Introduction

We highly recommend reading this document before starting the online form.

On the following pages you will find the eligibility criteria, programme outcomes, details of how to apply and what supporting documents you will need, some top tips, as well as the terms and conditions of any successful grant application.

The National Churches Trust supports Christian places of worship throughout the United Kingdom that can demonstrate strong community engagement and sound plans for economic viability. Priority is given to projects that demonstrate well-developed plans for the building, that are supported beyond the congregation, and into the future.

Our small grants programme is made possible through the generous support of the Pilgrim Trust. The aim of this grant programme is to address small problems before they turn into large, expensive repairs. Central to this approach is controlling building deterioration rather than reacting to it. Anticipating and addressing minor failures will help to bring a building back to normal repair at a nominal cost.

If you are still looking for the answer to something when you get to the end, you could also try our FAQ page.

Small grant programme

This programme supports **urgent maintenance works and items identified as high priority** within a recent Quinquennial Inspection Report, building survey or condition report.

Repairs or maintenance should cost no more that **£20,000** excluding VAT. We can offer grants of between **£500 and £5,000**. Our grants will never exceed more than 50% of the cost. Offers are valid for one year.

Find out more and apply **here.**

To continue an application you have already started please click here to access the application site.

Correct as of 3 August 2023.

Please ensure you check our website regularly. Grant programme information may be tweaked over time, please check our website for latest information.

Pilgrim Trust

NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST

Eligibility

Applicants must meet all the eligibility criteria. We consider each application alongside a range of scoring criteria and against other applications at the time of applying.

☐ Congregations can be of any Christian denomination and the building can be listed or unlisted.

☐ The building must be a **Christian place of worship (but not a cathedral)** located within England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands

☐ The building must originally have been constructed as a place of worship and must be no less than 30 years old.

☐ We do not fund works to converted buildings, church halls, or privately-owned churches - such as chapels within hospitals, hospices, schools, prisons and similar institutions.

☐ The proposed works must be to the **main church building** or an extension of it.

☐ Applicants must be the owners or have the right to carry out the work. If the church is not part of a main denomination, or registered with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, it must be a **registered charity**. Any place of worship whose annual income exceeds £100,000 must be registered with the Charity Commission.

☐ Buildings must be **open for regular public worship** for a minimum of six services per year. Buildings that have been closed to the public must have plans to reopen for regular worship and public access and a congregation waiting to use the building on completion of the works.

☐ Buildings must be open to the public for at least **100 days per year** in addition to worship times, or within a year of project completion. Tell us if you will need to have special arrangements in order to meet this requirement, such as keyholder details on display. Priority will be given to those with regular opening hours.

☐ Projects should be led, overseen and supervised by a suitably qualified professional, usually a professionally qualified architect (listed on the Register of Architects) or a chartered building surveyor (MRICS or FRICS). Where the building is listed, the professional **should** have **conservation accreditation** from one of the following conservation accreditation schemes at the stated level:
   o The Register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation (AABC) listed at category 'A'.
   o Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) listed as 'Specialist Conservation Architect'.
   o The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) listed as 'Advanced'.
   o The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) listed as 'Grade I'
   o Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) listed as 'Conservation Accreditation'
   o Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) listed as 'Accredited Conservationist'.

☐ **Work must not have started** before the online application is submitted but must be achievable within 1 year of the grant decision being made.

☐ You must have secured at least **50%** of the funding for the project you are applying to us for before you submit your application to us (please contact us if you need fundraising advice).

☐ All necessary **permissions** must be in place before you apply to us. This could include permits from your governing body i.e. Faculty signed off by the Chancellor, List B Archdeacon's consent (most common consent for maintenance applications at Anglican churches), Property Consent, Listed Building Advisory Committee authorisation or a Trustee minute. If consent is not required we would still like to see a PCC minute noting the work and the Committee's approval.

☐ **2 quotes** must be in place.

☐ Applications must be received before the deadline and include all documentation requested. **Any documentation not supplied online must be received within 5 working days** or we reserve the right to reject the application.

