

# Annual Review

2023-2024

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# Our plan for the future of churches



*Sir Philip Rutnam, Chair*



*Claire Walker, Chief Executive*

## **With many churches facing increased repair costs and at risk of closure, the future of churches remains the UK's single biggest heritage challenge.**

Although the facts may be familiar to many of you, they are worth restating. This is not least as they may help you make the case for church buildings to people you know, to heritage bodies and also to local and national politicians and other decision makers.

With over 20,000 having statutory listed status, churches are the single most important part of our national heritage. As well as being remarkable buildings, many designed by the leading architects of their day, they contain the UK's largest collection of art, sculpture and stained glass.

Regardless of their heritage, all of the UK's 38,500 churches, chapels and meeting houses help local people to survive and to thrive. They are the UK's 'National Help Service' and home to foodbanks, warm spaces and many other community support activities.

However, despite their importance, more churches are closing and many others face a very uncertain future. Historic England's 2023 At Risk Register included over 900 churches. In Wales, about a quarter of historic churches have closed in the last ten years, with many more now in danger. Meanwhile, in Scotland, as many as 40% of the Church of Scotland's churches face closure.

It is clear that action is urgently needed to deal with this growing crisis. To help chart a way forward, we have published a plan for the future of church buildings, 'Every Church Counts'.

### **Additional annual funding**

This sets out six key actions to save the churches that are so precious to us all. These include providing additional annual public funding of at least £50 million a year to pay for urgent repairs, with the money provided by a coalition of the willing, including Government, heritage funders and the main Christian denominations.

Saving church buildings is actually a very good investment. For every pound invested in a church, there is a social return on investment of £16. Also, church repairs help the wider economy by creating jobs and developing a wide range of skills.

As the national charity supporting church buildings, we redoubled our efforts to help as many churches as possible in 2023. We awarded 251 grants with funding of £2.27 million. This included help to 76 Grade I and Category A listed churches.

As well as helping nationally significant heritage, we also targeted our support to areas of need, with 40% of our funding allocated to churches in the most deprived areas of the UK.

Our ability to help churches was given an enormous boost in 2023 by a hugely generous gift of £500,000 from a private donor. This enabled us to create a funding appeal to match this amount which has benefitted 18 'Last Chance Churches'.

If you donated to this appeal, a huge thank you. Your support has persuaded the same donor to provide a further £500,000 to help our work in 2024-2025.

### **King Charles III**

In May 2024 we were delighted that King Charles III accepted Patronage of the National Churches Trust. This follows on from the late Queen Elizabeth II, who served as Patron of the National Churches Trust from 1953 until 2022.

The news of His Majesty King Charles III's support will mean a great deal to our Friends, donors and the churches we are helping to keep open.

It also highlights the significance of churches to the UK and the important role of the National Churches Trust.

**Sir Philip Rutnam, Chair**  
**Claire Walker, Chief Executive**

August 2024

# Music needs churches

By Catherine Pepinster

**When the Ezra Collective won the Mercury Prize, the most prestigious award in music, last year, its founder, drummer Femi Koleoso, said: “If a jazz band winning the Mercury Prize doesn’t make you believe in God, I don’t know what will”.**



*Ezra Collective win the 2023 Mercury Prize*

Koleoso and his band-mates’ triumph was not just about trouncing the likes of the Arctic Monkeys when their album, ‘Where I’m Meant To Be’, was the first jazz set to take the top prize. It also signified something else: how important churches are to music and to honing great talent.

Femi and his brother TJ, who plays bass in the Collective, are steeped in church music; their introduction to it came via the Jubilee Church in North London where their father is a preacher. And the path from playing drums as part of

worship to performing at Glastonbury last summer has taken in other venues, including a church which now doubles as a jazz venue.

As you walk past St James the Great in Hackney, it seems a typical London church, built in the Victorian era of red brick. But for around 10 nights a year it is transformed into the Church of Sound, a jazz funk venue, complete with a central speaker-tower and the pews and altar moved to make space for the musicians and the audience.

“It’s a big job. It takes about two hours to turn it into a jazz space, and then two hours to put the church back,” explains Spencer Martin, who created the Church of Sound. “But it’s a great venue, with a very special atmosphere that the audience loves.”

Music has always been at the heart of what happens in church, whether it is hymns sung by a small congregation in a village church, the liturgy of a Catholic Mass, the gospel music of an evangelical mission, or even the grandeur of the Coronation of the King at Westminster Abbey last year.

Then, in the last forty years or so, holding classical music concerts in churches became popular – something pioneered by the charity Music in Country Churches, which was founded in 1989. Since then Music in Country Churches has visited over 55 country churches and donated nearly £600,000 towards the fabric and upkeep of the churches.



*Music in Country Churches concert in St Mary’s church, Snettisham: David Bannister directs Vesperi Segreti*

## Pop and jazz

But more recently churches have become important venues for pop and jazz as well. Among the first was Salford’s church of St Philip with St Stephen, which hosted big names such as Florence and the Machine and Sugababes, as well as some classical music concerts.

Another which has found a new role via contemporary music is the Liverpool church of St Michael-in-the-Hamlet,

a 200 year old cast iron Grade I listed building. Small gigs started being held there as a way of raising funds for the local primary school, as well as a food bank and other causes. Since launching its music venue venture just before the Covid pandemic, it has become so popular for gigs that the ticketing platform Skiddle listed it as the third best music venue out of 525 in Liverpool.

Drummer Steve Pilgrim, who has family connections to the church, has organised the gigs, bringing in top acts, including Paul Weller – Pilgrim is often in his band.

A generous donor gave the church a PA system, they have had technical advice from a local theatre expert and run the events as a business. Ticket prices are kept low – around £20 a head – to ensure local people can afford them, while the fees for the church of around £30 an hour help bring in revenue. Around 275 people are accommodated for a concert, much the same number as can attend a church service.

“The money we get goes into a general pot of funds,” says vicar Keith Hitchman. That’s a useful boost to income, but the gigs are much more than that. The church eats money, and National Churches Trust grants have helped with repairs and refurbishment, but Hitchman is also hoping that it might receive Lottery funding too. And showing how the church is having an impact on the local community is key to securing that sort of money.

“We are not closed six days a week and just open on Sunday,” says Hitchman. “We are there for the community. Holding these events is opening people’s eyes to the church – people who might never have been in a church before. It’s a form of mission.”

👁️ *A lot of people are coming in who have never been inside a church. It has changed their perception about who a church is for.* 👁️

Back in Hackney, at St James the Great cum Church of Sound, the experience is the same. Spencer Martin, who is himself a church organist, finds that many people attend a gig who would otherwise never cross the threshold.

“A lot of people are coming in who have never been inside a church,” he says. “They like it; they think the space adds to a very special experience. It has changed their perception about who a church is for.”

Gigs, he says, are a “win-win situation.” Bands get somewhere special to play, the audience enjoys a night out that is cheaper than many other venues – they charge around £22 a ticket – and the church secures around £600 in revenue for the venue hire.

Meanwhile, across London, there is a boom in churches being used for classical and especially choral music concerts, with revenue coming for their use both as rehearsal space and as concert venues. The cheapest rehearsal church spaces cost around £100 while some churches charge up to £1,200 for a concert.

For 30 years, the chamber choir Canticum has been performing in a wide range of London churches, from St Stephen Walbrook in the City, to the Temple Church and St Sophia's Orthodox Cathedral in Bayswater. Its music director, Mark Forkgen, has made a specialism of matching the repertoire with the type of church in which Canticum sings: it offers Rachmaninov, John Taverner and Orthodox church music at St Sophia's, for example, and more Anglican music such as Howells and Stanford at Holy Trinity, Knightsbridge.

"The building and its ambience are part of the attraction for the audience," says Forkgen. "Playing the right kind of sacred music in the right building really makes a difference."

Other issues which affect Forkgen's choice of venue – and this is true for jazz, funk, rock, pop, folk and orchestral music too – are the lighting, the acoustics, and the flexibility of the space. "Fixed pews," says Forkgen, "can be the bane of our lives."

### Architecture and music

Then there is wheelchair accessibility, the need for toilets, a space to act as a performers' dressing room, and somewhere to host interval drinks. Often the church itself is used for interval drinks – but that is something which Roman Catholic churches often don't permit.



St Sophia's Orthodox Cathedral, London

© Katherine Young / Alamy Stock Photo

Forkgen has noticed that Catholic churches also often get ruled out as concert spaces because they do not have good acoustics, despite so much of the classical repertoire being Roman Catholic Masses. But the focus was not on Mozart's Mass or Faure's Requiem when the majority of Roman Catholic churches were built in Britain after emancipation in 1829.

Forkgen has found that most Anglican churches have decent acoustics for choral music but it can be more problematic for orchestras. The English Chamber Orchestra has a long history of performing in churches, including rural ones. "You cannot beat the combination of wonderful architecture and beautiful music," says the ECO's general manager, James Rutherford.

But echo and reverberation in a church can cause problems for orchestras. "There can be a wash of sound and delays can mean it is hard for the musicians to hear their fellow performers," says Rutherford. Sometimes drapes and curtains can help, as can the size of the audience in soaking up the sound.

●● *One of the biggest problems we have is that very few church venues can take more than 300 people.* ●●

Audience size is another crucial issue for performers. While purpose-built auditoriums might be too big for amateur and semi-professional choirs, churches can be too small, with their furniture limiting space for both performers and audience.

The Windsor and Eton Choral Society is a highly regarded local choir and long established – it was founded in 1837. It has a special dispensation to perform in both the chapel of Eton College and in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle, which can accommodate up to 450 concert-goers. Its chairman, Chris Aitken, says: "One of the biggest problems we have is that very few church venues can take more than 300 people. And when you take into consideration the layout and how you are going to fit in an orchestra and a choir, then you are talking about a limited choice of venues."

But as churches look for new forms of revenue, attracting more people to their doors, and confirming their role in their communities, concerts are becoming more and more attractive. Not far from Windsor, one church has had a major refurbishment with concerts partly in mind. St Mary's in Maidenhead, Berkshire, is a 1960s church with a fibreglass spire and a prominent position in the town centre.

It asked Communion Architects to come up with a refurbishment plan that made the building more usable throughout the week, replacing fixed pews, making a new organ a visual focus of the interior, a new welcome area and a new space for musicians.

Now it offers not only Sunday worship but other events including a weekly jazz evening. "The careful balance between the acoustics and constructional elements has been highly successful," Communion Architects says. "The



© Matt Crossick / Alamy Stock Photo

*Tasmin Little performing with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra*

congregants praise the brighter sounding organ and musicians applaud the excellence of the acoustics. The quality of sound the church continues to offer is a source of pride for the church and they hope to host more music-based events in the future.”

Churches like St Mary’s have long been associated with music. Generations of musicians from classical violinist

Tasmin Little to singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran took their first musical steps through involvement in worship. But now across Britain, many parishes are discovering a new role for themselves, at the heart of their neighbourhoods, thanks to being rehearsal spaces, concert venues and a place where young people can discover their creative talents. ●



**Music in Country Churches generates funds through concert ticket revenue, grants from organisations, and donations. If you would like to be part of the work of Music in Country Churches, you can join the Friends. For more information on how to join the Friends and to make a donation, visit [musicincountrychurches.org.uk](https://musicincountrychurches.org.uk)**



Catherine Pepinster is a journalist, broadcaster and author. She is a Trustee of the National Churches Trust.

She was the first woman editor of the Catholic weekly, *The Tablet*, where she worked from 2003 to 2016. She now writes for a variety of publications including *The Guardian*, *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times*, mostly on religion, and commentates regularly on TV and radio.

# History, tradition and sustainability – the Church of Scotland and its buildings

By *Rev Scott M. Rennie*

**The Church of Scotland is the national and established church in Scotland, but not a state church. Our relationship to the state is different from that of our Anglican sisters and brothers in the Church of England, in that although the Kirk is protected by the Treaty of Union (upon which HM The King at his accession promised to protect the Government, Worship, Discipline, Rights and Privileges of the Church of Scotland) there is a legal separation between the spheres of Church and State. When the monarch crosses the border, he/she becomes a member of the Church of Scotland and Presbyterian, and not its governor.**

This is reflected at the Kirk's annual General Assembly every May when the King appoints a Lord High Commissioner as his representative to that Assembly (this year HRH the Duke of Edinburgh) to listen to the Kirk's debate and business and to visit projects and initiatives around Scotland in which the national church is involved, making a difference in communities.

