

NATIONAL CHURCHES AWARDS

2023

NATIONAL
CHURCHES
TRUST

In the presence of
HRH The Duke of Gloucester
KG GCVO

6 November

Mercers' Hall, London



Hugh Dennis

Actor, writer and comedian.



Canon Ann Easter

Honorary Associate Priest in the East Ham team, Newham. Former Chaplain to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Hello and welcome

Your Royal Highness, Lords and Ladies, and gentlemen. Welcome to the 2023 National Church Awards.

Churches are important all year round. They are impressive, exciting and surprising.

Whether it is their fine architecture, wonderful services provided by volunteers from all walks of life, spaces for prayer, contemplation or solace, or somewhere to visit and take in history, art, craftsmanship and heritage, churches have something for everyone.

We are delighted you are joining us today, as we congratulate everyone involved in the awards and shine a spotlight on amazing churches, chapels and meeting houses right across the UK. You are all making such a difference in keeping these buildings alive for today; and also for tomorrow.

If you are not already a Friend of the National Churches Trust please consider joining today and tell your family and friends about our work. Together we can support many more church buildings from Land's End to John O'Groats, urban and rural, listed and unlisted.

Thank you

Sir Philip Rutnam
Chairman

Claire Walker
Chief Executive



The National Church Awards – the ‘BAFTAs for churches’ – is back and bigger than ever.

We are really proud to honour churches and the people who care for them through a range of award schemes.

Every year we attract hundreds of entries that exemplify the talent, dedication and innovation of individuals and teams.

Churches have an amazing story to tell – from their beautiful buildings to the dedicated volunteers who keep them open and serving local people – but they need help. With the future of many churches uncertain and under threat, there has never been a more important time to celebrate the UK’s churches and their importance to communities..

We’re very grateful to the Pilgrim Trust for supporting the Nayler Awards for Excellence in Church Maintenance, and to the Marsh Charitable Trust for supporting the Church and Community Volunteer Awards. We work together with the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association to celebrate the architecture awards; the King of Prussia Gold Medal, the Presidents’ Award and the Young Church Architect or Surveyor of the Year.

Our judging stages have brought together representatives from heritage organisations, denominations and churches, sector experts and individuals working in the awards category fields.

We’re extremely grateful to everyone who has been involved.

Also we are thankful to the Mercers’ Company for hosting us today, and particularly to Xenia Dennen and Fay Richards for helping us to stage such a fantastic event.

And finally we would like to thank the capable and wonderful Hugh Dennis and Canon Ann Easter, who will guide us through the afternoon with skill and entertainment.

Thanks to you both!

Pilgrim
Trust

MARSH
Charitable Trust



Programme

4pm	Welcome	
4.15pm	Naylor Awards for Excellence in Church Maintenance	Generously supported by the Pilgrim Trust
4.30pm	King of Prussia Gold Medal Presidents' Award Young Architect or Surveyor	In partnership with the Ecclesiastical Architects & Surveyors Association
4.45pm	Break	
5pm	National Churches Trust Friends Vote Award	
5.15pm	Open for Visitors Awards	
5.30pm	Church & Community Volunteer Awards	Generously supported by Marsh Charitable Trust
5.45pm	Break	
5.55pm	Church of the Year	
6.15pm	Thank you and goodbye	



Nayler Award for Excellence in Church Maintenance

St Mary, Altinure, County Derry
St Michael & All Angels, Bishop's Cleeve, Gloucestershire
St Anne, Dunbar, East Lothian
St Wilfrid, Grappenhall, Cheshire
St Andrew, Harberton, Devon
Killinchy Presbyterian Church, County Down
Parish Church, Llangunnor, Carmarthenshire
St James, Little Paxton, Cambridgeshire
St John's Scottish Episcopal Church,
Johnstone, Renfrewshire
Plymouth Methodist Central Hall, Devon
St Sampson, South Hill, Cornwall
Holy Trinity, Waringstown, County Down

