

# Friends

of the National  
Churches Trust



SPRING 2021

## inside

## Get ready to explore the UK's churches

**Doors are beginning to open and welcome signs are appearing as the UK's churches and chapels emerge from lockdown ready to greet worshippers and visitors once again.**

As travel restrictions begin to lift during the year, many of us will be taking the opportunity to venture out. What could be better than to stay local and visit churches near to your home or as part of a short break or staycation in the UK.

Our church visiting website ExploreChurches makes it easy to plan a day out visiting the best church heritage in the UK. The website provides a guide to the history and architecture of churches, insightful stories about the building and its people as well as useful visitor information including



opening times and contact information.

Key features of the site include the Visitor Guides to the best churches in English counties from Cheshire to Wiltshire; exciting articles

showcasing churches and chapels in Wales and Northern Ireland as well as themed explorations of the churches of Sir Christopher Wren and the UK's cathedrals.

Visit [explorechurches.org](https://explorechurches.org)

### Five churches to discover on ExploreChurches



© Michael Day

#### Surprises inside

St Mary's, Kempley, Gloucestershire has the most complete medieval wall art in England.

#### Magnificent monuments

Churches are brimming with magnificent glass, carvings and sculptures. St Giles, Cheadle, Staffordshire, is considered A.W.N. Pugin's finest masterpiece.



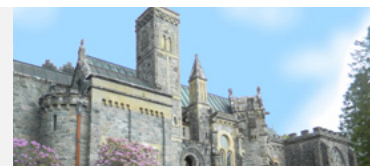
© Mark Kirby



**Pilgrim church** St Hywyn's medieval pilgrim church stands above the shore of the Irish Sea, nestled in the old fishing village of Aberdaron. It was the last parish of poet RS Thomas.

#### Splendid setting

St Conan's Kirk in Argyll and Bute is just as beautiful as the scenery that stretches before it.



© John Lord



**Wildlife haven** St Andrew's church, Ashby Peurorum, Lincolnshire provides spectacular views across the Wolds and is the perfect place to rest for lunch.



### Hove hits the heights

See page 3



### Funding boost for Sheffield's Baptists

See page 6

# Safeguarding the future of churches



**Churches have done so much to support local people during Covid-19. One of the most impressive recent examples is the way that local parish churches have been used as vaccination centres, helping our NHS in the continuing battle against the coronavirus.**

The good news is that meeting friends and family will soon be possible, as will communal worship and travel within the UK.

Our ExploreChurches website will help churches get back on track, many of which have been struggling financially. Bringing to life places of worship, ExploreChurches makes it easy to discover the UK's wonderful churches.

Once through the doors of a beautiful historic church, most visitors make a donation, buy a guidebook or postcards and often become long

term supporters by joining a Friends group or just spreading the word to others. If you have not yet looked at the website, please do so and share the link, [explorechurches.org](http://explorechurches.org)

## Benefits of churches

Like me, you may have been hearing a lot in the media about the future of churches. Over the next few years moves to close church buildings throughout the UK may accelerate. Churches, some people say, are expensive to run and in the age of digital worship are an irrelevance. I beg to disagree.

Our report 'The House of Good', which we published last year, clearly demonstrated that church buildings are the source of an enormous amount of social and community benefit. In financial terms, their value is over £12.4 billion a year. In human terms, their value is immeasurable.

Whether as a key part of our national heritage, as places of worship or as community hubs, the UK needs its churches. Our role is to help more of them become sustainable by securing their heritage and enabling them to play a full part in local life.

Over the coming months, we will engage with the government and key church and heritage organisations to make the case for church buildings and for financial support.

Thank you for your continuing interest in our work. The generosity of our Friends, funders and supporters allowed us to help over 260 churches with grants in 2020. Even in the midst of Covid-19, we are privileged to carry on our work to safeguard the future of the UK's church buildings.

*Elaine Walker*

**COMING SOON  
THURSDAY 6 MAY**



## A conversation with Hugh Dennis

We are delighted that Hugh Dennis, comedian, presenter, actor and writer, will be joining us for a special online event in which he will share his love of churches, tell us what life was like growing up in a vicarage, and the perils and pitfalls of being an actor. Hugh has been a regular panellist on the BBC Two satirical comedy show Mock the Week and in February 2021 he started presenting The Great British Dig on More 4 TV.

**Numbers are limited for this online event, so please do book early at [www.nationalchurchestrust.org/events](http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/events) or email [hello@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:hello@nationalchurchestrust.org). Ticket sales will support our work.**

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## Conservation Rope Access Masonry

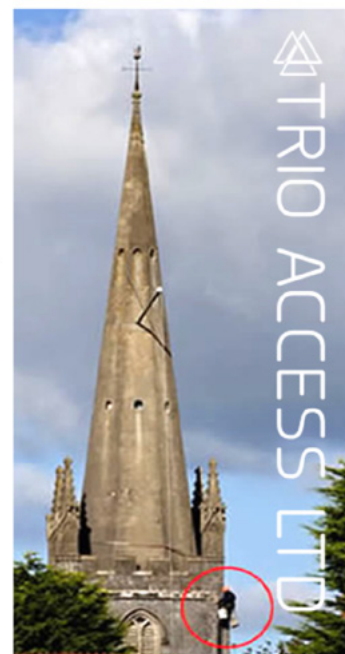
We undertake many specialist structural repairs and restorations at height and in high level situations, including in-depth surveys using Rope Access methods which remove the excessive expense of intrusive use of scaffolding. This is achieved through our discrete access methods that are in complete sympathy with the buildings on which we work.