While the stirrings of reform took place in sixteenth century Scotland following the publication of Lutheran tracts and materials, due to the life of John Knox and other Protestant leaders influenced by their exile in Geneva, when formal reformation came by Act of Parliament in 1560, that reformation took a more Calvinist and egalitarian character than was the case south of the border.

## **No Bishop, no King**

Even so, tension between Church and State, or at least Church and the Monarch remained, famously summarised by James VI and I's observation of 'no Bishop, no King' when comparing the Protestant settlement in Scotland to England. Sadly, this issue between the power of the monarch in the Kirk was not settled until the revolution of 1690, with the accession of William and Mary, reflected in the current accession oath. In between, and in civil wars, there was much rivalry, bloodshed and sorrow.



*King James VI of Scotland and I of England, painting by John de Critz*

© Iain Dagnall Computing / Alamy Stock Photo





© Andy Thompson / Alamy Stock Photo

Brechin Cathedral

Over the succeeding centuries, the Kirk's representative and bottom-up governance ethos have often resulted in a number of secessions and then reunions, sometimes over matters of doctrine but most often focussed on the place of the state in relationship to the governance of the church.

🗨️ *Underlying the split were other tensions between the moderate and evangelical parties of the Church of Scotland.* 🗨️

Most notable of these was the Great Disruption of 1843 where over one third of Ministers and Elders walked out of the established church to bring into being the Free Church of Scotland. This rupture took place over the issue of whether the Church of Scotland or the British Government had the power to

control clerical positions and benefits. Underlying the split were other tensions between the moderate and evangelical parties of the Church of Scotland.

It took until 1929 for there to be a reunion of these two churches, along with some secession churches, in the Church of Scotland Act of 1929.

But by this time, all this disunion and reunion had left its mark across Scotland's cities, towns and rural parishes, with a profligate number of churches built, particularly in the Victorian era, by secessionists and their resulting denominations. This meant that upon reunion, in many places the Church of Scotland often inherited three or four church buildings instead of just one.

### **Maintenance and upkeep**

By way of example, in my first parish of Brechin, a rural town in Angus (population c.8000) there were as late as the 1980's still four Church of Scotland churches requiring maintenance and upkeep. One

of these is the restored medieval Cathedral Kirk, with its distinctive Round Tower, founded on the site of a monastery built by Culdee monks.

The Cathedral was built in the 11th and 12th centuries, with the Chancel falling into disrepair following the Reformation. A major restoration was undertaken at the turn of the 20th century, with the chancel partly rebuilt, although notably the site of the bishops' throne remains outside the restored church.

In the town there remains in use a Victorian church built for the overflow following the Cathedral's restoration, alongside two other late Victorian churches now in a great deal of disrepair, and along with another now owned by the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. There is also a small episcopal church.

Brechin in many ways reflects the history of ecclesiastical buildings in Scotland, and the Kirk's struggle to deal with more buildings than it ever needed – especially now in a secular age where there is neither the money nor the people to care for them all. I use Brechin only as an example. It is a pattern that is repeated across Scotland as a whole.

### Major disposals

It is fair to say that the Church of Scotland has taken and continues to take a deal of criticism for the ongoing major disposal of church buildings. But few

of those critics have any resources to help remedy the financial realities underlying those local decisions.

Despite these challenges which are increasingly faced by all UK denominations, we are committed to owning and investing in well-equipped ecclesiastical spaces in the right places across the country. After a few difficult years of decision making, the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland (its property and land holding arm) are ready to assist congregations in investing in the future of the buildings being retained.

### History and tradition

As a national church we have an eclectic and broad range of buildings. If you come to Scotland, you must see some of these, soak in their sense of the numinous, as well as revel in their history and tradition. We are fortunate to be stewards of Scotland's most important and valuable cultural assets such as the High Kirk of Edinburgh: St Giles Cathedral, Paisley Abbey, the Church of the Holy Rude in Stirling, St John's Kirk in Perth, the Cathedral Church of St Machar in Aberdeen, and many other medieval church buildings. Their atmosphere and aesthetic mean they remain remarkable places of worship as well as visitor attractions.

In contrast we are also entrusted with simple village kirks which are community lifelines, as well as newly built modern community facilities such the Maddock



© Lesley Adams / Alamy Stock Photo

Paisley Abbey



© Angus Design Associates

*The Maddock Centre, St Madoes, Perthshire*

Centre in St Madoes, Perthshire. Occasionally, we have congregations deciding to leave relatively uninspiring late 19th century buildings, too costly to maintain and heat, for more modern shop units and community halls in order to facilitate better ministry and mission to their community seven days a week.

## 👁️ *Buildings across Scotland entrusted to us in service of our parishes.* 👁️

Painful as the rationalisation of buildings has been for all concerned, it has been necessary, and it will leave us able to maintain and improve around 1,500 ecclesiastical buildings across Scotland entrusted to us in service of our parishes. To help us in this task the recent appointment of Presbytery Buildings Officers (buildings professionals who can assist congregations with good project and maintenance advice) has been a game changer.

Going forward, the next challenge for the future sustainability of our estate is to think of ways we can generate more income for their maintenance and enhancement, through both commercial and mission initiatives, and in partnership with other community stakeholders. ●

### **Cherishing Scotland's churches**

The National Churches Trust's new Cherish project is helping churches in Scotland with support and grants of between £500 and £10,000 for small repairs and maintenance to help keep buildings in good condition and prevent expensive repairs.

Cherish was set up thanks to a £1.9 million National Lottery Heritage Fund grant awarded to the National Churches Trust and will run until 2026.

Karen Hind is our dedicated support officer, based in Scotland, and is on hand to help with advice and training. **You can email Karen at: [Karen.Hind@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:Karen.Hind@nationalchurchestrust.org)**



**Scott Rennie is a minister of the Church of Scotland, currently serving at Crown Court Church, Covent Garden, London. He is also Vice Chair of the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland – its property and land holding arm. Scott is currently spearheading work on the future flourishing and sustainability of the Church of Scotland's Cathedral style churches. He previously served in parishes in Brechin, Angus, and in Aberdeen.**

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# 2023 – Our Year in Review



Churches have an amazing story to tell. They are some of our most beautiful and historically important places, offer wonderful community support, and remain places of pilgrimage and of Christian worship. This precious heritage needs support and the work of the National Churches Trust in helping to keep them open and in good repair is vital to their future.

Hugh Dennis

# 72,000 years

## In 2023 our grants helped to save 72,000 years of church heritage

### 68%

of UK adults agree that churches and chapels are an important part of our heritage and history

\* Savanta/National Churches Trust 2023 opinion poll

### 251

grants awarded to churches and chapels throughout the UK

### 66%

of UK adults agree that churches and chapels are important for society

\* Savanta/National Churches Trust 2023 opinion poll

### 5,005

people support our work as Friends of the National Churches Trust

### 87%

of expenditure in 2023 went directly to support our charitable activities

### 76

Grade I and Category A listed churches supported with our grants in 2023

# Last Chance Churches

**There is no bigger issue facing our heritage than the future of churches. That is why in 2023 we launched our 'Last Chance Churches' fundraising campaign to raise £1 million for urgent repairs to 18 extraordinary churches across the UK.**

In a first for us, 'Last Chance Churches' was a match funding appeal. Thanks to the tremendous generosity of a private donor, we created a £500,000 fund to double the impact of donations from our supporters and Friends, raising £1 million for urgent repairs.



**Ben Sims is our Head of Fundraising:**

👉👉 'Last Chance Churches' caught the imagination of our Friends and supporters and also new donors who understood the real urgency of our appeal.

We were given a demanding challenge by a donor new to the charity to match their hugely generous gift of £500,000; what an opportunity!

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*Just six months after we launched the appeal, all the money had been raised.*

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With the help of our Grants Committee we selected 18 churches that were in desperate need of financial help and with 'live' projects that we could support with funding. That meant we could be sure that the money would be put to work as soon as possible.

By February 2024, just six months after we launched the appeal, all the money had been raised and was on its way to the churches. Perhaps most excitingly, a fifth of this money was from new supporters.

Public funding of church buildings through The National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme (which allows churches to reclaim VAT costs) is essential to their future. But private philanthropy has an increasingly important role to play. We are delighted to show how this can be done successfully.👉👉

## St Nicholas, Shepperton, Surrey



© Greg Balfour Evans / Alamy Stock Photo

There has been a place of worship on the site for 1,400 years; the current Grade I listed church is a sprightly 400 years old in a picturesque location on the River Thames. As one of the 'Last Chance Churches' we were able to give a grant of £37,260 towards the repair of the tower.

## All Saints, Antrim, County Antrim



Grade A listed. Dating back to 1596, this is one of the oldest churches still in use in Northern Ireland and a superb example of Elizabethan architecture.

Natural failures owing to wind and water weathering of the stone (caused by cement repairs in the church's past) meant that slivers of stone were falling off the north side of the tower. It will be repointed with a combination of hydraulic and hot lime, for a much more durable, permanent solution, thanks to a grant from the 'Last Chance Churches' appeal of £34,985.



## St Aeddau, Bettws Newydd, Monmouthshire



## St Mary the Immaculate Conception, Lochee, Dundee



Grade A listed. Designed by Joseph Hansom, (perhaps best known for the Hansom cab), the church was influenced by Pugin. It includes a flamboyant altarpiece by A B Wall of Cheltenham and stained glass by Mayer of Munich. The church receives £28,500 from the 'Last Chance Churches' appeal to repair battered walls, rainwater goods, stonework, masonry, mortar, and to fix damp.

Grade I listed. Boasts a unique medieval rood screen, thought to be the most complete rood arrangement in any church in England and Wales. The church is surrounded by three of the oldest and most important yew trees in Wales. £16,109 from the 'Last Chance Churches' appeal means that the church will be able to repair its stone slate roof.



[nationalchurchestrust.org/  
thelastchancechurches](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/thelastchancechurches)

# National Church Awards

**We know that churches have amazing stories to tell. From their beautiful architecture to the help they provide for local people, the UK's 38,500 churches are vitally important local buildings.**

**In 2023 we celebrated the work of the heroic volunteers who keep them open at our National Church Awards – the BAFTAs for churches.**

**Sarah Crossland, our Engagement Manager, managed the judging and the event:**

👏👏 **207 churches from around the UK were nominated for our 2023 awards; that's up from 193 in 2022.**

It was brilliant that they reflected the huge diversity of the UK's churches. Entries came

from 18 denominations ranging from the Church in Wales to the Ukrainian Greek Church and from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to the Church of England.



On 6 November 2023 we welcomed almost 90 guests to the awards ceremony at the historic Mercers' Company Livery Hall in the City of London, hosted by Hugh Dennis and Canon Ann Easter. The presence of HRH The Duke of Gloucester was a special privilege for us all. In addition, over 700 people watched a live stream and a recording of the event.



*Ginny Simmonds (Director of Heritage and Events), Ashley Nixon (Director of Development) and The Revd Canon Dr Stephen Evans from St Marylebone Church*

A highlight of the awards was the Church of the Year, won by St Marylebone Church in London. It epitomises everything that a successful, sustainable and open church should be, providing a wonderfully warm welcome to all and telling its stories with engaging interpretation. As well as regular worship, the church has an excellent music programme, hosts an NHS surgery and is home to a healing and counselling centre.

In 2023, for the first time we organised a 'Visit Your Finalist Day', with many of the churches taking part in our awards opening specially to let people find out more about their work and history.👏👏

**A special thanks to everyone who made the awards possible, and in particular to the Pilgrim Trust, the Marsh Charitable Trust, the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association and the Mercers' Company.**



*Hugh Dennis and Lord Cormack greeting HRH The Duke of Gloucester*

Our panels of judges selected 45 finalists. From eco-churches to those running community cafés, from churches with hardworking maintenance teams to those hosting festivals and concerts, the finalists made an impressive list.