King of Prussia Gold Medal

St Marylebone, London
Shrine Church of St Walburge, Preston, Lancashire
Minster Church of All Saints, Rotherham, Yorkshire
Saltaire United Reformed Church, Yorkshire
Our Lady of the Assumption & St Mary Magdalene,
Tavistock, Devon

Presidents' Award

Holy Trinity, Hazlemere, Buckinghamshire
St John, Manthorpe, Lincolnshire
St Hilda, Redcar, Yorkshire
St Peter, Ropley, Hampshire
St Mary the Virgin, Walthamstow, London
St John, Waterloo, London

Friends Vote Award

St John the Baptist, Hatherleigh, Devon
Union Chapel, Islington, London
St Mary, South Stoneham, Hampshire

Open for Visitors Awards

Sinclair Seamen's Presbyterian, Belfast, County Antrim
St Alfege, Greenwich, London
St Mary, Houghton on the Hill, Norfolk
St Patrick, Llanbadrig, Anglesey
St Peter, Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd, Denbighshire
St Michael, Llanfihangel y Creuddyn, Ceredigion
St Nefydd & St Mary, Llanefydd, Conwy
St Marylebone, London
Christ Church, Londonderry, County Derry
Immaculate Conception, Strabane, County Tyrone
Providence Chapel, Throwleigh, Devon
All Saints North Street, York, Yorkshire

Church & Community Volunteer Awards

Holy Rosary, Leeds, Yorkshire
St John the Baptist, Scampton, Lincolnshire
St John the Baptist, Suckley, Worcestershire
Bethel PCW, Wrexham Garden Village Wrexham
St Bestius, Termonamongan County Tyrone
Netherton Church, Tayside
St Laurence, Chorley, Lancashire
Diss United Reformed Church, Norfolk
St Hilda, Redcar, Yorkshire
Holy Trinity, Trefnant, Denbighshire
St James the Great, Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire
Christ Church, Londonderry County Derry

Nayler Awards for Excellence in Church Maintenance

The overall winner is

We place great importance on good maintenance and the usefulness of a detailed plan to ensure ongoing upkeep of a church building and to help reduce the likelihood of future repair projects.

The awards shine a light on the people who look after local churches.

In partnership with the Pilgrim Trust.

The awards will be presented by:
Sue Bowers, Director, Pilgrim Trust
Shirley Adams, Trustee, National Churches Trust

**Pilgrim
Trust**

St Michael & All Angels, Bishop's Cleeve Winner in England

"Our building is ancient and beautiful. We take satisfaction in handing down a place where God's work has a headquarters, history and architecture are loved, and the next generation are well served."

The original building dates from 1170 and is made of Cotswold stone, quarried locally.

The volunteer team have composed their own bespoke maintenance plan and it is used every month.

As well as being organised and having good foresight, the judges loved that they remember to thank everyone; it's even written into their plan!



Llangunnor Parish Church Winner in Wales

"The friendship of our group of wonderful people, promoting a can do attitude whatever challenges appear, has come into sharp focus. It's good to get back to having a good Welsh cwttch (hug)."

On a hill overlooking Tywi valley a mile from the town of Carmarthen stands a church with a panoramic view of the valley, whose volunteers pride themselves in creating a team which supports each other as well as the church.

Not much seems to phase them and the judges loved that they have brought together such a devoted group of people, who give so freely of their time and expertise.



***They write
in a very
warm way.
Clearly
volunteers are
valued here.***

*The judging panel about
Llangunnor Parish Church*

St Anne, Dunbar Winner in Scotland

"The application of skills towards care and maintenance is an expression of worship and a privilege. Bringing people together to undertake tasks allows connections to be made and strengthened."

St Anne's which was built in 1888 and sits about 200 metres from the sea. The maintenance schedule is used monthly. Volunteers apply the skills acquired for the benefit of the community, and to learn new specialist techniques.

The judges were impressed with the way they manage the practicalities of running the church – clearly it's having a big impact.



