

Churches Trusts Forum – Case for support example

The X Churches Trust

About us



The volunteers St Mary's Church in X did not know how to get a crucial first grant in place so that they could approach other funders. Faced with a leaking roof and a repair bill of £250,000, they wondered if they could save their beautiful medieval church for their local community and future generations. Finding a friendly local source of help and a grant from us gave them the confidence to go on to raise enough money to keep St Mary's open and serving people in X for the next three generations.

Our history

The X, founded in X is a X that is run and managed by volunteers for volunteers at churches, chapels and meeting houses in X.

Since X we have helped X churches through £X in grants towards fabric repair projects. In X we helped to fund X other churches and local communities just like St Mary's.

What we do and why

Our aim is:

- *[insert charitable objectives]* To help maintain, repair and sustain X's heritage of church buildings.

We believe that places of worship are an irreplaceable part of our heritage, culture, landscape and society, and that they provide a continuing benefit to their local communities. *We help buildings across Christian traditions and of any age.*

We help congregations to access funding and undertake repairs by providing an essential pump priming grant programme. Faith volunteers frequently have had no to little experience of fundraising and lack confidence. With our simple application process and through giving a X year claim period, we give the first crucial bit of funding giving them the confidence to continue.

We encourage the wider use of churches and greater public engagement through our concert series X held in churches.

We promote churches and help them to fundraise directly through the sponsored X which is held once a year on the second Saturday in September. 50% of the money raised goes towards funding our grants programme for the following year. This sponsored event is an opportunity for congregations and local communities to fundraise directly for their church and to visit and help other churches locally. People cycle and walk to local churches and can often enjoy other activities once they are there.

Our grants programmes are funded through sponsorship money raised through Ride+Stride for Churches, our Friends scheme and/or our other events. We are also

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grateful to the X for their invaluable support of our activities through a grant/and/or sponsorship.

What we want to do

We want to X

We want to do this because X

The difference we could make with your help is to X

What are churches?

Churches, chapels and meeting houses are at the heart of our county's heritage, history, community life and landscape. Many churches are historic buildings and need great and specialist care and maintenance to stay open and available to local people and visitors from further afield. Of course, not all churches, chapels and meeting houses are ancient, or even historic. However, they are still significant buildings, and play a central role in local life.

Built and used as places of religious worship, churches, chapels and meeting houses are also the keepers of community heritage, a shared symbol of continuity and pride, and a place where people can come together in the same way as generations before them. An increasing number are opening their doors visitors and local people.

Places of worship mean a great deal to people in very direct and personal ways, often because of family connections and special and meaningful events such as weddings. Many of us value quiet places for contemplation. Others appreciate lunch clubs, toddlers' groups, support groups or food banks. Special services remain as popular as ever and weddings, christenings, funerals and festivals, particularly Christmas, see churches full.

In a survey by the National Churches Trust (ComRes 2015) 84% of respondents agreed churches, chapels and meeting houses are an important part of the UK's history and heritage. 83% agreed they provide important space for community use.

Why do churches need funding?

We aim to support churches in their aim to look after our heritage for current and future generations. When repair work needs to be undertaken the challenge to local volunteers of raising the significant amounts of money needed can be a daunting task – and that is why we aim to provide grants to churches undertaking projects.

Planning and carrying out major building works are often beyond the means of local communities and beyond the scope of their experience. We provide a friendly local point of contact to support and encourage them to attain their goal. Our grants, accessed through simple application processes, act as a pump primer and an incentive to give churches confidence to raise more money and help them to attract other grants.

In the past, churches relied heavily on local patronage as well as the support of local people. Today each local building is small charity in its own right, usually paid for by their own congregation and they are heavily dependent on voluntary donations. They usually receive no finance from church authorities or from the government other than through public grants for which they must compete. Volunteers from congregations generally care for, manage and fundraise for the building. Many have little to no knowledge or previous experience of the needs of a historic or a public building. Many have little to no previous experience of managing a project, fundraising or promotion.

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Some may be in areas where rural depopulation or an ageing congregation present additional challenges.

