

Press release: Pilot scheme launched to help build sustainable future for listed places of worship

A new scheme to help build a sustainable future for listed places of worship will be piloted in urban and rural areas in England, Heritage Minister Michael Ellis announced today.

Expert advisors will work with listed buildings used by all faiths and denominations in Manchester and Suffolk to increase community engagement and vital heritage management skills.

The projects, expected to begin in early autumn, will receive a total of £1.8 million over the next two years.

Eligible listed places of worship in the pilot areas will be able to access a £500,000 minor repairs fund.

The Taylor Review: Sustainability of English Churches and Cathedrals, which was published in December 2017, called for greater community use of Church of England buildings to help congregations raise income to pay for their upkeep.

This new pilot scheme extends this support to all faiths or denominations in order to help worshippers better care for and protect their listed buildings.

Fabric support officers will work within the two areas to provide high quality advice and develop maintenance and repair plans. These will ensure that routine repairs can be addressed immediately and prevent the development of more costly problems.

Community support advisors will work with the custodians of listed places of worship to identify and strengthen relationships within their local area and develop greater community partnerships.

Heritage Minister Michael Ellis said: "Britain has an incredible array of historic buildings important to all faiths which tell the story of our shared history and our communities. However the costs of caring for and protecting many listed places of worship can be prohibitive and lead many to fall into disrepair.

"The innovative pilots I am announcing today will help unlock the community potential of these buildings and provide practical guidance so they can be preserved for future generations."

Deborah Lamb, Deputy Chief Executive of Historic England, said:

"We are delighted that the Government is funding a new project to support the volunteers who care for historic places of worship. Buildings that are well looked after help to enrich the lives of people across England. They are

special spaces to visit and can be enjoyed by anyone, whether for worship or not.

“We know that keeping these buildings in good repair can be a challenge for congregations so we are excited by the potential of this pilot scheme, and look forward to playing our part in its success.”

Bishop of Worcester, the Rt Revd Dr John Inge said: “Church buildings have always been a crucial part of the community life of this nation and the majority of them provide one or more form of social outreach or community facilities. In working with the government on reviewing their long-term sustainability, it has been gratifying to hear many stories of churches that understand their Christian mission in terms of service to the community.

“These pilots will model a new type of partnership between the Church and the Government, investing in people and buildings side-by-side to ensure churches are able to continue to fulfil this function, whilst growing new opportunities to serve the people of England.”

Notes to editors: Funding will be available across different faiths and denominations. The support officers will be based with the Church of England diocese of Manchester and St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

Press release: Prime Minister's Passover message 2018

Today marks the beginning of Passover, as Jewish families around the world come together at the seder table to tell the story of their ancestors' deliverance from slavery.

Here in the UK, we can all take the opportunity to celebrate the incredible and enduring contribution made by our Jewish community, in every corner of the country and in every walk of life.

Of course, the Exodus from Egypt did not mark the end of anti-Semitic persecution. For millennia, the descendants of those Moses led to freedom have continued to face hatred, discrimination and violence. It's a situation that continues to this day, including, I'm sad to say, here in Britain.

It's something I have consistently taken action to tackle, both through investing in security to protect our Jewish communities and through education, with the creation of a National Holocaust Memorial to remind us all where hatred can lead if left unchecked.

The story of Passover teaches us that, while wrong may triumph for a time, the arc of history always bends to the righteous. So, at this special time of

year, let us all pledge to stand up and make our voices heard in the face of anti-Semitism.

After all, as Elie Wiesel said, "Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

I wish you all a very happy and peaceful Pesach – chag kasher v'sameach.

Press release: Foreign Secretary's 2018 Passover Message

Passover is a time of coming together, when Jewish communities commemorate the liberation of the people of Israel from slavery in ancient Egypt. It is a time to celebrate freedom as a basic human right.

Pesach Sameach to all Jewish families both in the UK and around the world. I wish them a happy and peaceful holiday.

News story: Home Secretary's Hillsborough advisor to step down

The Prime Minister and Home Secretary today expressed their gratitude to their Hillsborough advisor, the Right Reverend James Jones KBE, following his decision to stand down.

Bishop James decided to step down from his formal position after the Crown Prosecution Service announced its final charging decisions and Hillsborough matters move into the criminal proceedings stage.

He will continue to maintain a close interest in Hillsborough matters.

The Prime Minister and Home Secretary today thanked Bishop James for the significant contribution he has made to Hillsborough matters, which began with his chairmanship of the Hillsborough Independent Panel between December 2009 and September 2012.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

Bishop James Jones has been a trusted and loyal counsel to me, the

current Home Secretary and, most importantly, the Hillsborough families for many years.

He has held a vital and unwavering role in the continued search for justice through the independent panel and as an independent adviser to government.

He steps down from this position with my utmost thanks and gratitude for his work and service.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

Bishop James has always provided timely, constructive and wise advice which has proved very valuable, particularly in terms of conveying the views of the bereaved families whose trust he has gained.

I am immensely grateful to Bishop James for all his work, but agree this is the right time for him to stand down as my advisor with the focus now firmly on criminal proceedings.

Bishop James was appointed as the Home Secretary's advisor on Hillsborough by Theresa May in October 2012.

Since then he has provided advice to the Home Office on a wide range of Hillsborough-related matters during the fresh inquests and up to the charging decisions.

Bishop James also researched and wrote his report on the experiences of the Hillsborough families which the Home Office published in November 2017.

He will formally stand down on 31 March.

Going forward, the Hillsborough families will be entitled to support offered by the government-funded court-based Witness Service, which provides emotional and practical support, advice and information, regardless of whether or not they are witnesses. The Crown Prosecution Service will also keep the families informed regarding developments with trials and court hearings.

[News story: Dame Mary Archer reappointed as Chair of Science Museum](#)

Group

Dame Mary Archer

Dame Mary Archer DBE started her career as a physical chemist and taught Chemistry at both Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Dame Mary was Chair of Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, 2002–2012, and a founder director of Cambridge University Health Partners, 2009–2012. In 2012, she was appointed DBE for services to the NHS.

Dame Mary is President of the National Energy Foundation, the UK Solar Energy Society, Cambridge Global Health Partnerships and the Guild of Church Musicians. She is chair of Cambridge Early Music, a trustee of the Britten Sinfonia, and a non-executive director of Hydrodec Group plc.

The role is not remunerated. This appointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Dame Mary Archer has declared no such political activity.