St Mary, Altinure Winner in Northern Ireland

"Volunteering in the church gives me a sense of belonging, I have developed lifelong friendships. I know my actions will have a positive effect on others and this gives me with a sense of accomplishment."

St Mary's Altinure was built in 1871.

The maintenance checklist was produced by the Maintenance Manager in conjunction with others. Major renovation work is due to be carried out, but the team are already working on a comprehensive plan for when the work is completed.

The judges thought that the ethos and community involvement shines through.



***Asking
local
groups who
use the building
to help with
maintenance. What
a brilliant idea!***

*The judging panel about
St Anne, Dunbar*

Church Architecture Awards

The King of Prussia Gold Medal celebrates innovative, high quality conservation or repairs.

The Presidents' Award is given for the best new addition, including re-ordering, extensions or alterations.

The Young Church Architect or Surveyor of the Year is given to an individual responsible for a scheme submitted for either.

In partnership with the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association.

The awards will be presented by:

Andrew Wood, Honorary President, Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association

Luke March, Vice President, National Churches Trust



Saltaire United Reformed Church King of Prussia Gold Medal

As a key building within the Saltaire UNESCO World Heritage Site, the church attracts visitors from around the world. In February 2020 Storm Dennis caused the partial collapse of the ceiling.

The restoration of the plaster ceiling and tower exemplifies environmental sustainability and the mitigation of the building's carbon footprint, employing traditional building conservation techniques.

The judges liked the good interdisciplinary collaboration to achieve beautiful results. It's a remarkable piece of work.



St John, Waterloo Presidents' Award

The project has preserved the 19th century architecture of Francis Bedford, and 20th century interventions made following wartime bombing.

The nave is a much enhanced worship, event and performance space, with a historically referenced paint scheme. In the crypt, are new spaces for community use. The project has transformed the life and role of St John's in the wider community.

The judges loved the elegant reordering of a fine interior, and the crypt is now warm and welcoming. The whole space is very calming.



Alex Spicer Young Church Architect or Surveyor of the Year

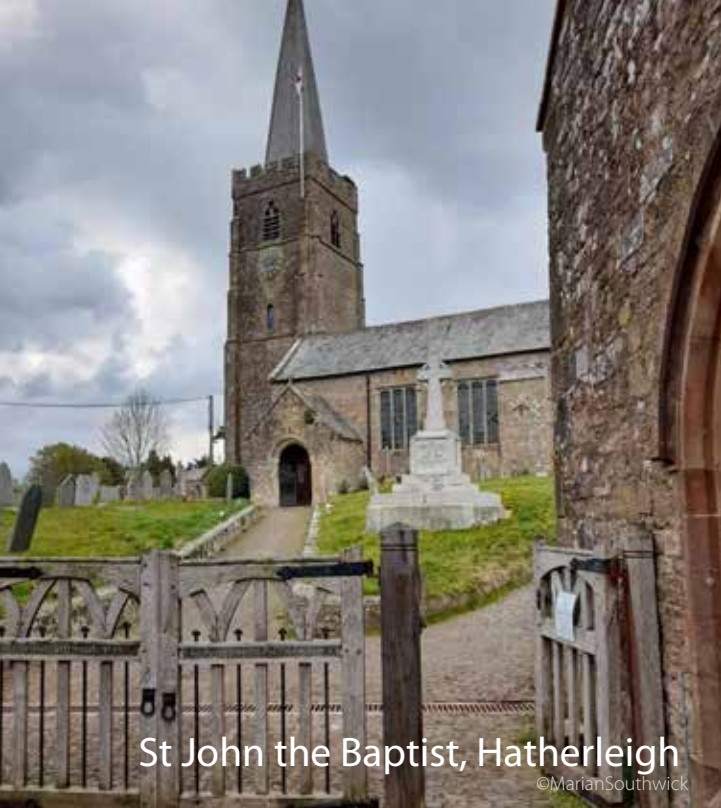
Associate Director at Matthew Lloyd Architects.
St Mary the Virgin, Walthamstow.