Appreciation of the often fragile nature of historic buildings that need to gracefully age drives our gentle approach with careful rigging plans. Due to our very careful approach we have always been able to establish unquestionable anchor points, which leaves very little we are unable to achieve using rope access techniques.



Current conservation and economic conditions mean resourceful and successful companies are continually looking for innovative ways to reduce costs and maintain the status of their buildings.

[www.trioaccess.com](http://www.trioaccess.com)





# Our new book celebrates church treasures

**In May we will be launching 'The Treasures of English Churches: Witnesses to the History of a Nation', a new book celebrating some of the greatest art, architecture and furniture to be found in English churches.**

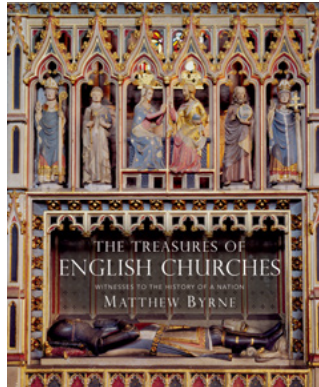
Matthew Byrne's new and luxuriously illustrated book reveals the stunning treasures of churches and invites readers to share his forty-year-long passion for photographing and exploring these unique buildings.

"I hope this book will help encourage readers to venture out and discover for themselves England's wonderful churches" said Matthew. "Getting more people to visit churches is one way in which these magnificent buildings can be safeguarded for the future."

## Breathtaking highlights

From the sublime to the curious, the sacred to the secular, Matthew has brought together breathtaking highlights of artistry, architecture and artisan skills that will inspire, uplift and spark interest in the glories of church heritage.

'The Treasures of English Churches' is the latest book by Matthew Byrne, a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society,



who has been exploring, studying and photographing churches for nearly 40 years.

## Joining gift

In 2017 we partnered with Michael on the publication of his book 'English Parish Churches and Chapels', which many new Friends have received as a joining gift.

Publication of the book has been generously supported by CCLA Investment Management,



who have also made possible our offer of the book as a joining gift to new Friends.

The book is published by Bloomsbury/Shire for the National Churches Trust.

## SPECIAL OFFER TO FRIENDS

For a limited time, you will receive a free pack of unique notelets featuring Matthew's photographs and get free postage and packing, when you purchase a copy of 'The Treasures of English Churches' directly from us. Reserve your copy for just £20 at [nationalchurchestrust.org/friendstreasure](http://nationalchurchestrust.org/friendstreasure), by emailing [hello@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:hello@nationalchurchestrust.org) or by phoning 0207 222 0605.

# CCLA

GOOD INVESTMENT

**Thanks to the generosity of CCLA Investment Management, all proceeds of books bought directly from us will help our work supporting churches and chapels.**



**With the help of a £40,000 National Churches Trust Cornerstone Grant, All Saints church in Hove, Sussex has been able to restore its two east towers and ensure the future of a magnificent building, originally designed by John Pearson, best known for his work on Truro Cathedral.**

Pictured on the north east tower are (l-r): Father Ryan Green; Richard Andrews, Church Architect from Carden & Godfrey; Paul Tunbridge, Quantity Surveyor from BLB Surveyors and Jerry Sojka, Project Manager from Universal Stone.

## Good VAT news for churches

**The recent extension of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme by the Government to March 2022 has come as a great relief to the churches and chapels we support that are undergoing or preparing building projects.**

The Scheme has been of great help in keeping church heritage in good repair. It pays grants to cover the VAT incurred on urgent structural work and new roofs and reduces the burden on congregations to raise funds.

Without it a church would have to add 20% onto the



cost of a repair project, a substantial increase in costs. The scheme has paid out over £300m since its inception and assisted over 13,000 buildings.

Extending the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme was one of the measures in our Church Buildings Manifesto, published in 2019. We very much hope that when it is next reviewed, a longer term extension can be guaranteed so as to provide certainty for churches.



# The National Churches Trust

**We are proud to be the only charity supporting church buildings open for worship throughout the UK.**

Our national support for churches received a boost this year with the announcement of two funding streams.



In 2021 we will be administering £60,000 of funding exclusively earmarked for Scotland, thanks to The Pilgrim Trust. The money will pay for 'Foundation Grants for Maintenance' supporting projects including gutter and roof repairs. The grants will be administered in partnership with Scotland's Churches Trust.

In 2020, our grants helped eight churches in Scotland with funding of £75,500. Churches benefitting included St Mary's Scottish Episcopal Church in Port Glasgow, the Cathedral Church of St Machar in Aberdeen and Lochgilphead Parish Church.

Over the past five years, we have provided grants totalling more than £500,000 to help churches and chapels of a wide range of denominations throughout Scotland.

## Northern Ireland

Meanwhile, church and chapel buildings in Northern Ireland will benefit from £270,000 of funding thanks to a grant awarded to the National Churches Trust by the Department for Communities.

£200,000 is boosting our grants for urgent repairs and for the provision of modern community facilities such as toilets and kitchens. £50,000 will help churches and chapels developing repair and maintenance projects, including funding for drone surveys to help identify problems with buildings and to scope possible work. £20,000 will help us

further extend the reach of maintenance and tourism resources and training.