These combined circumstances are significant challenges to the future of these important buildings. *We cover the county of X where there are X churches and where x is particularly significant.* With your help we can ensure that individual churches have better chance at a more sustainable future by helping us to give much needed grants and to create local networks through our Ride+Stride for Churches event and our membership schemes. We will also be able to work with others locally and nationally to seek longer term solutions to the significant challenges that congregations face.

Our expertise

Through our grants we fund x ensuring that churches can open and that they are fit for purpose, available to serve their communities and for visitors to enjoy.

We are part of a network of independent local trusts that covers England and have links with bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland through our relationship with the National Churches Trust, which supports and promotes church buildings throughout the United Kingdom. We belong to the Heritage Religious Buildings Alliance. Locally we work closely with religious bodies and local government. Our Trustees and/or Grants Committee members have a range of expertise and experience in supporting faith heritage buildings.

In X we helped X church communities with X grants.

Impact of our work – a case study

St X's Church, X

St X's is a rural church situated in X. Its long history and beautiful architecture mean that it is a heritage building of internationally important significance. It is also a local church with a small but determined congregation. Opening its doors and providing essential local support every day to local people and other visitors.

We gave a grant of £xx to an essential repair project with a total cost of £X. This was a daunting challenge for a small parish church congregation to raise.

X, a churchwarden, states, "We were blown away by X Trust's generous grant which came at a point when we felt down-hearted and overwhelmed by the challenge of getting this work done. The grant made all the difference in encouraging us to carry on and this spurred us on to raise all of the money needed."



Taking part in Ride+Stride for Churches St X has taken part in Ride+Stride for Churches for the last five years.

"Taking part is a statement to our community that we are here for them through a fun activity day. We open all day and many of us cycle or walk. We raise money through donations and sponsorship that we would not otherwise receive. It gives us a chance to meet our neighbours at other churches and to appreciate their wonderful churches. It

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gives us a different perspective on our church as we see it through the eyes of visitors. We love putting on refreshments and showing people our beautiful and very historic church. Half the money raised is kept here and used to help us run this building. The other half is an investment in the important grants programmes run by X Churches Trust. We know that the trust is there to give us a helping hand when times are difficult and we urgently need to raise money to help us to keep this church open in our community.” Vicar, St Mary’s, X, R+S for Churches participant since 2012.

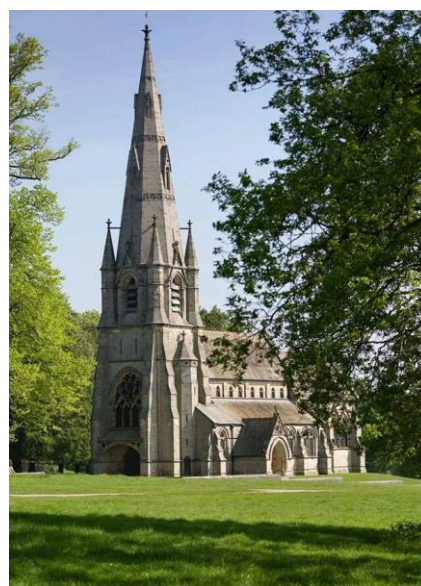
Why invest in the X trust and not in churches directly?

By supporting the X you are drawing on our expertise in helping churches when they face a fundraising challenge. Through grant criteria developed over many years of grant giving, we ensure that funding goes where it is needed and to capital projects to repair churches that are being properly managed.

Our grant offers are decided by our Grants Committee/Trustees which consists of local people and experts who provide a wide range of expertise from different fields.

Grants help us to provide opportunities for churches through establishing a relationship and offering participation in Ride+Stride for Churches and other events.

Collaborative working with other organisations is important to us. We work closely with other independent local trusts and the National Churches Trust when we can. Our work is informed by the needs of churches and priorities shared across the faith heritage sector. By sharing ideas, best practice and experience of caring for church buildings we aim for churches to be better maintained, better promoted and less vulnerable to disrepair.



How can you help?

Many of the UK's historic churches, chapels and meeting houses are fighting a battle against the ravages of time and socio-economic and environmental change. We need to make sure they get the repairs and renovation they need to remain open and at the heart of local communities.

Join our membership scheme by X

Attend our event by X

Sponsor Ride+Stride for Churches by X

Take part in Ride+Stride for Churches by X