

The United Kingdom has some of the most historic and beautiful religious buildings to be found anywhere in the world. At the centre of local communities, churches, chapels and meeting houses provide a home for countless activities such as playgroups, drop-in-centres and musical events, as well as serving their core purpose as places of worship.



For people who love church buildings

The National Churches Trust's income comes from individuals and other trusts and foundations, not from government or church authorities. It is thanks to our Friends and supporters that we are able to help the UK's churches, chapels and meeting houses. To find out how you can help us, please contact info@nationalchurchestrust.org, phone 020 7222 0605 or visit our website at: www.nationalchurchestrust.org

For more information and to download copies of this document, please visit: www.nationalchurchestrust.org/buildingresilience

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Published by the National Churches Trust © 2018
Designed by SO Branding & Communications Ltd
Company registered in England – Registration number 6265201
Registered charity number 1119845



BUILDING RESILIENCE

2019 – 2023



For people who love church buildings



Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic church, Hungerford, Berkshire



All Saint's church, Norbury, London



St Laurence church, Diddington, Cambridgeshire

THE CHALLENGES AND THE OPPORTUNITIES

The National Churches Trust exists to support church buildings from all Christian denominations, of all ages and listing status that are open and accessible across the United Kingdom.

The good news is that today many of the United Kingdom's churches, chapels and meeting houses are in a good state of repair. However, challenges remain.

- There is still a substantial backlog of repairs.
- Historic fabric is not static, requiring churches to continue to prevent or repair ongoing wear and tear.
- Not enough priority is given to maintenance, despite the fact that delaying a small repair or putting off regular maintenance can lead to a big repair bill later.

- Much more can be done to make churches a valuable and valued resource for their local communities.
- There remains huge unrealised potential to engage the support of the wider public by opening up more churches to visitors and telling their stories in new and exciting ways.

Our strategy for 2019 – 2023 is designed to make sure that we continue to support a wide range of church improvements, to make it easier for churches to carry out regular maintenance, and to encourage more people to visit churches.

We will help to ensure the future sustainability of church buildings, provide demonstrable public benefit and support the people who give their time freely to keep the UK's ecclesiastical heritage in good condition for future generations to enjoy.



Luke March
Chairman, National Churches Trust

NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST

2019-2023



The purposes of the National Churches Trust are:

- To help maintain the UK's heritage of church buildings and to enhance their ability to serve local communities.
- To promote the benefit to communities of church buildings and to inspire everyone to value and enjoy them.

The National Churches Trust will focus its work over 2019-2023 on three goals:

Preserving heritage

Promoting sustainability

Inspiring support



The Incorporated Church Building Society
1818 - 2018

The National Churches Trust is a registered charity and is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. The Trust is the successor organisation to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust and the Incorporated Church Building Society, providing the Trust with a 200 year history of supporting the United Kingdom's churches, chapels and meeting houses.

St Catherine's church, Hoarwithy, Herefordshire

GOAL ONE: PRESERVING HERITAGE



St Mary's church, Abbey Dore, Herefordshire

Our work helps congregations and volunteers look after their church buildings and makes it easier to keep them in good condition. We will continue to offer urgent repair grants and grants for new facilities where there is need or demand.

Urgent repair grants and grants for new facilities

We will fund projects where qualified conservation professionals are involved and so ensure that work on the UK's highly valued church heritage is of the highest quality. We will prioritise repair and community projects where the church is committed to ongoing maintenance.

Grants for preventative maintenance and proactive small-scale repairs will be offered to address problems early and to make sure that historic fabric is conserved.

GOAL TWO: PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY



Bath Quaker Meeting House

Sustainability means that churches are at the centre of their community as this encourages a sense of ownership and care from local people and their long term viability.

Our grants will support the new facilities churches need to be community hubs and also, where appropriate, venues for music and the arts, leisure, social action and other activities.

We will focus on supporting active and well-used churches, or churches which have a well-developed plan to enhance their community use and therefore their sustainability.

We will provide systems that make it easier for church volunteers to look after and promote their church buildings, as well as offering training and resources for volunteers and promoting knowledge sharing.

A culture of sustainability

GOAL THREE: INSPIRING SUPPORT



Holy Trinity church, Lenton, Nottinghamshire

Churches are a vital part of the UK's heritage. They deserve to be widely appreciated and valued.

As fewer people now attend church services on a regular basis, it is more important than ever that non-churchgoers hear the message that church buildings are a shared heritage and a community resource open to all.

We will continue to develop our ExploreChurches tourism website in close collaboration with partners in the tourism, heritage and church sectors. Getting more people to value the United Kingdom's heritage of church buildings is a key way of generating support for churches.

Celebrating the riches of churches and chapels

We will vigorously make the case for church buildings and volunteering through imaginative publicity, competitions and campaigns which reach a wide audience, in particular younger people and new supporters.

OUR VALUES

Throughout our work, the staff and trustees of the National Churches Trust will be guided by our core values.