Alex was project architect and lead designer from concept design to handover. The project included repair, re-ordering and adding a striking extension which preserves, enhances, and safeguards this significant historic asset.

The project has transformed the life of the church, which is now open everyday.

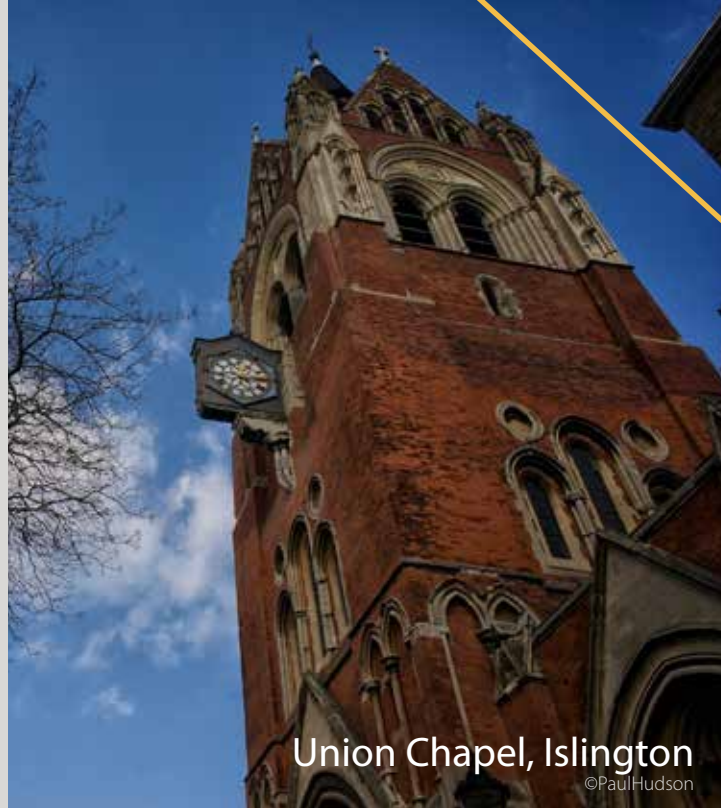
The judges were impressed Alex's attention to detail; the floor is glorious. They look forward to seeing more of his work in the future.





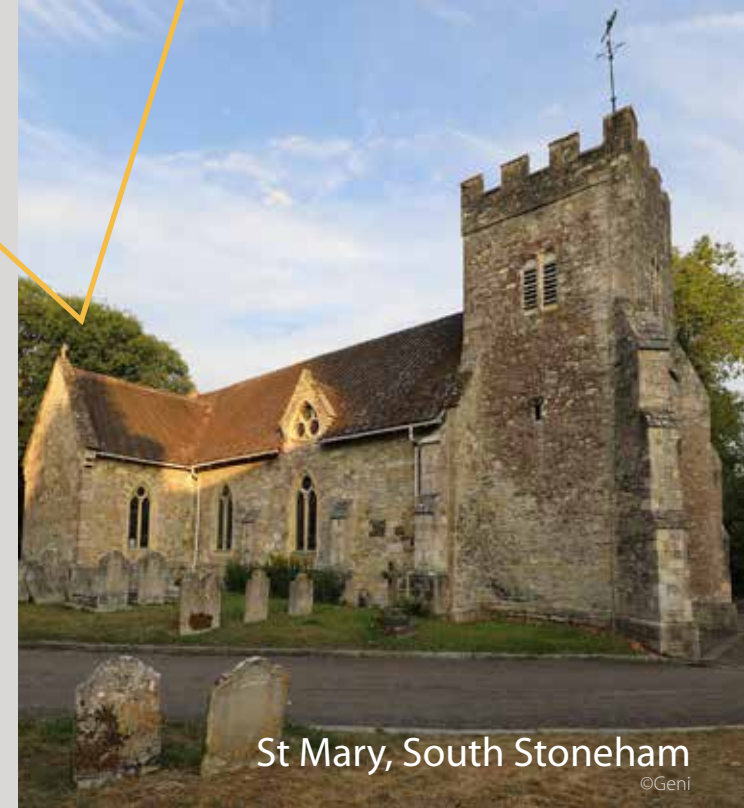
St John the Baptist, Hatherleigh

©MarianSouthwick



Union Chapel, Islington

©PaulHudson



St Mary, South Stoneham

©Geni

Friends' Vote Award

Through their support and generous donations, our growing number of Friends help us carry out our work.