In order to establish eligibility for the programme, you will be asked a series of questions at the start of any new application to us, reflecting the statements above. Please answer these honestly. Submitting an application that does not meet one of the criteria is likely to result in a rejected application.

What we fund

As a guide, the following projects would be eligible for funding under the **Small Grant** programme. The list is indicative; many other repairs could be eligible.

- Addressing high level access issues to allow regular inspection and maintenance of roofs and rainwater goods;
- Introducing improvements to rainwater removal systems above and below ground;
- Removing inappropriate vegetation from buildings;
- Replacing lost, damaged or slipped roof tiles;
- Removing pest infestations and fitting preventative measures;
- Repairing flashings, masonry, floor tiles etc.;
- Electrical work to correct faults which present a significant risk to the building.

In addition, if you know that there is an issue within your church but you are unsure what the cause of the issue is, then a Small Grant could help fund small investigative works and/or surveys to help plan the way forward.

What we cannot fund

- Repairs to, or scheduled maintenance of boilers, clocks, organs, wall paintings, bells, monuments, fittings and fixtures and solar panels;
- Heating, lighting, and AV;
- Works to boundary walls, paths, churchyards, churchyard monuments or car parks;
- Stained glass restoration (unless urgent repairs to window surrounds or lead cames, or the building is no longer watertight);
- Regular inspection surveys, Quinquennial Inspection Reports, consents, planning permission fees;
- Existing staff costs;
- Training in maintenance skills/knowledge;
- Redecoration;
- Replacement of historic fabric with new materials unless supported by your statutory heritage body e.g. Historic England.

What we will prioritise

- Work to architecturally and historically significant buildings;
- <u>Urgent</u>/essential structural repair projects as evidenced in a recent QIR, building survey or condition report;
- Places of worship that can demonstrate a suitable maintenance system is in place, including maintenance plan, to protect your building and our investment;
- Places of worship with regular opening hours;
- Places of worship that can demonstrate strong community engagement and sound plans for economic viability.

Although not listed as distinct priorities, it is important to us to continue to attract more applications from non-Anglican denominations and to ensure our funding has geographic spread. This can play into our grant making decisions.

Programme outcomes

We want to see churches open and in regular use, available to all. In order to ensure our funding is focused to achieve the greatest impact, and that we are meeting our two key goals outlined in our current strategy, applicants should demonstrate how their project will address these. We also ask about environmental sustainability and community and social outcomes. We recognise that Small grant applicants will have less to write than our Large grant applicants.

➢ Church buildings being well maintained, adaptable and in good repair
  o *E.g. avoid costly major repairs, removed from at risk register, watertight for another 100 years, improved maintenance access, improved maintenance plan etc.*
➢ Church buildings being sustainable, open and welcoming
  o *E.g. work will ensure regular worship and activities can continue; work will allow us to open the door to visitors; work will enable more users to access the building, address local demand or gaps in service, changes will diversify income, changes will open opportunities to welcome more and/or different people, changes will engage with more volunteers, form new partnerships etc.*

Scoring criteria

➢ **Heritage** – the architectural significance of the building.
➢ **Need** – the problem that needs addressing - urgency of the project due to condition or limitations, and the need for our funds; financial need as demonstrated by accounts; Index of Multiple Deprivation; funding shortfall.
➢ **Case for investment** – what is the case for our funding right <u>now</u>, in this round? Whether the project is ready to start; if there is a pending funding deadline or an existing grant about to expire; potential for the community to raise funds on the basis of its size and other funding needs in the area; if the building is identified as being at risk; partnerships or other significant projects in the area; opening times.
➢ **Risk management & project planning** – the level of planning undertaken e.g. tenders/quotes received, funds in place, maintenance plan in place, suitably qualified professional leading the project if relevant; Annual maintenance spend; realistic time frames; financial condition of the church (sustainability risk).
➢ **Heritage & community impact** – how the application meets the required programme outcomes to show improvement and benefit.

Using our application portal

The online application form can be accessed here. The first time you use the site you will need to 'Register' – when you next access the site, you will go to 'Login'.

When you register a validation email will be sent to your inbox. Check your junk mail if it doesn't arrive. It may take a few minutes.

