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for Culture,  
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Dame Caroline Dinenage MP  
Chair, Culture, Media and Sport Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

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Dear Dame Caroline,

Further to your letter of 24 July regarding the future of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and my subsequent reply of 4 September, I am writing to provide the Committee with an update on the Government's approach to funding listed places of worship, which the Secretary of State announced today.

During my time as Heritage Minister I have seen for myself the important role that listed places of worship have both for their historic value and as centres of their communities. Since my appointment I have engaged with key stakeholders, including the Church of England, the National Council of Trusts, and Marsha de Cordova MP in her capacity as Second Church Estates Commissioner, and visited places of worship from St Michael le Belfrey in York to Salisbury Cathedral, to gain a firsthand understanding of the needs on the ground.

This has demonstrated the need for funding, from a range of sources including government, to secure the role that listed places of worship play in their communities.

However, the fiscal picture we inherited from the previous government means we have to carefully consider the money we spend. Our evaluation shows that under the current Listed Places of Worship Scheme, 80% of respondents said that they would still have carried out the work without the rebate. As we look toward a new fiscal period and the evolving needs of our communities, it is essential that government support is deployed where it can have the greatest impact and where it is needed most. An untargeted scheme does not achieve that. I will therefore deliver a new capital fund for places of worship of £23 million per year, starting in 2026/27 for the remaining years of the Spending Review until 2029/30, targeted at places of most need.

By moving to a more targeted model aimed at places of worship in areas of greatest need, we can ensure that every pound of taxpayers' money is leveraged to secure the future of our heritage while supporting the government's wider missions for national renewal and community cohesion. The fund will be focused on England, because Heritage is a devolved policy area. Further details regarding the eligibility criteria and application process, will be published in due course.



The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme will not be renewed and will end on 31 March 2026 or when the budget for the year is spent, whichever comes first. Since its inception, the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme has played a significant role in helping congregations maintain the fabric of our nation's most historic and beautiful buildings and I want to thank the volunteers and communities who have secured grants for their buildings as part of this scheme.

We are carefully considering the lessons from the last scheme, including ensuring that in a more targeted model, small congregations and volunteers can still be supported.

I look forward to discussing issues relating to Heritage when I give evidence to the Committee on 10th February.

With best wishes,



Baroness Twycross  
**Minister for Museums, Heritage and Gambling**