



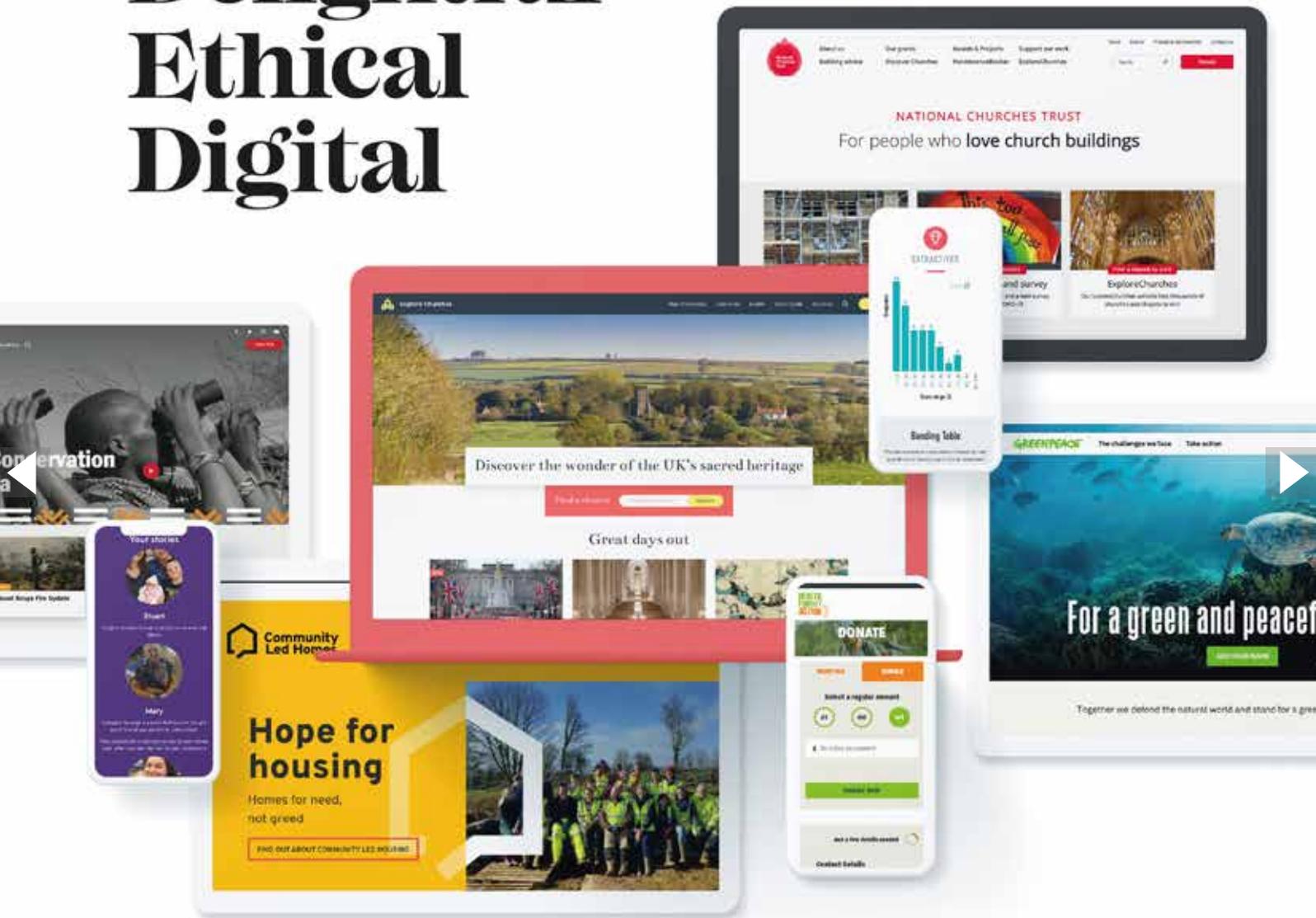
ANNUAL REVIEW

2019-2020



For people who love church buildings

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Cover photos: (left to right) The decorated vaulted ceiling of Tewkesbury Abbey, England © Martin Bache / Alamy Stock Photo, Stonework being repaired using lime mortar at St Mary's church, Long Crendon, St Mary's church, Horncastle, Lincolnshire, Huw Edwards, Bill Bryson, Michael Palin, and Joe Stigoe at the National Churches Trust's 2019 Carol Concert at St James's church, Piccadilly © Andy Sillett

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Published by The National Churches Trust ©2020 Company registered in England Registration number 06265201 Registered charity number 1119845

Chairman's message



As I write this introduction to the National Churches Trust's Annual Review, the UK's churches and chapels are starting to reopen after the coronavirus lockdown. However, the impact of the coronavirus on churches has been significant.

Although digital technology has allowed some aspects of church life to continue, and new forms of worship, attracting new people, have been very successful, for most the digital is no substitute for a real, physical church building.

This was made clear in our 'State of the Churches' survey, which we carried out in May 2020. This showed that over two thirds of churches (75%) said that the closing of their church during lockdown had a negative effect on the community and that 64% of respondents thought that churches will become more important in the future as a result of COVID-19.

During these difficult times, our staff and Trustees have been able to play an active role in providing help and advice to the clergy, volunteers and staff who look after church buildings. This has included continuing to provide grants and expanding our digital support for churches through our websites, online training, virtual events and on social media.

Churches at risk

In 2019, the poor condition of many historic church buildings remained a source of great concern to the Trust. Historic England's latest 'Heritage at Risk Register' included over 900 listed places of worship and there are many more in a parlous state in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

With increasing competition for funding from other heritage bodies, demand for the National Churches Trust's grants was high. Last year, we received 515 applications across all our grant programmes.

I am pleased to say that, thanks to the generosity of our supporters and funders, in 2019 we made and also recommended 188 awards to churches and chapels throughout the UK, totalling £1,344,474. That is 6% higher than in 2018.

Towards the end of last year the Trust received a major vote of confidence when the Wolfson Foundation agreed to transfer the administration of the Wolfson Grants for Fabric Repairs to us, with the full support of the Church of England, the previous distributors. The Wolfson Foundation typically provides annual funding of £400,000 for listed churches throughout the UK.

My thanks to all those at the Church of England and the Wolfson Foundation who worked with us on this major transition.

I very much hope that further collaboration between more funders will make it easier for churches to apply for grants and remove duplication of effort and paperwork.

The value of churches

With national heritage bodies and charitable trusts and foundations facing increasing demands for funding, it is more important than ever for the National Churches Trust and our church heritage partners to be able to demonstrate, by using quantifiable measures, the value of churches to local people and to the nation.

Making the case in this way is important for Government when it determines the allocation of exchequer funds, and also for charitable trusts and foundations when they decide which charities they wish to support with their inevitably limited resources.

That is why, in 2020, a critical area of our work has been a major study into the economic and social value of churches. We will publish the results of this study, 'The House of Good', in October 2020. It will provide a range of robust evidence which will help us to make the case and secure future funding for church buildings from as wide a range of sources as possible.

Building Resilience

In this Annual Review, we highlight key areas of work which the Trust has prioritised during 2019, the first full year of our new five year strategy, 'Building Resilience'.

These include 'Experiencing Sacred Wales', a major project to make historic churches and chapels a key part of Wales' tourism offer and in Northern Ireland, 'Treasure Ireland', a new project to help keep churches and chapels in good condition.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the production of this Annual Review, especially our writers and all those who have helped us in other ways. A special thank you to all the organisations who have taken out advertisements in this year's issue. They range from website designers to clerical outfitters and include many companies who can help with securing the future of church buildings.

Without the help of our Friends and supporters, our work would not be possible. In addition to the many volunteers looking after church buildings across the UK, I also pay particular thanks to my fellow trustees and our small team who have continued to support and develop our mission during 2019 and into 2020.

Luke March
August 2020

After COVID-19: who pays for churches?

by Catherine Pepinster



Catherine Pepinster is a writer and broadcaster. She was the editor of the Catholic weekly, *The Tablet*, for 13 years. She is a Trustee of the National Churches Trust.

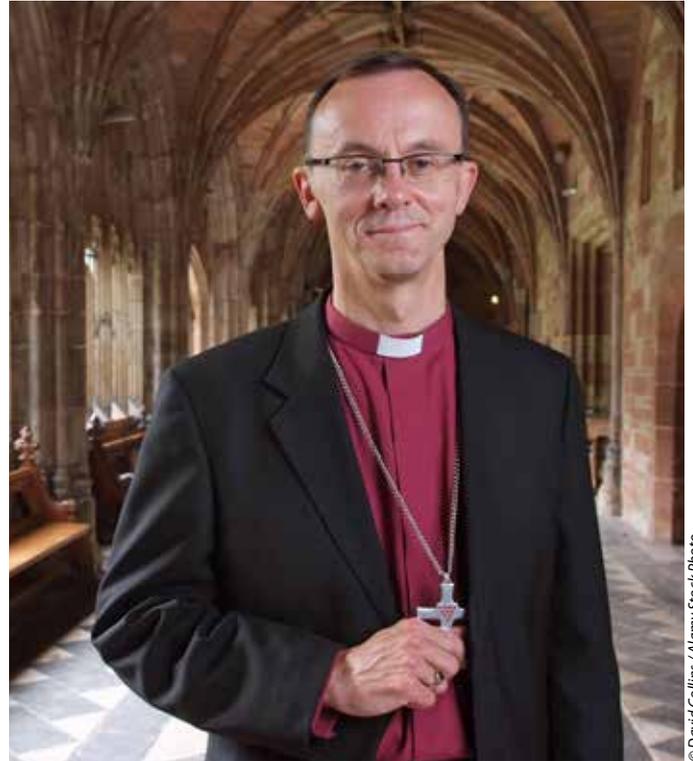
It could be described as the perfect storm: the moment when financial support for church buildings plummeted just as people were in need more than ever of spiritual sustenance and the care provided by church organisations.

On 23 March 2020, church buildings, like the rest of the country, went into lockdown ordered by the Government in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The result was catastrophic for church bank balances. There was a lack of income from church service collections, from rentals of buildings, from events, from donations by visitors. They were all wiped out.

Regular maintenance work, necessary to keep buildings in good repair, was put on hold as were major refurbishment projects. With the Church of England banning everyone, including its priests, from the premises, and other denominations only allowing clergy in, unless working on their own, craftsmen and women could not get over the threshold. And with 45% of Grade I listed buildings being the responsibility of the Church of England, the consequence for the country's architectural heritage will be profound.

Now churches are having to rethink their usual financial models and how they will preserve their buildings in future. For example, the financial bedrock of the church has historically been parish members. Their donations via the collection plate have been essential. But that money can no longer be guaranteed in a post-COVID-19 world when many people have discovered digital church services and look like sticking to them, especially those who remain physically vulnerable.

But physical church still matters. As the Rt Revd Dr John Inge, the Bishop of Worcester put it, "Churches need to be there in the future to be focal points of community in times of need. They are there to symbolise the Christian faith but they matter to the whole community."



The Right Reverend Dr John Inge, Bishop of Worcester

"They are memory palaces for everybody," he said. "These buildings are everybody's heritage, the jewel in our country's heritage crown."

Paying for major repairs

The problem is that the running costs of a church building are being funded by a small group of people – the active members of the parish, and that group is declining in number as physical church attendance falls. Even if parishes persuade more congregants to pay by regular standing order it will still not be enough to pay for the day to day upkeep of churches, especially the most historic. The problem is much worse when major repairs have to be carried out or new facilities such as kitchens and toilets installed, the funding of which is way beyond what most congregations can pay for themselves.

With no central funding of church repairs from denominations including the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church, to bridge the gap, places of worship have to fundraise and find the money needed from external sources. In recent years this has become more difficult as schemes such as the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund have come to an end and as the National Lottery



Saturday Singers at Edale Methodist Chapel, led by folk singer Bella Hardy

© Kate Chappell

Heritage Fund has ended ring fenced funding for church buildings. Funding is still available from a range of trusts, including the National Churches Trust, but many of these have limited resources.

Restoring Selby Abbey

An example of the responsibility that some congregations face is that of Selby Abbey in North Yorkshire. The former monastic church is more than 900 years old and the Selby Abbey Trust was set up to raise money to preserve the church and its fabric. After raising £7 million in the last 20 years towards its restoration, the Trust then sought

to raise another £3 million for repair of the roof and gutters which were letting in water that was damaging stonework. Phase one of the roof project was to raise £950,000 for repairing the south side of the church roof, with the final £25,000 tranche coming from the National Churches Trust.

Appeal director Brigadier Jeremy Gaskell, who helped organise the fundraising, said: "These sums of money are a huge responsibility for any congregation. We need £140,000 just for the usual upkeep of the church so raising any more has required the work of the Trust."

Lockdown has made it extremely difficult. “We don’t have any regular income”, said Brigadier Gaskell, “and fundraising events are now impossible. But we still need to complete the work on the roof to stop water seeping into the nave.”



© Robert Culkin / Alamy Stock Photo

Selby Abbey

Smaller projects are affected too. At Sts Peter and Paul, in Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, a rolling programme of restoring the external stonework was underway before lockdown but after spending the initial £10,000 the parish has had to stall the next works because it has had a shortfall of £20,000 since lockdown.

Its vicar, the Revd Rosie Harper, explained: “The deficit is largely fundraising, lettings and occasional offices rather than a big fall in giving. It is impossible to know as yet how well relationships with the local community will stand up. For rural parishes, the support of everyone is needed to keep afloat, not just the really keen folk. Church members tend to fund the running costs and the locals support capital building needs. We are all hoping that the affection that people have for the church building at the heart of their community will prove strong enough when things get really tough financially for everyone.”

When parishes fund running costs, they not only have to look after their own finances but also contribute to those of the diocese, through the system known as parish share. A similar system exists in the Roman Catholic Church where parishes contribute to diocesan costs. But with the collection plate down because of lockdown, a parish will be incredibly stretched if they have to contribute to diocesan costs. If they are to still take their responsibilities to their own buildings seriously, they may need an understanding diocese to discount parish share.

While one solution might be to cut the money going out of parish coffers, the other challenge is to find new ways of getting more money coming in. And that means looking at various schemes that might be a solution to cash strapped parishes.