When you access the site you enter a dashboard. Select 'Apply' at the top of the screen, then 'Start a New Application'. Then select 'New Application' under Small Grants.
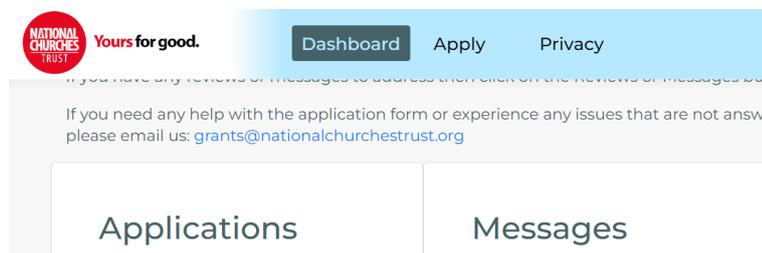
You will first need to answer the eligibility quiz. If you pass you will proceed to the Application Form via a Privacy Statement. If you fail you will be sent back to the start of the quiz.

The online application form

Click on each of the sections to access the questions. When you click on the next section the form will automatically save. Try to answer as much as you can.

You may wish to work on the form over a number of sittings. When you re-enter the portal you will need to select 'Continue this application'.

Mandatory questions are marked with a red star. Help text is available where there is a blue question mark.
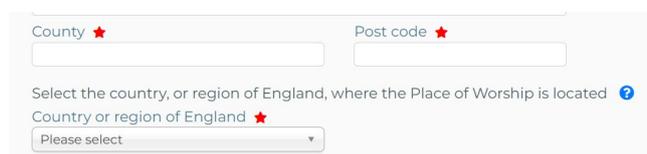
There are a number of uploads required throughout the application – you will need these available to upload when prompted, preferably as PDFs – if you don't have these available please send them to us via the 'Messages' section in your portal within the next 5 working days, or email us at grants@nationalchurchestrust.org:

➢ **Accounts** – A copy of your most recent set of audited, signed or independently examined, annual accounts to help us understand your financial situation. These should include the independent

examiner's report. If the income exceeds £100,000 you will need to be registered with the Charity Commission, or provide evidence that you are in the process of registering.

➢ **1 external image and some more of the issue** – A separate exterior image, and some more just of the main issue, in jpeg or pdf format of up to 10MB. We will use these in the assessment papers for our Grants Committee and, if the application is successful, for publicity purposes. Please ensure you have permissions to use the images in place before sending them to us, and make it clear if any credits are required.

➢ **Maintenance plan** - Regular maintenance is one of our top priorities, so we ask for a copy of your annual maintenance plan and, if you haven't already got one in place, grant recipients will be required to produce one as a condition of an award and before payment will be released. Maintenance plans are an annual timetable of regular steps to keep the building and grounds in good order. We have templates for you to edit, and advice and resources on our website here.

➢ **Permissions** – A copy of the permission from the governing body i.e. Faculty signed off by the Chancellor, List B Archdeacon's consent (most common consent for maintenance applications at Anglican churches), Property Consent, Listed Building Advisory Committee authorisation or a Trustee minute. If consent is not required we would still like to see a PCC minute noting the work and the Committee's approval.

➢ **Quinquennial Inspection or Building Survey or Condition Report** – A recent QIR or building survey report that clearly highlights the issues that require attention and their urgency.

➢ **2 Quotes** – applicants must provide **at least two** competitive tenders or quotes for the work they are applying for (identifying the preferred quote).

➢ **Architect/surveyor letter –** we would like to see a letter of support from a qualified professional architect or surveyor that confirms the need for the work being done and shows approval of the solution outlined in the preferred quote.

➢ **Additional information** – anything further you would like to attach e.g. leaflets, activity plan etc.