© Andy Sillett





© Providence Chapel

Ian Crawford (left) with photographer Chris Chapman in front of an exhibition of photographs of life on Dartmoor held in Providence Chapel, Throwleigh, Devon

## Architecture Awards

There were three winners in the Architecture category. The King of Prussia Gold Medal for conservation architecture was awarded to Arctic Associates for their work restoring the ceiling and tower of Saltaire United Reformed Church. The Presidents' Award was awarded to Eric Parry Architects for their work to re-order St John's Church in Waterloo, London. Alex Spicer of Matthew Lloyd Architects received the Young Church Architect or Surveyor of the Year prize for his work at St Mary the Virgin, Walthamstow.

## Excellence in Church Maintenance Award

The overall winner of the Nayler Awards for Excellence in Church Maintenance was Llangunnor Parish Church. Not much seems to phase this church and the judges were impressed by the devotion of the maintenance team who give so freely of their time and expertise.

## Open for Visitors Award

The overall winner of the Open for Visitors Award was Providence Chapel, Throwleigh, Devon. Just a few years ago, the chapel was facing a real risk of closure. Thanks to the work of its dedicated volunteers, in 2022 it welcomed over 1,750 new visitors.



© Russell Trudgeon

Restoration work at Saltaire United Reformed Church

## Church & Community Volunteer Award

The overall winner of the Church & Community Volunteer Award was St Hilda's Church, Redcar. A core team of seven people ranging in age from 40 to 76 supports a huge range of community activities in a stunning new church building.

As well as an award for the overall winner, separate awards were also given to churches in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in the Church & Community Volunteer Award, the Excellence in Church Maintenance Award and the Open for Visitors' Award.



[nationalchurchtrust.org/  
impact/awards](https://nationalchurchtrust.org/impact/awards)

# Training for Churches

**Our new 'For Churches' strategy recognises the importance of providing high quality advice on how to manage church buildings. So in 2023 we extended the range of our training curriculum to provide more support to volunteers and clergy.**

During the year we ran 34 training sessions attended by over 800 people. Much of our training is now delivered online and free of charge, making it accessible to people all across the UK. Our aim is to extend the subject range and also to develop more partnerships with other church and heritage organisations.



**Karl Newton is our Deputy Chief Executive:**

👁️ **Finding high-quality advice on how to run and look after a church building can be a huge challenge, even more so if the building is hundreds of years old. So to help the people who look after churches, including clergy, we are expanding our training offer.**

In 2023 many of our training sessions had a focus on attracting new visitors to churches. In Derry/Londonderry, in a new course run in conjunction with Dr David Caron, we showed how churches can reach new audiences by using stained glass to tell stories about the history of their building. Church tourism was also the focus of a training session held at the United Reformed Church in Bingley, Yorkshire. This included modules on how to create the perfect welcome, telling the story of your church and marketing and publicity.

We also took part in events organised by our partners and stakeholders in the church and heritage sectors.



*Dr David Caron telling the story of stained glass in Northern Ireland*

This included advice on grants and fundraising at the Catholic Fundraising Conference in Salford and taking part in an online meeting of the Senedd Cross-Party Faith Group, where we were able to showcase the support for churches and chapels in Wales being provided thanks to our new 'Cherish' project. We also ran bespoke training for Baptist and Methodist churches.

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*83% of attendees rate our training sessions as excellent or very good.*

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In 2023 we also launched new training films, including 'how to' guides about specific tasks. Our films now include 'How to Create a QR Code' and 'How to Find Images That You Can Use Online'.

## Expanding our training

We ask all attendees to complete an evaluation report. 83% rate our training sessions as excellent or very good, with the remaining 17% rating them as good. 83% said they learned something new, and 75% said they could put their learning into practice.

In 2024 we will again expand our curriculum of training with a new programme of core online sessions, delivered monthly by our expert team. Subjects will include building maintenance, church tourism, grants, funding and marketing.

Supporting churches in this way helps them to attract new visitors, raise much needed funds and remain open and in good repair. 🗨️



[nationalchurchestrust.org/training](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/training)

# Cherish the Churches

**There was good news in 2023 for places of worship in Scotland, Wales and North West England (Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cumbria) when we received funding of £1.9 million from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for 'Cherish', a new three year project to keep historic churches and chapels open and thriving.**

This vote of confidence in our work will make it possible for more churches and chapels to improve the care of their buildings. This will include help and advice provided by three locally based Support Officers on building maintenance, fundraising and strengthening heritage management skills.

We will also provide grants of between £500 and £10,000, (worth £1 million over three years), to help pay for maintenance and small repairs such as rainwater goods maintenance, damp prevention, re-pointing, and roof and plasterwork repairs.



**Bea Prosser-Snelling helped to launch the project in 2023 as our Cherish Project Manager:**

• **Having received the go-ahead from The National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2023, we set about recruiting our Cherish Support Officers, key to making the project work.**

We appointed three talented people who are now making a real difference to churches:

- Karen Hind in Scotland is a built heritage consultant who has worked in the private and public sector in Scotland for over 25 years.
- Matthew Maries in North-West England is an archaeologist with a Master's degree in the Conservation of Historic Buildings and experience working in the construction industry, museums, and planning.
- Gareth Simpson in Wales is a second-language Welsh speaker with over 20 years of experience in community support and development, working with grassroots projects and volunteers.



*Bea Prosser-Snelling (left) with Gareth Simpson, Matthew Maries and Karen Hind, the Cherish project Support Officers*



© Mike Ling

*Keeping the lights on at St Anne's Church, Dunbar*

A key achievement in the first phase of the project has been to build new links between church and heritage organisations. Creating a more integrated network and starting new conversations is crucial to help volunteers and clergy look after their church buildings.

It is important that decision makers know about Cherish and the importance of church buildings to heritage, community life and local people.

So we have been actively making the case for churches with local authorities, dioceses and the devolved administrations. This has included talking to the Senedd Cross-Party Group on Heritage, the Scottish Parliament and the Diocese of Blackburn Architects' Conference.

Towards the end of 2023 it was with a real sense of pride that we awarded our first grant of £10,000 to St Peter's Church in Ireleth with Askam, in Cumbria, to pay for repair works to the west end gable and the tower.

### Bespoke support for churches

In 2024 we will have funding of £450,000 to award to churches across the three Cherish areas. Our Support Officers are actively speaking to and visiting churches and, where necessary, providing assistance in making grant applications, including bespoke support.

## *Help to secure the future of more church buildings in Scotland, Wales and the North West of England.*

We will also be starting work to increase the tourism profile of churches and chapels. This will involve creating themed visitor trails and engaging with local heritage partners.

This vote of confidence in our work, thanks to the support of National Lottery players, means that by working with local churches and key stakeholders we can help to secure the future of more church buildings in Scotland, Wales and the North West of England. 🍀



Thanks to National Lottery players

### **Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:**

🍀 Our long-term partnership with the National Churches Trust builds on our wide-ranging experience of grant-making to conserve heritage and bring new life and purpose to cherished churches and chapel buildings. This grant will direct funding to where it is most needed, protecting and caring for some of our most precious and fragile heritage, at the heart of communities. 🍀



[nationalchurchestrust.org/getsupport/cherish](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/getsupport/cherish)

# Safeguarding Church Heritage

**We want to see churches, chapels and meeting houses open and available to all. But there are many challenges facing church buildings, not least that of raising the money needed to keep them watertight, windproof and in good repair.**

In 2023, thanks to the magnificent support of our Friends and supporters, we played a key part in keeping churches and chapels open in all four nations of the United Kingdom, providing 251 grants to safeguard their future.

We awarded a total of £2.27 million in grants and our funding helped to remove seven churches from the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register.

Thanks to the support of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, we were delighted that our Treasure Ireland project, supporting churches in Northern Ireland, was extended for a further three years.



**Catherine Townsend is our Director of Church Engagement:**

🔴🔴 **20,000 of the UK's church buildings have statutory listed status as being key to our heritage. They include nearly half of Britain's most important historic buildings, those listed as Grade I or equivalent.**

In 2023 we played a vital role in safeguarding this priceless heritage by funding 76 Grade I and Category A listed churches with grants totalling £858,932.

In addition to their beauty, these and many other churches are also key places for voluntary and community activities.

We are proud to support these important local buildings, and the people who work so hard to keep them open. So we offer a wide range of help in addition to financial support. This includes training, access to specialist skills, and advice on effective maintenance to protect church buildings for future generations.

We cannot do this alone, so we work together with local congregations, and alongside other sources of help provided by County Churches Trusts, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, and the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme.

In 2023 we upgraded our grants database and application process to a new 'cloud-based' portal. The new system has the advantage that applicants can access all of our grant programmes with one login, saving time and making it easier to submit a funding request.

## Environmental improvements

Supporting churches with environmental improvements and finding ways of meeting carbon neutral targets is increasingly important. Our new application process invites information about the ways in which building projects contribute to environmental sustainability, how they reduce a church building's carbon footprint, or whether other similar initiatives are already in place.

Our grant programmes continue to be generously supported by a range of funders including the Wolfson Foundation, the Headley Trust and the Pilgrim Trust. 🔴🔴



*St Andrew, Chinnor, Oxfordshire, on the Historic England At Risk Register and supported with funding from the National Churches Trust in 2023*



**Nigel Walter is Chair of our Grants Committee:**

👁️👁️ **The giving of grants is one of the principal purposes of the National Churches Trust, and the Grants Committee is central to that; so chairing the Committee is a huge privilege.**

We meet three times a year, and assess applications across our three main grant streams

(renamed Small, Medium, and Large in 2023) as well as making recommendations for funders we work with including the Wolfson Foundation, and for our own Treasure Ireland and Cherish projects.

*We awarded 76 grants totalling £901,622 to the most deprived areas of the UK, over 40% of the total funding.*

All our work is guided by the professional advice provided by our Church Engagement team, who are the people dealing directly with churches and grant applications on a daily basis.

I am very grateful to the other members of the Grants Committee, who give freely of their time, and to all who support us – without you, the Trust simply could not do this essential work. 👁️👁️



© Chris Hoskins

*Members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) Church in Craigtinny, Edinburgh, whose building was supported with a National Churches Trust grant in 2023*

Sadly, the funding available is always less than is needed by the range of deserving projects under consideration. So we are regularly faced with really difficult decisions over which churches to support. This is why the committee has a wide range of skills, sectoral and denominational experience, and geographic spread.

We support churches across the four nations of the UK, across all denominations, and are always mindful of churches in areas of higher deprivation. In 2023 we awarded 76 grants to churches in the most deprived areas of the UK, based on the four lowest deciles of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. At £901,622, this was over 40% of the total funding we awarded in 2023.

It is an inspiration to see how these buildings, whatever their situation, are used by and for their communities. Whether they are highly listed or plain and modest, they play a key role in that church's ministry and involvement with its community.



