Cornerstone Grants 2019 - 2023

Guidance Notes

For people who love church buildings

Contents

Introduction

We highly recommend that you read this document <u>in full</u> before starting the online form.

You will find the eligibility criteria, our priority areas, programme outcomes, details of how to apply and what supporting documents we require, as well as the terms and conditions of any successful grant application, on the following pages.

This programme supports the conservation and sustainable use of church buildings, focusing on larger and more complex projects. Priority for funding is for **urgent structural repairs** (costed at more than £100,000 including VAT), but the Trust will consider projects for the **installation of kitchens and accessible toilets** (costed at more than £30,000 including VAT). Eligible works must meet at least one of these funding criteria, though projects may include other associated work.

Grants usually range between £10,000 and £50,000 and will only apply to eligible work. The National Churches Trust reserves the right to award less than £10,000. Grants will never exceed 50% of the project cost. Offers are valid for two years. Those applying for £50,000 will need to demonstrate a strong case for investment.

Find out more at: www.nationalchurchestrust.org/cornerstonegrants

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

Applicants must meet all of the eligibility criteria (see Section 1) to be progressed to the assessment stage. Sadly we are unable to support every type and size of church project (see Section 2 for exclusions). We consider each application alongside a range of scoring criteria (see Section 4), and against other applications at the time of applying. The Grants Committee makes final decisions, and meets three times a year.

If you are awaiting the outcome of a major grant you are advised to await their decision before applying to us, as it could substantially impact upon your project shortfall which will be considered during the assessment process. In any case, 50% funding must be in place.

As we cannot guarantee that you will receive a grant offer, we encourage applicants to start local fundraising and to apply for as many other grants as possible in the meantime. For further advice on other sources of funding, see our website www.nationalchurchestrust.org/managing-building-projects/how-fundraise-your-project.

The National Churches Trust relies on voluntary donations, as well as the help of our Friends and a number of trusts and foundations, to support our work. Our grant programmes depend upon the income we receive and consequently our grants budget varies each year and between rounds. If you are able to help us to continue to support places of worship please join us as a Friend, make a donation to the Trust or consider us in your will. Any donation you make will help places of worship across the UK. For more information about supporting our work, please visit our website www.nationalchurchestrust.org.

1.   Eligibility

The National Churches Trust accepts applications from listed and unlisted churches, chapels and meeting houses of any age, as long as they are open for regular public worship and are located within England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands. Congregations can be of any Christian denomination and must be the owners or have the right to carry out the work.

Applicants to all of our programmes must meet the following eligibility criteria:

☐ The building must be a Christian place of worship (but not a cathedral) located within the UK, and originally built as a place of worship no less than 30 years ago. We do not fund works to converted buildings, church halls, or privately-owned churches such as chapels within hospitals, hospices, schools or prisons or other such institutions.

☐ Works must be to the main church building. If applying for new facilities, the proposed works must be to the place of worship, or an extension thereof. The National Churches Trust will not fund new build or stand-alone structures. Exceptions may only be made upon request if the place of worship is Grade I / A listed, and the decision is endorsed by one of the UK Home Countries Heritage Bodies.

☐ Applicants must be the owners or have the right to carry out the work. If the church is not part of a main denomination, or registered with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, they must be a **registered charity**.

☐ Buildings must be **open for regular public worship** for a minimum of 6 services per year. Buildings that have been closed to the public must have plans to reopen for regular worship and public access, and a congregation waiting to use the building on completion.

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

☐ Projects must be led, overseen and supervised by a suitably qualified professional, usually a professionally qualified architect (listed on the Register of Architects) or a chartered building surveyor (MRICS or FRICS). Where the building is listed, the professional must have **conservation accreditation** from one of these conservation accreditation schemes at the stated level:
  o **The Register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation** (AABC). Architects must be listed at category 'A'.
  o **Royal Institute of British Architects** (RIBA). Architects must be listed as

'Specialist Conservation Architect'.
- o **The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland** (RIAS). Architects must be listed as 'Advanced'.
- o **Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors** (RICS).
- o **Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists** (CIAT). Listed at 'Accredited Conservationist' level.

☐ Work must not have started before the online application is submitted.

☐ At least **50%** of the total project cost must be in place at the point of application, with more than £10,000 still to raise.