Once you have completed the form – review what you have entered (you can edit anything you need)
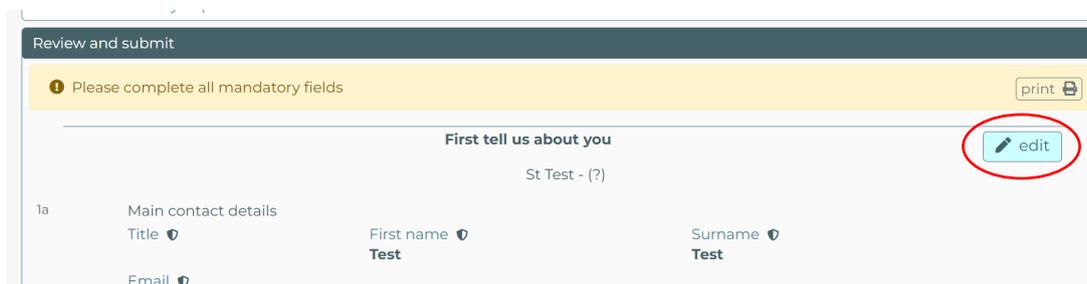
Any fields not yet completed will be marked 'Required'. You will need to select 'Edit' and complete the missing fields, then return to the Review panel.

Once all required information has been provided a tickbox will appear at the top of the panel to check that you understand our privacy policy. You can then press 'Submit'.

You will receive an automatic email and a message inside your application portal under 'Messages'. The current status will show when you select the application in your dashboard, under 'Progress'.

Once you have completed the form your progress will show like this:
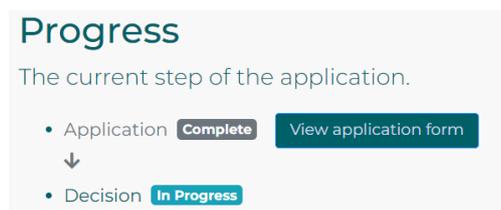
Tips on using the online application forms

Printing. If you select the 'Submit and Review' tab – a printer icon in the top right corner will appear. Select this to either print, or save as a PDF.
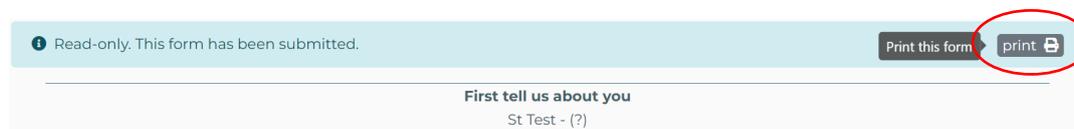
Web links. Not all web addresses are hyperlinks. You may have to copy and paste links into a web browser.

Questions marked with a red star * are mandatory and all applicants must complete these. If you have nothing to enter write 'none' or 'NA'. Mandatory questions must be completed in order to proceed to the next pages. We encourage applicants to answer as many of the questions as possible. If you have no information to enter into a box, and it is not mandatory, you can leave it blank and continue to the next question.

Character and word counts – these will either be stated by the box or appear as you start writing.
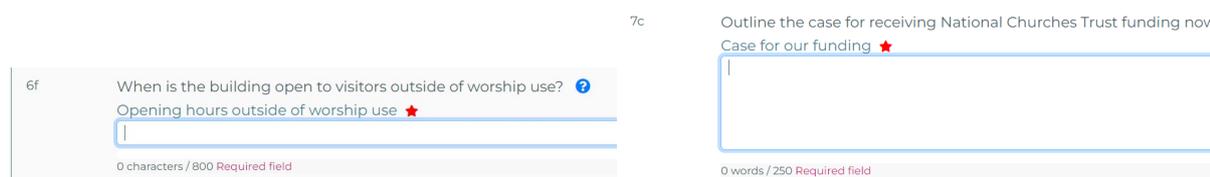
File uploads – the maximum file size for a single upload is 10MB. If you are having difficulty uploading files please try removing spaces and punctuation from the file name.

Second attempt applications - If you are submitting a new application having previously been refused, please assume the case is being assessed for the first time and resubmit all the information we require ensuring it is up to date as we cannot guarantee that the same staff member will review the application. Also please be sure to address any feedback sent in any previous refusal letter. Failure to do so is likely to result in another unsuccessful outcome. We cannot guarantee that any reapplication will be successful and would only expect to receive a reapplication if a change has been made (such as a change to the project cost, income or proposal), or you have been encouraged to do so.