We will be a **catalyst for change**, identifying innovative ideas and opportunities to help churches remain open and to thrive as both sacred and public spaces.

We will be **collaborative** in working with others to find the most appropriate solutions to issues affecting all Christian places of worship in the United Kingdom.

We will strive to **learn and evolve** what we do in response to feedback from our partners, applicants, service users and friends.

We will be **transparent** in all of our work, ensuring that the people who look to us for help have confidence in our ability to be fair and accessible.

We will be **inclusive** in how we work with all Christian denominations and people from all backgrounds across the United Kingdom.

HOW WE WILL DELIVER OUR GOALS

Caring for churches is largely the responsibility of thousands of dedicated, but often overworked, volunteers. Our aim is to offer practical systems and services that help the people who look after church buildings.

Grants, projects and services

Being open for worship and at the heart of communities requires churches to be well looked after, open for prayer and community use, and valued by a wide group of volunteers, users and visitors. To achieve our three goals, the Trust will offer a range of grants, projects and services to the people who look after and enjoy churches.

GRANT PROGRAMMES

Grants will remain a key element of the National Churches Trust's work, with funding available to support repairs, improvements to church facilities, project development and maintenance. Grants will be linked to wider policy goals related to maintenance, sustainability and encouraging churches to be open on a regular basis.

We will award funding to congregations that are committed to opening their churches to the public for at least 100 days per year in addition to worship times.

To aid with transparency and to ensure equal access to our funding across the United Kingdom, the National Churches Trust will simplify its grant programmes and work more collaboratively with other funders.

We will use targeted priorities to ensure that grant funding goes to areas of greatest need, or addresses strategic initiatives identified by the Trust.



St Michael's church, Cwmafan, Wales

We ensure that grant funding goes to areas of greatest need

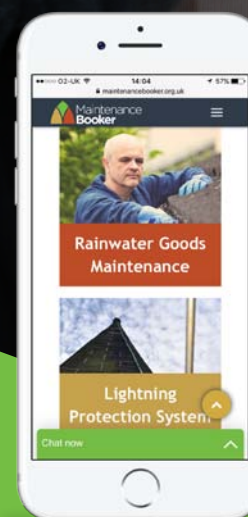


St Peter and St Paul church, Hathern, Leicestershire



MAINTENANCE

Research conducted by English Heritage in 2012 showed that nearly 65% of people responsible for looking after places of worship say that repair and maintenance is a constant or occasional major concern. Maintenance is often not done because those running churches find it hard to identify qualified professionals, or lack knowledge about when regular maintenance works are required.



Supported by:



maintenancebooker.org.uk

Preventative maintenance and proactive repairs

Our MaintenanceBooker web-based service has been developed to make it easier for churchwardens and other volunteers to find qualified contractors and to improve the maintenance of their buildings. It is core to the Trust's strategy of working with churches to help them avoid large structural repair problems through preventative maintenance and proactive repairs.

Set up by the National Churches Trust in partnership with procurement

experts 2buy2, MaintenanceBooker makes it easy for churches to prevent problems such as leaking roofs and crumbling stonework.

Churches register on the system and post jobs against the service areas available. Qualified contractors on framework contracts then bid for the job. The service is available to churches of all denominations, with no administrative costs or registration fees.

Our vision for MaintenanceBooker is for it to be a trusted resource for church and chapel maintenance across the United Kingdom. As the system grows, further services and contractors will be added, along with user-focused information, videos and materials related to maintenance issues.

Delivering our goals



ExploreChurches



Huw Edwards (Vice President, National Churches Trust) with Luke March (Chairman), Claire Walker (CEO) and Archbishop George Stack (Vice President, National Churches Trust) at the launch of 'Sacred Wales – Cymru Sanctaidd' in 2017.

CYMRU SANCTAIDD
SACRED WALES

Historic England



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Historic Religious
Buildings Alliance
a group within the Heritage Alliance

CHURCH TOURISM

The Trust will help congregations to increase visitor numbers by promoting improved church tourism through training, grants to develop tourism resources, and the development of our ExploreChurches website.

Churches are often the most important historic building in a city, town or village.

Yet many are infrequently visited and some are rarely open to visitors or have restricted opening times.

The vision for ExploreChurches is for it to become the central hub for church tourism across the UK. It will be fully integrated with tourism, heritage and church sectors, and the source of information about open and accessible

churches, chapels and meeting houses for visitors and local people.

The history of churches can be best told through vivid storytelling and promotion that captures the attention of tourists and local visitors. We will encourage many more people to visit churches and to see them as a key part of the UK's heritage.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

The Trust will collaborate with partners in all parts of the UK.

The relationship between the National Churches Trust and county and regional churches trusts is an important element of our work, covering a wide range of initiatives including Ride+Stride for Churches and policy co-operation. This network of 35 independent regional organisations offers opportunities to co-ordinate support for churches across the United Kingdom at the most appropriate level, and to share learning and showcase good practice.

churches by identifying and removing duplication of effort and ensuring that resources are allocated where they will achieve the best results.