One body that responded quickly to COVID-19 is the National Lottery Heritage Fund which closed previous programmes and set up a £50 million emergency fund. However, according to the Church of England’s submission to the Department of Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS)’s Select Committee on the impact of COVID-19, “due to tightly drawn eligibility criteria, many have found themselves unable to access it” and “a continuing lack of large-scale capital grant funding for repair and restoration is likely to have long-term repercussions for our ability to keep church and cathedral buildings open.”

Church buildings need help

Despite the 2015 Church Buildings Review Group, chaired by Bishop Inge, calling on the government to find more money to support church buildings, and the DCMS commissioned Taylor Report of 2017 recommending such a capital fund, it has still not been forthcoming.

According to Bishop Inge, “I argued very strongly that there should be more support but we were told there was no more money. Yet now the Government is throwing money at the public after COVID-19 to help restaurants, pubs and others. We need help for the renewal of churches.”

One way in which churches could be helped post-COVID-19 is for the Government to extend the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. It gives grants that cover the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings in use as places of worship. Since its inception it has paid out £296m and been used to benefit over 13,000 buildings. But it is supposed to end in 2021. Luke March, Chair of the National Churches Trust, has called on faith minister Lord Greenhalgh to consider its extension for the remainder of this parliament until March 2025.



© Keith Blundy

The Revd Miranda Threlfall-Holmes, team rector of St Luke in the City team parish in Liverpool

Backlog of repairs

Meanwhile parishes will be trying to find ways to keep their buildings going. The Revd Miranda Threlfall-Holmes, team rector of St Luke in the City team parish in Liverpool, is responsible for three churches. St Dunstan’s is a large Victorian church, St Bride’s is a large Georgian, and St Michael in the City is a Sixties building. When lockdown began she was deeply anxious about how the parish – a mix of affluent and poor – was going to cope, as collection income disappeared and so did rent from groups using their buildings. Since then the parish has signed up to the Give A Little online platform and even though services are still streamed online and the doors stay closed, income thanks to the platform has risen.

“When people come to church, they dig in their pocket and pull out a fiver,” she said, “but when they have a button to press at home, it seems to make them more generous. We’ve people giving who don’t come to church, but for them it matters. It really helps.”

But coping with the backlog of repairs is going to be very tough. "This is what we will most struggle with. Lockdown has brought to the fore how we can deal with all these buildings. It's really hard to know what to do. All the churches play their role in the community but the real issue is can we sustain them all?"

With gutters, a floor and drains all needing urgent attention, Revd Threlfall-Holmes would like dioceses to help parishes like hers to create diocesan maintenance contracts and use some parish share money to deal with annual checks and maintenance, easing not only finances but responsibilities for vicars, and their volunteers.

What she remains committed to is the work that the churches do in the centre of Liverpool, providing not only a spiritual centre but resources for other vital organisations such as food banks. "We are used by services that are vital and have nowhere else to go," she says.

The importance of city centre churches in the post-COVID-19 era is matched by rural ones. The Edale Methodist Chapel, nestled beneath Kinder Scout and tucked away at the end of the Peak District's Hope Valley, has been recently renovated with brickwork repaired, and water, heating, toilets and a kitchen installed, partly funded by an £8,000 National Churches Trust grant.

Emerging from the lockdown

The atmospheric Georgian building, erected in 1811, serves not only the neighbourhood but also people out walking, seeking respite from nearby Sheffield and Manchester. Two years ago there were six services a year but they have since doubled in number to one a month and continued via Zoom in lockdown. With £144,000 raised so far for renovation and another £32,000 left to find, the chapel congregation is committed to keeping it open.

For just when fundraising became more difficult during lockdown, the need for the chapel grew. Kate Burnett, renovation co-ordinator, has noticed Edale become busier as people have emerged from the strict lockdown.

"We want Edale Chapel to be able to be hospitable again, play its part in our wonderful Peak Circuit of chapels and to offer a very practical warm welcome to all who visit. In these difficult COVID-19 times people need special places to drop into, spend structured or informal, shared or private time, to rest, celebrate and maybe mourn," she said.

As a theatre designer, Burnett has been very struck by a church space being a situation full of possibilities, just as a theatre space is. "We need spaces for possibilities, for people to wonder in, rest in, even just to have the courage to step into."

But those spaces and those possibilities need financial support more than ever which is why all eyes will be on the Treasury's Comprehensive Spending Review this autumn to see whether there are any plans to help churches further when they need it most.

The House of Good

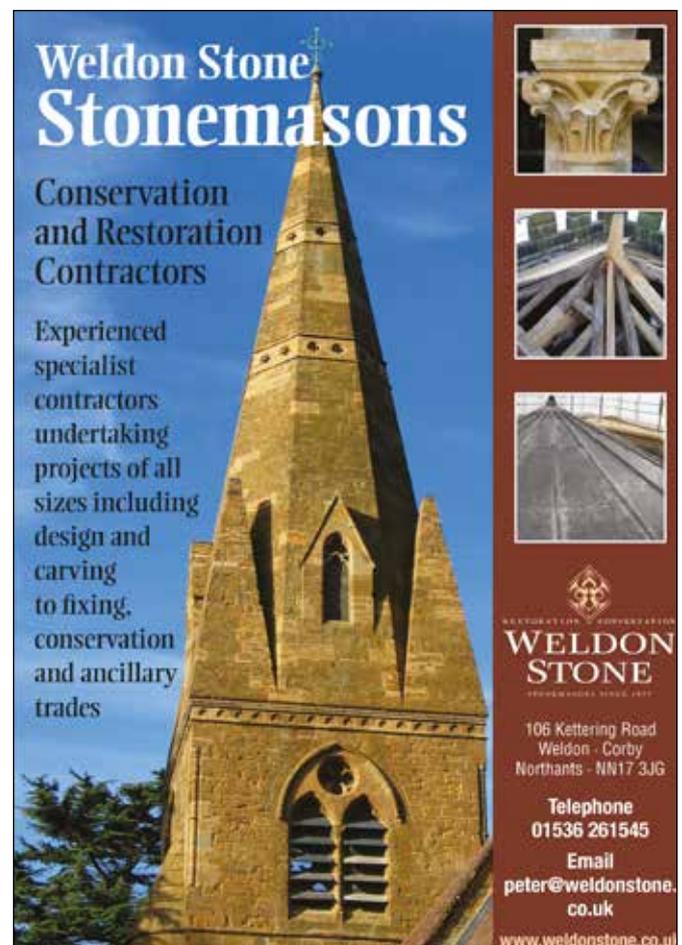
In October 2020, the National Churches Trust will publish *The House of Good*, a pioneering study of the value of church buildings. For the first time, this report will quantify the financial value of a range of the key social and economic support that is generated by and through church buildings.

As we emerge from COVID-19 we need to identify 'key places'; those places that will start to rebuild and look after the vulnerable and hardest hit in our society. One of those key places will be, and has always been, the local church building.

Each year the National Churches Trust gives over £1m of grants to help keep church buildings open but demand far outweighs the ability of the Trust to provide grants and the National Churches Trust has to say 'no' to 75% of the churches that need support.

We cannot let these buildings crumble. Not only are churches our heritage, and our past, they are integral to our futures. Without significant help, we will lose these 'Houses of Good' and we will all be poorer as a result.

To find out about *The House of Good*, please email us at info@nationalchurchestrust.org



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“I’ve met some really witty clergymen”

Olenka Hamilton meets Hugh Dennis, who is deeply fond of churches.



Olenka Hamilton is a freelance writer who has written for publications including *The Spectator* and *Spear’s Magazine*.

by Olenka Hamilton

Lockdown has been kind to Hugh Dennis. One of his regular comedy gigs, *The Now Show* on Radio 4, has carried on with Dennis and his co-stars recording from home. His various writing and voice-over work hasn’t stopped either and when we speak in mid-July, restrictions are easing and he is getting ready to go back to filming the BBC 1 sit-com *Not Going Out* at Pinewood studios.

Alongside his work for radio and television – Hugh Dennis is perhaps best known for playing Pete Brockman in the TV series *Outnumbered* – he is also a regular on the Christmas carol service circuit. Every year, he turns up to Winchester Cathedral or St Martin in the Fields to do his bit and read a lesson. He read at the National Churches Trust carol service a few years ago. While this may seem surprising, it becomes much less so once you know a bit about Dennis’ background.



Born in Kettering in 1962, the son of a vicar, his whole childhood was spent living next door to a church. His two aunts on his father’s side both married vicars and his paternal grandparents rang the bells at their local church in Wimbledon. Later in life his father, John Dennis (pictured

left) who died in April this year, was made a bishop and eventually a Lord spiritual. When the Dennis family went on holiday, because money was tight they would either do a vicarage swap or go on a caravanning holiday where the days’ activities consisted of walking to and looking around cathedrals and castles.



Hugh Dennis (left), with Bettany Hughes, Bill Bryson, Michael Palin, Huw Edwards and Joe Stilgoe at the National Churches Trust’s Christmas Concert in 2017



Church of St Bartholomew the Great

© David Collins / Alamy Stock Photo



A Georgian pew at St Michael's church, Up Marden

Churches benefit communities

While Dennis never considered the priesthood himself, nor does he consider himself to be particularly religious, his fondness for churches is deeply embedded. "It is a mistake in a way to think of churches just as places of religion," he says. "They are full of history and continue to be the hubs of their communities. Architecturally and atmospherically they are uplifting. The National Churches Trust is great because it not only helps to maintain the buildings themselves but also tries to promote the benefit of the space to the communities where the churches are."

Dennis now lives in Smithfield near St Bartholomew, a church he loves and knows well because he went there often as a child - "it's like I've come home, back to where I started," he says. Southwark Cathedral in Borough Market is also a favourite. "The reason I like it is because originally churches would have been right in the middle of bustling markets - people used to have stalls in the middle of churches. I think

it's a good model for how churches should work," he explains. Another favourite is St Michael's, a small pre-conquest church with no electricity - "very beautiful, very simple" - in Up Marden, West Sussex, where he used to live and which he chose to be included in "The UK's Favourite Churches" campaign launched by the National Churches Trust.

Christ Church on the Isle of Dogs, where his father was vicar for some of his childhood, is also an interesting church, he says. Built out of discarded stone from London Bridge, it was supposedly the only church in England with wallpaper and came complete with a sprawling and dilapidated vicarage where Dennis spent his formative years. "My parents were very liberal, nothing was precious, you were allowed to be who you were. We rode bikes inside the house and kept newts in the spare bathroom," he recalls, and not a day went by without someone popping in off the street for a cup of tea and a sandwich.

Table tennis with the Archbishop

"Having a clergy upbringing is a very odd thing," says Dennis. "I know in the 1970s I played table tennis with the Archbishop of York. It was fun, my parents were serious people, but both also had a great sense of fun." He tells the story of when he went along to his father's instalment as a Lord spiritual in the House of Lords at the time when he was the voice of Archbishop Carey on *Spitting Image*. "It was really embarrassing because my dad had told him beforehand. Carey strode in, dropped my dad's hand and looked up, smiled and waved at me and then carried on processing," he recalls. "The Church of England is actually in my experience full of very funny people, lots of would-be performers. I've met some really witty clergymen."

As the son of a vicar, Dennis is, of course, in interesting company. From the likes of Jane Austen and Van Gogh to Theresa May and Gordon Brown, and of course Dennis' own brother, a former ambassador, the children of clergy are notoriously high-achieving. Dennis, who has a first from Cambridge, is reticent about attributing his and his brother's successes to their vicarage upbringing, but he does concede that an emphasis on education at home and being in contact with a broad spectrum of the public from an early age were all good preparation.



Churches are used by local people in many ways: Soupalunch at Hawick Congregational Community Church

© David Ross and Britain Express

Smart church photography



The National Churches Trust frequently works with photographers to capture the wonder of the UK's churches, chapels and meeting houses, commissioning images such as those on this page, taken by heritage photographer Ashley Taylor in his native Lincolnshire. But we also help our brilliant church supporters take better images themselves, using trainers like Angela Montague – who happens to be Ashley's wife! In this article Angela provides her top ten tips to inspire anyone who has a smartphone – although most of the advice is also relevant to digital cameras.

by *Angela Montague*

I have always enjoyed taking photographs but the freedom of having such a good camera on my phone means I can do this anytime something catches my eye. I've put together these tips to give even the most hesitant church photographer a raft of ideas to try as soon as COVID-19 restrictions allow.

1 – Get 'snap happy'

If you have grown up buying rolls of film with 24 exposures, you tend to think in terms of taking one photo of each subject and hoping it will work. With smartphones you can forget those limits – you can take 24 photos of one subject, confident you'll get at least one good one! Try a variety of angles, get close and then far away, adjust the lighting and focus (more on that later). Include lots of sky or just a sliver of sky. Put your subject in the middle of the frame, then put it to the side.

2 – My photos have 'bin' ruined

We tend to focus on the centre of the image when taking a photo, ignoring the edges and corners, where trouble could be lurking – a wheelie bin peeking out from a porchway, a floral arrangement giving the Bishop horns or a church tower missing its weathervane. A quick check of the side of an image can avoid the embarrassment of having to take it again.

3 – Get on the grid

A lot of cameras allow you to switch on a 3x3 grid that overlays your screen. This is incredibly helpful if you tend to take photos that are just a bit wonky. Use this grid to get that altar truly horizontal and that tower perpendicular.



Look at the world from a fresh angle and use leading lines to draw the eye in (Holy Trinity, Tattershall)

4 – Change your viewpoint

We tend to take photos from our eye level. Often just the simple trick of kneeling on the floor or looking down from a higher spot will make an image stand-out. Lay down on a pew to photograph your church ceiling. Hold your camera flat over a ledger stone to photograph it like the page from a book - a fascinating image to share on social media!

5 - Tap into secrets

With most modern devices you can tap the screen before you take the photo to tell the smartphone where you want to focus and the level you want to expose at (how much light gets into the image).

Point your phone camera at a busy room with lots of light and dark to test this out, tapping the screen to concentrate on different areas. Use this technique to help your camera cope with unusual lighting, and experiment too – force your device to take darker photos full of atmosphere.



Long shadows and golden glows await you at 'Golden Hour' (St Leonard, Kirkstead)

6 - See the light

Waiting for the right light adds clarity and magic to your photos. Think of how the sun travels throughout the day. When is the stained-glass illuminated? When is the entranceway flooded with light?

When photographing people or objects that you can move easily, place them where the light is falling on their front or side. Avoid taking photos of people with strong light behind them, this will cast their faces in shadow.