Tables – It is very important that the project cost and income tables are completed. We will not be able to assess your application without this information. For project costs, click 'Edit' on the line and enter a short description if required, the cost and the VAT, then click 'Save', and move onto the next line. For project income, click the plus button, complete the details in the same way, then click Save. For more tips on completing the tables, please see 'Completing the Project Cost and Project Income Tables' below.

Project costs	Description		Cost	Total	
Project costs: Professional fees		Description:			
Cost:		VAT:			
				Save Cancel	
Repair and conservation work			0.00	Edit	⋯
Contingency			0.00	Edit	⋯
Inflation			0.00	Edit	⋯
			0.00	0.00	

+

Income stream	Description		Unsecured funds	Secured funds
Income stream:		Description:		
Unsecured funds		Secured funds		
				Save Cancel
			10,000.00	Edit Delete

Question tips

2c: Country/Region: Please select the country, or region of England, that the place of worship is located in. For places of worship in England please follow the following system:

- ➢ EAST MIDLANDS: Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland
- ➢ EAST: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk
- ➢ LONDON
- ➢ NORTH EAST: Durham, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear
- ➢ NORTH WEST: Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside
- ➢ SOUTH EAST: Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey, Sussex
- ➢ SOUTH WEST: Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Isles of Scilly, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire
- ➢ WEST MIDLANDS: Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire
- ➢ YORKSHIRE

3a: The listing grades in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland are as follows:

- ➢ England: I / II* / II Check here: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/
- ➢ Wales: I / II* / II Check here: https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support?lang=en
- ➢ Northern Ireland: A / B+ / B / B1 / B2 Check here: www.communities-ni.gov.uk/services/buildings-database
- ➢ Scotland: A / B / C   Check here: www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/search-for-a-listed-building/

6a: Projects should be led by a suitably qualified professional: a professionally qualified architect (listed on the [Architects Register](#)), or a chartered building surveyor (MRICS or FRICS). Where the building is listed, the professional should also belong to one of these conservation accreditation schemes:

> ➤ [The Register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation](#) (AABC) listed at category 'A'.
> ➤ [Royal Institute of British Architects](#) (RIBA) listed as 'Specialist Conservation Architect'.
> ➤ [The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland](#) (RIAS) listed as 'Advanced'.
> ➤ [The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland](#) (RIAI) listed as 'Grade I'
> ➤ [Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors](#) (RICS) listed as 'Conservation Accreditation'
> ➤ [Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists](#) (CIAT) listed as 'Accredited Conservationist'.

4g: Explain what is the problem that needs addressing - does it have to be done? What is the urgency of the project alongside the need for our funds? Also, the financial need which may be demonstrated by the accounts and lack of unrestricted reserves. We will review the Index of Multiple Deprivation for the area - explain what impact the scale of deprivation has on fundraising capacity and why you still need our limited funds.

5l: What is the case for our funding this project right now? Whether the project is ready to start with permissions in place and this is the final bit of funding required; if there is a pending funding deadline or an existing grant about to expire; what the potential is for the community to raise funds on the basis of its size and other funding needs in the area / if other bodies are fundraising locally; if the building is identified as being at risk; if there are local partnership arrangements, or other significant projects in the area.

Completing the Project Cost and Project Income Tables

Project Cost Table
The project cost table should show the total cost of your project, broken down into the categories listed. Please include the total costs for the project or phase, even if some elements are not eligible for our funding.

Tips:
- Please enter whole numbers with no punctuation (the system will automatically add commas to large numbers).
- The 'cost' column should contain the cost excluding VAT.
- The VAT column should contain the VAT you expect to pay. Please do not enter the rate of VAT or the cost including VAT in this column. Please enter VAT even if you expect to claim it back.
- The 'Total incl. VAT' column will automatically populate with the sum of the Cost + VAT columns
- Please ensure that you include a contingency allowance within your budget
- The 'Other' row can be used for any costs that do not fit with the other rows. Please do not use this row for VAT.
- Please note that on smaller screens some columns may not appear. You can either zoom out to see all columns, or click on the three dots to the right of the row to see what you have entered in any columns that do not appear.