Each year we invite churches to whom we have already awarded a grant to let us know if they still need additional funding. They each make a short film and Friends vote for their favourite.

Now the vote is completed everyone watch the finalists films from this year on our website. If you'd like to take part in the vote next year, why not join is and become a Friend.

Our finalists this year are:

St John the Baptist, Hatherleigh, Devon

Union Chapel, Islington, London

St Mary, South Stoneham, Hampshire



The winner is

Open for Visitors Awards



Whether for quiet reflection, a warm welcome, a place to worship, or a space to explore with wonder, churches need to be open, loved and supported.

These awards celebrate churches where being open and welcoming is part of their ethos, and that encourage others to do the same.

Presented by:

Sandra Lynes-Timbrell, Director of Visitor Engagement, St Paul's Cathedral

Sarah Stewart, Trustee, National Churches Trust

The overall winner is

Providence Chapel, Throwleigh Winner in England

"Going back a few years Providence was facing real risk of closure. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, its fortunes have been turned around. In 2022 we welcomed over 1,750 visitors through our doors."

The bold decision to launch a new programme of free open days has given the Chapel a sustainable future. The chapel is in Dartmoor National Park and hospitality lies at the heart of everything.

All the judges loved the warmth here, even if you have something simple you can draw in visitors with a warm welcome. It's heartwarming, and providing 'tables to talk' is inspiring.



St Marylebone, London Winner in England

"We are open 365 days a year. At the heart of central London, we are a much needed community resource. We endeavour to create a warm and inviting environment in which all feel welcome and included."

The St Marylebone Festival offers affordable access to performances. An art space in the church crypt allows artists to exhibit and sell work. There are weekly tours and storytelling focuses on people as well as the beautiful heritage building. The crypt is home to an NHS clinic and mental health services.

The judges loved their commitment to being open to all and putting interpretation where everyone will see it.



A '100 year old pledge of hospitality' is the most wonderful way of describing what tourism in places of worship should be.

The judging panel about Providence Chapel, Throwleigh

St Peter, Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd Winner in Wales

"Being open is more than just having the door unlocked. Being open is a state of mind, a way of being. It took being locked during the pandemic for us to discover this ... we could never close the door again."

The door is always open and fresh coffee and cakes available. The churchyard is managed for wildflowers with secluded spaces and plenty of seating. Eco-Fest is their weekend festival discovering hospitality through care for creation.

The judges loved the ethos and the focus on welcome. The sense of warmth and love is wonderful, and shows how a couple of small initial changes can make such a difference.



Church of the Immaculate Conception, Strabane Winner in Northern Ireland

"Our church is at the heart of the community. Being open and creating that sense of community makes Strabane a better place to work and live and visit."

The church is open every day. Anyone can come in a sit and enjoy peace and tranquillity. In the last year there were an incredible 118,560 visitors. There are fabulous museum interpretation panels and leaflets, souvenir brochures, and guided tours.

Judges loved that the church has engaged well with the local tourism board and community. To do all they have done, and to mentor other churches, is wonderful.