Our work in Northern Ireland already includes Treasure Ireland, a project which is helping churches and chapels with maintenance, grants for repairs and tourism initiatives.

Since 2018, we have helped 35 churches and chapels in Northern Ireland with funding of £200,000 for urgent repairs, the provision of toilets, kitchens and other community facilities and essential maintenance. Thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Pilgrim Trust, the Department for Communities and the Wolfson Foundation.



Drone's eye view of St Guaire Church, Aghadowey

## DIARY DATES

**10 May** Nominations open for the 2021 UK Church Architecture Awards. The King of Prussia Gold Medal is awarded for the best church repair and conservation architecture and The Presidents' Award for the best new church architecture and for reordering, extensions or alterations to existing church buildings. Projects completed in the last three years can be entered and you can nominate your own church, or ask your church architect to do so on your behalf.

[nationalchurchestrust.org/architectureawards](http://nationalchurchestrust.org/architectureawards)



**11 September** Get your bikes and boots ready for Ride + Stride for Churches. Supported by the National Churches Trust, it's the single largest source of income for many County Churches Trusts enabling them to make grants to churches and chapels. The Covid-19 pandemic impacted on the usual plans for Ride+Stride in 2020, however many counties managed to hold their event with some raising more money than in normal years. There are many exciting plans for 2021 so do please support the event and get new people involved.

[ridestride.org](http://ridestride.org)

## Church of the Week



© UPI / Alamy Stock Photo

Each Friday our website features a 'Church of the Week'. It may have outstanding features, or connections with an historical event, have done good work in its community or received a grant from the National Churches Trust. We recently featured All Saints, Margaret Street in London, which is one of Andrew Lloyd Webber's favourite churches.



© David Iliff (CC-BY-SA3.0)

All Saints, Margaret Street, London

Please do visit our website and see if your favourite church has been chosen. [nationalchurchestrust.org/churchoftheweek](http://nationalchurchestrust.org/churchoftheweek)

## Tile appeal

A special 'National Churches Trust' tile now graces the new porch roof at St James's church Leckhampstead. The tile is a way the church is saying thanks to us for a £20,000 Cornerstone Grant awarded in 2020 towards their roof repair as well as our special £2,500 Friends' Vote Grant.





# Methodist Chapels, past, present and future



John Wesley

**We are the only charity to support church buildings of all denominations throughout the UK and since 2007 have provided grants to over 70 Methodist churches and chapels. In a special feature Sarah Hollingdale, the Heritage Officer for the Methodist Church, outlines the history of Methodism and its buildings.**

Originally, Methodists had no churches of their own. As a movement within the Church of England, Methodists were encouraged to attend their local parish church, and meet with other Methodists in addition to, rather than in replacement of, Sunday services. If the Methodists did have any 'church' at this point, it was the great outdoors!

John Wesley first preached outdoors at Hanham Mount on 8 April 1739, beginning a

tradition that was upheld by preachers and missionaries for generations.

When the Methodists did start erecting their own buildings, it was to serve the needs of their local community. Religious societies in Bristol asked John Wesley for a 'new room' where they could meet and pray. At The New Room, Methodists ran a school, offered food and clothes to the poor, and operated a free medical dispensary. Almost immediately they outgrew the building, and a structure double the original size had to be built in 1748.

However, growing resentment towards the Methodists meant that the building was also designed to shield its congregation; the



The New Room

ground floor of The New Room had no windows to protect prayer meeting attendees from stone-throwing mobs.

As the Methodist movement developed and began offering communion to its members, chapels of their own were required. City Road Chapel in London, now Wesley's Chapel, was the first purpose-built Methodist chapel. It was built in 1778, not far from Aldersgate Bridge, where John Wesley was famously 'strangely warmed' by an encounter with God. The auditorium design of the chapel was crucial, ensuring that all attendees could hear the preacher clearly.

## Octagonal chapels

This was to become a key feature of Methodist chapels. While most, like City Road Chapel, were rectangular, John Wesley had a penchant for octagonal chapels, as he believed that the octagon shape carried sound best. A few examples of these remain, such as Heptonstall Chapel, and St John's in Arbroath.

Through the 19th century, Methodist chapels appeared at pace. There was an emphasis on having a chapel in each community, rather than encouraging people to travel to larger central locations. This resulted in a huge number of Methodist

chapels – a number which increased once Methodism diverged into different threads, with some villages having a Wesleyan, Primitive and United Methodist chapel!

The architecture of these chapels varied; from huge, gothic, cathedral-like structures, to the pre-fabricated 'tin tabernacle' chapels. Though money was often raised at local level, architects of national significance were employed. Long Street Methodist Church, for example, is an arts and crafts masterpiece designed by Edgar Wood.

As congregations declined or relocated during the 20th century, many chapels were rendered redundant. However, Methodist chapels have continued to be built or modernised in many places, reflecting the needs of that community.

For example, in 2020 the National Churches Trust generously funded renovation work at Edale. This has ensured that one of the oldest Methodist chapels remains of use to both locals and visitors.

Across the country, Methodist chapels are remaining relevant by seeking

new ways to reach their communities. At Leigh on Sea, Memory Worship services bring people with and without dementia together, to worship and share fellowship. Lantern Methodist Church combines a chapel and an arts centre under one roof. The Trinity Centre in Cardiff, which has developed out of the work of Trinity Methodist Church, supports asylum seekers and refugees by offering language classes, parent and toddler groups, and foodbanks.

