, and enjoyed by everyone, now and for generations to come."

Since 1994, The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded over £1 billion to more than 8,200 places of worship projects, enabling vital restoration and conservation of some of the UK's oldest and most cherished buildings, including facilitating the removal of many from the UK's 'At Risk' registers.

The Heritage Fund's National Lottery Heritage Grants programme is open for applications and any place of worship in the UK, of any religion, faith or denomination, is encouraged to apply.

-Ends-



**Heritage
Fund**

Notes to editors

Today, The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded a total of £7,365,062 for the heritage of places of worship, supporting the many volunteers who care for them and the many benefits they bring to local communities.

The four funding awards are:

- **The Jewel in the Strand, St Mary Le Strand** - £4,630,000
- **Parallel Lives, The Parochial Church Council of St Mary Magdalene, Stockland** - £2,057,916
- **St John the Baptist Church - Tower, Spire and Roof Refurbishment, The Parochial Church Council of Nash and Boraston** - £561,305
- ***St Monans Auld Kirk, St Monans Auld Kirk Enterprise** - development round grant of £115,841 (with the potential delivery grant of £1,876,239). This project has been awarded development funding to enable project plans to be developed and an application for a full National Lottery delivery grant to be made at a later date.

Further information about The National Lottery Heritage Fund's support for places of worship

For further information about how we support places of worship, please visit: [How do we support historic Places of Worship? | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

For further details about the Heritage in Need strategic initiative for places of worship, and the Heritage Fund's other strategic initiatives, please visit [Strategic initiatives | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

About The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Our vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future. That's why as the largest funder for the UK's heritage we are dedicated to supporting projects that connect people and communities to heritage, as set out in our strategic plan, Heritage 2033. Heritage can be anything from the past that people value and want to pass on to future generations. We believe in the power of heritage to ignite the imagination, offer joy and inspiration, and to build pride in place and connection to the past.

Over the next 10 years, we aim to invest £3.6billion raised for good causes by National Lottery players to make a decisive difference for people, places and communities. heritagefund.org.uk Follow @HeritageFundUK on Twitter/X, Facebook and Instagram and use #NationalLottery #HeritageFund

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