**Paul Ramsbottom, Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation, said:**

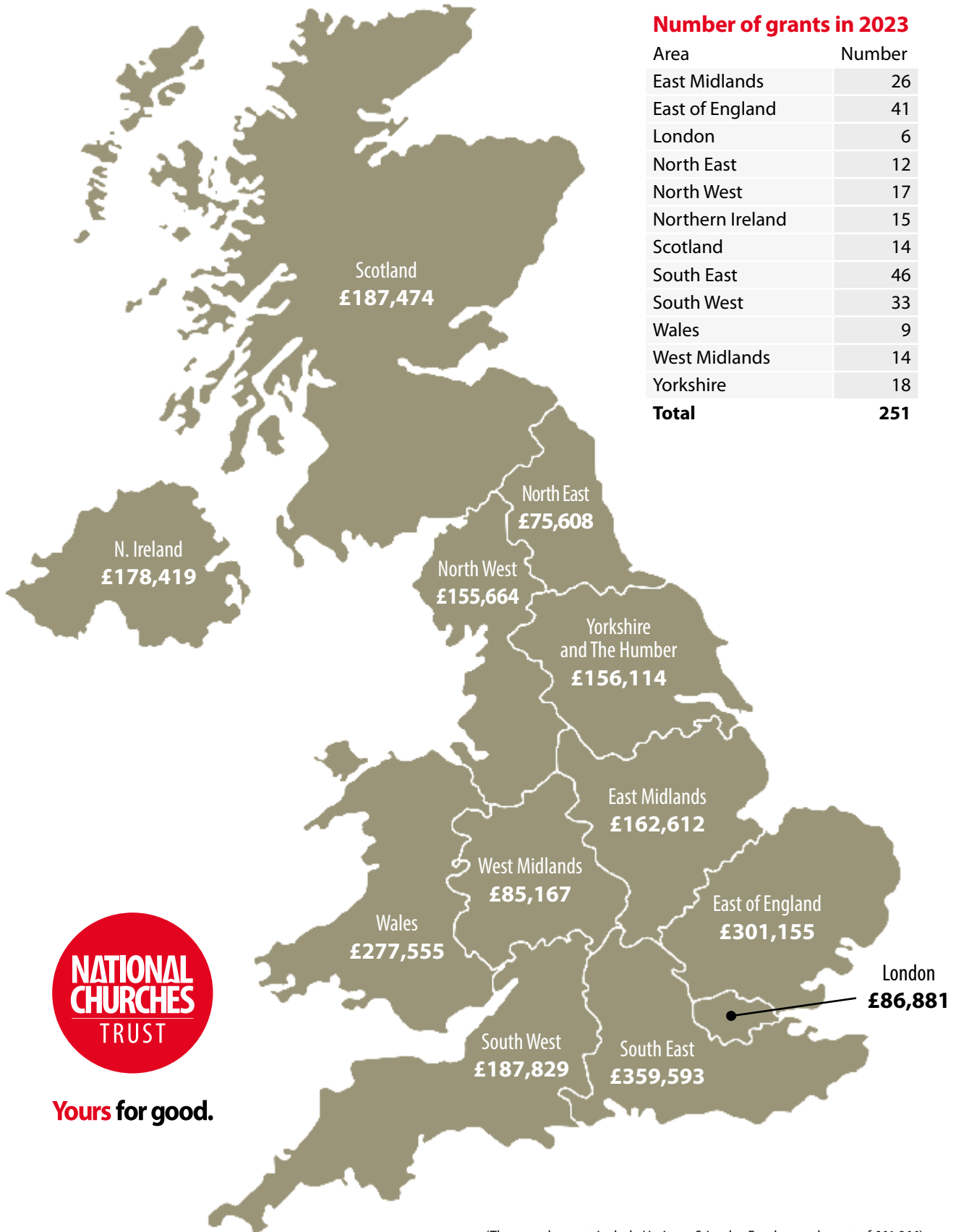
👁️👁️ We are delighted to continue to partner with the National Churches Trust to help conserve and restore listed places of worship of outstanding historical and architectural significance, preserving these much-loved buildings for future generations to enjoy. 👁️👁️



[nationalchurchestrust.org/  
grants](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/grants)

# Helping the UK's churches in 2023

## Amount of grant funding by nation and region



# We awarded or recommended 251 grants

(Some churches were awarded more than one grant in 2023, and these are each shown separately.)

## Aberdeenshire

**Aberdeen**, Crown Terrace Methodist Church: **£15,000**

## Angus

**Dundee, Lochee**, St Mary The Immaculate Conception: **£30,000, £15,708, £10,000**

## Bedfordshire

**Melchbourne**, St Mary Magdalene: **£5,000**

**Milton Bryan**, St Peter: **£5,000**

**Northill**, St Mary Virgin: **£4,461**

**Old Warden**, St Leonard: **£15,000, £10,000**

**Sutton**, All Saints: **£10,000, £8,000, £2,000**

## Berkshire

**Leckhampstead**, St James: **£10,000**

**Boxford**, St Andrew: **£5,000**

## Birmingham

**Sparkbrook**, St Agatha: **£25,000**

## Bristol

**Horfield**, Horfield Methodist Church: **£2,000**

## Buckinghamshire

**Buckland**, All Saints: **£895**

**Granborough**, St John the Baptist: **£10,000**

**Great Brickhill**, St Mary: **£16,854, £6,500, £5,000**

**Turville**, St Mary: **£5,000** (On the Heritage at Risk Register)

## Cambridgeshire

**Boxworth**, St Peter: **£5,000**

**Cambridge**, St Giles with St Peter: **£1,260**

**Duxford**, St Peter: **£8,000, £5,000, £4,000**

**Southoe**, St Leonard: **£5,000**

## Cardiff

**Cardiff**, Trinity Centre: **£50,646, £10,000**

## Cheshire

**Hollingworth**, St Mary: **£2,600**

**Stalybridge**, St Paul: **£1,530**

**Weaverham**, St Mary the Virgin: **£4,496**

## Cornwall

**Egloskerry**, St Petrock & St Keri: **£5,000**

**Launceston**, St Stephen the Martyr: **£3,534**

**Marazion**, Friends' Meeting House: **£1,749**

**South Hill**, St Sampson: **£5,000, £2,783**

(On the Heritage at Risk Register)

**St Mawgan-in-Meneage**, St Mawgan: **£4,600**

**St Neot**, St Anietus: **£1,397**

## County Antrim

**Antrim**, All Saints: **£19,282, £10,000**

**Belfast, Dundela**, St Mark: **£25,000**

**Carrickfergus**, St Nicholas: **£10,000**

(On the Heritage at Risk Register)

**Carryduff**, Parish Church of St Ignatius: **£2,000**

**Drumtullagh**, Drumtullagh Parish Church: **£10,000**

## County Armagh

**Keady**, St Matthew: **£25,000**

## County Down

**Comber**, St Mary: **£5,000**

**Killough**, Bright: **£15,000**

## County Durham

**Darlington**, St Cuthbert: **£20,000, £10,000**

(On the Heritage at Risk Register)

**Greatham**, St John the Baptist: **£10,000, £4,000,**

**Middleton-in-Teesdale**, St Mary the Virgin: **£1,708**

(On the Heritage at Risk Register)



*St Cuthbert, Darlington*

## County Tyrone

**Broughderg**, Our Lady of the Wayside: **£6,875**

**Strabane**, Church of the Immaculate Conception: **£19,282, £15,000**

## Cumbria

**Ireleth w Askam**, St Peter: **£10,000**

**Ormside**, St James: **£4,030** (On the Heritage at Risk register)

**Workington**, St John the Evangelist: **£633**

## Derbyshire

**Dronfield**, St John Baptist: **£2,987**

## Derry/Londonderry

**Altinure**, St Mary: **£4,000, £1,980**

**Moneymore**, St John: **£10,000**



# ants in 2023, worth £2.27 million

## Devon

**Abbotsham**, St Helen: **£19,282, £10,000**  
**Belstone**, St Mary: **£3,925, £3,713**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Ermington**, St Peter & St Paul: **£2,633**  
**Rose Ash**, St Peter: **£7,000, £5,000, £4,000**  
**Sandford**, St Swithin: **£2,332**

## Dorset

**Worth Matravers**, St Nicholas: **£10,000, £10,000**  
**Wyke Regis**, All Saints: **£15,000, £5,000**

## East Sussex

**Arlington**, St Pancras: **£8,000**  
**Bexhill**, St Barnabas: **£52,911**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Eastbourne**, All Souls: **£10,000**  
**Forest Row**, Holy Trinity: **£1,228**  
**Icklesham**, St Nicholas: **£5,000, £5,000**  
**Plumpton**, St Michael & All Angels: **£3,500**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)

## Essex

**Canvey Island**, Canvey Island Methodist Church: **£1,500**  
**Colchester**, St James the Great: **£6,250**  
**Little Hallingbury**, St Mary the Virgin: **£5,000**  
**Shalford**, St Andrew: **£5,000**  
**Thorpe-le-Soken**, St Michael: **£5,000**  
**Wethersfield**, St Mary Magdalene: **£2,974**

## Flintshire

**Rhosesmor**, St Paul: **£25,000**

## Glamorgan

**Cowbridge**, St Hilary of Poitiers: **£7,500**  
**Dowlais**, St Illtyd: **£100,000**

## Gloucestershire

**Painswick**, St Mary the Virgin: **£10,000, £3,000**  
**Tarlton**, St Osmund Chapel of Ease: **£2,486**

## Greater Manchester

**Alkrington**, St Thomas More: **£27,360**  
**Chorlton-cum-Hardy**, Our Lady & St John: **£3,157**  
**Mulberry Street**, St Mary: **£30,000, £6,000**  
**Salford**, St Luke, Irlams o' th' Height: **£5,000**  
**Swinton**, St Charles: **£2,000**

## Hampshire

**Nursling with Rownhams**, St John the Evangelist: **£3,020**  
**Odiham**, All Saints: **£5,000**  
**Owslebury**, St Andrew: **£4,667**  
**Southampton**, Swaythling, St Mary: **£10,000**

## Herefordshire

**Flaunden**, St Mary Magdalene: **£2,659**  
**Hinxworth**, St Nicholas: **£20,000**  
**Leominster**, Priory Church of St Peter & St Paul: **£3,000**  
**Llangarron**, St Deinst: **£264**

## Highlands

**Inverness**, Free North Church: **£10,000, £5,000**



*Inverness, Free North Church*

## Kent

**Coxheath**, Holy Trinity: **£5,000**  
**Greenhithe**, St Mary: **£20,000**  
**Hartlip**, St Michael & All Angels: **£5,000**  
**Shipbourne**, St Giles: **£8,267**  
**Upper Hardres**, St Peter & St Paul: **£5,000, £4,303**  
**Wickhambreaux**, St Andrew: **£8,122**

## Lancashire

**Blackpool**, St Stephen-on-the-Cliffs: **£27,558**  
**Hornby**, St Margaret: **£10,000**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Leigh**, St Peter: **£10,000**

## Leicestershire

**Higham-on-the-Hill**, St Peter: **£3,827**  
**King's Norton**, St John the Baptist: **£8,829, £4,500**  
**Leicester**, St Andrew's Methodist Church: **£7,000**  
**Leicester**, St Stephen's United Reformed Church: **£1,500**  
**Orton-on-the-Hill**, St Edith: **£10,000**  
**Owston**, St Andrew: **£5,000** (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Peckleton**, St Mary Magdalene: **£1,569**

## Lincolnshire

**Little Steeping**, St Andrew: **£5,000**  
**Mareham-on-the-Hill**, All Saints: **£4,994**  
**Stamford Baron**, St Martin: **£10,000, £8,000, £5,790**  
**Ulceby**, St Nicholas: **£5,000, £5,000, £4,000**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)

## London

**Edmonton**, Saint Aldhelm: **£20,000**  
**Finchley**, St Mary at Finchley: **£10,000, £10,000**  
**Holborn**, St Sepulchre: **£1,881**  
**Tottenham**, St Mark's Methodist Church: **£40,000**  
**Wood Green**, St Michael: **£5,000**

## Lothians

**Dalmeny**, Dalmeny Parish Church: **£4,780**  
**Edinburgh**, RCCG King of Glory: **£9,965**  
**Edinburgh, Portobello**, St Mark's Episcopal Church:  
**£55,116, £10,000**  
**Musselburgh**, Musselburgh Congregational Church: **£4,245**

## Merseyside

**St Helens**, St Mark: **£3,800**

## Monmouthshire

**Bettws Newydd**, St Aeddan: **£40,000, £10,000, £4,409**

## Norfolk

**Briston**, All Saints: **£5,000**  
**Homersfield**, St Mary: **£2,942**  
**Larling**, St Ethelbert: **£5,000**  
**Pulham**, St Mary: **£2,000**  
**Weeting**, St Mary: **£5,000** (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Weston Longville**, All Saints: **£10,000, £5,000**

## Northamptonshire

**Blakesley**, St Mary: **£10,000, £4,000**  
**Calverton**, St Wilfrid: **£5,000**  
**Matfen**, Holy Trinity: **£5,000**  
**Westbury**, St Augustine: **£2,186**