Sunrise and sunset bring an unusual glow and long shadows to any scene, a magical time known as the 'Golden Hour'. Find out when the sun is due to rise this weekend, pack a picnic along with your smartphone and make a meal of it!

As well as varying the time of day, you can also vary the time of year. From first snowdrops to midsummer sunsets, wouldn't it be wonderful to capture your favourite church in every season?

7 - Don't be flash

Most modern cameras can cope in lower light if you set the exposure with the tapping technique described above. A built-in flash often overexposes an image, losing detail and adding harsh shadows.

8 - Lead the way

'Leading lines' is a fantastic technique to draw someone into a photograph, using strong lines in the environment to pull the eye into the frame. Think of a railway track compelling you to follow the lines into the distance. The good news is churches are full of leading lines. The path up to a church, the aisle itself (try photographing that from floor level), the top of a pew lit up by a window, they've been there all along waiting for you to point your camera at them!



Use frames in the environment to give a sense of discovery (St Mary, Horncastle)

9 - You've been framed

Another way to make your image catch the eye is to frame your subject using something that's part of the image – such as foliage or looping ironwork. This really gives your photo a 'secret garden' feel.

10 - What's the story?

Images that hint at a story always captivate and make people want to complete that story; as in visit that church! Doors slightly ajar, statues taken at eye level (like a portrait), animal carvings, intriguing glimpses of stained glass, a grave that begs many questions. Use images like these to fire people's imaginations and make your favourite church the one they want to visit.

You can watch Angela's training videos on the National Churches Trust's Explore Churches website at www.explorechurches.org/about-us and on Angela and Ashley's www.pushcreativity.co.uk website you'll find a whole page dedicated to their heritage photography.



Did you know...

that we helped 20 churches install assessable toilets thanks to gifts in Wills?

To find out more about leaving us a gift in your Will call Claire Walker on **020 7222 0605** or email legacy@nationalchurchestrust.org



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2019

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

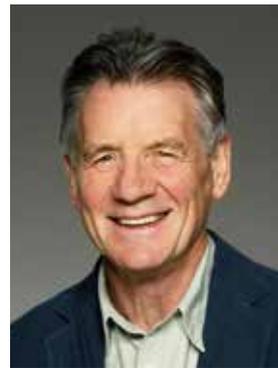
2019 was the first year of the implementation of 'Building Resilience', our strategy for 2019 – 2023. This guides the Trust in a wide range of work designed to ensure the future sustainability of church buildings.

The Year in Review section of our Annual Review covers our work in 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 we have continued to provide grants and to support churches and chapels in a wide variety of ways, including providing help and advice on the pandemic and on the re-opening of church buildings.

Our values

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

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. We will strive to learn and evolve what we do in response to feedback from our partners, applicants, service users and friends.
4. 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.
5. We will be inclusive in how we work with all Christian denominations and people from all backgrounds across the United Kingdom.



The National Churches Trust does so much to help keep the UK's church buildings open and in good repair. With post offices, shops and even pubs closing, churches are often the only community building left in many parts of the country.

Michael Palin



Preserving heritage

Churches, chapels and meeting houses are a vital part of the UK's heritage.

Our Church Support team helps to keep churches, chapels and meeting houses in good repair and supports church leaders and volunteers in looking after their church buildings.

Keeping churches and chapels well maintained

The National Churches Trust sustains churches as places of worship and community facilities.

Support for maintenance

For many churches, paying for maintenance work can be a problem.

So in 2019, the National Churches Trust, with the support of the Pilgrim Trust, offered Preventative Maintenance Micro-Grants towards the cost of a number of fabric repair services available to book through MaintenanceBooker.

In 2020, churches continue to be able to receive these grants which fund up to 50% of service costs (excluding VAT), to a maximum of £500.

Churches can also apply for National Churches Trust Foundation Grants to help pay for maintenance work. This programme offers grants of between £500 and £5,000 towards urgent maintenance works and small repairs as well as small investigative works and surveys.

To support essential maintenance work at church buildings, in 2019 with the help of the Pilgrim Trust we awarded 105 grants totalling £371,779. Funds awarded through Foundation Grants more than doubled compared to 2018, with 85 grants totalling £363,717 awarded. Preventative Maintenance Micro-Grant awards also increased, to £8,062.



Maintenance can help to defeat leaking water and damp, two of the worst enemies of church buildings

Maintenance plans

The National Churches Trust expects churches making an application for a grant to have a maintenance plan in place.

Effective maintenance depends on regular 'health checks' and carrying out any work needed at the appropriate time. 'The Value of Maintenance?', a 2019 report by Historic England, showed that delaying repairs and maintenance results in increased costs. A calendar and plan for routine maintenance is especially useful as it helps ensure that tasks are carried out regularly and at the best time of year.

In 2020 the Trust will be working with Historic England and The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) to make available new maintenance resources which can be used by any church in the UK, regardless of whether or not they have applied for a grant to the Trust. Providing simple-to-use advice and plans is another way of helping to keep church heritage in good condition and reducing the need for expensive repairs.

One of the best ways to keep church heritage safe for the future is regular maintenance. This also saves money as when things go wrong they cost a lot to put right.

Preventative maintenance also contributes to the sustainability of buildings by preserving resources and contributing to the carbon neutral agenda. By keeping buildings in good condition, churches preserve embodied carbon, save energy and the use of materials which would otherwise be needed for repairs.

MaintenanceBooker

In 2019 our MaintenanceBooker web-based church maintenance service continued to make it easy for churchwardens and others to find contractors to help look after their buildings.

A key feature of the service is that all contractors are carefully vetted by procurement experts 2buy2, and have adequate and appropriate insurance for the services they are delivering.

New services were added in 2019 and MaintenanceBooker now helps churches and also other historic buildings with the following work:

- **Asbestos management**
- **Gutter clearances and repairs**
- **High level maintenance**
- **Lightning conductor inspections**
- **Lime mortaring**
- **Masonry repairs**
- **Tree surveys and surgery**

Register your church for MaintenanceBooker, at
www.maintenancebooker.org.uk/register



© Scott Hortop Travel/Alamy Stock Photo

Repairing the tower of St Peter's church in Brighton

Focus
on

Church maintenance



St Chad's
church, Rubery,
Worcestershire



by Reverend Claire Turner, St Chad's church, Rubery, Worcestershire

I suspect we are not the only church to let routine, mundane maintenance jobs slip a little - in the midst of growing our congregation, ministering to our local schools and local estate, developing worship and involving ourselves in community projects, gutters never seem to come very high up our 'to do' list!

Serious issues

However, following a quinquennial inspection in 2014 that noted serious issues with our guttering, downpipes, drainage and concrete soffits (the things they don't teach you at theological college!) we had, in 2016, spent a significant five-figure sum on replacing the lot.

Fast-forward to 2019 and we realised that we hadn't had the gutters cleared since they were replaced. As I say, we can't be the only ones!

Keen to rectify this, we used MaintenanceBooker to request quotes from appropriate contractors. Using the website

seemed a lot quicker and easier than contacting individual contractors and gave us confidence that the people who quoted were tried and tested.

Click to accept

A quick email to our architect confirmed that the lowest of the quotes seemed reasonable so we clicked to accept it. Within days, the contractor (Ben Jenkins) had been in touch, booked the job in and attended the site to complete the work.

Having requested quotes through the MaintenanceBooker website, www.maintenancebooker.org.uk, we were quickly informed, via email, about the Preventative Maintenance Micro-Grant scheme administered by the National Churches Trust. Applying was quick, easy and could all be done online. The grant has subsequently covered 50% of the net cost of the work.

I'm not sure why we put it off for so long!

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Grants for repairs, maintenance and new facilities

The National Churches Trust's grants continue to be extremely important in safeguarding the future of the UK's churches.

Our grants help ensure that church buildings are watertight and windproof and that roofs, towers and spires remain structurally sound.

They also help fund the installation of modern facilities, such as toilets, kitchens and heating. This means that church buildings can be used as venues for the arts, leisure, social help and other community activities and can host facilities such as post offices and libraries.

2019 was the first year of allocating grants through our Foundation, Gateway and Cornerstone grant programmes that were introduced as part of the Trust's new strategy, 'Building Resilience'.

The Trust made 188 grant awards to churches and chapels in 2019 totalling £1,344,474 (including recommendations on behalf of other grant-giving organisations). The total sum awarded was 6% higher than in 2018.

Through our Cornerstone Grant programme for major structural repairs and the installation of facilities, in 2019 we were able to provide funding for 59 projects.

Overall, demand for grants continued to be high with 515 applications received across our grant programmes during the year.

£323,772 was awarded to non-Anglican places of worship by the Trust, including £77,541 to Roman Catholic and £168,901 to Presbyterian churches.

We continued to prioritise projects run by qualified conservation professionals so that we have confidence our investment supports work of the highest quality and safeguards the UK's highly valued church heritage.

During the year we had over 600 phone and email enquiries about church building projects; the largest percentage of these were enquiries about roof repairs (18%).

Priority areas

Northern Ireland, North-East England and Wales were priority areas for the Trust's grants in 2019. This promotes an equitable distribution of funding across the UK.

£175,981 was awarded to places of worship in priority areas.

Our grant giving in Northern Ireland rose to £63,895 (a 13% increase since 2018). This was supported by our work with local agencies made possible thanks to funding awarded to us by the Department for Communities. As part of this work, the National Churches Trust set up a Northern Ireland Listed Places of Worship Forum which met three times in 2019.

Understanding historic buildings, and raising funds for church projects, including understanding who gives money for what, can be difficult. To help, we took part in 14 seminars and workshops, reaching over 800 delegates from over 250 churches in locations including Northern Ireland and Wales and from denominations including the Church of England, the United Reformed Church, and the Roman Catholic and Baptist Churches.



Roof repairs at St Just-in-Penwith, St Just, Penzance, Cornwall

© David Osborne-Broad

The Wolfson Foundation

In 2019, work concluded on transferring the administration of the Wolfson Fabric Repairs Grants from the Cathedral & Church Buildings Division of the Church of England to the National Churches Trust.

The move, which took effect in January 2020, creates a simplified funding application process for fabric repairs. Churches will submit one application form if eligible and be considered for up to two grants – one funded by the Wolfson Foundation and the second from other funds raised by the National Churches Trust, with both grants administered by the Trust. This will reduce form filling for parishes. There will also only be one reporting and claims process for the two grants, again reducing the burden on church volunteers.

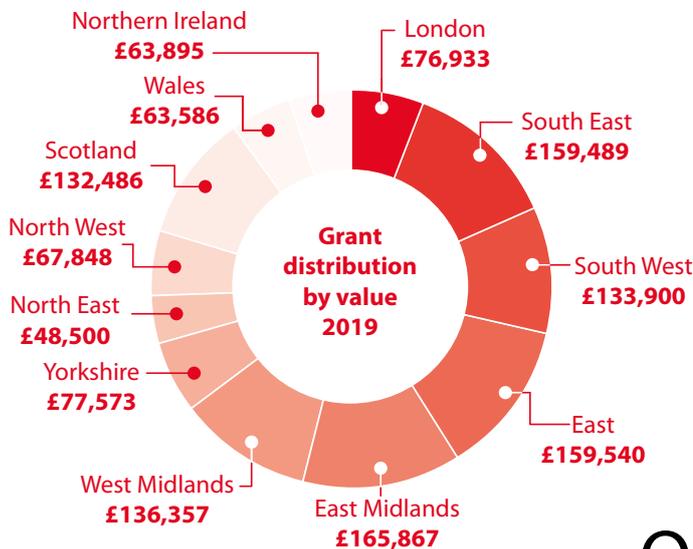
In 2020 the Wolfson Fabric Repairs Grants programme will support fabric repairs for listed church buildings throughout the United Kingdom. In 2020, a total of £400,000 will be awarded to projects, including for urgent roof repairs, improving rainwater goods, drainage works, and wall repairs.



Stonework being repaired using lime mortar at St Mary's church, Long Crendon

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

Grants from the National Churches Trust – 2019



Awards	
London	14
South East	19
South West	18
East	20
East Midlands	20
West Midlands	19
North West	18
North East	4
Yorkshire	16
Wales	10
Scotland	12
Northern Ireland	6

The piechart and table show the regional distribution of the 176 grants awarded with Trust funds in 2019. In addition 12 further grants were recommended on behalf of other funders.

OBJECTIVES **for** 2020

- **Ensure** grants awarded support churches throughout the UK and from a wide range of denominations.
- **Support** more churches in the sustainable management of their buildings through regular maintenance to delay the need for costly major repairs in the future.
- **Enhance** the future sustainability of church buildings by supporting the installation of new facilities which enable their use for community activities.
- **Continue** to support volunteers with advice on funding, maintenance and building projects.
- **Lead** a new project in Northern Ireland to improve the maintenance and sustainability of historic places of worship.

How our grants helped

To see all the churches we helped in 2019 please visit www.nationalchurchestrust.org/grantsmap

All Saints' church, Newcastle upon Tyne



The magnificent tower of All Saints' church, Newcastle upon Tyne

A £30,000 National Churches Trust Cornerstone Grant awarded in 2019 funded major work to the Grade I listed All Saints' church, Newcastle upon Tyne, enabling it to open once again as a church. The building is currently on the Historic England 'Heritage At Risk Register'.

Dr William Schweitzer, Minister at All Saints' church, said: "We are so thankful to God for this generous grant from National Churches Trust. It has come at just the right moment. The National Churches Trust is one of the few organisations which grasps just how important kitchen and toilet facilities are to the life of a church. We will be blessed by this wise provision for many years to come."



St Mary's church, Brighton



The altar of St Mary's church, Kemptown, Brighton

St Mary's church, Kemptown, Brighton was awarded a Foundation grant of £5,984 in 2019 to help fund the removal of asbestos.

A spokesperson for St Mary's church said: "Since 2016, the National Churches Trust has awarded St Mary's over £60,000 to help with urgent repairs and improvements. We are so grateful for this support. It's not just the money – though that helps! – but the Trust's repeated endorsement of our mission to save St Mary's as a living church and make it into a real community asset is a massive boost to our morale. Thank you to everyone at the National Churches Trust and to all who donate to its work. We really appreciate it!"



St Teresa's church, Tullyherron

A £15,000 National Churches Trust Cornerstone Grant awarded in 2019 funded roof repairs at the Grade B listed St Teresa church, Tullyherron, Northern Ireland, making the church watertight and preserving its historic fabric.