☐ All necessary **permissions** (from both the governing body and the local planning authority, if required) must be approved and <u>in place</u> at the point of application.

☐ Applications must be received before the deadline and include all documentation requested. Any documentation not supplied online must be received within 10 working days.

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

2. What we cannot fund

- Works required due to negligence;
- Repairs to, or scheduled maintenance of boilers, clocks, organs, wall paintings, bells, monuments, fittings and fixtures and solar panels;
- Reordering, lighting, electricity, and AV;
- Works to boundary walls, paths, churchyards, churchyard monuments or car parks;
- Stained glass restoration (unless urgent repairs to window structure, or the building is no longer watertight),
- Construction of new places of worship or church halls.

3. What we will prioritise

We only have a limited amount of funding available which unfortunately means that we can only support a proportion of the many deserving projects from which we receive applications. We therefore prioritise:

- Work to architecturally and historically significant buildings,
- Applications from regions identified as priority areas: Northern Ireland, Wales and the North East of England,
- <u>Urgent</u> structural repair projects (as identified in a recent QIR or building survey as required within two years), with a focus on buildings that are at risk,
- Installation of kitchens and toilets where a strong need can be demonstrated,
- Places of worship that can demonstrate a suitable maintenance system is in place to protect our investment,
- Places of worship that can demonstrate strong community engagement and sound plans for economic viability.

The National Churches Trust's regional priority areas are not intended to exclude applicants from other areas. However, applications received within these regions will benefit from weighting. Applications still need to be of suitable quality to be successful. Although not listed as distinct priorities, it is important to us to continue to attract more applications from non-Anglican denominations.

4.   Scoring criteria

- **Heritage** – the architectural significance of the building
- **Need** - the urgency of the project and need for our funds, e.g. no toilet and unable to meet demand for use / can't accept bookings; financial need as demonstrated by accounts; Index of Multiple Deprivation; funding shortfall
- **Case for investment** – what is the case for our funding <u>now</u>? Whether the project is ready to start; if there is a pending funding deadline or an existing grant about to expire; potential for the community to raise funds on the basis of its size and other funding needs in the area; if the building is identified as being at risk; partnerships or other significant projects in the area e.g. Heritage Action Zones, Taylor Pilots, City of Culture etc.; community support as evidenced by consultation; opening times; priority areas.
- **Risk management & project planning** – the level of project planning undertaken e.g. if permissions secured, tenders/quotes received, fundraising in place, consultation carried out, business plan produced, maintenance plan in place, and a qualified professional with conservation accreditation leading the project. Level of contingency included within budget; annual maintenance spend; realistic time frames for funding or project delivery; financial condition of the church (sustainability risk).
- **Heritage & community impact** – how the application meets the required programme outcomes to show improvement and benefit to heritage, community and sustainability

5.   Programme outcomes - project impacts

We are interested to know what impact our funding will have on the churches, chapels and meeting houses we support. To achieve this applicants must demonstrate in Section F of the online form that they meet **at least 3 outcomes, with at least one from each of the headings below**, which reflect the [National Churches Trust's strategy for 2019-23](#)

Answers should be no more than 200 words. We have provided some prompts below but answers should be in the applicants' own words and may include other ideas.

1. **Preserving Heritage**
   - **1.1** Building will be in better condition
     - *E.g. removed from at risk register, watertight for another 100 years etc.*
   - **1.2** Building will be better managed
     - *E.g. maintenance plan in place, improved maintenance access etc.*
   - **1.3** Building / heritage will be better understood
     - *E.g. new website, revised guide book, more interpretative material, new events etc.*

2. **Promoting Sustainability**
   - **2.1** Building will be more suitable for wider community uses
     - *E.g. work will enable more users to access the building, addressing local demand or gaps in services etc.*
   - **2.1** Building / organisation will be more secure for the future building
     - *E.g. changes will boost income / engagement with community, repairs will be met so no further outgoings, local partnerships etc.*
   - **2.3** Problems will be diagnosed and / or projects well planned
     - *E.g. viability study/options appraisal/feasibility studies and public consultations informed proposals, business plan in place etc.*

3. Inspiring Support
- ➢ **3.1** Church will engage with more people
  - o *E.g. changes will open opportunities to welcome more and/or different people as demonstrated by consultation etc.*
- ➢ **3.2** Increased opportunity for volunteering
  - o *E.g. changes will engage with more volunteers, form new partnerships etc.*
- ➢ **3.3** Place of worship will be more financially viable
  - o *E.g. changes will diversify income, managed income, repairs will avoid bigger issues in the future etc.*

6.   The online application form – what to expect

The **online application form** can be accessed after registering, with an email address and password, via the Cornerstone Grant Programme page of our website. Each of our grant programmes has its own online form which requires separate registration.