## North Yorkshire

**Askrigg**, St Oswald: **£10,000, £5,000, £1,500**  
**Arkengarthdale**, St Mary: **£10,000**  
**Austwick**, The Epiphany: **£5,000**  
**Healey**, St Paul: **£4,000**  
**Huntington**, All Saints: **£4,795**  
**Leyburn**, St Matthew: **£10,000**

## Nottinghamshire

**Calverton**, St Wilfreds: **£5,000**  
**Claypole North & South**, St Peter: **£10,000, £10,000**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Sutton-cum-Lound**, St Bartholomew: **£10,000, £5,000**

## Oxfordshire

**Buckland**, St Mary the Virgin: **£7,500, £5,000**  
**Chinnor**, St Andrew: **£4,170** (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Mollington**, All Saints: **£5,000**  
**Ratley**, St Peter Ad Vincula: **£8,000, £5,000**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Stonesfield**, St James the Great: **£10,000, £5,000**

## Rhondda-Cynon-Taf

**Aberdare**, Bryn Sion Baptist Fellowship: **£30,000**

## Ross-shire

**Tain**, St Andrew's Episcopal Church: **£10,000, £5,160**

## Rutland

**Egleton**, St Edmund **£10,000, £7,930, £5,000**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Exton with Horn**, St Peter & St Paul: **£4,500**

## Shropshire

**Blymhill**, St Mary: **£2,000**

## Somerset

**Cossington**, The Blessed Virgin Mary: **£3,000**  
**Hornblotton**, St Peter: **£4,929**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Taunton**, Temple Methodist Church: **£10,000**  
**Timberscombe**, St Petroc: **£1,922**

## Staffordshire

**Butterton**, St Bartholomew: **£2,717**  
**Stretton with Claymills**, St Mary: **£5,000**

## Suffolk

**Copdock**, St Peter: **£5,000**  
**Hitcham**, All Saints: **£3,540**  
**Lawshall**, All Saints: **£3,500**  
**Mendlesham**, St Mary: **£3,350**  
**Ovington**, St Mary: **£5,000** (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Rushfield**, All Saints: **£4,000**  
**Rushmere St Andrew**, St Andrew: **£3,578**  
**Somerton**, St Margaret: **£10,000, £10,000, £5,000**  
**Stoke-by-Nayland**, St Mary: **£55,761**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Thrandeston**, St Margaret: **£10,000, £5,000**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Westleton**, St Peter: **£5,000**  
**Withersfield**, St Mary the Virgin: **£10,000**



*St Mary, Ovington*

## Surrey

**Shepperton**, St Nicholas: **£20,536, £10,000**

## Sussex

**Brede**, St George: **£4,000**  
**Litlington**, St Michael the Archangel: **£7,000**  
**Wivelsfield**, St Peter & St John the Baptist: **£9,000**

## Tyne & Wear

**Hebburn**, St Oswald: **£1,900**  
**Lobley Hill**, All Saints: **£5,000**  
**Newcastle**, St Gabriel: **£4,000**

## Warwickshire

**Rugby**, St Peter & St John: **£4,700**

## West Yorkshire

**Leeds**, All Souls: **£5,000**  
**Leeds, Chapeltown**, Holy Rosary: **£11,023, £10,000**  
**Low Moor**, Holy Trinity: **£2,269**  
**Morley**, St Peter: **£4,700**

**Ripponden**, Stones Methodist Church: **£16,535**  
**Steeton**, St Stephen: **£900**  
**Thurstonland**, St Thomas: **£20,392**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)  
**Wakefield**, Westgate Chapel: **£25,000, £10,000**



Westgate Chapel, Wakefield

### Wiltshire

**Hardenhuish**, St Nicholas: **£4,550**  
**Heytesbury**, St Peter & St Paul: **£3,480**  
**Latton**, St John the Baptist: **£5,000**  
**Sherston Magna**, Holy Cross: **£5,000**  
**Whiteparish**, All Saints: **£10,000**

### Worcestershire

**Colwall**, St James the Great: **£10,000, £8,000, £5,000,**  
**Mamble**, St John the Baptist: **£10,000, £3,000**  
 (On the Heritage at Risk Register)

(Not including Heritage Stimulus Fund grants)

## 2023 Grant Awards by type

• Cherish	£10,000	1
• Cornerstone	£285,000	17
• Cornerstone (Wolfson)	£63,500	8
• Friends Grant	£10,000	1
• Gateway (Wolfson)	£3,000	1
• Heritage Stimulus Fund (amendments)	£ 61,866	–
• National Churches Trust-HSF (Top ups)	£28,249	10
• Large (Headley)	£45,000	9
• Large (Wolfson)	£202,250	25
• Large	£370,125	25
• Last Chance Churches	£540,922	18
• Medium (Headley)	£45,000	10
• Medium (Wolfson)	£131,250	22
• Medium	£152,849	26
• Small	£226,051	64
• Treasure Ireland	£40,875	5
• (Grants on behalf of other funders)	£60,000	9

**TOTALS** **£2,275,937** **251**

## Our Grants in 2024

**We support a variety of churches, chapels and meeting houses across the United Kingdom with our grant programmes:**

Our grants are available to any Christian place of worship in the UK that is open for regular worship. They help keep church buildings in good repair, open for worship and community activities, and allow them to continue to serve people, communities and visitors in all sorts of ways.

In 2024, our grants include:

**Large grants** for urgent structural repair projects and for projects to install kitchens and toilets.

**Medium grants** to support urgent repair and maintenance issues as well as project development work.

**Small grants** to support small but urgent maintenance and repair issues or to carry out small investigative works.

**Treasure Ireland grants** to support church projects in Northern Ireland.

**Cherish grants** for churches in Scotland, Wales/ Cymru and North West England to carry out maintenance, urgent repair work or project development.

**Wolfson grants.** Since 2020, we have managed grants made to churches by the Wolfson Foundation. You can apply for a Wolfson grant via our Large or Medium grants programmes.

## Our six top tips for making a grant application

- Read the guidance (you'd be surprised...!)
- Don't be shy! Tell us about all the wonderful things your church is doing already and what more you want to do;
- Paint a picture about your current challenges, and the difference our funding would make;
- Show how your building is used beyond the worshipping community;
- Approach us as partners, and make use of our advice, training and networks;
- Demonstrate your resilience in terms of community support and local fundraising.



[nationalchurchestrust.org/get-support/grants](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/get-support/grants)

# Every Church Counts

**As the UK-wide charity supporting churches of all denominations, we are uniquely placed to make the case for church buildings.**

At a time when an increasing number of churches are at risk of closure, in 2023 one of our priorities was to produce a manifesto for church buildings based around six policy proposals to help secure the future of the UK's 38,500 churches, chapels and meeting houses.



**Eddie Tulasiewicz is our Head of Policy and Public Affairs:**

🗨️ **We started work on our 'Every Church Counts' manifesto in early 2023 by asking 650 people with an active interest in church buildings, including some of our Friends, what they thought were the most important issues we should address.**

It was important for us to take into account the views of others with responsibility for churches. So we then consulted on our proposals with key organisations including the Church of England, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Roman Catholic Church and the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance.

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*It received extensive media coverage and the praise and support of key stakeholders.*

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## Some of the key things they told us were:

- More funding for the repair of church buildings is urgently needed.
- More use should be made of church buildings by local organisations and for a broad range of purposes.
- More volunteers are needed to keep churches open and in use.
- Churches are one of the few local buildings left that promote a sense of community.

## Praise and support

'Every Church Counts' was launched at a packed reception in Parliament in January 2024, attended by MPs, Peers, and church and heritage leaders. It received extensive media coverage and the praise and support of key stakeholders.

We are now working with our partners to have the proposals in 'Every Church Counts' implemented so that church buildings can continue to benefit local communities and the nation as a whole. 🗨️



Rachael Adams (Communications Manager), Karl Newton (Deputy Chief Executive), Claire Walker (Chief Executive), Lord Chartres (Vice President of the National Churches Trust), and Eddie Tulasiewicz (Head of Policy and Public Affairs), getting ready to launch 'Every Church Counts'

## Church heritage at risk

**An increasing number of churches are at risk of closure, many because it is proving impossible to raise the money needed to carry out urgent repairs.**

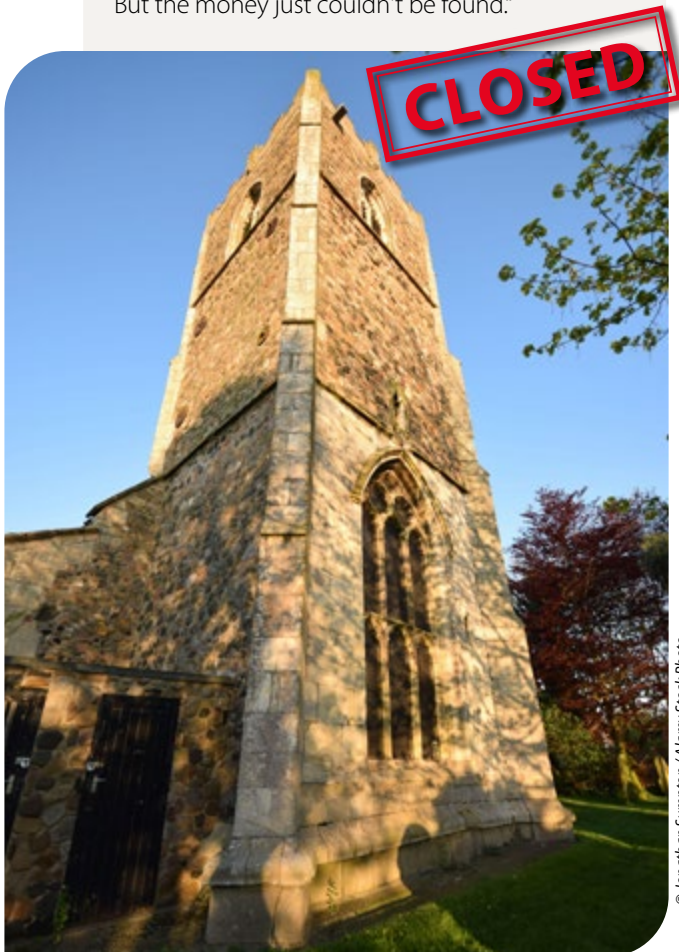
One church that has closed is Grade I listed All Saints Church in Burstwick, near Hull in the East Riding of Yorkshire, which conducted its final service on 26 January 2023.

Before its closure, the church was one of the oldest churches open for worship in the region. Helen Audley, Vice President of the Beverley and District Ringing Society, was a bellringer at the church. She said:

“The bells in this tower sound absolutely glorious. We rang for that final service and it was very poignant getting the bells down for the last time knowing that we wouldn't be able to ring them again.

I think it's very sad when any church closes, because people expect the church to be there in their time of need...and when a church just becomes a closed building the life has gone out of a village.

Somehow even if people don't attend the services, they still expect the church to be there for them. But the money just couldn't be found.”



All Saints Church, Burstwick

© John Swannel

© Jonathan Sumpton / Alamy Stock Photo



### Sir Michael Palin, Vice-President of the National Churches Trust

Right now, many church buildings are in danger of closure. ‘Every Church Counts’ proposes a range of ways in which the future of the UK’s churches, chapels and meeting houses can be secured.

## Saving the UK's churches

**‘Every Church Counts’ sets out six key actions needed to save the UK’s church buildings.**

These are:

- Creating a network of professional support officers to help the heroic volunteers and clergy who look after church buildings.
- Boosting the UK’s church-based ‘National Help Service’ by basing more community support services in church buildings.
- Additional annual public funding of £50 million to help save church heritage for the future; a national matched funding scheme to incentivise charitable giving is also proposed, with the value of donations doubled.
- A strategy to increase tourism to historic churches, including more UNESCO style world heritage site designations, for example for the wool churches of Norfolk or Suffolk and the early Christian sites of Wales and Northern Britain.
- Regular opening of churches beyond worship times, including seven day a week opening where possible.
- Urgent action by Government, heritage organisations and denominations, including the development of a national plan.