Very Rev Malachy Murphy, Parish Priest of Loughgilly Parish said: "The funding from the National Churches Trust is very much appreciated and vital in preserving this historic place of worship for generations to come. On behalf of all parishioners and myself I want to thank and highly commend the work and commitment of the National Churches Trust and all that they do in preserving the past for the future."



Very Rev Malachy Murphy

Grants available in 2020



Preventative Maintenance Micro-Grants

Grants of up to **£500**

Our Micro-Grants to support the cost of MaintenanceBooker maintenance services.



Foundation Grants for Maintenance

Grants of **£500 – £5,000**

Our small grants to support urgent maintenance, and small repair issues, or to carry out small investigative works costing up to £10,000.



Gateway Grants

Grants of **£5,000 – £10,000**

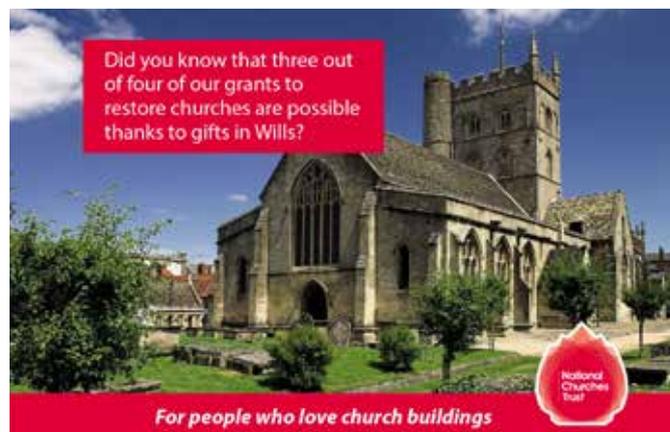
Our medium sized grants to help churches in their project development up to RIBA stage 1; to support initiatives by local churches trusts; and for essential repair projects with estimated costs of between £10,000 and £100,000.



Cornerstone Grants

Grants of **£10,000 – £50,000**

Our large grants for urgent and essential structural repair projects with estimated costs of at least £100,000 that will help places of worship become wind and watertight, and for installing kitchens and toilets with estimated costs of at least £30,000, to improve access for all.



Did you know that three out of four of our grants to restore churches are possible thanks to gifts in Wills?

For people who love church buildings



Our people



Nigel Mills

Senior Church Support Officer

I provide advice and support to the fantastic army of volunteers who do such an amazing job looking after some of our country's oldest and most important church buildings. This ranges from advice on how to access our grant programmes to more practical issues such as maintenance plans and constitutions.

For hundreds of years, churches were built to be the most significant local building and I think that is still the case today. The fact that there are over 40,000 churches in the UK means that just about everyone is close to one – geographically, emotionally, and spiritually. They are the place where people find their roots either through events in their own life or significant events in the lives of their ancestors.



Dedication of a time capsule at the church of St Peter and St Paul, Ewhurst, Surrey

The range of activities that take place in our churches never ceases to amaze me. From job clubs to food banks, from debt counselling to mental health support services, from parent and toddler groups to lunches for the elderly.

Of course, churches need money to stay open and safe for the future. But I think the single most important thing is to make sure that we properly value and support the volunteers who are looking after our churches. Without these amazing and selfless people, churches simply don't have a future. We therefore need to find ways to make it easier for them to look after their buildings in the right way, The National Churches Trust will continue to support them as they plan for the future and we need to help them recruit and support the next generation of volunteers.

Promoting Sustainability

Sustainability involves providing information and recognition for volunteers and other people who look after churches and chapels, and promoting best practice and knowledge sharing.

Supporting the volunteers who keep churches and chapels open

Volunteers across all parts of the UK play active and very important roles within their local community, keeping their churches and chapels open to serve the wider public, and supporting people's well-being in numerous and often extraordinary ways.

Their contribution was recognised at the National Churches Trust's Local Treasures awards ceremony which took place at the Mercers' Hall in the City of London on Friday 15 November 2019.

The awards celebrated a tremendous range of innovation, good ideas, exciting partnerships and engagement within and beyond congregations that make a real difference to strengthening the future of churches and the wider community.

Innovative churches

At the Local Treasures ceremony, the Lighthouse Project in Hackney won the Marsh Innovative Church Project Awards, a competition to find the Christian congregations running the best community activities in church buildings.

Hackney Church (which includes Grade II* listed St John at Hackney and St Luke's Homerton Terrace) helps over 800 people a week through the Lighthouse Project. Partnerships include a drop-in lunch in collaboration with leading restaurant chain Moro. Hackney Church is also a partner in the new Hackney Church Brew Co., profits from which help to fund the church's work with the homeless and vulnerable.



© Katharine Rose/Alamy Stock Photo

Glasses of Joosy Pale Ale at the Hackney Church Brew Co., a microbrewery under the railway arches at Bohemia Place, Hackney, East London



© Andy Sillett

June Butler, Chair of the Northern Ireland Listed Places of Worship Forum (left) with Nigel Mills and Claire Walker from the National Churches Trust and Jennifer Stutt and Primrose Wilson (right) from the Ulster Historic Churches Trust who received a Marsh Church and Community Volunteer Award

Great ideas for using churches

There were eight winners of the Marsh Church and Community Volunteer Awards, which celebrate people who have had great ideas for using churches, have contributed significantly to the sustainability of church buildings, or who have helped their local community through or in their church building with exceptional dedication and kindness.

Winners included:

Barbara Lewis, Annan United Reformed Church, Scotland for her dedication in engaging young people through music and fundraising for the church and other causes.

Theophilia Shaw, St Peter's, Walworth, London, England for exceptional volunteering within the church and community, inspiring young people and helping people in crisis and need.

David Furnival, Chairman, Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust, England for engaging new audiences with churches through Music in Quiet Places, a successful concert series bringing high quality performances to local people and providing opportunities for young people.

The Ulster Historic Churches Trust Trustees, Northern Ireland for helping local people address and tackle maintenance through the Maintenance Project in Northern Ireland, where supporting good maintenance practice is essential to the sustainability of churches.

The Marsh Innovative Church Project Awards and the Marsh Church and Community Volunteer Awards are run jointly by the National Churches Trust and the Marsh Christian Trust.

The Good Guardianship Award

A new partnership between the National Churches Trust and The Pilgrim Trust, set up in 2019, The Good Guardianship

Award rewards local people for excellence in planning the maintenance of a church or chapel. Good maintenance practice, including annual maintenance plans, regular inspections and small preventative repairs stop many minor problems from escalating into large, expensive repairs that can threaten the future of a building.

The first winner of the Good Guardianship Award was St James the Great, Cradley, Herefordshire. The church received a prize of £5,000 towards the ongoing care of their place of worship.

The Local Treasures Awards were made possible by the support of the Mercers' Company, the Marsh Christian Trust and The Pilgrim Trust and by sponsorship provided by Edwards Insurance and Distributed Sound & Video Ltd.



Rev Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett, who spoke about the importance of volunteers for churches at the Local Treasures award ceremony.

Showcasing good practice

Excellence in new and conservation church architecture and encouraging new talent.



Alexa Stephens, Young Church Architect or Surveyor of the Year 2019, with HRH The Duke of Gloucester, Vice Patron of the National Churches Trust

The UK's Church Architecture Awards promote excellence in church architecture and are run as a partnership between the National Churches Trust and the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association.

In 2019, a project by Roz Barr Architects to restore and refurbish St Augustine's Roman Catholic church, an unlisted Edwardian church in Hammersmith, London, won the 2019 Presidents' Award, given for new church buildings and new designs in re-ordering, alteration, or extension.

Bob Allies, a founding partner at the architecture and urban planning practice Allies and Morrison, and one of the judges for the UK Church Architecture Awards said:

📍📍 *At St Augustine's church in Hammersmith, Roz Barr has used form, material, light and colour combined to transform an unpromising interior into something really remarkable. An extraordinary achievement for which the architect – and the client – are to be congratulated.* 📍📍

An architectural 'who done it'

The King of Prussia Gold Medal for repair and conservation architecture was awarded in 2019 to PPIY architects for their work on St Margaret's church, Thimbleby, Lincolnshire.

The Victorian spire on this church had been deteriorating so much it was threatened with closure and the spire had been removed in 2013. After much detective work it was discovered that the specification of the 19th century architect James Fowler had included his favourite mortar, so-called 'dog kennel lime'; the mortar has a high magnesium content which led to destructive salts leaching through the building including the spire. Armed with the new knowledge, architects PPIY re-built the spire and the church is now safe for the future.

Church architects of the future

The award for Young Church Architect or Surveyor of the Year in 2019 went to Alexa Stephens, the lead architect for the work to replace the spire at St Margaret's church, Thimbleby. Alexa was the lead architect – and pioneering sleuth – for this project.

She received a prize of £250, supported by Ecclesiastical Insurance. Thanks to the generosity of NCT Trustee Richard Carr-Archer, she also received a magnificent new trophy designed by stained glass artist Keith Barley.

Encouraging community engagement

Working with volunteers and clergy, Great Interpretations, a project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and supported by the National Churches Trust from April 2018 – April 2019, told the stories of over 50 churches in the Horncastle Deanery, Lincolnshire.

The project made it easier for them to understand their heritage, record priceless treasures and promote their churches to audiences far and wide in order to encourage visitors, raise income and make them more sustainable. Digital technology and improved interpretation were used to change the way people access, engage and learn about the churches and chapels. It delivered training courses giving volunteers the skills and confidence to welcome visitors, to create innovative and engaging interpretation and to produce attractive publicity, photography and video in order to market their church to the rest of the world.

The project engaged with 54 historic churches, chapels and meeting houses. On completion of the project in April 2019, the large majority of churches who took part had increased their visitor numbers and are now armed with the resources, information and a new confidence to make them more resilient in the future.

Volunteer skills and welcoming visitors



Lord Cormack, Vice President of the National Churches Trust with Revd Teresa McLaughlin and Ann Lovelock at the launch of the Lincolnshire Wolds and Coast Churches Festival

Another project delivered by the National Churches Trust in 2019 was the Lincolnshire Wolds and Coast Churches Festival project. A collaboration between the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey District Council and Lincolnshire Coastal BID, the project was managed by The National Churches Trust.

The project focused on 200 churches and their communities in the district of East Lindsey in Lincolnshire. It developed a new festival spanning two weekends in September, created new interpretation materials about the history of churches and built volunteer skills and confidence in welcoming visitors to churches.

Key outcomes included:

- **9,000 church visits over the two weekends**
- **600 volunteers participated over the two weekends**
- **Robust marketing campaign including digital marketing to support the festival**
- **Churches Directory created to encourage visits at other times of the year**
- **Each church received a family activity pack**
- **Church Spotter Book trialled, which has the potential for rolling out across the country**

Most crucially, following the project's completion, a committee has been created and funding secured to ensure the festival's sustainability for at least the next three years.

OBJECTIVES for 2020

- **Pursue** new partnerships with organisations across the UK to find a range of solutions to help ensure the future of church buildings.
- **Ensure** knowledge sharing and the development of information, resources and best practice with places of worship throughout the UK.
- **Support** county churches trusts in the development of capacity building and fundraising including through Ride+Stride for Churches.
- **Develop** and support a range of high profile award schemes to celebrate the dedication and creativity of professionals and volunteers whose work keeps churches open and in good repair and being used for worship and community benefit.

Our people



Caroline Welch
Church Support Officer Wales

Based in Wales, I'm working on the 'Experiencing Sacred Wales' project - promoting historic places of worship in Wales to a wider audience and bringing tangible financial support to them through an increase of visitors and the creation of bookable 'Experiences'.

My greatest achievement in 2019 was connecting with so many people and organisations involved in historic places of worship across Wales. We trained around 100 volunteers, clergy and diocesan staff in welcoming visitors, finding stories and promoting churches, and have connected with colleagues across the church heritage and tourism sector.

Churches and chapels remain the under-appreciated treasure in every town and village. We celebrate our castles in Wales, but many of the churches next door are older still – they are repositories of memory, of community, of art, and spiritual places to connect with God and with oneself. It's high time these incredible buildings got the attention they deserve.

For churches and chapels to stay open and safe for the future they need to be relevant to and valued by more people. Their special character comes from their sacred nature but I think more focus needs to be made on their sheer age, by drawing out their stories, and by bringing people inside in new and innovative ways.



A carving in St Mark's church, Brithdir, Gwynedd one of the pre-eminent churches of the Arts and Crafts Movement

© Martin Crampin

Inspiring support

Our strategy is to make it easier for people to value our shared heritage of church buildings and to generate more support for their future from the public, key church and heritage stakeholders and from national and regional government.

Engaging more friends and supporters

Increasing our pool of Friends and supporters is key to our long-term strength. We maintain strong relationships with our supporters, with whom we are able to champion the cause of church buildings.



Huw Edwards, Bill Bryson, Michael Palin, and Joe Stilgoe at the National Churches Trust's 2019 Carol Concert at St James's church, Piccadilly

730 new Friends joined the National Churches Trust in 2019, bringing the total number to 3,311. We were delighted that many joined after seeing a new animated film about our work with a voiceover by Michael Palin, Vice-President of the Trust. 2019 also saw an increase in the number of members of our Cornerstone Club to 34.

Legacies

Without gifts in Wills some of the UK's church heritage could be lost forever. Remembering the National Churches Trust through a legacy helps us to keep the UK's precious church buildings alive for generations to come.

We are very grateful to our Friends and supporters who have supported our work by leaving a gift in their Will and for the many legacies we received in 2019 which totalled £778,444.

Events

We were delighted to welcome many of our Friends to our church visits and events in 2019.

Led by Dr Rory O'Donnell, a Vice-President and a longstanding member of both the National Churches Trust and the Westminster Cathedral Art and Architecture Committee, in May 2019 a group of Friends took part in a tour and received expert insight to the history, design and the ongoing mosaic decoration of Westminster Cathedral.

For the second year, our Christmas Carol Concert was held at St James's Piccadilly, one of Sir Christopher Wren's masterpieces. The sell-out event, supported by CCLA Investment Management Ltd and Distributed Sound & Video, included contributions from Huw Edwards, Bill Bryson and Michael Palin, Vice-Presidents of the Trust, Dame Penelope Wilton, Joe Stilgoe, the Parkgate House School Choir, singers from the ENO and also our Trustee the Reverend Lucy Winkett, Rector of St James's Piccadilly.