Applicants must first pass the **eligibility test** (as introduced in Section 1 above). Please ensure you answer the questions accurately to avoid disappointment later. If you are eligible you can then proceed to the main pages of the **application form** (see instructions below). Please keep your log-in details safe. We cannot accept paper applications but the questions can be viewed in advance, HERE.

If you have previously registered for the Cornerstone Grant Programme, or are returning to complete your form, enter your details where it says 'Retrieve your application'.

The form is split into the following sections:

- ➢ **Essential Information** – Contact Details and context
- ➢ **Heritage** – Architectural and historic significance
- ➢ **Need** – Urgency and need for our funding
- ➢ **Case for Investment** – Case for why you need our funding and why now
- ➢ **Risk Management and Project Planning** – Project planning and fundraising to date
- ➢ **Heritage and Community Impacts** – Does the project meet the required programme outcomes to show improvement and benefit to heritage, community and sustainability?
- ➢ **Additional Information** – To help inform our work going forward and to stay in touch
- ➢ **Supporting Documents** - See below. These help us verify information. Please still answer all of the application questions in full. Do not presume attaching a supporting document can replace an answer to one of the questions.

You will also be asked to attach the following supporting documents on the final page of the online form. Please ensure you send us all of the documentation we require using the links on the form, or via email, to: grants@nationalchurchestrust.org **within 10 working days of your submission**, or we will reject your application. Please include the name and location of the place of worship, and the application reference (supplied on submission), into the title bar.

Don't assume that we will find details useful to your application within the supporting documents. Please ensure key details are contained within the body of the application form. The supporting documents will be used for checks and clarifications. See tips in Section 7 below.

- ➢ **Accounts** – A copy of your most recent set of audited, signed or independently examined, annual accounts to help us understand your financial situation (these should include the independent examiner's report)
- ➢ **Friends' Accounts** - If you have a Friends' group, a copy of its most recent accounts

- **Architectural plans/drawings** – This is <u>essential</u> for applicants proposing changes. If you have multiple documents you will need to email us separately, or merge documents together into a single file
- **Buildings at risk register entry** – If your building is outside of England, a copy of the buildings at risk entry, if applicable
- **External and Internal Images** – A separate exterior and interior image in jpeg format of between 1MB and 5MB – please avoid sending these as Word documents or PDFs. We will use these if the application is successful for publicity purposes, and the Grants Committee will also review the images
- **Grant offer letters** – If you have been awarded a major grant award, please supply a copy of their offer letter and project costings
- **Maintenance plan** - Regular maintenance is one of our priorities, so we ask for a copy of your annual maintenance plan. This is an annual timetable of steps regularly taken to keep the building and grounds in good order. For advice about maintenance, our website has advice and resources here: www.nationalchurchestrust.org/maintenance. Information and templates can also be found in the SPAB Faith in Maintenance toolkit HERE. If you haven't already got one in place, we advocate compiling one during your project and we will ask again at the payment stage
- **Permissions** – A copy of the permission from the governing body, e.g. Faculty (signed by the Chancellor, DAC advice is not sufficient) or equivalent for non-Anglican denominations, this should be in date and include the detail of the permitted work. We also request local planning authority permission where it is required
- **Quinquennial Inspection Report** – A recent QIR, or extract of it, that clearly highlights the issues that require attention and their urgency. Alternatively a survey report
- **Specification of works** – Compiled by the lead professional and detailing the work the work that will be done, preferably costed
- **Development plan or business plan** – if available
- **Statement need** – or an equivalent, if available
- **Evidence of consultation** – if available
- **Additional information** – anything further you would like to attach e.g. leaflets, activity plan etc.

7.   The online application form – how to complete it

General Guidance:

To fill out the online form, work through each page answering every question as best you can. The form can be saved by clicking 'Exit (Autosave)', and returned to at any time. To do so, return via the link on the website and enter your registration details (make sure you have selected the link to the correct grant programme) into the 'Retrieve your application' box. We will only see your application once you have clicked on 'Complete'.