The Trust will remain a committed member of the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance, the Historic England Places of Worship Forum and the Wales Places of Worship Forum. We will also work closely with colleagues in Scotland and Northern Ireland to develop similar forums to share good practice and information across the UK.

We will pursue new opportunities to collaborate where they arise, including looking outside of the usual church heritage sector. We will also continue to engage with all denominations and encourage cross-denominational approaches to sustainability issues.

Our partnerships will aim to achieve change in the following areas in particular:

- Delivering improvements in conservation and maintenance practice
- Making it easier for churches to apply for funding
- Encouraging collaboration in church tourism
- Influencing government policy

Share learning

Showcase good

practice and

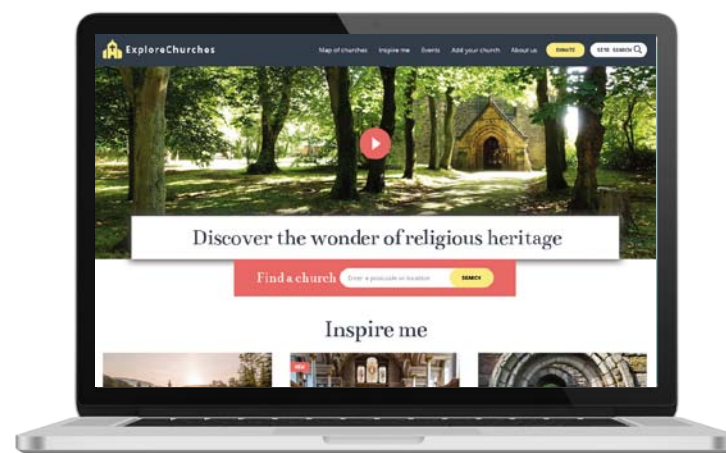
build capacity

The National Churches Trust works in partnership with a number of funding, capacity building and umbrella body organisations. Our partners have similar objectives and provide services that complement ours. The Trust is committed to increasing the efficiency of how the sector supports

ExploreChurches

– the central hub

for church tourism



explorechurches.org.uk



Delivering our goals



© St Mary the Virgin, Alton Barnes, Wiltshire

St Mary the Virgin, Alton Barnes, Wiltshire

**Strong
supporter
relationships**

SUSTAINING THE TRUST

The National Churches Trust will ensure that it operates effectively, maximising the resources devoted to charitable objectives, delivering financial sustainability and maintaining positive relationships with beneficiaries, stakeholders and the public.

Our income comes from individuals, charitable bodies and commercial sponsors, not from government or church authorities. So it is entirely thanks to the help of our generous supporters that we are able to provide grants to places of worship in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, including both listed and unlisted buildings.

Our long-term aim is to increase our fundraised income to allow the Trust to continue to offer grants to churches and support our project work. We will strive to maintain strong relationships with our supporters, enhancing and developing existing and new income streams.



Claire Walker
Chief Executive,
National Churches Trust

Through our growing Friends scheme we will provide more people with an opportunity to join with us in celebrating the architectural and human riches of churches and chapels and build a group of like-minded people who are able to help us champion the cause of church buildings.



Increasing our pool of Friends, donors, legacy gifts and major donors is key to our long-term strength. These supporters also provide significant unrestricted income which enables us to fund the core costs involved in sustaining the charity.

THE NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST 2007-2018

2007



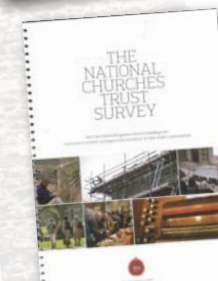
The National Churches Trust created as the UK's church buildings support charity, taking forward the work of the Historic Churches Preservation Trust.

2007-18



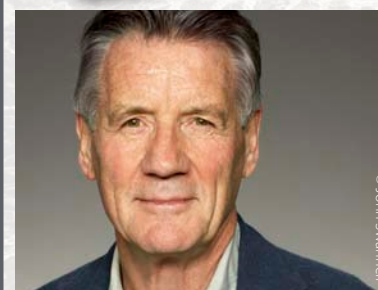
We have provided 1,983 grants worth over £17 million to places of worship in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2011



The National Churches Trust Survey was published, one was the largest exercises of its kind, and establishing the facts about the state of the UK's church buildings.

2013



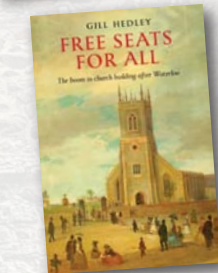
60 leading people from the world of politics, religion, entertainment, journalism and academia, including Michael Palin CBE, chose 'The UK's Favourite Churches'.

2016



'50 Things to do in a Church' celebrated the many and diverse uses of church buildings.

2018



We marked the 200th anniversary of the Incorporated Church Building Society with 'Free Seats for All', a new book charting the history of the ICBS which opened up Anglican worship to all.

2007-2018