Friends vote

We maintained a direct link between our Friends and our grant giving in the third year of our Friends Vote. 606 Friends took part, resulting in the award of a £10,000 grant to St Just-in-Penwith, St Just, Penzance, Cornwall which had been the recipient of an earlier repair grant in 2018.

The grant will help to fund the church's major roof repair project, making it watertight and safe for worshippers, building users and visitors. This will secure the building and protect early Christian heritage which dates back to the 5th and 6th Centuries, including the Selus Stone.

‘Save our Churches’

The generosity of our Friends provides significant income for the Trust. In November, Friends and other heritage lovers had a chance to support our work by bidding for some exclusive items in the National Churches Trust’s first ever ‘Save our Churches’ online auction.

The ‘money can’t buy’ items included joining Bill Bryson for tea, cake and conversation, taking part in a personal guided tour around the Chapel of St Peter and St Paul at the Old Royal Naval College with Michael Palin, and going on location

with award-winning historian, author and broadcaster Bettany Hughes on her latest filming project. The auction raised nearly £10,000, with bids coming from the UK and overseas and we plan on running a second one in early 2021.

Leave a gift in your Will

If you love churches and chapels you can leave a legacy in your Will to the National Churches Trust to help safeguard the future of the UK’s historic places of worship.

Please visit www.nationalchurchestrust.org/legacy or phone 020 7222 0605.

Growing church tourism and visits

The National Churches Trust’s tourism team manages the ExploreChurches website, creates and manages innovative tourism projects and offers advice and volunteer training alongside design and other consultation work to churches and organisations across the UK.

ExploreChurches

In 2019 we continued to develop our ExploreChurches website, www.explorechurches.org, as the digital entry point for church tourism.

ExploreChurches is a high quality resource for visitors and churches, the perfect place to discover a love for churches and to find out all the information you need to visit them.

In 2019, the number of churches featured on the site increased to almost 4,000. It now includes all the UK’s Cathedrals and Major Churches.

From Cumbria to Wiltshire, nine county guides provide information about beautiful churches to visit and wonderful stories to discover and are a great way to plan a day out. More county guides will be added in 2020 and this will help increase the number of people discovering churches, such a vital part of our national heritage.

Another key area of the website features ‘themed lists’ of churches related to historic, social and general interest subjects. These include lists of churches relating to Queen Victoria, Charles Dickens, Suffragettes, Yew Trees and even Dr Who.

In December 2019, a themed list celebrated mountain churches, including those used by royalty, those loved by writers Wordsworth, Tennyson and Melvyn Bragg, and others that help to save the lives of those caught out by avalanches and falls. As well as being beautiful, many of the churches are at the centre of often remote mountain communities.

Work continued on Experiences by ExploreChurches which offer tourists, tour operators and church lovers the opportunity to find and book ‘hands-on experiences’ in churches and cathedrals. These include behind the scenes tours and local food and drink as added extras.

The planned launch of Experiences in April 2020 was deferred in view of the disruption to tourism caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Once launched, money from ticket bookings will provide a new income stream for the places of worship taking part as well as broadening our church tourism offer.



Discovering St Mary’s church in Horncastle, Lincolnshire

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

ExploreChurches

	2019
Churches registered on ExploreChurches	3,778
New lists, trails or festival pages	32
Page views	252,000
Unique Users	80,290

Focus
on

Experiencing Sacred Wales

CYMRU SANCTAIDD
SACRED WALES

© Paul Weston/Alamy Stock Photo

St Cwyfan's church at Llangwyfan, Anglesey, North Wales

Thanks to the National Churches Trust, historic churches and chapels are to become a key part of Wales' tourism offer.

Working with Visit Wales, the Church in Wales, Friends of Friendless Churches, Addoldai Cymru, Cadw and other national partners, 'Experiencing Sacred Wales' is bringing over 500 historic places of worship to ExploreChurches, the National Churches Trust's church tourism hub.

The website will showcase the fascinating history and stunning art and architecture of over 500 historic churches and chapels along and around The Wales Way, a family of three national routes developed by Visit Wales – The Coastal Way, The Cambrian Way and The North Wales Way.

This project has received funding via the Tourism Product Innovation Fund (TPIF) and supported through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the Welsh Government. The Fund aims to encourage new innovative product ideas working in partnership which will have a greater impact and attract more visitors.

Mae'r prosiect hwn wedi derbyn cyllid drwy'r Gronfa Arloesi Cynnyrch Twristiaeth (TPIF) ac yn derbyn cefnogaeth

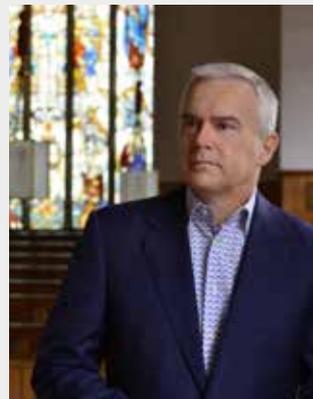


y Rhaglen Datblygu Gwledig 2014-2020 – Cymunedau Gwledig Llywodraeth Cymru sy'n cael ei ariannu gan Gronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer datblygu gwledig (EAFRD) a Llywodraeth Cymru. Nod y Gronfa yw annog syniadau arloesol ar gyfer cynnyrch newydd a chydweithio er mwyn cael mwy of effaith a denu mwy o ymwelwyr.

The aim is to make visiting churches and chapels part of family holidays, weekends away, short breaks and days out in Wales.

Although COVID-19 may lead to changes in the way that people travel, the sacred spaces of Wales will also be marketed to the tourism trade in Britain and abroad. Five powerful 'Experiences', bookable online and themed around place and history will form part of 'Experiencing Sacred Wales', so visitors can book and easily explore Welsh heritage at first hand.

Huw Edwards, Broadcaster and Journalist and Vice-President of the National Churches Trust said:



"I'm delighted that 'Experiencing Sacred Wales' is making it exciting and easy to discover the sacred spaces of Wales. It's high time that the churches and chapels of Wales took their rightful place on the tourism map alongside our magnificent castles, stunning mountains and exhilarating coastline."

Communicating the value of churches

We continued vigorously to make the case for church buildings with creative publicity and marketing and with our public affairs work.

The Trust was an active participant in the meetings of Places of Worship Forums run by Historic England and in Wales and Northern Ireland. It also contributed to the work of the Heritage Alliance and the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance. Meetings were held with officials from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and with Government more broadly on matters of common concern and in particular on developing new ways of supporting church buildings.

The Trust also made representations about the future of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme which gives grants to cover the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings in use as places of worship, urging for its long-term retention. The Scheme was extended in 2019 but is only guaranteed to run until the end in 2021.

More churches than pubs

In April 2019, new data published by the National Churches Trust showed that the UK had more churches than pubs.

There are around 39,000 pubs in the UK, according to the latest figures from the Office of National Statistics. However, there are around 40,300 church buildings in the UK open to the public and being used for worship, according to research carried out in conjunction with The Brierley Consultancy.

The current high demand for raw materials has seen an increase in the theft of metal, typically lead, copper and steel. Churches are particularly vulnerable to this type of crime. The Trust's advice on combatting heritage crime and the need for changes to the Scrap Metal Dealers Act was reported on by national and church media.

Throughout the year, the work of the Trust featured in national, church and heritage media. In July 2019 BBC Television turned its attention to the work of the National Churches Trust in 'One Day that Changed My Life'.

The programme followed the story of the church of St Mary and the Host of Heaven in Cheveley in Cambridgeshire as it sought funding from the Trust to install an accessible toilet and a modern kitchenette.

In the run up to Christmas, in December 2019 the Trust secured coverage on ITV Regional News programmes throughout England with a story about the importance of church heritage and the shortage of funding for repairs which featured actor and comedian Hugh Dennis, who is a keen supporter of the Trust's work and of churches.



© ACORN 10/Alamy Stock Photo

Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem, Nottingham

Church buildings matter

In December the Trust published a five point manifesto for church buildings for the 2019 General Election, 'Church Buildings Matter'. The manifesto asked the next Government to:

- **Establish a new Urgent Repair and Maintenance Fund.**
- **Ensure that parish and town councils have the legal powers to fund church buildings.**
- **Help more churches to become community hubs through funding the installation of toilets and kitchens.**
- **Put in place stronger measures to stop heritage crime and lead theft.**
- **Keep church repairs free of VAT.**

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

Communications

	2019
Total page views to the Trust's websites	871,000
– nationalchurchestrust.org	543,000
– explorechurches.org	252,000
– maintenancebooker.org.uk	76,000
National Churches Trust E-newsletter subscribers	13,500
Facebook followers	4,083
Twitter followers	10,269

OBJECTIVES for 2020

- **Strengthen** relationships with and increase income from Trusts and Foundations.
- **Recruit** 700 new Friends for the Trust.
- **Develop** and promote income generating 'ExploreChurches Experiences' in sacred places for group travel tours and individual travellers.
- **Attract** UK and international visitors to the sacred heritage of Wales, particularly those along and close to The Wales Way, through marketing, developments to ExploreChurches and training.
- **Complete** and publish a study into the economic and social value of churches to demonstrate the continuing importance of places of worship to the UK and local communities.

Our people



Anna Tham

Senior Fundraising Officer

I am a key part of the Fundraising Team and my main task is the management of our supporter database. My work involves administration of incoming donations, membership data analysis and also a lot of correspondence with our Friends.

A big highlight of 2019 for me was our Carol Concert. After months of preparation, the doors swung open as we welcomed many familiar faces of long standing supporters, and also a lot of new faces belonging to some of the over 700 new Friends recruited in 2019. It gives me great satisfaction watching our supporters come together at the beautiful St James's church in Piccadilly and share their enthusiasm for preserving the beautiful heritage of church buildings.

One of the most common enquiries from our supporters is about entry to churches; when are they open and how to get in if they are locked. Too many people, including church crawlers, family history researchers, holiday makers looking for a church to visit and wedding planners often find it hard to find opening hours and contact details when planning a church visit. If more churches could have up to date entry information on their websites it would help to encourage visitors and increase income, making it possible for them to become more sustainable.

Of course, churches and chapels can also join our ExploreChurches website, which prides itself on having comprehensive visitor information for some 4,000 churches in the UK.



The Parkgate House School Choir at the National Churches Trust's 2019 Carol Concert at St James's church, Piccadilly, with Bill Bryson, Michael Palin, Huw Edwards and Joe Stilgoe

© Andy Sillett

Focus
on

Ride+Stride for Churches



Launching Ride + Stride for Churches in Oxford in 2019

Vicars from across the country descended on Oxford in May 2019 to learn how to ride penny farthings to promote Ride + Stride for Churches which raises money for the upkeep of historic churches.

Run by county churches trusts across England, the event raises more than £1 million annually. The National Churches Trust helps to co-ordinate the event.

Clergy received instruction from world experts from the Penny Farthing Club before the more accomplished and

adventurous ones took to the streets. There was plenty of nervous laughter and wobbling – but no serious injuries or, worse, blasphemy.

Rev David Salter, from Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire, was one of the clergy taking part.

He said: *“Ride + Stride for Churches raises such a lot of money and I wanted to give something back by helping to promote a great event. Hopefully, this shows that we are grateful for the support of the public and also that clergy are game for a laugh.”*

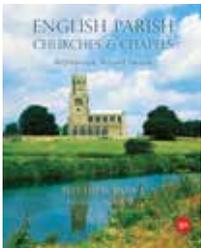
'The Treasures of English Churches; Witnesses to the History of a Nation'



Matthew Byrne has been exploring, studying and photographing English churches for nearly 40 years. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society in 1988 for his work in architectural photography.

by *Matthew Byrne*

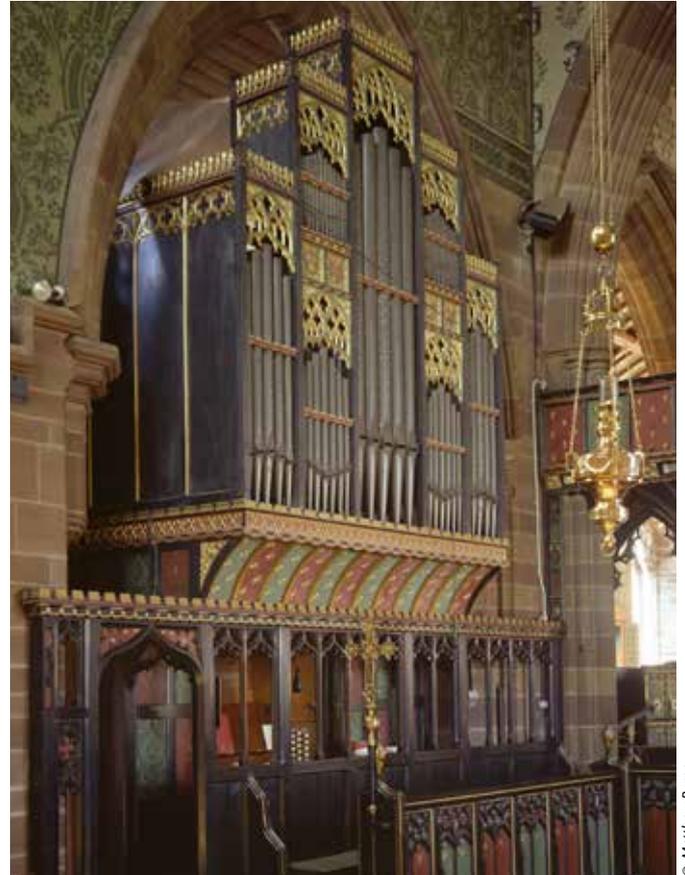
I am delighted that, thanks to the help of the National Churches Trust and CCLA Investment Managers, I am now hard at work on a new book drawing on my extensive library of photographs of churches.



Due to be published by Shire Books in Spring 2021, 'The Treasures of English Churches; Witnesses to the History of a Nation' takes a significantly different approach to that of my most recent books, such as 'English Parish Churches and Chapels' (pictured left), which was also produced in partnership with the Trust.

Rather than focussing on photographic portraits of individual churches, my new book takes a thematic approach. It includes chapters devoted to the magnificent interiors of the Anglo Saxon and Norman periods, with examples drawn from churches from Cornwall to Cumbria. The treasures of later centuries are illustrated through photographs of monuments, stained glass, paintings and woodcarvings.