Find out more:  
[methodistheritage.org.uk](http://methodistheritage.org.uk)



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**ASSISTING TO APPLY FOR CONSENT FOR PROPOSED WORKS**

We are happy to provide our expertise and experience to help with applying for consent, whether it be helping to document electrical additions on a wider proposal or providing a lighting design to prove lux levels to enable you to get a faculty

**WORKING TO ENGAGE WITH TRUSTEES AND PCC'S TO ENSURE CONGRUENCE**

Commonly we find that other members may have differing views on developing a project. What is not important to one member may be really important to another. We are happy to attend committee meetings to discuss the proposed works and answer any questions



**APPROVED CONTRACTOR**

## Grants in 2021



### Preventative Maintenance Micro-Grants

**Our Micro-Grants of up to £500**

to support the cost of maintenance work booked on our MaintenanceBooker website.



### Foundation Grants for Maintenance

**Grants of £500 – £5,000**

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**

to help churches in 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**

for urgent and essential structural repair projects with estimated costs of at least £100,000 and for installing kitchens and toilets with estimated costs of at least £30,000.

Details at:  
[nationalchurchestrust.org/grants](http://nationalchurchestrust.org/grants)

# Building a future for churches

**67 churches across the UK are being helped with grants totalling £611,000 in our first round of funding to support places of worship in 2021.**

We are supporting a tremendous range of churches including very important Grade I listed Church of England heritage in Dorset, Herefordshire and Suffolk; a Baptist chapel in Sheffield which has a focus on helping local people in need and nationally significant churches in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



**Catherine Townsend, our Head of Church Support, said:** "Our latest funding is a much needed lifeline

for churches and chapels, many of which have found it hard to raise money for building projects during the Covid-19 lockdowns. Our grants will help safeguard unique local heritage and help communities as the UK begins to emerge from the current restrictions. We are

determined to support as many churches as we can in 2021."

"The help of our amazing Friends and supporters and the commitment to our work of our partners allows us to make an incredible difference to churches and the people they support. Thanks to all of you who allow us to build a brighter future for the church buildings we love and cherish."

£135,000 of the funding is provided by Wolfson Fabric Repair Grants, as part of our partnership with the Wolfson Foundation to support listed churches in the UK.

### Cemetery Road Baptist Church, Sheffield

**A £17,500 Cornerstone Grant will fund urgent window repairs and upgrades to toilets. The work is part of an ambitious plan to return the building to the heart of the community.**

The church was founded in 1839 and as the membership grew, the congregation moved to the existing three-storey building, constructed in brick, stone and slate in 1859. It has been the largest Baptist church in Sheffield for decades and during the Covid-19



pandemic the church has been actively supporting the local community.

## Southwell, Tyrrell & Co.

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Food Cycle volunteers prepare a community meal from reclaimed waste food saved from landfill at Cemetery Road Baptist Church



# and chapels with your support



**St Peter and St Paul, Blandford Forum, Dorset**

**A £20,000 Cornerstone Grant plus a £7,500 Wolfson Fabric Repair Grant will help the Grade I listed church, which is on the Historic England 'Heritage At Risk' Register, to carry out urgent repairs to the roofs and high level masonry.**

The church is the centrepiece of one of the best surviving Georgian market towns and is one of

the 'Thousand Best Churches' chosen by Simon Jenkins.

The church runs a highly popular community kitchen and in February volunteer drivers delivered decorated bags (pictured below) containing cake, cheese scones and a sandwich plus a welcome card to 42 addresses.



**St Michael and All Angels, Croft, Herefordshire**

**A £10,000 Cornerstone Grant plus a £10,000 Wolfson Fabric Repair Grant will pay for urgent repairs to the roof and cupola of this Grade I listed church. The work will enable the church to be removed from the Historic England 'Heritage At Risk' Register.**

The small church is situated in the beautiful grounds of Croft Castle, owned by the National Trust. The church, however, is still a working church and is looked after by the parish.



The beautiful, tiny church contains a hugely impressive 16th century tomb of Sir Richard Croft, Sheriff of Herefordshire and his wife Eleanor (pictured above). The stand-out feature of the church is the bell-turret of around 1700 with its leaded ogee-shaped cupola.



**Kirkcaldy Old Kirk, Fife**

**A £10,000 Cornerstone Grant plus a £7,500 Wolfson Fabric Repair Grant will fund urgent tower, roof and window repairs.**

Kirkcaldy Old Kirk is the oldest building in continuous use in the town and today is a non-denominational Christian building. Founded by Columban monks from Iona in the 7th century, after the Reformation it became Kirkcaldy Parish Church, with Revd George Gillespie playing a key part in securing Presbyterianism.

The 15th century square tower is the oldest part of the church, measuring 28 feet by 24 feet, the lower walls being

five feet thick. The parapet walkway gives fine views over the town and the River Forth out to sea, with a unique historical perspective on the growth of the town.

Adam Smith was baptised in the Old Kirk and his tercentenary will be celebrated in 2023.

## Northern Ireland

**As part of our latest grants programme we are helping nine churches and, unusually for us, five cathedrals in Northern Ireland. This work is funded by the Department for Communities Historic Environment Division's Covid-19 Culture, Languages, Arts and Heritage Support Programme.**

These include St Patrick's Cathedral in Armagh, which receives a £24,500 grant for roof and rainwater goods repairs, and St Macartin's Cathedral in Eniskillen, Fermanagh, which receives a £25,000 grant for roof and stonework repairs.