***There
is a
lot that
churches of all
kinds and in all
locations can be
inspired by.***

*The judging panel about
St Marylebone, London*



Tavistock
©AlexRamsey



Little Paxton
©AnnetteReed



Suckley



Diss



Netherton
©HarryOrr



Preston
©KepczykPearceSanderson



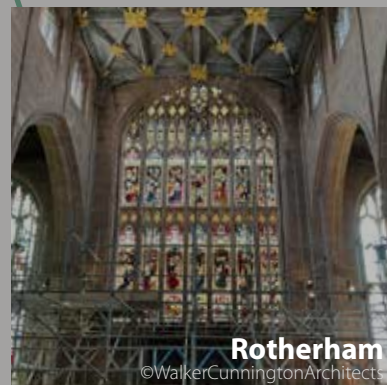
Scampton
©JoeBartrop



Llanfihangel y Creuddyn



Redcar
©ChanceDeSilva



Rotherham
©WalkerCunningtonArchitects



Killinchy
©DoreenHalliday



York
©RuthMather



Belfast
©TourismNorthernIreland



South Hill



Waringstown



Harberton
©JonathanBean



Greenwich

Church & Community Volunteer Awards

Celebrating the vital contribution volunteers make to both looking after and making the best use of churches to benefit local communities and people.

We're particularly excited about incredibly innovative and engaging activities which involve the wider community.

In partnership with Marsh Charitable Trust.

Presented by:

John Bennett, Ambassador,
Marsh Charitable Trust

Victoria Collison-Owen, Historic Churches
Scotland

The overall winner is

MARSH

Charitable Trust

St Hilda, Redcar Winner in England

"We have a core team of 7 people ranging in age from 40 to 76. They act as beacons in the community."

The church has become a venue for many events and groups as well as a safe and welcoming space for those of some faith and none. There is a charity shop and community café with local organisations dropping in. Prices are kept deliberately low and free if needed.

The judges were very impressed at the structure here, they take care of people and ensure they are in a role that suits them. There is a huge variety going on, and their newly built church is stunning!



Holy Trinity, Trefnant Winner in Wales

"If someone comes up with an idea then we will give it a go and see if it works."

The team of volunteers in Holy Trinity are a warm and welcoming community of people. They are incredibly enthusiastic and willing to try their hand at anything. Each has their own unique talents which brings joy to the local community.

'Prayers and Bears' welcomes over 25 children. There is a book club, a youth group, village events and collections for the local foodbank.

The judges loved that carers were cared for. The impression is of a warm, fun group to be with.



*This is an
astonishing
example to
us all.*

*The judging panel about
St Hilda, Redcar*

St James the Great, Stonehaven Winner in Scotland

"We suggested that members of Inspire, a local learning disabilities charity, might like to take on the disused garden. Approximately 25 volunteers have become involved in various ways."

An overgrown vegetable patch is now an amazing vegetable and flower garden. The local Men's Shed and the Masons have been involved.

There is a drop in for Ukrainian Refugees and host families and a Warm Space. It was here that the Inspire project started.

Judges loved that the partnership with Inspire came from a conversation at a drop in!



Christ Church, Londonderry Winner in Northern Ireland

"Christ Church and its neighbours are bringing people together in a celebration of culture, heritage and hope for the future."

Christ Church has a small, aging congregation of some 80 people, about half of whom are regular volunteers. They have developed friendships, knowledge of the burdens and joys others carry and realised the sheer surprise of the goodness of people in all sorts of circumstances.

Judges were impressed at volunteers using what they have to develop ecumenical partnerships – it's proving very powerful.



Their open mindedness is inspiring ... it's a great way to approach working with your community