There are many books which take just one of these topics and examine it in great detail. However, what my new book does is to show as many treasures of English churches as possible. I hope this will make it easy for readers to see in one place the wonderful range of art and craftsmanship that makes these buildings so remarkable. In this way, I want my new book to be a joy for existing lovers of churches but also a joy for those who may love history and heritage but may not be aware of what our religious buildings have to offer.



Late 19th century organ by William Hill and Sons at St John the Baptist church, Tuebrook, Liverpool

© Matthew Byrne

Treasures are in every church

The selection of photographs in the new book highlights two important points. The first is that the idea of 'treasures' includes objects created by the greatest woodcarvers, sculptors, painters and glaziers of their time. But it also includes what are often charmingly 'rustic' and much loved works produced by local craftsmen, many of whose names have been long forgotten. These range from bench ends and misericords through to every manner of stone carvings of human faces, animals and abstract shapes that are present in almost every church.

The second important point is implied in my new book's subtitle, which describes churches as witnesses to the history of a nation. For it is people who are at the heart of the book. That is because churches are meeting places of the Divine and the human.

The former is evident in their primary function as places of prayer, preaching and sacrament. But secular human concerns are often as much in evidence as the sacred in churches, reflecting the lives of those who have not just

Did you know...

that we stopped 30 church roofs from leaking last year thanks to gifts in Wills?

To find out more about leaving us a gift in your Will call Claire Walker on 020 7222 0605 or email legacy@nationalchurchestrust.org



15th century rood screen at St Andrew's church, Holme Hale, Norfolk

© Matthew Byrne

worshipped but who have also been part of the local community. These lives may have shown much Christian piety, but have also shown pride (sometimes bordering on arrogance) and a desire to be immortalised.

Lives of our ancestors

Hence the huge monuments of the medieval and particularly the post medieval periods, which dominate so many churches; from those in small villages through to the cathedrals of our cities. In these monuments we get to know not just the art of the craftsmen but also the lives and human character of our ancestors.

So great is the range of these in terms of historical period and style that I have devoted four chapters to monuments, arranged in terms of the almost theatrical effects they created: piety, pride, war and pathos.



Norman capital showing two men planting a tree, at Leominster Priory, Herefordshire

© Matthew Byrne

These chapters, relating to the great and the good – and the not so good – of English society are, however, balanced by an equal number of chapters showing the lives of the middle and lower classes as shown by the work of contemporary local craftsmen. The point here is that every part of English society has had a role to play in creating our churches.

There are wonderful churches everywhere

While my book attempts to show the remarkable spread of architecture, art and human character to which churches are witnesses, there is one aspect of church buildings that it cannot show; the fact that there are wonderful churches to be discovered everywhere in England and indeed throughout the United Kingdom. They exist in the centres of our great cities and in their suburbs; in commercial centres and in market towns and in villages and remote hamlets. There are even churches where there is little else, to be found; on the fells, on cliff tops and at the end of long narrow country lanes.

Through my work of exploring and photographing churches, I have also been able to explore England. I hope that my new book will help you to do the same.



Reredos by Grinling Gibbons at St Mary Abchurch, City of London

© Matthew Byrne

'The Treasures of English Churches; Witnesses to the History of a Nation' will be published in Spring 2021 by Shire Books. The book will be available from all good bookshops and online. Friends of the National Churches Trust will be able to purchase the book at a specially discounted price and full details will be available on our website in March 2021.

CCLA
GOOD INVESTMENT

The publication of 'The Treasures of English Churches; Witnesses to the History of a Nation' is very kindly supported by CCLA Investment Managers.



The decorated vaulted ceiling of Tewkesbury Abbey, England

The hidden gems of church heritage

by *Elena Curti*



Elena Curti was born in Italy but has spent most of her life in London. She has worked as a journalist in newspapers, television and radio. Elena has always loved visiting churches and in the last few years has specialised in writing about Roman Catholic heritage and conservation.

Behind the simple neo-classical façade of St Charles Borromeo church in Hull, (pictured right) is an interior redolent of the Victorian music hall.

“Think of it as Christ smiling,” said parish priest Fr James Benfield as we surveyed the profusion of gilded columns, domes, garlands, cherubs and plaster saints bathed in the evening sunshine.

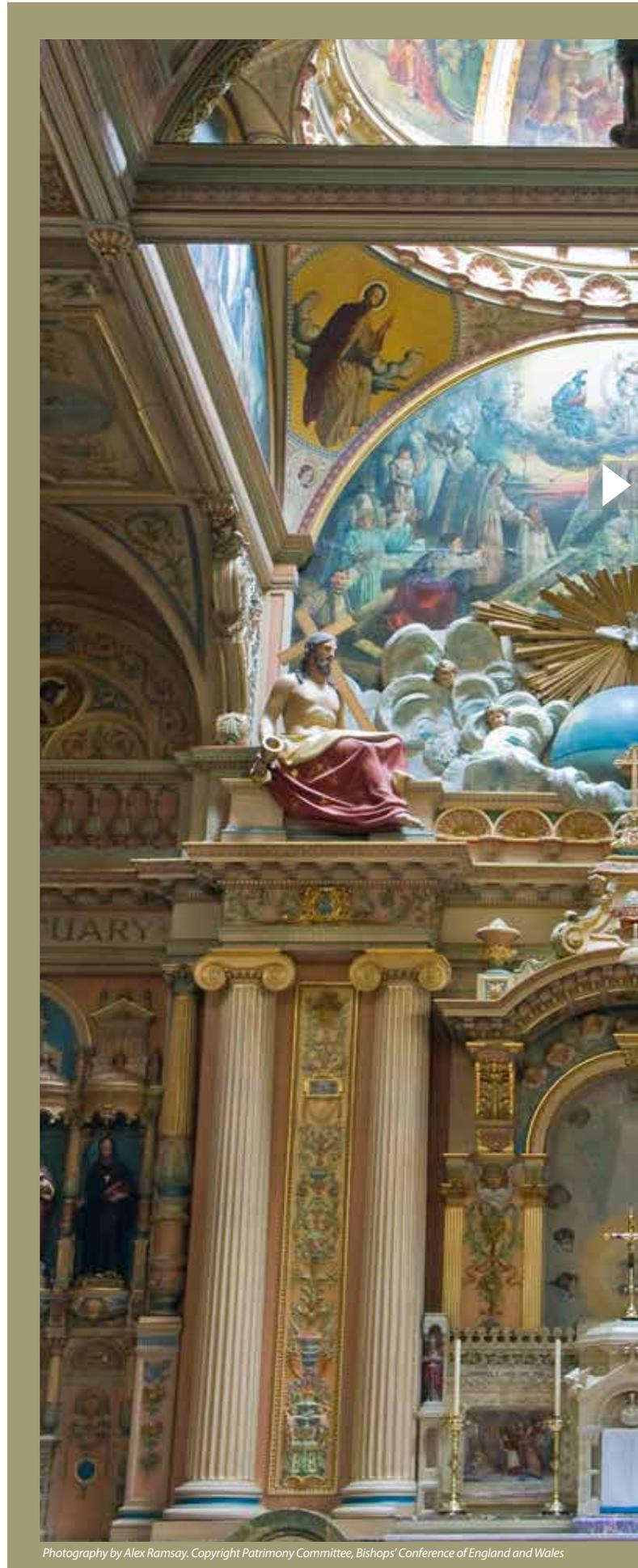
This church is proof, if ever it was needed, that God has a sense of humour.

St Charles’s was one of the highlights of a year spent exploring churches for my book, ‘50 Catholic Churches to See Before You Die’. I knew a few of the churches already but in the course of my research I discovered many more. It was difficult to pick out just 50 so, at the end of each entry, I have listed a number of churches in the vicinity that are ‘worth a detour’.

Not for nothing are so many Catholic churches known as “the Hidden Gem”. A great many are known only to their congregations and a handful of experts.

More than a quarter of the 3,000 Catholic churches in England and Wales are listed buildings. Of these, 34 are Grade I and deemed of exceptional interest. The biggest group is Gothic Revival, but there are also Romanesque, Baroque, Classical, Byzantine, Arts and Crafts, Art Deco and Modernist. Some defy categorisation.

The number of Catholic churches being listed and upgraded in recent years has grown thanks to a research programme called Taking Stock. The project is funded by Historic England and has involved a team of researchers touring England and Wales to assess the architectural and



Photography by Alex Ramsay. Copyright Patrimony Committee, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales



The Church of St Charles Borromeo in Jarratt Street, Hull, was completed in 1829, the year of the Catholic Emancipation Act, and replaced a chapel nearby that was destroyed in the anti-Catholic Gordon Riots of 1780. The building was begun by local architect, John Earle and remodelled by the celebrated Catholic architect, Joseph John Scoles in 1834.

The internal decoration, in a blend of Italian Baroque and Austrian Rococo, was carried out in the 1890s by Heinrich Immenkamp of Munich, who lived in Hull.

The church's heyday seems to have been the early twentieth century when there was often standing room only at Mass. The 1960s saw a decline with the clearance of slums in the city centre. St Charles's fell into disrepair and a leaking roof threatened the fabulous interior. The National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded the church a repair grant totalling £246,000. Historic England has upgraded the church's listing to Grade I. The area around Jarratt Street has revived in recent years, and the church's congregation swelled by Catholic migrants from Eastern Europe, the Philippines, India, Africa and elsewhere.



Photography by Alex Ramsay, Copyright Patrimony Committee, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales



The chancel of St James's, Spanish Place, London



St James's, Spanish Place, London

historic importance of every Catholic church. As a result many more 'listable' churches have been discovered.

The Patrimony Committee of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales advises dioceses, priests and congregations on what they can do to conserve and protect their treasured places of worship. A network of historic churches committees determines applications for changes to listed buildings. This is how the Catholic Church manages the 'Ecclesiastical Exemption', the permission given by the Government to certain Christian denominations to administer the assessments of works to their listed churches in-house.

Parishioners, generally, hold their churches in huge affection and were bereft when they were closed in the lockdown following the outbreak of COVID-19. Churches are the places where Catholics find spiritual nourishment in the Mass, where they pray for themselves and others, where they go to give thanks and to grieve. Families associate their churches with rites of passage: with baptisms, First Communions, Confirmations, weddings and funerals.

Church closures

The steep decline in church attendance and vocations to the priesthood has led to the closure and sale of many churches and the clustering of parishes. Many congregations are ageing and while Catholic migrants have boosted numbers they are often a poor, transient population.

It is still possible to find lovely churches, especially in cities, that are well attended with 100 or more worshippers at weekday Masses, proof of the power of beauty to inspire faith. Nevertheless, keeping even these buildings in good repair is a challenge.

The main threat to the fabric of all Victorian churches is from failing roofs, gutters and crumbling stonework. Although well built in their time, they are reaching the point where original materials have started to fail and need replacing. Those constructed later, especially in the 1960s,

have a myriad of problems relating to flat roofs, deteriorating concrete and leaking windows, the result of experimentation with materials and with cutting edge design.

One of the 50 churches in my book was placed on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register in 2019. Our Lady Star of the Sea and St Michael, Workington (1876), (pictured overleaf) is one of Edward Welby Pugin's last churches, and Early English Gothic perfection. A group of volunteers established the Workington Stella Maris Project in 2016 with the aim of saving the church. In 2018, they were refused a £1.9 million grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. They hope to reapply but the Coronavirus pandemic has put this, and similar projects, in jeopardy.

A glittering sanctuary

If I had to choose a favourite from among the 50 churches in my book it would be St James's, Spanish Place, central London, completed in 1890. Some of the greatest artists of the era were responsible for its decoration, and their work adds up to an exceptionally rich interior. Edward Goldie (1856–1921) designed the church in the Early English Gothic style, with French touches. It is very large and very tall, squeezed into a site surrounded by other buildings.

The description of a jewel box was never more apt, especially for the chancel. St James's is special for its peaceful, prayerful atmosphere and wonderful treasures. Each time I visit I am reminded of the long walk down the central aisle to the glittering sanctuary where I was married. Plenty of others without this personal connection share my view that this is the most beautiful church in London.

Some of the churches in my book are part of Catholic heritage centres and offer a particularly warm welcome to visitors. They include Ushaw, the grand former seminary for the North of England, the Bar Convent, York, and some of the great Benedictine abbeys. Guided tours are available at these and at most of the famous parish churches such as St Giles, Cheadle and St Walburge's, Preston.

Others are becoming more adept at welcoming visitors with guidebooks, small museums and information displays. Nevertheless, when planning a visit, it is essential to phone ahead to check when the church is open. Many are locked outside Mass times and funerals usually take place on weekdays, further limiting access.

Priests and parishioners at historic Catholic churches are proud of their heritage and eager to share it. For those exploring them for the first time, it will be a revelation.



Baptistry at Our Lady Star of the Sea and St Michael, Workington, added in 1947

Appreciating sacred spaces



© Archdiocese of Westminster/
Creative Commons

Appreciation of the Roman Catholic Church's architectural heritage has been growing steadily over the years and each new publication adds to our knowledge and enriches our understanding. Whether built, rather self-effacingly, in

the years before Catholic Emancipation (1829) and the restoration of the Hierarchy (1850) or unashamedly afterwards, all these churches have a story to tell. This latter period had its own architectural emphasis as Catholic people emerged from the shadows, epitomised in the work of the Catholic A. W. N. Pugin – "God's Architect" – pioneer and publicist for the Gothic Revival style.

Describing the architecture of Westminster Cathedral, the poet John Betjeman wrote of being 'Surprised by Joy'. Elena Curti has been surprised by the same joy as she recommends her favourite fifty churches to see before you die. Readers will be moved by the history, the sacrifice, the architecture and artefacts contained within these sacred spaces. All who visit these churches, and all who read this seminal book, will surely be reminded of the words of T. S. Eliot on visiting the church in the Huntingdonshire village of Little Gidding:

*You are not here to verify,
Instruct yourself, or inform curiosity,
Or carry report. You are here to kneel
Where prayer has been valid.*

(Little Gidding 1:43-46)

+George Stack
Archbishop of Cardiff
Vice-President, National Churches Trust

SPECIAL OFFER

Fifty Catholic Churches to See Before You Die is published by Gracewing Books. The retail price is £14.99 but Friends and supporters of the National Churches Trust can get the book for only £10.00, including postage and packing.



To obtain copies, please contact Gracewing Publishing by emailing sales@gracewing.co.uk or by phoning **01568 616835**

Financial Summary, grants and acknowledgements



Visitors discover the history of St Mary's church in Horncastle, Lincolnshire

Valuing our supporter relationships



I am delighted to report that in 2019, excluding legacies, our total income was £1,519,087; that is a 5% increase compared with 2018. This resulted from funding received to develop our ExploreChurches project together with a rise in other fundraised income from trusts and foundations, corporate supporters and our Friends.