**How we helped the UK's churches and chapels in 2020**

**26**

churches and chapels were removed from the Historic England 'Heritage At Risk' Register with the support of our grants.

We helped to fund

**260**

church and chapel projects.

We awarded and recommended grants of

**£1.7 million**

for urgent repairs, new facilities, maintenance and project development work.



# Experience Wales' hidden churches



Try sea kayaking, star gazing, pilgrimage walks and more

**As part of our Experiencing Sacred Wales project supporting churches and chapels, we are proud to announce the launch of 'Experiences by ExploreChurches', a series of bespoke tours designed to offer travellers great days out.**

Over the last year, whilst armchair travel has been just about the only way to go on holiday, we have been working with churches and chapels in Wales to create new ways to attract visitors. Our aim is to link these beautiful buildings to Wales' beauty spots to create tours and trails ready for when church and chapel doors can be open once again.

The tours, which will be hosted on our church visiting website ExploreChurches, come as Booking.com and Airbnb's 2021 travel trends

have revealed changes in the way people travel. After a year of living with the pandemic, many future travellers will not only be opting for domestic over international travel, but they will also be seeking out more pastoral, off the beaten track locations, where they can fully immerse themselves in the outdoors and avoid the potential for crowds.

Wales is expected to grow in popularity as a holiday destination in 2021. Each of the 'Experiences by ExploreChurches' tours will shine a spotlight on some of Wales' finest churches and chapels – among some of the most beautiful and ancient religious buildings anywhere in the world.

Discover our great Experiences at: [explorechurches.org/experiences](https://explorechurches.org/experiences)

## THE HOUSE OF GOOD

**Our 'The House of Good' report, which showed that church buildings contribute at least £12.4 billion each year to the UK in social and economic value, continues to influence the church and heritage sectors.**

In February, Claire Walker, our Chief Executive, led a discussion about the report's findings at a meeting of the Welsh Assembly's Cross Party Group on Faith.

This summer, the report will form part of the launch of 'Faith & Belief 2040' a major project organised by Cumberland Lodge, where policymakers discuss and debate key policy issues.

**To keep in touch with news about 'The House of Good', visit our blog at [houseofgood.org](https://houseofgood.org). We also have a special Facebook House of Good group, [facebook.com/groups/UKChurchesHousesofGood](https://facebook.com/groups/UKChurchesHousesofGood) which features news from churches about their work supporting local people and building stronger communities.**

# Expanding our digital training

**Digital technology is making it easier for us to deliver a range of training to help keep church buildings safe, open and welcoming to all.**

There are many great advantages to online training. Courses can be accessed anywhere in the UK, there is no limit to the number of people who can attend and travelling costs disappear. All this enables us to run more training, giving people the opportunity to attend and learn about how to look after and make the most of their churches and chapels.

### Bespoke training

Our training now includes church tourism workshops on welcoming visitors,

interpretation and promotion and courses on how to apply for grant funding. In addition, as part of our Treasure Ireland project, we are also delivering a bespoke set of training courses in Northern Ireland.

Our training is noted for being delivered in a friendly manner with plenty of opportunity for Q&As both during and afterwards in chat sessions. Looking to the future, although lockdown measures are easing, our digital training is definitely here to stay.

**"I was impressed by the knowledge & positive attitude of the contributors and the amount of expertise & support available."** All Saints church, Newtown, Powys

## Join one of our courses

**14 April** – Finding your church stories

**28 April** – Raising income from bookable Experiences

**12 May** – Welcoming visitors

**23 June** – Raising income from bookable Experiences

**Full details of all our training courses can be found on our website: [nationalchurchestrust.org/training](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/training)**

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**JUPITER**





# Hopper heads, gutters, pipes and gratings



Profile written by Elena Curti

If you are looking to match original cast iron work on an historic church, there is a good chance that a traditional foundry near Huddersfield can help you.

**The store-room at J & J W Longbottom Ltd is an Aladdin's cave containing thousands of beautiful patterns for hopper heads, gutters, pipes and gratings including a gutter designed by A.W.N. Pugin.**

"The collection grows and grows and that's to the good because the more patterns you've got, the better chance you have of giving the customer what they need," says Managing Director Simon Gudgeon.

## Cast iron rainwater goods

Longbottom is one of the last traditional foundries in the UK producing cast iron rainwater goods. The company operates at the Bridge Foundry in Holmfirth, the same site where it was founded by Joshua Woodhead Longbottom and his brother, Joe, in the 1870s.



*A Longbottom hopper head*

In the nineteenth century, there were three foundries in the town benefiting from its riverside location and the then excellent rail connections. Longbottom is the last one left and continues to be a significant local employer. In 2019 they celebrated the centenary of their incorporation as a limited company.

"Men working now have had the skills passed down from their seniors and these continue to be passed on down the line," says Simon, a member of the family that currently runs the business.

The Bridge Foundry has been extended since the early days but a foundryman of 150 years ago would still recognise his place of work.

## Traditional methods

Says Simon: "It's a source of pride that we still do things to a traditional method. That's important in the business we're in. We would not want to change."

"We are regularly sent photos asking us to replace like for like. Quite often we can say 'you're in luck' and can supply from stock or otherwise make it in a day or two."