[nationalchurchestrust.org/  
everychurchcounts](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/everychurchcounts)

# Friends Supporting Churches

**We want to keep churches open and in use, and protect their precious heritage now and in the future. To do this, the support of our Friends is crucially important.**

So it is wonderful news that at the end of 2023, the number of our Friends reached 5,005 with 581 new individual Friends having joined us during the year. The total number of Cornerstone Club members at the end of 2023 increased to 72 and that of Life Friends to 367.



**Lydia McCutcheon is our Senior Fundraising Events Officer:**

👁️ **Our events provide a wonderful opportunity to discover some beautiful churches. But we like to think that they are also a chance for our Friends and other supporters to meet and for us to get to know them better.**

In May, 38 Friends and supporters joined us for a walking tour in the City of London to commemorate the tercentenary of Sir Christopher Wren's death.

We visited three churches rebuilt by Wren following the destruction of the Great Fire of London; St Clement Danes, Temple Church and St Bride's Church off Fleet Street, famous for its tiered spire. It took nine years for St Bride's to reappear from the ashes under the inspired direction of Christopher Wren.

### **Walking tour of Canterbury**

In June, 20 Friends and supporters made the journey to Canterbury for a walking tour of the three churches that form part of that city's UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Friends visited Canterbury Cathedral, Mother Church of the Church of England, explored the remains of St Augustine's Abbey, resting place of St Augustine and the first Archbishops of Canterbury, and experienced the beauty of St Martin's Church, the oldest church in the English-speaking world.

For Henry Stanford, our Treasurer, an added bonus was the discovery of the gravestone of Burgon and Julian Bickersteth, his first cousins twice removed.

### **Carols by Candlelight**

Our highlight event of the year was undoubtedly our annual Carols by Candlelight concert, held in 2023 at Grosvenor Chapel in Mayfair, London.



*Carols at Grosvenor Chapel*

An audience of over 250 was transported into a winter wonderland with carols, as well as music and readings from Michael Palin, Alexander Armstrong, Joe Stilgoe and Bill Bryson, with the event hosted by comedian and actor Tim Vine.

As if that was not enough, we were delighted that our Vice Patron, HRH The Duke of Gloucester, was able to attend the concert. 🎶

# CCLA

GOOD INVESTMENT

**We are most grateful for the support of CCLA Investment Management, without whom Carols by Candlelight would not have been possible, and to Revd Stephen Coleman, Priest in Charge at Grosvenor Chapel.**



[nationalchurchestrust.org/friends](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/friends)

# Meet our Friends



**Diane Conrad-Daubrah is an ex-pat British citizen whose hobby is researching English churches in Switzerland.**

👉👉 I felt I would like to contribute to UK causes that support British heritage, in particular churches. I became a Friend in 2017 and have recently donated to the 'Last Chance Churches' appeal; the prospect of losing even more religious built heritage is disheartening.

I was delighted that you recently featured Lincolnshire on your website. From a relatively early age, I was interested in country, village and market town churches in my home county. My school in Louth was situated very close to St James' Church. Later, when I worked in London, on the return journey at weekends, a second important Lincolnshire church stood as a beacon in the flat fenlands – St. Botolph's, Boston; as soon as it came into view, we were nearly home! 👉👉

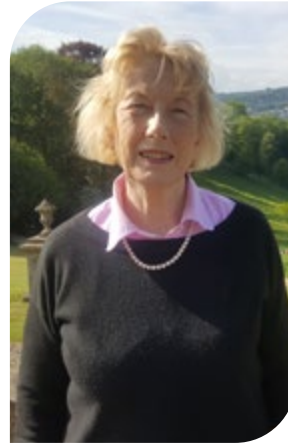
*St Botolph's Church, Boston*



© Peter Scholey / Alamy Stock Photo

**Virginia Utley has been a Friend of the National Churches Trust since 2020.**

👉👉 I support the National Churches Trust because it does an excellent job of focusing attention on churches in urgent need of preservation, and also allows the public to participate in this very important work.



My favourite church is St Mary the Virgin, Layer Marney, Essex. I used to have a cottage nearby.

My second favourite church is St Agnes, Cawston, Norfolk. I discovered this quite by accident when on a bicycling tour in the 1970s, using a 1930s RAC Guide for Cyclists. 👉👉



*St Mary the Virgin Church, Layer Marney, Essex*

© Steve Nimmans / Alamy Stock Photo



**William Sharp has supported the National Churches Trust for many years and has always enjoyed visiting churches.**

👉👉 Their history, be they ancient or modern, fascinates me. I have recently become interested in stained glass windows which opens up different things to find out about, such as who designed them, who paid for them and what they depict.

Favourite church? The Martorana in Palermo. In this country, at the moment, my top church is All Saints Parish Church in Wigan. So much history, so much to uncover. Each church has its own unique history. 👉👉



*All Saints Parish Church, Wigan*

© lowefoto / Alamy Stock Photo

# A History of English Churches in 100 Objects

**Matthew Byrne's new book, 'A History of English Churches in 100 Objects', tells two closely related stories: the history of churches as buildings and the history of The Church as a continuity of Christian believers; each has influenced the other.**

**The book includes a special Foreword by HRH The Duke of Gloucester, Vice Patron of the National Churches Trust.**

These two closely related histories cover almost 1,700 years from the creation of a fledging Christian Church in fourth century Roman Britain right up to the year 2023 and the coronation of King Charles III in Westminster Abbey.

## Architecture and theology

The history of churches as buildings allows readers of the book to better understand their architecture from the Saxon, Norman, late medieval and early modern periods and concluding with the Victorian and 20th century periods. The book shows that the changes in style and indeed construction were all part of the changing spirit of their times, both architecturally and theologically.

The rich variety of church furnishings was part of the same process, and many of the 100 objects are drawn from the treasures of stained glass, metalwork and paintings. Church monuments, such an essential feature of so many churches, are chiefly confined to memorialising the great and the good. But many other features in stone and wood depict ordinary people in their everyday lives.



HRH The Duke of Gloucester

The history of The Church is illustrated in terms of changing liturgical practices and the development of theology and also the increasing power and wealth of the medieval church. The seismic upheavals of the Reformation can be seen in the way that church interiors changed, including the appearance of new furnishings and objects and the disappearance of others.

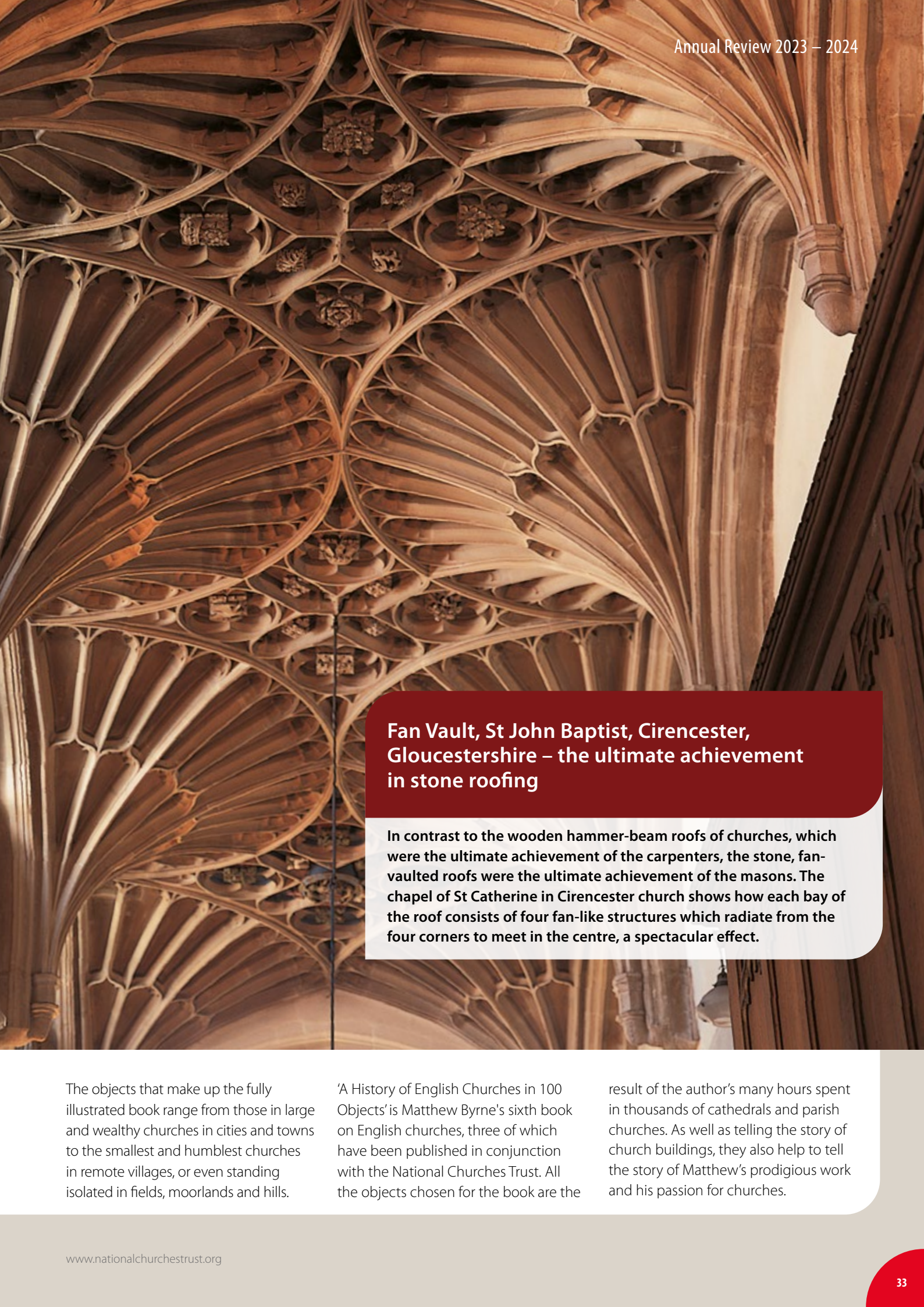
## Church furnishings

Changing social, as opposed to theological attitudes, between the

seventeenth and nineteenth centuries can also be traced through changes in church furnishings. The turn to new ideas in worship and religious art in both the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches is also a focus of the book.







**Fan Vault, St John Baptist, Cirencester, Gloucestershire – the ultimate achievement in stone roofing**

**In contrast to the wooden hammer-beam roofs of churches, which were the ultimate achievement of the carpenters, the stone, fan-vaulted roofs were the ultimate achievement of the masons. The chapel of St Catherine in Cirencester church shows how each bay of the roof consists of four fan-like structures which radiate from the four corners to meet in the centre, a spectacular effect.**

The objects that make up the fully illustrated book range from those in large and wealthy churches in cities and towns to the smallest and humblest churches in remote villages, or even standing isolated in fields, moorlands and hills.

'A History of English Churches in 100 Objects' is Matthew Byrne's sixth book on English churches, three of which have been published in conjunction with the National Churches Trust. All the objects chosen for the book are the

result of the author's many hours spent in thousands of cathedrals and parish churches. As well as telling the story of church buildings, they also help to tell the story of Matthew's prodigious work and his passion for churches.

o



**Stained Glass, Coventry Cathedral, Warwickshire – a titanic work of modern abstract glass**

In 1961, the country's two foremost glaziers, John Piper and Patrick Reyntiens, created this window for the cathedral baptistery. Its abstract design, which shows outer dark, glowing colours converging on a central sun, has been described as one of the best works of the 20th century.



**The Altar Reredos, Trinity College Chapel, Oxford – perfect Baroque furniture**

The reredos of 1694 is generally attributed to Grinling Gibbons and is one of his finest pieces in the richest Baroque style. The top edge is a mass of characteristically deeply undercut foliage interspersed with cherubs' heads.



**Coronation Chair and Stone, Westminster Abbey, London February 1308 – May 2023**

The coronation chair at the abbey was commissioned by Edward I for the coronation of his son Edward II with the ancient Stone of Scone beneath the seat. First used in 1308 and all coronations since, it was the centrepiece of the coronation of Charles III in May 2023.



**The Porch, Romsey Abbey, Hampshire – faces from the past on a Gothic wall**

Throughout the whole of the 400 years of the Gothic period, walls, capitals, doorways, roofs and parapets were adorned with the faces of every type of person in every type of mood. Here a charming smiling woman's face (mirrored on the other side) is seen on an early 13th-century doorway greeting those entering the abbey.