You can **print** the form at any time by selecting 'View' (and not 'Continue') when you log-in to the application form, and then select 'Print'.

Help - Help and additional guidance is available within the online form as you complete it wherever you see a red question mark **"?"** by left clicking on the symbol to open a help screen.

Web links. Most web addresses included within the form's help text are not hyperlinks. Please copy and paste the links into a web browser.

Questions marked * are mandatory and all applicants must complete these, if you have nothing to enter write 'none' or 'NA'. Mandatory questions must be completed in order to

proceed to the next pages. We encourage applicants to answer as many of the questions as possible. If you have no information to enter into a box, and it is not mandatory, you can leave it blank and continue to the next question.

Character counts – 255 characters is approximately 40 words; 500 characters is approximately 100 words; 1000 characters is approximately 200 words; 2000 characters is approximately 300 words. You can review your character count in Word in the same section that the word count function can be found.

Entering numbers - Where figures are required, these must be rounded up to the nearest whole number and should not include a £ sign or punctuation. E.g. £1349.85 will be '1350'

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

Specific guidance to support particular application questions:

Project costs (Section D of the form) - Information about associated works should be included with the project costs if it is all one project and/or one phase. However **the committee will look at the cost of eligible works in particular.** If a significant portion of costs are ineligible, or ineligible costs just bring the project over the eligibility threshold for the programme, we may reject the application or score the case for investment lower. The Trust will not award grants where projects already appear to be fully funded. We do not expect places of worship to completely exhaust their reserves. Project costs presented to us that are based on returned tenders will demonstrate a better case for risk management.

Question D8 - includes a table to complete. To do so, type into the first blank column called 'Description', a description of the cost e.g. architect's fees, or installation of kitchen, etc. Include whether the cost is based on an estimate or tender. Insert whole numbers without punctuation into the remaining columns. The columns will automatically tally vertically (they do not tally horizontally). We recommend projects to have a contingency figure of 10% to 15%, depending on the level of risk associated with the project.

VAT - When we review your project income we take a blanket approach to VAT. If your building is listed it will qualify for the **Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS)** which allows you to claim back VAT on repairs, maintenance and alterations (including kitchens and toilets). Although you can only apply to the LPWGS once work has started we currently calculate this as 100% of the full amount of the VAT on the project and will include it in your project income – unless we are notified otherwise. For cash flow purposes note that you will have to make the full payment initially before reclaiming, however claims can be submitted once invoices are in excess of £1,000 excluding VAT and within 12 months of their issue date. For up-to-date information about the scheme and eligibility of items, please click here, or call 0845 013 6601.

Grant amount (Section D of the form) - We ask what size grant you would like to receive. This should be between £10,000 and £50,000. Note that we will calculate your project shortfall to be the total project cost, minus the confirmed project income, as well as the expected LPWGS rebate (see above). Your grant request should not exceed 50% of the project cost, and the request should not be larger than the shortfall. If your application is successful we cannot guarantee that you will be awarded the full sum requested as this will depend upon the budget available to the Committee. Very few applicants will be awarded the top sums and applicants

requesting £40,000-£50,000 will need to demonstrate excellent case of investment and value for money. The Grants Committee reserves the right to award less than £10,000.

Question E9 - is a table to identify project income both unsecured (i.e. not yet confirmed due to pending application or is a fundraising aspiration) and secured (i.e. confirmed grants or donations). Enter the awarding body or source of income in the first column 'Description'. Enter the value of the grant as a whole number in the correct column. If there are not enough lines to separately list each of your income sources you can use other lines as long as you clearly describe what the funds are for. The figures will tally vertically. If the award is pending, include the estimated decision notification date in the description box. If you have been notified of an award, though await payment into your account, this can be listed under 'secured'. Please notify us of any grant awards you receive during the assessment period.

Impact (Section F of the form) – Describe the impacts of your project and how it meets our programme outcomes (see Section 5 above). The information helps us to understand the value for money of our grant award and the benefits of your project. We wish to allocate our limited resources to the places where we know it is going to make the biggest difference.