The company has supplied ironwork to

**Our Professional Trades Directory offers a wide range of trades people who can help you with work to your church, chapel or meeting house.**

**With over 200 companies in our directory, you should be able to find the right person for the job. Many of the trades people can also help with other heritage buildings and private houses.**

[www.nationalchurchestrust.org/ptd](http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/ptd)

Westminster Abbey for many years including non-slip gratings for the thirteenth century Triforium, where galleries opened to the public in 2019.

"The gratings were designed with decorative holes but they also had treads on the top. They were made to a certain shape to fit the stone that went in all sorts of directions. That was a big challenge," says Simon.

## Booming business

The company has also supplied bespoke gratings to match the existing ones at Wakefield Cathedral.

Business is booming following the coronavirus lockdown as the company clears a backlog of work that has built up.

"It's a very popular service. With Victorian churches, a lot of their rainwater goods are cast iron. Good cast iron will last over a century so we're in a period now when it is coming to the end of its lifespan and we're one of the last suppliers of these goods. There's quite a high demand."



*The Longbottom foundry*

**Replication:** The company can replicate almost anything and regularly make hopper heads, motifs, gutters, pipes with unusual sockets or ears, grating and airbricks, all to match existing ones.

**Repair:** Many castings do not need replacement. Often cracks may have caused them to fail or they may have a rotten back where water has collected. It is possible to repair these types of problems, even replacing a missing piece of a casting where necessary. In many cases this provides a cost-effective alternative to replacement of items of architectural interest.

**Renovation:** One service provided is to undertake alterations to castings such as changing the outlet size or fitting an overflow to a gutter or hopper head.

## Contact

Email [Info@longbottomfoundry.co.uk](mailto:Info@longbottomfoundry.co.uk)  
Telephone **01484 682 141**  
Link [longbottomfoundry.co.uk](http://longbottomfoundry.co.uk)





# A gift to help churches survive



Harriet Page

**Many of the UK's historic churches, chapels and meeting houses are fighting a battle against the ravages of time. Leaving a gift in your Will helps us keep these precious buildings alive for future generations.**

**Given the current Covid-19 pandemic, many people have turned their minds to making a Will. But what actually is a Will and what are the first steps you need to take to make one? Harriet Page, solicitor in the Tax and Private Client department of RadcliffesLeBrasseur, explains.**

## What does a Will do?

A Will allows you to choose who can receive your assets upon your death. If

you do not make a Will, your estate would be subject to the intestacy rules, over which you have no control, and may not provide for your family effectively. Therefore, it is important to consider putting in place a Will if you do not already have one.

## What to consider when making a Will?

Firstly, you will want to consider who you want to appoint as your Executors (people who administer your estate on your death). These should be people you trust, and they may have an idea as to your family circumstances and assets. You should then consider who you wish to benefit, for example, you may want to give pecuniary legacies to your nieces, nephews or godchildren or to charities. You should then consider who you want to give the remainder of your estate to, such as your spouse and children.

It is advisable to seek legal advice as to the preparation of your Will. In particular, you may wish to consider tax planning which can be incorporated into your Will. Broadly Inheritance Tax (IHT) is charged at 40% on the value of your estate above your available Nil Rate Band (£325,000 at the moment but subject to

certain gifts you may have made in the seven years before your death).

However, there are additional considerations. One such example is that charitable legacies are exempt from IHT. In addition, if you give 10% of your net estate to charity, you could benefit from a reduced rate of IHT of 36% (under current legislation) and you may wish to seek legal advice to consider and calculate how this may impact your IHT position and the position of your beneficiaries.

## I already have a Will and want to make a small change – what should I do?

If you already have a Will and you want to make a small change to it, you may be able to make that change by Codicil, which is a shorter document but still needs to be signed and witnessed in the same way as your Will.



Severe damage to internal walls

If you do have a Will in place, it is also advisable to review it to ensure that it still meets your wishes.

In summary, it is very important to put a Will in place, not only for your peace of mind, but also for that of your family.

RadcliffesLeBrasseur LLP

**A gift of just 1% of your estate will help to guarantee that our nation's rich heritage of churches and chapels will survive for many more years to come. If you would like further information about leaving a gift in your Will or adding a Codicil, please phone 020 7222 0605 or visit [nationalchurchestrust.org/legacy](http://nationalchurchestrust.org/legacy). There is no obligation and we would be delighted to help you further.**

## Carols boost



**Thanks to over 280 Friends and supporters who joined us for our online 2020 Christmas Carols. You helped us to raise over £7,000 to help the UK's church buildings remain open and in good repair.**

Because of Covid-19 the concert was pre-recorded at St Paul's, Knightsbridge. The evening started with a lovely welcome from Revd Alan Gyle and throughout the event the church's renowned choir and musicians led the singing of many best loved carols.

In addition to the glorious singing, our Vice Presidents Huw Edwards, Bill Bryson OBE, and Sir Michael Palin, together with Revd Lucy Winkett, Joanna David, Richard Clifford and Hugh Dennis entertained us with specially recorded readings from either the

church or from home using mobile phones. Musician and composer Joe Stilgoe even performed and recorded 'December Lights' for us from his garden shed!

The event was made possible thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, CCLA Investment Management.