On behalf of the churches we support, a very big thank you to everyone who has supported our work. A list of many of the people and organisations that have supported us can be found on page 44.

Together with legacies of £778,444, this income allowed us to pursue our three strategic priorities of preserving heritage, promoting sustainability and inspiring support, together designed to ensure that churches remain open and playing an active role in people's lives. This work includes our grants, our promotion of church tourism through ExploreChurches and a full range of support for church maintenance, including MaintenanceBooker.

Fundraising involves pretty much everyone who works for the National Churches Trust. So in what has been a successful financial year for the Trust, the credit must be shared by all our staff and Trustees.

Sustainability and support

Churches are more often than not packed with amazing architectural features and monuments and have a history that runs back hundreds of years; that's why they are so important. However they are not museums. They are places of worship where communities are built and supported and where people's needs can be met.

It is estimated that, pre COVID-19, nearly 90% of churches were used for community purposes such as playgroups and lunch clubs and for social and cultural activities including concerts and exhibitions.

At a time when so many public buildings are closing, high streets are changing and the long term impact of the coronavirus on society is uncertain, church buildings are places where people can work together for the common good. That's why it's so important to keep them open and in good repair.

Friends scheme

Churches are also places where friendships are made and nourished. The same spirit of companionship and togetherness is evident in our active and growing Friends scheme. 700 new Friends joined us last year; that is an impressive number for a small but growing charity like ours.

I know from the feedback I get from many of our Friends that you support us because you think our work is so very important. But I know that Friends also value the personal touch we bring to our supporter relationships. Last year, I was pleased to have met many Friends at our supporters' events when we were able to talk one-to-one about our work and our future priorities.

2019 concluded with our annual Carol Concert at St James's church in Piccadilly, where we were entertained by some of our very high profile supporters including Bill Bryson, Huw Edwards, Michael Palin, Joe Stilgoe and Penelope Wilton. The church was packed and as the concert ended I felt honoured to be together with over 400 Friends and supporters who were so appreciative of our work.

Due to the coronavirus, we have had to postpone most of our events in 2020. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in what I hope will be happier times.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments about our work, please feel free to contact me at claire.walker@nationalchurchestrust.org

Claire Walker
August 2020.

About the National Churches Trust

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives 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

Structure of the National Churches Trust

The National Churches Trust is a registered charity and is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. It is the successor to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust and the Incorporated Church Building Society. The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees who are appointed by the Trust's joint presidents, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Trustees are appointed for an initial term of five years which can be renewed once for a further five years.

The group also includes a trading subsidiary, NCT Heritage Services Ltd (NCTHS).

Financial summary

Financial resources

Excluding endowments, the funds of the National Churches Trust amounted to £4.0m at the end of 2019. Of this, £3.4m 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 other restricted funds of the Trust, totalling £0.6m, are held to be used in accordance with the wishes of the donors to maintain and enhance churches in general or particular classes of churches. The Trust had endowment funds of £2.4m at the end of 2019. These funds are held to generate investment returns.

Spending in 2019

The Trust awarded £1.3m in grants from its own funds in 2019. Total expenditure decreased marginally in 2019.

	Spending £000s
National Churches Trust Grants to maintain and enhance church buildings*	1,234
Other spending to maintain and enhance church buildings	277
Promoting the benefit of church buildings and inspiring everyone to value and enjoy them	186
Fundraising	330
Services to churches and other heritage buildings	303

*Grants awarded during 2019 less previous awards not claimed of £52,000.
In addition the Trust recommended grants of £59,000 awarded by other charities.

Total 2,330

Where the money came from

Total income (not including unrealised gains on investments) decreased in 2019 compared to 2018 resulting principally from lower legacy income. Unrealised gains on investments amounted to £707,000 in 2019.

	Where the money came from £000s
Trusts and Foundations	626
Support from Friends and other donations	673
Legacies	778
Investment returns** & other income	933

** Includes unrealised gains on investments.

Total 3,010

The Financial Summary above does not comprise the full statutory accounts of the National Churches Trust and is a summary of selected financial information. Our full Financial Statements for 2019 are available on request. Please email: info@nationalchurchestrust.org

The Trust awarded or recommended 188

Cornerstone Grants

Aberdeen, Cathedral of St Machar, Scotland	£40,000
Argyll and Bute, Tiree, Tiree Parish church, Scotland	£20,000
Armagh, Tullyherron, St Teresa, Northern Ireland	£15,000
Bedfordshire, Blunham, St Edmund or St James	£10,000
Berkshire, Leckhampstead, St James	£15,000
Buckinghamshire, Grendon Underwood, St Leonard	£20,000
Cambridgeshire, Cheveley St Mary and the Holy Host of Heaven	£10,000
Cornwall, St Just-in-Penwith, St Just, Penzance	£10,000
County Down, Holywood, St Philip and St James, Northern Ireland	£14,000
Denbighshire, St Asaph, St Asaph and St Kentigern, Wales	£15,000
Derbyshire, Bolsover, Hilltop Methodist church	£5,000
Derbyshire, Chaddesden, St Mary	£20,000
Durham, Dalton-Le-Dale, St Andrew	£10,000
Eilean Siar, South Uist, Howmore church, Scotland	£20,000
Essex, Mount Bures, St John the Baptist	£8,000
Gloucestershire, Pitchcombe, St John the Baptist	£10,000
Gloucestershire, Redmarley D'Abitot, St Bartholomew	£15,000
Hampshire, Appleshaw, St Peter-in-the-Wood	£10,000
Hampshire, Colden Common, Holy Trinity	£5,000
Herefordshire, Burghill, St Mary the Virgin	£15,000
Hertfordshire, Reed, St Mary	£10,000
Inverness-shire, Eskadale, St Mary, Scotland	£20,000
Isle of Wight, Brighstone, St Mary	£15,000
Isle of Wight, Chale, St Andrew	£15,000
Isle of Wight, St Helens, St Helen	£10,000
Lancashire, Burnley, All Saints	£10,000
Lancashire, Warton, St Paul	£10,000
Leicestershire, North Kilworth, St Andrew	£15,000
Leicestershire, Thorpe Arnold, St Mary the Virgin	£15,000
Lincolnshire, Broughton, St Mary	£10,000
Lincolnshire, Long Sutton, St Mary	£10,000
Lincolnshire, Stickford, St Helen	£13,000
Lincolnshire, Wickenby, St Peter and St Lawrence	£14,000
London, Bow, St Mary and Holy Trinity	£10,000
Londonderry, Aghadowey Presbyterian church, Northern Ireland	£20,000
Norfolk, Beighton, All Saints	£20,000
Norfolk, Old Buckenham, All Saints	£10,000
Norfolk, Thursford, St Andrew	£10,000
North Yorkshire, Newton On Ouse, All Saints	£10,000
North Yorkshire, York, Trinity Methodist church	£25,000
North Yorkshire, York, York Baptist church	£10,000
Northamptonshire, Flore, All Saints	£10,000
Northamptonshire, Middleton Cheney, All Saints	£20,000
Northamptonshire, Watford Village, St Peter and St Paul	£10,000
Powys, Churchstoke, St Nicholas, Wales	£10,000
Shropshire, Minsterley, Holy Trinity	£30,000
Shropshire, Moreton Corbet, St Bartholomew	£10,000
Somerset, Charlton Musgrove, St Stephen	£17,000
Somerset, Taunton, St John the Evangelist	£20,000
Somerset, Timberscombe, St Petrock	£10,000
Suffolk, Bury St Edmunds, St John the Evangelist	£20,000
Suffolk, Cavendish, St Mary the Virgin	£15,000
Suffolk, Drinkstone, All Saints	£24,000
Tyne and Wear, Newcastle upon Tyne, All Saints	£30,000
Tyne and Wear, Newcastle upon Tyne, St Wilfrid	£5,000
Warwickshire, Burton Dassett, All Saints	£10,000
West Yorkshire, Leeds, Roundhay, St Edmund	£10,000
Worcestershire, Norton Juxta Kempsey, St James the Great	£15,000
Worcestershire, Overbury, St Faith	£10,000
£845,000	

Gateway Grants

Bristol, St Stephen with St James	£5,000
County Down, Conlig, Conlig Presbyterian church, Northern Ireland	£5,095
Essex, Harlow, St Paul	£7,750
London, Chingford, St Peter and St Paul	£9,000
London, Clapton Common, St Thomas	£9,150
London, Colindale, St Augustine	£6,000
London, Great Stanmore, St John the Evangelist	£2,800
London, Holborn, St George the Martyr	£10,000
London, Lower Clapton, St James the Great	£5,000
Norfolk, Attleborough, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	£1,900
Tyne and Wear, Cullercoats, St George	£3,500
West Sussex, Shoreham-By-Sea, St Mary de Haura	£4,000
£69,195	

In 2019, National Churches Trust grants helped remove 24 churches from Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register.

Foundation Grants

Aberdeenshire, Gourdon, Gourdon Mission Hall, Scotland	£2,150
Antrim, Belfast, Bloomfield Presbyterian church, Northern Ireland	£6,800
Bedfordshire, Bedford, Goldington, St Mary the Virgin	£8,500
Bedfordshire, Keysoe, St Mary the Virgin	£787
Bedfordshire, Yelden, St Mary	£5,000
Cambridgeshire, Southoe, St Leonard	£509
Cardiff, Gabalfa Baptist church, Wales	£1,000
Ceredigion, Llandysul, St Tysul, Wales	£3,917
Cornwall, Lelant, St Uny	£4,550
County Down, Belfast, Christian Fellowship church, Northern Ireland	£3,000
Cumbria, Cowgill, St John the Evangelist	£3,000
Cumbria, Murton-cum-Hilton, St John the Baptist	£1,323
Cumbria, Newlands, Newlands church	£2,773
Derbyshire, Monyash, St Leonard	£2,185
Derbyshire, Taddington, St Michael and All Angels	£8,461
Derbyshire, Twyford, St Andrew	£8,914
Devon, Exeter, St Thomas	£1,345
Devon, Harberton, St Andrew	£5,725
Devon, Hawkchurch, St John the Baptist	£5,500
Dorset, Creekmoor, Christ church	£9,091
Dumfries and Galloway, Whithorn, St Ninian, Scotland	£8,465
Dunbartonshire, Cardross, Parish Church, Scotland	£7,000
East Sussex, Brighton, Kempton, St Mary	£5,984
East Sussex, Chiddingfold, Parish Church	£3,300
East Sussex, St Leonard's-on-Sea, St John the Evangelist	£9,331
East Yorkshire, Hedon, St Augustine	£915
East Yorkshire, Nunburholme, St James	£5,000
East Yorkshire, Wressle, St John of Beverley	£2,000
Gloucestershire, Rudolf, St Mary	£4,734
Gloucestershire, Mid-Wyedean churches (5 buildings)	£2,405
Greater Manchester, Manchester, Whitefield Methodist church	£10,000
Greater Manchester, Salford, St Clement and St Matthias	£4,600
Gwynedd, Caernarfon, Castle Square Presbyterian church, Wales	£2,000
Herefordshire, Kinnersley, St James	£4,679
Herefordshire, Monnington on Wye, St Mary	£7,044
Herefordshire, Litlington, Litlington Congregational church	£1,875
Kent, Ulcombe, All Saints	£2,500
Kent, Ulcombe, All Saints	£4,564
Lancashire, Mellor, St Mary	£3,000

grant awards in 2019, totalling £1,344,474

Lancashire, Newtown, St Mark	£1,175	Lancashire, Preston, St Michael and All Angels	£500
Leicestershire, Sproxtton, St Bartholomew	£3,000	Lancashire, Whelley, St Stephen	£425
Leicestershire, Willoughby Waterleys, St Mary	£6,462	Lancashire, Wigan, St George	£550
Lincolnshire, Barrowby, All Saints	£7,445	Liverpool and Merseyside, Birkenhead, St Catherine	£339
Lincolnshire, Scamblesby with Cawkwell, St Martin	£3,000	Liverpool and Merseyside, St Helens, St Helen	£397
Liverpool and Merseyside, Birkenhead, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception	£4,907	London, Mottingham, St Edward the Confessor	£504
Liverpool and Merseyside, Birkenhead, St Joseph	£5,666	London, Surbiton, St Matthew	£250
Liverpool and Merseyside, Wallasey, Our Lady Star of the Sea and St Joseph	£5,530	Monmouthshire, Caerwent, St Stephen and St Tathan, Wales	£364
Liverpool and Merseyside, Wallasey, English Martyrs church	£3,663	Norfolk, Feltwell, St Mary the Virgin	£497
London, Catford, St Laurence	£3,530	Rutland, Oakham, All Saints	£275
London, Catford, St Laurence	£9,294	Warwickshire, Hillmorton, St John the Baptist	£437
London, East Dulwich, St John the Evangelist	£2,705	West Midlands, Oldswinford, St Mary	£475
London, Holborn, St George the Martyr	£1,137	West Midlands, Wylde Green, Emmanuel church	£475
London, Hornsey, St Mary with St George	£7,563	West Yorkshire, Halifax, All Saints	£398
Mid Lothian, Edinburgh, Polwarth Parish church, Scotland	£1,600		£8,062
Mid Lothian, Penicuik, St James the Less, Scotland	£1,230		
Monmouthshire, Monmouth Methodist church, Wales	£3,000		
Moray, Dyke, Dyke Parish church, Scotland	£7,500		
Newport, St Mary, Wales	£9,920		
Norfolk, Whissonsett, St Mary	£3,000		
North Yorkshire, Long Preston, St Mary the Virgin	£595		
North Yorkshire, Norton, Trinity Methodist church	£1,180		
North Yorkshire, Skipwith, St Helen	£2,300		
North Yorkshire, Stillingfleet, St Helen	£2,697		
Nottinghamshire, Nottingham, Wollaton, Kingswood Methodist church	£1,625		
Nottinghamshire, Tollerton, St Peter	£2,500		
Oxfordshire, Hethe, St Edmund and St George	£7,718		
Oxfordshire, Spelsbury, All Saints	£1,000		
Renfrewshire, Paisley, The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Scotland	£2,500		
Shropshire, Condover, St Andrew and St Mary	£4,000		
Somerset, Castle Cary, All Saints	£8,000		
Somerset, North Wootton, St Peter	£2,000		
South Lanarkshire, East Kilbride, Moncreiff Parish, Scotland	£2,041		
South Yorkshire, Sheffield, Richmond Road, St Catherine of Siena	£3,000		
Staffordshire, Cannock, Bethany Baptist church	£2,250		
Staffordshire, Rugeley, St Augustine	£6,180		
West Glamorgan, Briton Ferry, St Mary, Wales	£9,841		
West Midlands, Coventry, Salem Chapel	£7,150		
West Midlands, Coventry, St Osburg	£3,250		
West Midlands, Coventry, St Osburg	£9,605		
West Sussex, Chichester, St Paul	£3,000		
West Yorkshire, Halifax, St Hilda	£3,000		
West Yorkshire, Huddersfield, Holy Trinity	£750		
West Yorkshire, Sowerby Bridge, Christ Church	£738		
Wiltshire, Marden, All Saints	£3,000		
Wrexham, Gresford, All Saints, Wales	£8,544		
	£363,717		

Grants recommended

12 other grants totalling £58,500 were recommended and awarded on behalf of other funders.