**The Ceilings, Witley Court, Great Witley, Worcestershire – the most Italianate church in the whole of England**

**Statue of Elizabeth I, St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol – A Protestant queen replaces Catholic saints**

This painting, which covers half of the nave ceiling, shows Christ ascending to heaven after his Resurrection, watched by His apostles below and angels above.

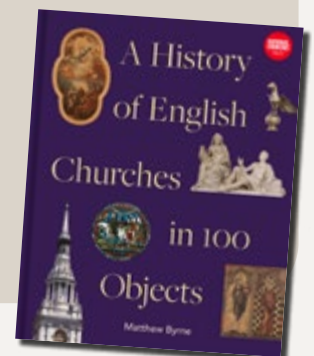
Following a visit by Elizabeth I in 1574, the congregation erected this wooden image near the main entrance. Crowned and holding a sceptre and orb, the figure has a sense of movement. Before the Reformation only canonised saints could be represented in such a position.



Matthew Byrne has been exploring, studying and taking photographs of English churches for nearly fifty years. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society in 1984 for his architectural photography.

*A History of English Churches in 100 Objects* will be published by Pitkin Books in October 2024 for £18.99. Friends and supporters

can buy the book direct from us for £16.99 plus postage and packing. Please email [info@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:info@nationalchurchestrust.org)



# The spirit of England's churches

By *Bishop Andrew Rumsey*



Care of the church notice

© Andrew Rumsey

In the vestry cupboard at St Editha, Baverstock, hangs a slightly mouse-nibbled notice entitled 'Care of the Church'. Issued by the Church Information Board in 1951, this advises a few regular checks that incumbents and churchwardens might usefully make of their buildings. Most of these sound pleasantly dated

but sensible, 'at no time allow soil, coal, coke or other materials to be heaped against the wall of the church'. They also include an early nod to the quinquennial ('and oftener if practicable') inspection by the church architect.

It drew my attention, not first as an indicator of that decade's growing appreciation of the need for enhanced national support of historic churches, but as an enjoyable example of the peculiarly powerful effect of these buildings upon time and space – an influence hard to express but essential to their lasting appeal.

This can appear merely to be a knack for prolonging the life of things placed within them, regardless of that item's worth or holiness. In another vestry recently, draped over the sacristy tap, I found what had once been a yellow rubber glove but which the cloying damp had caused to perish so badly it was barely identifiable – and certainly useless.

Yet there it remained, undiscarded. However mundane, objects in churches obtain a kind of sanctity that prevents their easy removal, in a way that can be both hilarious and maddening to those wielding a new broom.



© wda.cerche / Alamy Stock Photo



*Winged angel in the churchyard  
of St John's Church in Devizes,  
Wiltshire*



*All Saints, Ham*

Yet this facility for preservation is, I have come to realise, simply a by-product of something more meaningful and mysterious at play – namely, that church buildings are rehearsing for eternity.

☉☉ *The Church's liturgy deliberately blurs the imaginative boundaries of space and time.* ☉☉

However obscure or eccentric it may appear to the modern mind, the primary pursuit of these places is worship of an invisible God, held to dwell both in earth and in heaven. Consequently, the Church's

liturgy deliberately blurs the imaginative boundaries of space and time – offering up everyday things (bread and wine not least) that they might be effectual signs of a divine life in our midst.

As an apologist for church buildings, I can be tempted to play this down and emphasise only the secular or human narrative that weaves so closely into Christian ritual, but I have come to realise that serves and satisfies no one.

**Visual and textual clues**

The particular 'presence' of church buildings derives from their spirituality, and one doesn't have to be a believer to understand how. On entering almost any church, one

is conscious of this: partly from the visual and textual clues that direct one's attention. In St Peter Ad Vincula, Broad Hinton – another of the Wiltshire churches for which I share responsibility – the painted lettering along the sanctuary step reads: 'In this place is one greater than the temple', quoting Jesus' words in Matthew's Gospel.

Nearby, at All Saints, Ham, a text from St John greets the visitor: 'God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth! Such allusions, when joined to the memorials of so many dead, add to the sometimes-uncanny sense of not being quite alone in church and of being invited into a



© The Beaten Track / Alamy Stock Photo

Of course, by no means all churches are ancient or beguiling in this way. My formative experience was of a breeze-block church in Luton where my father served as vicar. Built only in 1966, with concrete paving slabs as flagstones, it nevertheless swiftly took on a similar quality, I think because what the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, called the habitus of repeated practices therein were daily indicating another place entirely, while grounding those heavenly mansions in the reality of life on a housing estate in the Seventies.

## Extraordinary spirit

All of which is to urge that, however widely church doors may be opened to craft fairs, food banks and folk gigs (and I think quite widely indeed), wherever possible we must retain signs of the buildings' founding and consecrated purpose to the glory of God, however unknown. To do otherwise is to evacuate Britain's churches of their extraordinary spirit and deny to others the release, the relief, that comes from encountering a life greater than one's own. ●

kind of transcendent conversation. Like many, I find this especially so when the building is empty, and the half-life of ancient things is most palpable.

Ham Church is a particular favourite, for simplicity of form and limpidity of light. A Georgian gallery and box pews also provide an expanse of nut-brown, resounding wood that rings along with spoken words and music - prompting a friend and me to record an album of songs here a couple of summers ago in an attempt to capture its mood and tone - along with any ambient interruptions from bees, birdsong or a warden's keys. The main impression was of being graciously 'hosted' by our makeshift studio and its ghosting genius loci.



© geophotos / Alamy Stock Photo

Box pews at Saint Mary's Church, Old Dilton, Wiltshire



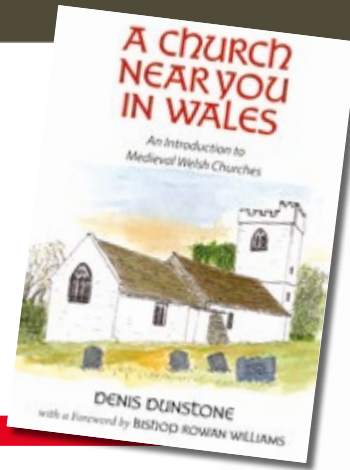
The Right Reverend Dr Andrew Rumsey became the Bishop of Ramsbury in October 2018. He is responsible for the Wiltshire parts of the Diocese of Salisbury (as well as one parish in Dorset and four in Hampshire).

Bishop Andrew comes from a long line of parish clergy and was born in Marlborough where he and his family now live. He is co-lead bishop responsible for the Church of England's church and cathedral buildings.

His latest book is *English Grounds: a Pastoral Journal* on sale at £19.99. [scompress.co.uk](http://scompress.co.uk)

# A Church Near You in Wales

A new book by Denis Dunstone



**'A Church Near You in Wales' is a sequel to my previous book on mainly English churches, which included some in Monmouthshire, due to their character and outstanding qualities. Inspired by that, my new book seeks to introduce the architecture of other Welsh churches. It is intended to arouse curiosity as to the nature of church buildings and to stimulate a desire to investigate further.**

The focus of the book and my illustrations is on exteriors, as that is where the history of a church is most clearly revealed. This is at the expense of paying attention to interiors, sometimes with wonderful paintings, screens and roofs. There are just under one thousand churches in Wales judged to be of medieval origin. With a few notable exceptions, most have been altered over time, some drastically in the 19th century.

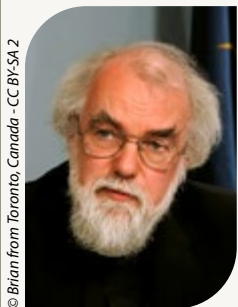
Larger churches normally started as part of a monastery and their dedication was to international saints. Smaller Welsh churches were normally dedicated to a local saintly person. These small churches are often secluded and have become part of the countryside. They have a special atmosphere.

More than in England, in Wales the location is part of the church. The churches of Wales are remarkable buildings; a very important part of our heritage that bear the scars as well as the spirit of history. If they are to be saved for the future more people must become engaged in their maintenance and protection.



*St Giles, Wrexham, in Flintshire, is unexpectedly fine. Its magnificent decoration and grandeur are attributed to Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII, whose husband had local interests. It is unusual in having a polygonal apse, similar to that at Mold.*

## A treasury of image and information



© Brian from Toronto, Canada - CC BY-SA 2

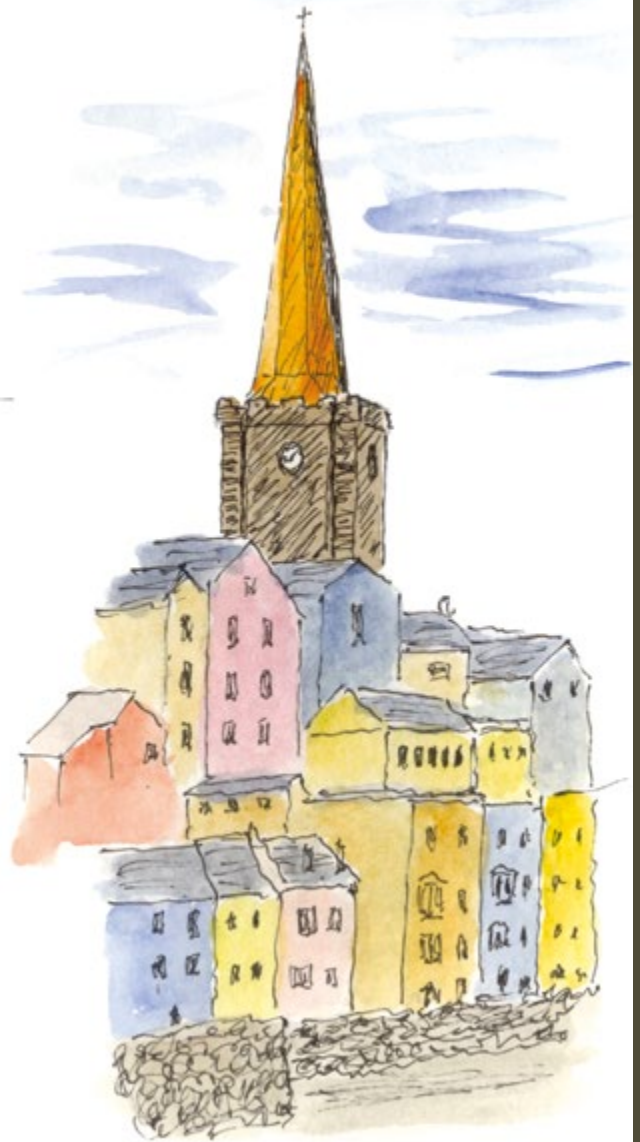
'A Church Near You in Wales' is a treasury of both image and information about the oldest Welsh churches. We are offered a comprehensive overview of the presence of these buildings in their geographical and historical context, and a lucid guide to the regional varieties of building styles within Wales and how these developed across the centuries. The fine watercolours illustrating the text give a more lively sense of these buildings than most photographs could do, and they are an integral part of the book's contribution.

**Bishop Rowan Williams**





*The site of St Teilo, Llandeilo, in Carmarthenshire, has been a Christian location since the 6th century and was at one time the seat of a bishop. The present church was rebuilt in the 19th century, though the tower is from the 16th century. The steep slope on the south side of the church explains why it is entered by a north door.*



*St Mary, Tenby, on the coast of Pembrokeshire, has a spire 152 feet high. This is a large church and the tower is on the south side of the chancel. This may be because the space in the middle of the town was limited.*



*At the southernmost point on the coast of Pembrokeshire, St Govan's Chapel snuggles into the side of the cliff. It is reached by steps from the cliff-top. Now more a curiosity for tourists than a holy site, it is said to have been founded in the 6th century by St Govan who lived in an adjacent cave.*



*St Gwynhoedl, Llangwnadl, near the end of the Lley peninsula in Caernarfonshire, is a real triple nave with two equal aisles on either side of the original nave. They were added to a 13th-/14th-century church in the 16th century. There is a bell cote on the west end gable of the original church.*



*The tower at St Mechell, Llanfechell, on Anglesey is topped with an octagonal bell-shaped spire. This is an old church with substantial 12th-century fabric.*



*St Woolos, Newport, now a cathedral, has an unusual layout. Between the fine west tower and the nave there is a chapel devoted to the patron saint, as is the case more modestly at Partrishow and at Llantwit Major.*

'A Church Near You in Wales' supports the National Churches Trust and the Friends of Friendless Churches, two organisations who work tirelessly to keep churches and their history alive.