*The judging panel about
St James the Great, Stonehaven*

Thank you to all our judges

HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG KCVO

Vice Patron National Churches Trust

Prince Nicholas von Preussen

Vice President, National Churches Trust

Shirley Adams, Trustee, National Churches Trust

Sue Bowers, Director, Pilgrim Trust

Anthony Brown, Vice President, National Churches Trust

Richard Carr-Archer, Architect

Victoria Collison-Owen, Executive Director,

Historic Churches Scotland

Xenia Dennen, Master Mercer, The Mercers' Company

Canon Ann Easter, Honorary Associate Priest, Newham

Diana Evans, Head of Places of Worship Strategy,

Historic England

Anna Joynt, EASA

Douglas Kent, Head of Technical & Research SPAB

Alastair Hunter, Vice President, National Churches Trust

Sandra Lynes-Timbrell, Director of Visitor Experience,

St Paul's Cathedral

Luke March, Vice President, National Churches Trust

Annie McCarthy, Trust Manager, Marsh Charitable Trust

Donna McDonald, Trustee, National Churches Trust

Natalie O'Rourke, Senior Conservation Architect,

Historic Environment Division, NI

Graeme Renton, Honorary Secretary, EASA

Sir Philip Rutnam, Chairman, National Churches Trust

Archbishop Emeritus George Stack

Sarah Stewart, Trustee, National Churches Trust

Richard Taylor, Vice President, National Churches Trust

Robert Thompson, Awards Officer, EASA

Robin Tjolle, VisitEngland

Claire Walker, Chief Executive, National Churches Trust

Andrew Wood, Honorary President, EASA

Crafting the awards

We're thrilled to work with Rob Harris and Erik Winn at York Cemetery Memorials to create our awards again this year.

Each award is skillfully hand cut and lettered in Morley Grey Yorkstone. They took 50 hours to create. By working with local craftspeople each year we are championing and supporting heritage skills. It's been wonderful to see the awards come alive in stone. You can see more of Rob and Erik's work on Instagram or by visiting York Cemetery.

Our overall category winners, the Friends Vote winner and the Church of the Year will each receive one of these stunning awards. Every winning church will receive an aluminium plaque to proudly display.



Congratulations to all our winning churches

St Michael & All Angels, Bishop's Cleeve
Llangunnor Parish Church
St Anne, Dunbar
St Mary, Altinure
Saltaire United Reformed Church
St John, Waterloo
St Mary the Virgin, Walthamstow.
Providence Chapel, Throwleigh
St Marylebone, London
St Peter, Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd
Church of the Immaculate Conception, Strabane
St Hilda, Redcar
Holy Trinity, Trefnant
St James the Great, Stonehaven
Christ Church, Londonderry

Plus, of course, our Friends Vote Award winner and the Church of the Year, who will be announced live at the event.

Church of the Year

We believe that for a church to be successful, it must be sustainable. Our definition of sustainable includes the following characteristics: relevant; looked after; in good repair; in use; and, open for all.

Our Church of the Year is a shining example of a church, chapel or meeting house which is open, available to all and supported by the local community. It should meet the needs of this community and be welcoming to those visiting from further afield.

We want to celebrate a church that values and uses volunteers successfully, and is an inspiration to others across the UK.

We are thrilled to award Church of the Year 2023 to one of the churches here today.

The winner is

National Churches Trust

We want to keep churches open and in use. Available to all.

Whether seeking quiet reflection, access to critical community services, a warm welcome, a place to worship, or a space to explore, we believe they should be loved and supported. Available to all.

Working together with churches across all four nations, we help to maintain these wonderful historic buildings and keep them thriving today, and tomorrow.

We **Build Up** churches through funding vital maintenance, repairs and development, providing specialist advice, and establishing new resources to train and support the amazing individuals who give their time to look after church buildings.

We **Open Up** churches by helping them to become welcoming spaces where communities can be supported and served, churches explored, and heritage can be experienced and recognised.

We **Speak Up** on behalf of churches, helping those in positions of leadership and influence to see the unrivalled role churches play in supporting the well-being of the nation.

Yours for Good.





