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Trevor Cooper  
Chair  
The Heritage Religious Buildings Alliance  
Clutha House  
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London SW1P 3AY

CMS 302049/DC

24 April 2017

Dear Mr. Cooper

Thank you for your letter of 3 April outlining your concerns about the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) change of approach in relation to the funding places of worship, specifically its Grants for Places of Worship (GPOW) Programme.

As you are aware, HLF is proposing that from September 2017 funding for repairs to places of worship will be made available through its Our Heritage and Heritage Grants programmes rather than through GPOW. HLF believe that the merging of GPOW with its existing programmes will meet the needs of applicants who are seeking a more flexible and lighter-touch way in accessing much-needed funding. These proposed changes will make applications significantly less onerous for grants up to £100,000 and will offer places of worship more flexibility and scope in terms of what they can apply for. They should also help to enhance the sustainability of the places of worship themselves. Larger grants will still be available to individual places of worship where more significant schemes of repair are needed.

I have asked officials here at DCMS to take forward the issues you raise in your letter with HLF regarding lack of consultation and the impact of these changes to the funding landscape for listed places of worship. They are currently in touch with HLF and will respond to you in due course.

**Tracey Crouch MP**  
Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage

