



THE SPACE steering group is delighted to announce that the second round application for Heritage Lottery Funding has been successful and a grant of £227k has been awarded! This means that vital roof repairs can be carried out to the highest standard, securing the future of our wonderful church for generations to come. It will also enable us to install a much needed toilet block, glass entrance doors, heritage displays, the rectification of damage caused by the damp seeping from the failed roof as well as general remedial works to tidy up our church and preserve its rich history.

The lottery bid success coincides with a hefty anonymous donation of around £75k and another major promise of support of around £20k which, together with other grants and income sources, mean we need to secure only around a further £20k in 2017 to fully fund this first phase in our SPACE project.

The support from Otterton (and beyond) for the SPACE project has ensured its success. Together we have so far raised more than £125k through fundraising events and activities and the strength of community backing for a project is one of the criteria on which the HLF judges applications. In December the school presented nearly £4k to SPACE, a wonderful and astonishing amount, which had been raised by donating a percentage of the money taken at various events over the last couple of years. Getting to this point with phase one of the SPACE project has been a real community effort!

Phase Two will involve dividing the interior of the church, while still retaining its primary role as a place of worship, to create a meeting room, improved kitchen and hall space for the whole community.

Reverend Anne Charlton said: "I am absolutely delighted to have received the National Lottery's financial support enabling us to restore Otterton Church building for use by not only those who wish to worship there, but also as a community building for the wider community.

"From my Christian perspective, I am very pleased to have been involved in this campaign that will enable the children, who I now see playing in the playground, to know that there will be a village church available to them when they wish to marry, baptise their children, and in time, say farewell to those they love, as well as being able to worship there.

"From the wider community perspective we have this wonderful Grade 2* listed building, built by the Rolle family which is a huge asset to the village as a community space, and I hope in years to come it will be a venue for many joyful family and community gatherings."

In late April scaffolding will start to be erected around the West side of the church to mark the start of six months of work to be undertaken by contractors Ellis and Co. The scaffolding will be moved as work on each elevation is carried out, but access to the church will continue uninterrupted throughout the period.

But we will not have to wait until April to see changes taking place. In February cupboards will be installed to accommodate the equipment and paraphernalia at the back of the church that will need to be stored safely, this will improve the appearance of that area.

Another early job to be undertaken, probably in March, will be the removal of the green algae that has blighted the interior walls of the church for so long.

We will provide monthly updates in this newsletter to keep the parish up to date with works as they progress and advise on the changes that you are likely to see.

In the meantime if anyone is able to organise or host a fundraising event to help with the final push then please contact Jane Smith (568184) or the Rev Anne Charlton (444276).