

North Devon churches get grants to carry out crucial repair work



GRANT RECIPIENT: St Mary's Church in High Bickington has received a £148,000 grant to carry out repair work. Picture: Mike Southon 0901-91_02

MORE than £700,000 is to be invested in five North Devon churches.

The cash has been awarded by English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund to support crucial repair work to grade one and grade two listed buildings under the Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme.

The five North Devon churches set to benefit include St George and All Saints Church in Beaford which is to receive £130,000, Newton St Petrock Church near Holsworthy which will get £158,000, and [St Mary's Church](#) in Atherington, which has been awarded £126,000.

A further £160,000 has been allocated for St Peter's Church in Thornbury near Holsworthy, and £148,000 for St Mary's Church, High Bickington.

The money will be used for vital maintenance. For example the £148,000 awarded to St Mary's, will be spent on repairs to the tower, buttresses, roofs and valley gutters and drainage works.

The church, with Norman origins, has a 15th century west tower, to which buttresses were added later, probably in the 16th century.

These buttresses were poorly bonded to the tower masonry and the facing stones have been falling from the tower recently, prompting the church to fence off the base of the tower.

Under the scheme, 17 grants worth a total of £1,833,000 have been offered to places of worship in the South West.

Andrew Vines, regional director for English Heritage in the South West, said:

"Here in the South West we have a wealth of churches which boast a rich heritage. With these grants we seek to ensure that this heritage can be preserved and enjoyed by all."

Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the South West, Nerys Watts, added: "The South West is home to some of the country's most important and precious places of worship but sustaining them is always a big challenge. They are central to the local communities, and by awarding nearly £2million to these seventeen churches, the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage can provide the much-needed investment and support to ensure these wonderful buildings are safeguarded for the future."

Read more about

- [St Mary's Church](#),
- [Freemasonry](#)