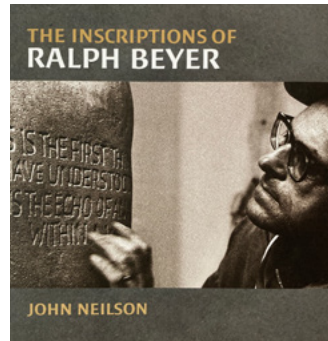


Joe Stilgoe recording in his shed

**We are now starting to plan Christmas 2021 with both a 'live' and an online Carol Concert so that Friends and supporters can attend from across the UK as well as in person in London. Do check our website for details later in the year, or sign up for our e-newsletter which has all the latest news about our work and events. [nationalchurchestrust.org/enews](http://nationalchurchestrust.org/enews)**



# Book Reviews



## **The Inscriptions of Ralph Beyer**

**By John Neilson  
Lund Humphries – £19.95**

**Exiled at the age of sixteen from Nazi Germany, Ralph Beyer made his home and career in Britain.**

He was a carver of stone inscriptions, best known for his huge 'Tablets of the Word' in Basil Spence's Coventry Cathedral. These broke the mould of classical formality associated with British letter carving after Eric Gill — their irregularity and roughness offending conventional notions of 'correctness'.

His work also includes the inscriptions at St Paul's Church, Bow Common, which won our 2013 competition, held with the 20th Century Society, to find the UK's best modern church.

Beyer trained for a few months with Gill, but his own unique voice owed as much to his childhood in Weimar

Germany and his father's wide interests, which ranged from Modernist architecture to 'primitive' art. In Britain, Beyer came to know Henry Moore and Nikolaus Pevsner, and was influenced by the artist and poet David Jones.

This book, profusely illustrated, charts Beyer's increasing sensitivity to words and their realisation in stone. It raises interesting questions about hand lettering and what place the making of stone inscriptions has in the modern world.

Friends of the National Churches Trust can claim a 20% discount if they purchase a copy at [www.lundhumphries.com](http://www.lundhumphries.com) using the discount code INSCRIPTIONS20.

## **Grinling Gibbons: Master Carver**

**By Paul Rabbitts  
Bloomsbury - £8.09**

**Master Carver Grinling Gibbons (1648–1721) is famous for his breathtakingly delicate, intricate and realistic carvings, both in wood and stone.**

Supreme master of carving in wood, Dutch-born Gibbons emigrated to England in the 1660s to work first in York and then



London. The Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and the Great Fire of London in 1666 provided huge opportunities for craftsmen. Gibbons produced some of the finest carving ever seen to grace the palaces of royalty and the state rooms of England's leading nobility and also in a small number of ecclesiastical buildings including St Paul's Cathedral.

From his early work in the Low Countries to his

'discovery' by the diarist John Evelyn in London, and his appointment as the king's Master Carver, this handy sized book by Paul Rabbitts, a landscape architect, is a great introduction to Grinling Gibbons' work and shows how he was able to transform humble pieces of wood into some of the most exquisite artworks of his day.

We have three copies of Grinling Gibbons Master Carver to give away. Simply answer the question: "Where was Grinling Gibbons born?" Please send your answer to: Friends Competition, National Churches Trust, 7 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QB or email [info@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:info@nationalchurchestrust.org) by 31 May 2021. Winners will be drawn at random on 15 June 2021.

## **Discovering Art in a Churchyard**

**By Mary Blanche  
£15.00 plus p&p  
Available via [www.maryblanche.co.uk](http://www.maryblanche.co.uk)**

This delightful book, written by Norfolk author Mary Blanche, is a collection of photographs of headstones in the churchyard of St John the Baptist, Reedham. Each headstone tells the story of a single life in the words of an inscription; seeing them together in one book tells a wonderful story of the people of this parish dating from 1773 to 2020. Through this simple device, the author also shows the meaning of various decorative devices, handy knowledge for anyone who likes to wander through churchyards and cemeteries but is perhaps uncertain of the exact symbolism of ivy leaves, a cross and anchor or roses and daisies. A lovingly produced book worthy of a wide audience.

## **111 Churches in London that you Shouldn't Miss.**

**By Emma Rose Barber. Emons – £12.99.**  
From Bermondsey to Wanstead, a guide to churches in the capital that are rarely visited, but certainly should be.

# Meet our Team Shirley Adams: Trustee



## **What is my favourite church?**

One of my really favourite churches is Saint Beuno's Church, Pistyll on the Lley Peninsula. It dates back to the 15th century and was once a hospice for the Pilgrims on their way to Bardsey Island. The floor is traditionally covered with rushes and herbs. It is just so peaceful and stunning in its simplicity.

## **What are the main challenges facing church buildings?**

One of the biggest challenges is that of maintenance and keeping the fabric of churches in good order as they get older and maintenance work becomes more crucial and unfortunately more expensive. Having the money and the expertise to do the work is a challenge for many churches, so I am very pleased that we are in a position to not only grant monies – albeit never enough – but also to provide support and information to churches. We must continue to encourage and educate people to respect, love and support church buildings.

## **What does being a Trustee involve?**

In addition to the statutory responsibilities, a Trustee has responsibility for supporting the work of the charity, supporting the staff, providing guidance, providing challenge, and being an ambassador for the charity. I also tell as many people as I can about the good work the National Churches Trust does and why everyone should support it. It is an honour and responsibility which I take very seriously.