The book is published by Ylolf  
at £19.99 and  
is now on sale.  
[www.ylolf.com](http://www.ylolf.com)



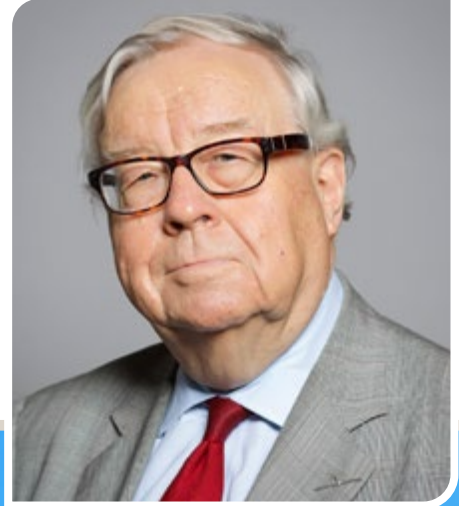
# The Lord Cormack DL, FSA 1939 – 2024

## Vice-President of the National Churches Trust 2007 – 2024

Lord Cormack was one of this country's most committed and fearless advocates for the cause of our church heritage. He understood the church in the UK in all its dimensions – physical, spiritual and social – and was tireless in supporting the work of the National Churches Trust.

He was also a charming, kind and hospitable man, for whom friendship clearly ranked alongside family, community and faith as one of the sources of life's meaning.

*Sir Philip Rutnam, Chair, National Churches Trust*



Lord Cormack worked to support the UK's churches and had a great love for the cathedral and churches of Lincoln. He was honoured with the Freedom of the City of Lincoln in 2021.



### 2024 National Church Awards

This year our National Church Awards are inspired by the work and legacy of Lord Patrick Cormack and will take place in Lincoln Cathedral on Tuesday 22 October.

You can find out more and nominate your church on our website at [nationalchurchestrust.org/impact/awards](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/impact/awards)

# Financial summary 2023



**In 2023 we were pleased to award 251 grants to churches totalling over £2.2 million, while continuing to promote the value of church buildings and provide advice.**

Income for the year amounted to c. £5.1 million, including £1.9 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the

Cherish Project, as well as a further £0.2 million for the Treasure Ireland project. This funding is for a three-year period. Recognition of the income in 2023 has resulted in a substantial surplus for the year but it is likely that there will be deficits for the next three years as expenditure on the projects occurs.

The Trust also received £0.5 million from a major donor which enabled the launch of the 'Last Chance Churches' match funding appeal, with the aim of raising an additional £0.5 million for major building projects in 18 churches across the UK. Nearly £0.3 million was raised in 2023 and the target amount of £0.5 million was achieved in the first quarter of 2024.

Legacies are an important source of income for the charity but can fluctuate considerably from year to year. In 2023 the Trust accounted for 12 new legacy notifications generously providing funding of c. £0.3 million (compared to 10 new notifications totalling £0.5 million in 2022).

Two further legacies notified in 2023 totalling c. £0.4 million, where probate had not been granted by the year end, will be accounted for in 2024.

Investment income contributed £0.2 million and the net result, before movements in the value of investments, was a surplus of £1.5 million.

Investment values increased over the course of the year by £0.5 million, resulting in a positive net movement of funds of £2.0 million.

At 31 December 2024, total funds amounted to £8.0 million, comprising £2.8 million of endowment funds, £3.3 million restricted reserves and £1.9 million unrestricted reserves.

**Henry Stanford, ACA, Treasurer**

## Donors and support

### Trusts and Foundations

Alan and Sheila Diamond Charitable Trust  
 Antelope Trust  
 Aslackby Trust Atlas Fund  
 Bartleet Family Fund  
 Basil Brown Charitable Trust  
 Benefact Trust  
 Cadw  
 Department for Communities Northern Ireland  
 Dulverton Trust  
 Earl Mawby Trust  
 Edinburgh Trust No 2  
 Esme Mitchell Trust  
 Eversley Charitable Trust  
 Fulmer Charitable Trust  
 G M Morrison Charitable Trust  
 Golden Bottle Trust  
 Headley Trust  
 Health Foundation  
 Hippocleides Trust  
 Historic England  
 Ian Askew Charitable Trust

Keith and Margaret Ellis Charitable Trust  
 Kettle Memorial Fund  
 Lady Elliotts Charitable Trust  
 LJC Fund Ltd  
 Major General Sir A G V Paley's Second Charitable Trust  
 Marsh Charitable Trust  
 Mill Garden Trust  
 Monkswold Trust  
 National Lottery Heritage Fund  
 O J Colman Charitable Trust  
 Oakley Charitable Trust  
 Oldcastle Charity  
 P F Charitable Trust  
 Pilgrim Trust  
 Pitt-Rivers Charitable Trust  
 Privy Purse Charitable Trust  
 Rhododendron Trust  
 Sir Jeremiah Colman Gift Trust  
 Ulster Historic Churches Trust  
 Vicarage Trust  
 Volvox Trust  
 Wolfson Foundation

### Legacies

June Barclay  
 Eileen Bowmer  
 Peter Brooke  
 June Brooks  
 Janet Dereham  
 Carol Excell  
 Rachael Horne  
 Alison Parker  
 Kenneth Riley  
 David Savage  
 Peter Vanderman  
 Michael Way

### Major Gifts

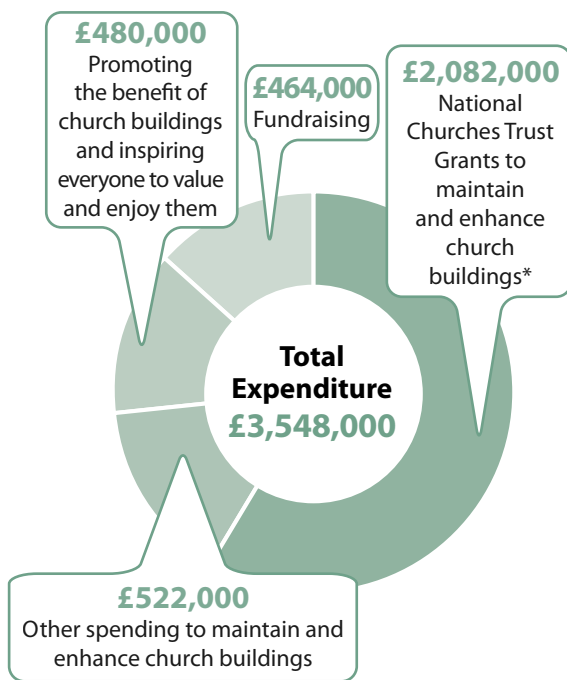
William R Aldwinckle  
 Richard Broyd CBE  
 Peter and Diana Butler  
 Richard Carr-Archer  
 Francis and Kate Ford  
 Catharine Kroon  
 Richard Taylor  
 Lord Antony and Lady Angela Wedgwood

**We are grateful to the many Trusts, Foundations and donors who generously support us, including those listed here, and others who prefer to remain anonymous.**

# Expenditure and income in 2023

## Expenditure in 2023

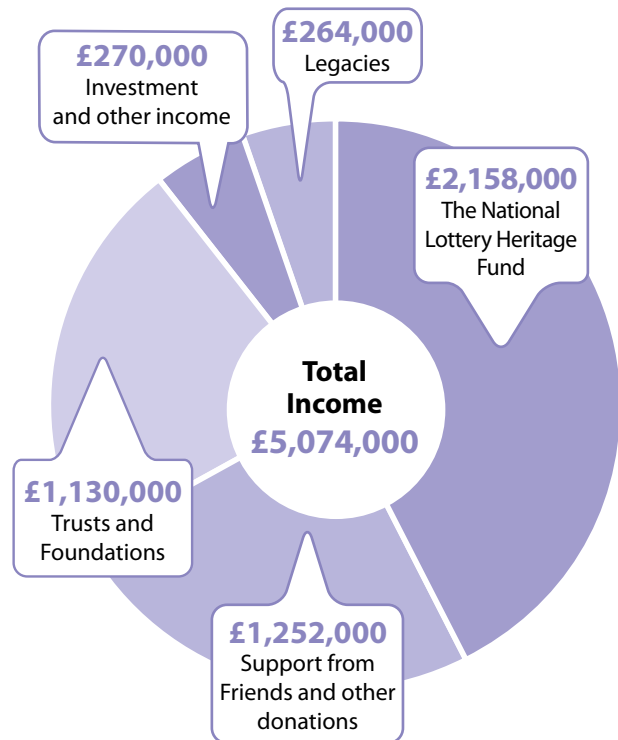
The Trust awarded over £2.2 million in grants in 2023. Non-grant expenditure increased by £264,000, principally as a result of an increase in staff costs, with extra staff recruited for the Cherish project, and additional expenditure on project costs, IT and communications.



\*Grants awarded during 2023 less previous awards not claimed of £134,000. In addition the Trust recommended grants of £60,000 awarded by other charities.

## Where the money came from

Total income before unrealised movements on investments increased by £2,190,000 in 2023 compared to 2022, principally as a result of funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for the Cherish and Treasure Ireland projects.



Unrealised gains on investments amounted to £550,000.

## Financial resources

Excluding endowments, the funds of the National Churches Trust amounted to £5.2 million at the end of 2023. Of this, £1.9 million can be used without restriction on any of the Trust's activities and objectives.

Unrestricted reserves are important as they provide flexibility to maintain activities in the event of fluctuations in income.

The restricted funds of the Trust, totalling £3.3 million, are to be used for the purposes given, for example for the Cherish Project or for churches in specified regions or for particular types of grants.

The Financial Summary above does not comprise the full statutory accounts of the National Churches Trust. Our full Financial Statements for 2023 are available on request. Please email: [info@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:info@nationalchurchestrust.org)

## Help churches with our Christmas cards

By buying a pack of our Christmas Cards, you can show your support for our work helping churches keep their buildings in good order all year round so they can serve their communities and welcome visitors.

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We are grateful for the support of all the members of our Specialist Skills Directory, who are listed below. We also thank members who are supporting the publication of our Annual Review by advertising in this special Specialist Skills Directory advertising section. If you contact them, please do tell them that you saw their advertisement in the National Churches Trust Annual Review.

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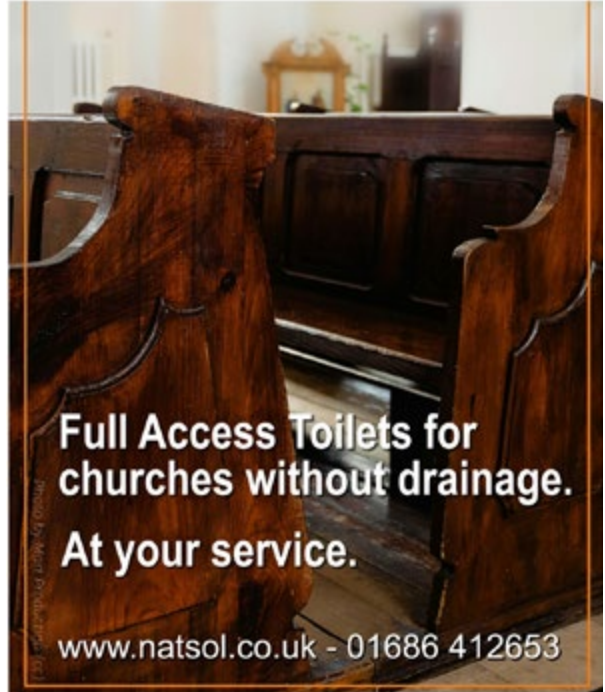


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David Brooke

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Published by The National Churches Trust ©2024  
Company registered in England Registration number 06265201  
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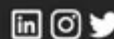
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