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Birmingham, Rubery, St Chad	£425
Birmingham, Small Heath, All Saints	£387
Cambridgeshire, Hardwick, St Mary	£222
Cornwall, North Petherwin, St Paternus	£550
Hertfordshire, Oxhey, St Matthew	£250
Kent, Sittingbourne, St Michael	£342

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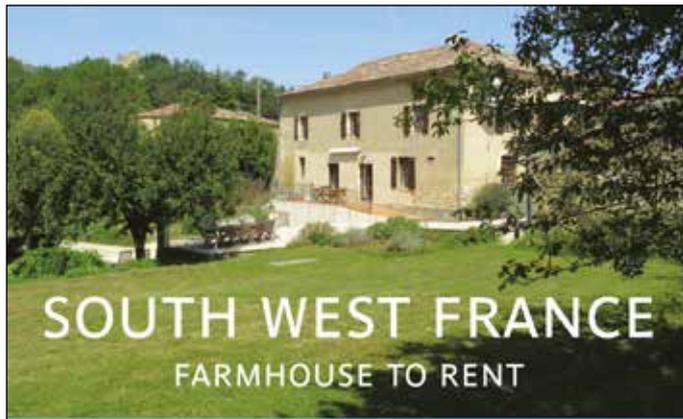
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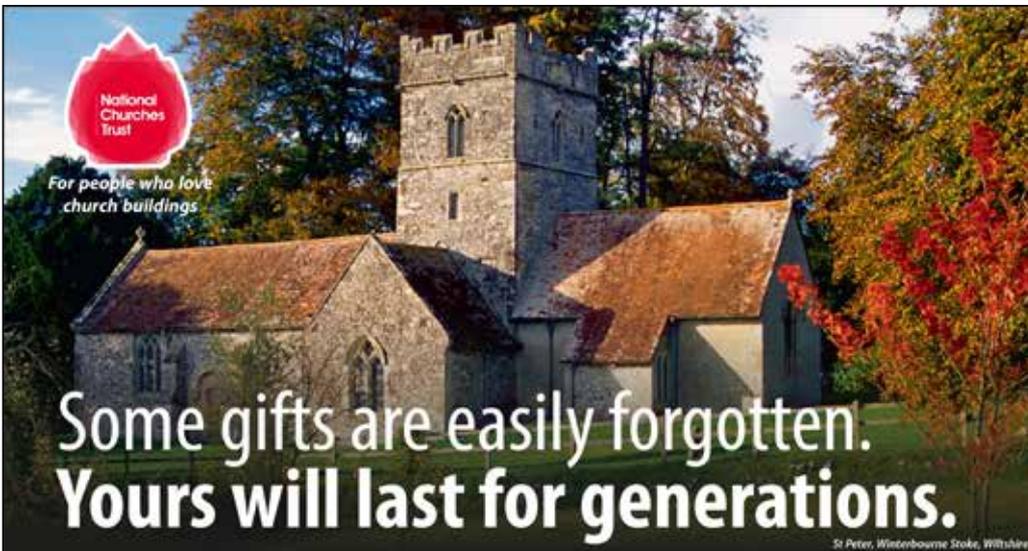
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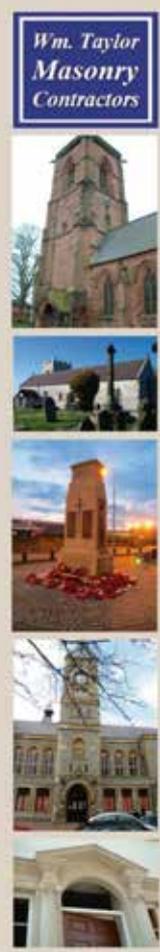
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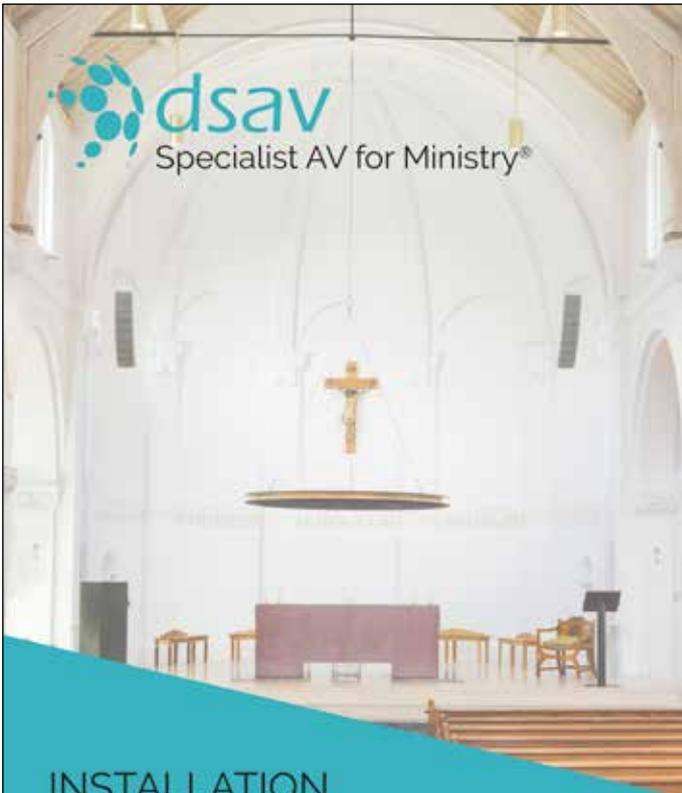
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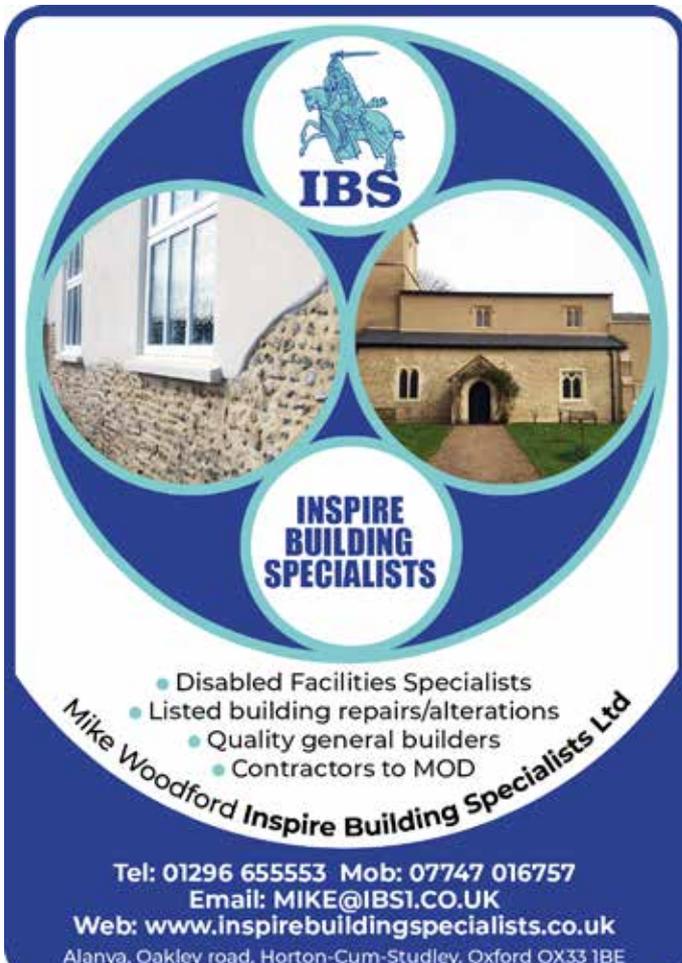
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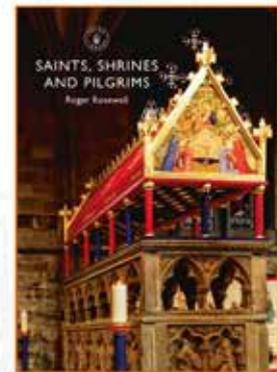
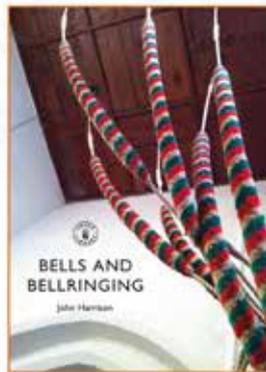
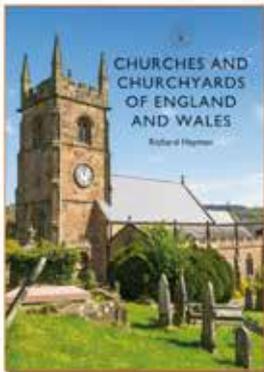
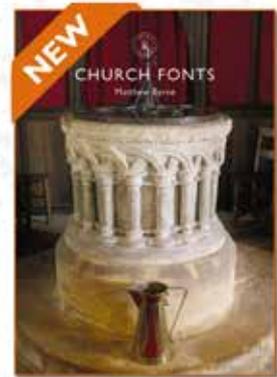
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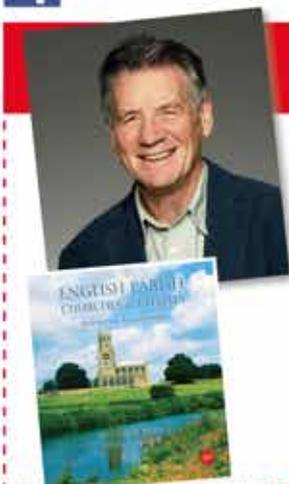


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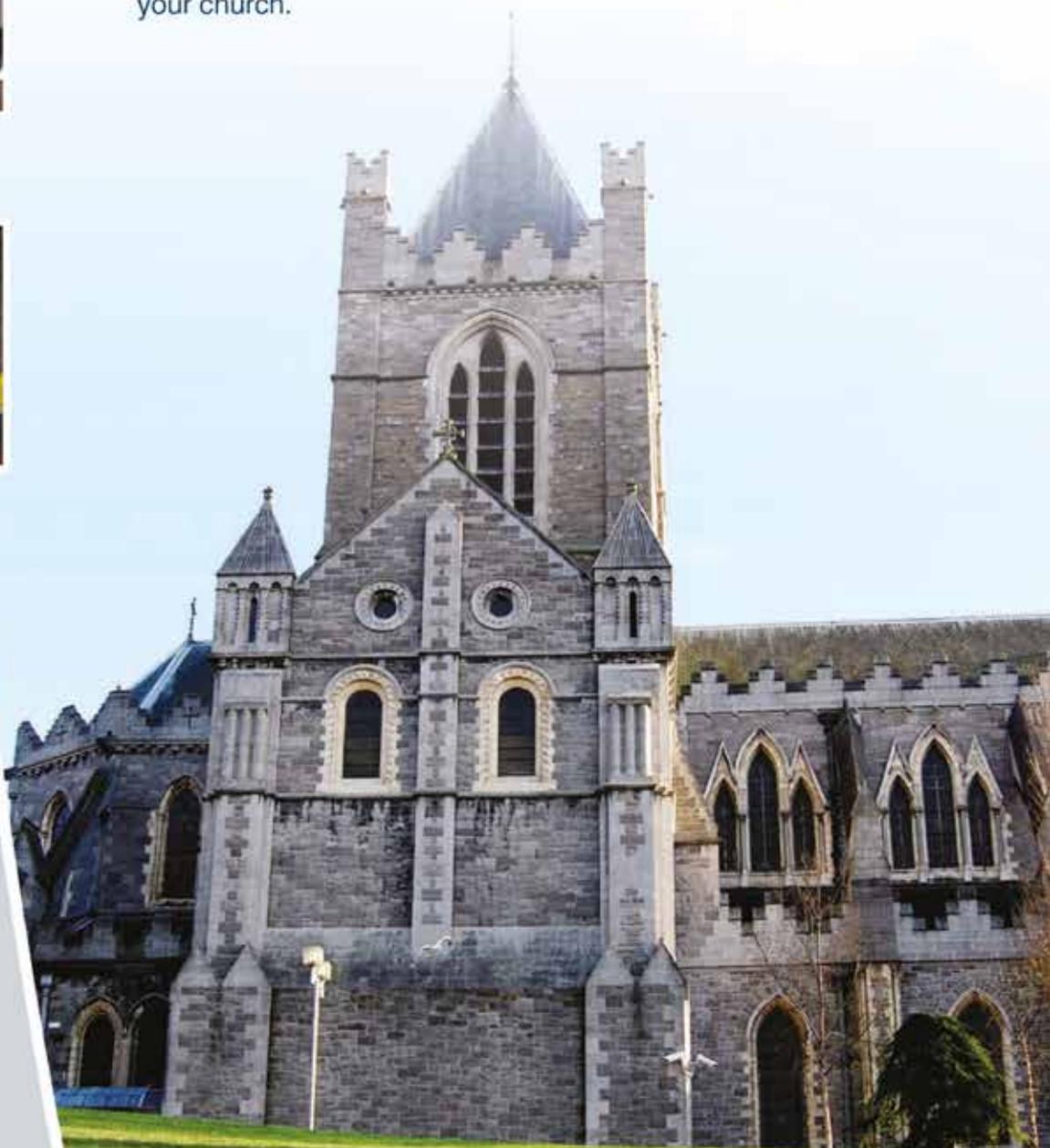
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