## **When did you first become interested in churches?**

I find this question quite difficult to answer as I can't really remember a time when I wasn't interested in churches – albeit not as a child but even as a teenager I loved the thrill of going into cathedrals. I am now becoming more interested in specific architects and also improving my understanding of the history of the parish church and its development. My biggest frustration is locked churches!

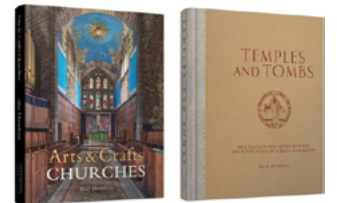
## BOOK REVIEWS

# FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP GIVES YOU MORE

**We have teamed up with organisations that support our work to bring you some lovely offers which are available all year round.**

## **Great discount on book titles including:**

- Arts & Crafts Churches
- Temples and Tombs
- 50 Catholic Churches to See before You Die



**Don't forget a 10% discount on a wide range of books and greeting cards from Church House Bookshop.**



- Historic Houses – £5 discount on membership with free access to over 300 beautiful historic places
- The Oldie Magazine – £1 per issue
- Villiers Park – 5% discount on Church Study tours
- Watts & Co – 10% discount on finest quality candles

**Ecclesiastical Insurance –  
10% discount on Home Insurance**



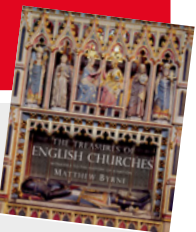
## **Further details:**

**[www.nationalchurchestrust.org/friends/news-friends](http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/friends/news-friends)**

## **Friends Membership**

Why not give someone a gift that lasts a year – they also receive a free copy of our new book 'The Treasures of English Churches'.

**[www.nationalchurchestrust.org/membership](http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/membership)**





## Explore Cheshire Churches

Cheshire is the latest county to feature on our ExploreChurches website



© Richard Barnes / Alamy Stock Photo

The 16th century church tower of St Oswald, Lower Peover, Cheshire

[explorechurches.org/cheshire](https://explorechurches.org/cheshire)

# Meet our Friends

*People join the National Churches Trust for many different reasons. We catch up with two of our Friends to ask why they chose to join and support our work.*



**Angela Cholmondeley-Clarke**

**Mrs Angela Cholmondeley-Clarke (née Warr-King) FRICS, who lives in West London, is a longstanding member of the Prayer Book Society, member of the Westminster Abbey Association, and now a Friend of the National Churches Trust.**

"Having worked in property and, being interested in historic architecture and religious art (part of my BA related to Greek and Roman Architecture and Renaissance Painting), I am mindful of the need to support traditional places of worship."

"I consider the National Churches Trust to be a most effective charity providing grants for repairs, maintenance and new facilities to churches and chapels throughout the UK. I know how important this

is, having made a donation to restore the stained glass of the east Apostles' window (circa 1450) of my family church, St Mary the Virgin, Drayton Beauchamp, Buckinghamshire."

"The church is a Norman Grade I Listed building, rebuilt in the 15th century, with a 12th century font. My maternal grandparents, father and uncle are buried in the graveyard, and I and my cousins were married there, and importantly my mother and aunt still live in the village. My aunt was a church warden and funded the restoration of the monument, (pictured below) which appears in Matthew Byrne's book, 'English Parish Churches and Chapels', given to me when I became a Friend."



Monument to Lord Newham

St Mary the Virgin has a relatively small congregation and so is being designated a 'Festival Church', which at least will preserve the fabric, if not provide weekly worship.

.....

**Christopher Claxton Stevens is a member of our Cornerstone Club.**

"I am a consultant in antique and contemporary furniture and my life has revolved around this, but my second love is architecture and particularly churches."

"I have been aware since my teens of Britain's fantastic heritage of places of worship, along with their fittings and furnishings, which are unique in the world and must be protected at a time when congregations in many places are diminishing. I am also very much aware of how important it is to keep repairs in hand, so that they do not become urgent and much more expensive to put right later on."

"I have been a member of the National Churches Trust for over thirty years, but I recently decided to join the Cornerstone Club as it seems



© Kate (CC-BY-SA2.0)

St Mary's church, Harefield

to me an affordable way of giving regularly rather than in fits and starts. I know it also helps the Trust to budget for its income."

"The grandeur of fine architecture and the romance of a simple secluded country church can be equally moving, and I have hugely enjoyed visiting all sorts of churches over the years. It is very difficult to choose a favourite church but if I had to choose one it would be St Mary's, Harefield, Middlesex for which I revised the guide book as a teenager in 1972. Apart from its lovely green setting (in spite of being on the edge of London), it is a treasure house of fascinating monuments, furnishings and architectural and family history. It had a very formative influence on me."

that the friendliness and personal contact of the Trust has made me feel wanted and involved second to none. I have also remembered the Trust in my Will."



Christopher giving out awards at West Dean College

## Join the Cornerstone Club

**Why not join Christopher as a member of our Cornerstone Club and become one of our closest supporters?**

Our Cornerstone Club now has over 50 members. Their generosity helps us to fund our Cornerstone Grants programme, enabling significant grants of between £10,000 and £50,000 to be awarded to churches tackling major works.

If you would like to be sent a Cornerstone Club leaflet, please phone 020 7222 0605, email [info@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:info@nationalchurchestrust.org) or write to us at 7 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3QB

You can find out more at [nationalchurchestrust.org/cornerstoneclub](https://nationalchurchestrust.org/cornerstoneclub)