For example, a completed table might look like this:

Project costs	Description	Cost	Total	
Professional fees	Architects fees	1,000.00	1,200.00	Edit ⋯
VAT: 200.00				
Repair and conservation work	Roof repairs	10,000.00	12,000.00	Edit ⋯
Contingency	10% of repair costs	1,000.00	1,200.00	Edit ⋯
Inflation	5%	500.00	600.00	Edit ⋯
		12,500.00	**15,000.00**	

Project Income

The project income table should show the fundraising that has already been carried out for the project. Click the + button in the top right to add a new line. Add as many lines as required.

Tips:

- Please enter whole numbers with no punctuation (the system will automatically add commas to large numbers).
- Unsecured funds are funds which are not yet confirmed, such as pledged donations or grant applications which are pending a decision.
- Secured funds are funds which are confirmed, such as donations that have been received or grants for which you have received an offer letter.
- If you intend to commit funding from reserves it should be listed in the table.
- If the building is listed, include what you expect to apply for from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS) – this is likely to be all of the VAT incurred on the project.
- The Income Stream column should contain a headline description of the funding source – for example 'Grant' or 'Local Fundraising'.
- The description column can be used to add detail, such as the name of the grant funder, although please keep this brief. If some funds are allocated to specific elements of the project this information can be entered here.
- Please note that on some screens the 'Secured funds' column may not appear. You can either zoom out to see all four columns, or click on the three dots to the right of the row to see what you have entered in any fields that do not appear

For example, the table could look like this:

Income stream	Description	Unsecured funds	
Local fundraising			Edit Delete ⋯
Secured funds: 10,000.00			
Grant	Local Landfill grant		Edit Delete ⋯
Grant	Essex Churches Trust	10,000.00	Edit Delete ⋯
LPWGS	VAT reclaim	48,000.00	Edit Delete ⋯

Additional funding

On occasion we may be able to help you secure additional funding from other funders who we partner with and who, from time to time, invite us to make recommendations to them. To be considered, be sure to indicate interest in question 8b of the form.

What happens next?

Deadlines will be bi-monthly throughout the year. Places of worship are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

Your application will be assessed by officers against our priorities, scoring criteria and impacts, and against other applicants in the round. We may request further information via the Messaging service inside your application portal – we recommend checking back regularly, although you should receive an email alert if you are sent a message.

Providing all documents have been submitted, applicants can expect to be notified of a decision by email within 2 months. Grant offers are valid for 12 months. Recipients will need to return a signed acceptance form within 60 days. The latest conditions of the grant will be laid out in the offer documents. These are likely to include:

1. Compile a maintenance plan if one is not already in place by point of payment;
2. Submit details for free to the Explore section of our website;
3. Open for at least 100 days a year beyond worship;
4. Acknowledge the National Churches Trust grant in printed materials and on a website, and help publicise the award, for instance on social media;
5. If the place of worship is closed for worship within 10 years of receiving payment of a grant award, report this to the National Churches Trust without delay. We may request full or partial repayment of the grant;
6. Claim the grant within 1 year of the decision date.

Payment claims

This will be outlined in the offer letter in terms of process and what supporting information we require. It will include returning a payment claim form with information about the project and its impact and will need to be supported by invoices and copies of any reports produced with the help of our grant. If on receipt of invoices, costs have reduced, we will reduce our grant offer to 50% of costs incurred, excluding VAT.

Church membership

We have recently launched our new Church Member and Church Member+ schemes. Members can access a range of benefits, including a page on our website. If you receive a grant from us your church will receive Church Member+ membership FREE for one year. If you are already a member, we will extend the term of your current membership by one year. You can find more details about our church membership here. Our website features over 4000 churches. If you receive a grant from us we will require you to submit an entry for your church to enable us to promote your open days as part of our explore churches pages. If you'd like to submit your church now you can do so here.

Final comments

If you have any additional questions please visit the [FAQs page](#) of our website or contact the Church Engagement Team via email: grants@nationalchurchestrust.org or telephone: 020 7222 0605.

In the meantime we encourage you to look at other sources of funding, useful information can be found on our [website](#).

You can stay in touch by signing up to receive [our monthly e-newsletter](#). You can also subscribe as a [Friend](#).