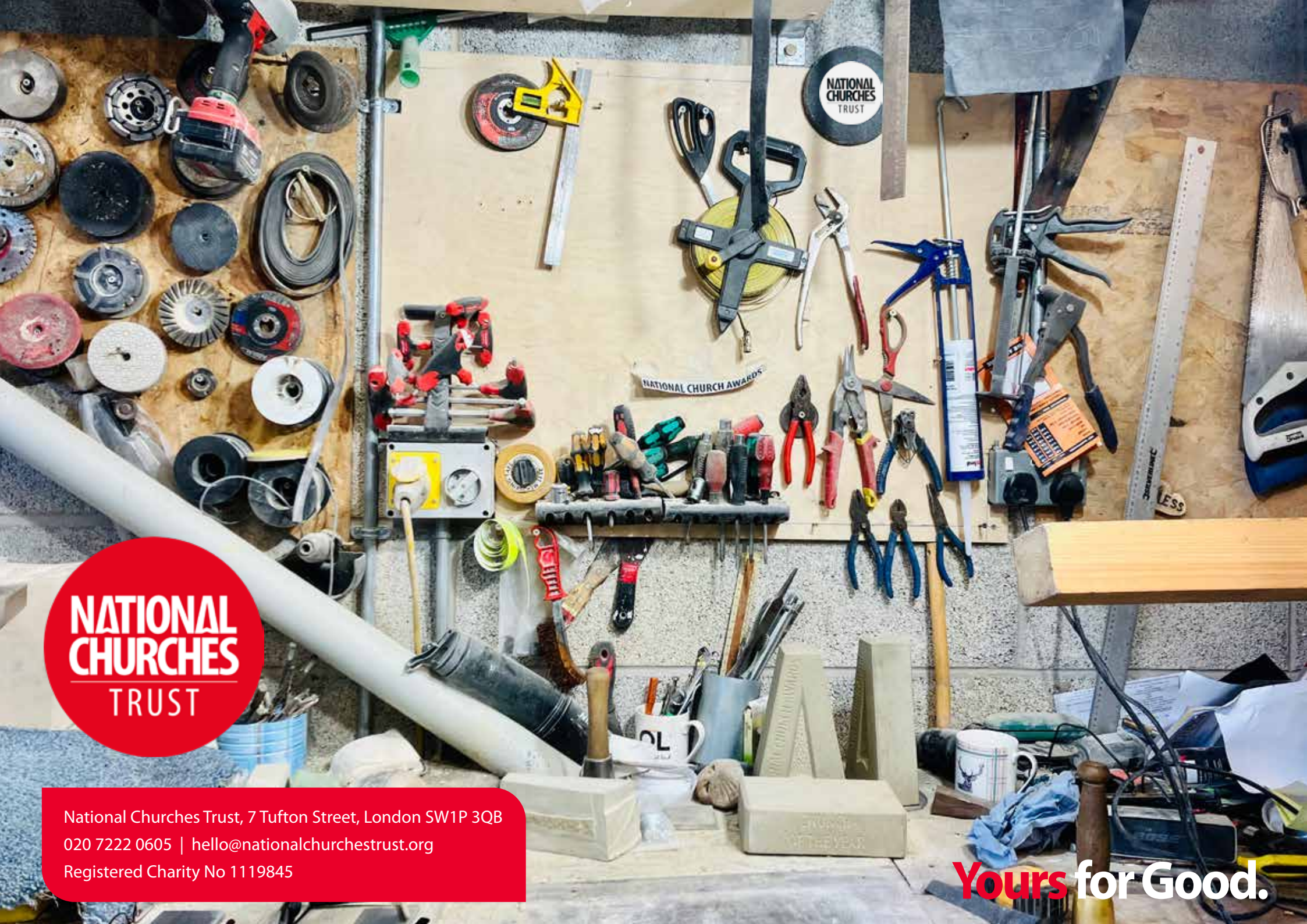
**NATIONAL
CHURCHES
TRUST**

There is no bigger issue facing the UK's heritage than the future of its churches.

Nearly half the nation's most important historic buildings are churches, chapels and meeting houses. They contain our greatest collection of decorative arts and are the repositories of our history. Yet crippling repair bills and dwindling congregations mean they are falling into disrepair.

Join the National Churches Trust as a Friend or through our new Church Membership to help keep churches standing for future generations.

nationalchurchestrust.org/friends



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020 7222 0605 | hello@nationalchurchestrust.org
Registered Charity No 1119845

Yours for Good.