

The Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP
The House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

15 July 2010

The Heritage Alliance

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Dear Dr Fox

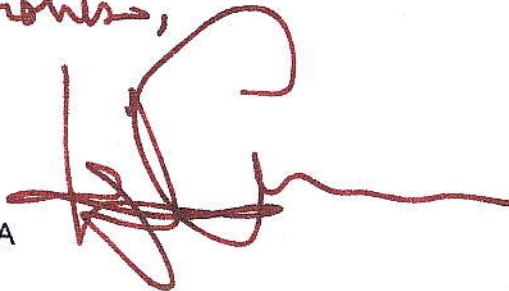
I am writing to express the strong support of The Heritage Alliance for the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme (LPWS). I understand that one of your constituents, Mr Mortlock, has recently brought his concerns about the future of the Scheme to your attention, particularly its impact on local communities when combined with the planned increase in VAT.

The LPWS is a particularly valuable scheme as it goes directly to local communities, it has attracted five times the Government investment through donations and match-funding, and it rewards preventative maintenance where other grant schemes tend to reward neglect.

As Chairman of the Alliance I would also like to comment on your reply that additional lottery funding would somehow compensate for the loss of LPWS Grants. We are the first to welcome the proposed restoration of the lottery shares since this could mean an additional £50million pa for the Heritage Lottery Fund and we have responded fully and positively to the current consultation. However the two sources of funding are entirely separate and different in their aims. Greater emphasis on heritage through the National Lottery does not mean that funds will flow to churches since HLF grants are awarded on a competitive basis whereas the repayment of VAT under the LPWS scheme is automatic. LPWS grants are relatively easy to apply for and follow the actual repair work undertaken. Many places of worship also find it hard to satisfy access and education conditions on HLF grants, for example small rural historic churches which are currently most at risk. Even if a special programme were established under HLF, certain denominations and faiths would not accept the profits of gambling.

We would be glad to discuss the value of the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme with you in more detail. If you would find this helpful please do get in touch with my office to see if we can arrange a meeting.

With best wishes,



Loyd Grossman OBE FSA
Chairman

cc Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State DCMS
John Penrose Minister for Heritage & Tourism DCMS

Our members are non-government, voluntary and private organisations that promote, conserve, study and involve the public in **our heritage**.

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