Supporting documents (Section H of the form, see advice in [Section 6](#) above) - You will be asked to upload supporting documents on the final page of the online form. To do this select "**browse**" to find the file, select it and click "**open**", then select "**upload**". Only one document can be uploaded per box. If you upload the wrong document you can browse and reselect again, but you cannot clear a field entirely. Before uploading check the titles of the documents, keep these as short as possible and without punctuation. There is a **maximum file size of 5MB** for each document. If you have difficulties or you are unable to provide the documents, or you have additional documents you wish to send, you must email these to us **within 10 working days** at: [grants@nationalchurchestrust.org.](mailto:grants@nationalchurchestrust.org) Please ensure that you include the name and location of the place of worship, and the reference number, in the title bar.

Submit - Once you have completed Section H of the form, click **"Next"** this will produce a summary of your answers for you to check. If you are ready to submit your application choose "**Submit**" at the bottom of the page. Choose "**Amend**" if you wish to edit any text. Follow the same procedure again, clicking "**Next**" to proceed through all of the pages and, once satisfied, select "**Submit**". You will receive a copy of your application by email along with a reference number. Only at this stage will we know about, or be able to view, your application. Once it is submitted you can-not re-edit the form and we cannot return it to you. If you do need to notify us of any changes or additional information, please email us.

8.   After submission

We will usually contact your lead professional to check details of your application such as project costs and project description. Sometimes we may also contact your denominational body, or your local Churches Trust, for their knowledge of the scheme.

Stage One - Once a completed application is received we will conduct a first review of the information in line with our eligibility criteria (see [Section 4](#)). We aim to notify you within six weeks if your application is not eligible - some applications will be withdrawn or rejected at this stage. If you are asked to supply further information please ensure it is provided. Due to the volume of applications we receive, and limited resource, we are not always able to carry out a second request email.

Stage Two – Those applications who pass the eligibility test will be fully assessed against our assessment **criteria and priorities** (see [Sections 3](#) and [4](#)) and also in comparison with other candidates. We will look at the benefits and surrounding circumstances of each project, the

outcomes it proposes, and we will also consider the funds available to us at that time. The final decisions on all applications are made by the Grants Committee three times a year (deadlines and approximate decision dates are on the programme page of the www.nationalchurchestrust.org/cornerstone).

The Grants Committee comprises both Trustees and independent experts from church and heritage sector backgrounds. Decisions cannot be made between meetings, and once made by the Committee a decision cannot be reversed.

9.   Conditions of a grant award

We will usually contact you by email or post within two weeks of a committee meeting with news of your application. This could be up to five months from the date of your application to us. Some applications, usually those that do not meet our eligibility requirements, may hear from us sooner. Due to the volume of applications we receive, we will not accept late submissions and we are unable to read submissions in advance. We can however answer simple queries.

Grantees will need to return a signed acceptance form within 30 days, and will need to agree to the following conditions:

1. Register on the Maintenance Booker website (please note there is no requirement to book services via the site once registered)
2. Submit details to the ExploreChurches website
3. Project led by a qualified professional with conservation accreditation if the building is listed
4. Open for at least 100 days a year beyond worship, within a year of project completion (tell us if you will need to have special arrangements, such as key holder details on display, in order to meet this requirement)
5. Acknowledge the National Churches Trust grant in printed materials and on a website, and help publicise the award – a logo and materials will be provided
6. Return a feedback report a year after project completion (these are sent as an email via SurveyMonkey)
7. If the place of worship is closed for worship within 5 years of receiving payment of a grant award, report this to the National Churches Trust without delay. We may request full or partial repayment of the grant
8. Claim the grant within 2 years of decision date

Payment claims will need to be supported by the production of an architect/or surveyor's interim or completion certificate showing that relevant work in excess of the grant offer has been carried out. The terms of the grant must be met before payment will be released.

These terms and conditions are subject to change. The grant offer letter will contain the most up to date version.

Further funding and final comments

On occasion we may be able to help you secure additional funding from other funders who we partner with. Question G2 asks for your permission for us to share details with those we think are relevant.

If you have any additional questions please visit the FAQs page of our website www.nationalchurchestrust.org/grants-faqs or contact the Grants Team via email: grants@nationalchurchestrust.org or telephone: 020 7222 0605.

In the meantime we encourage you to apply for as many different sources of funding as possible. For information about other sources of funding please www.nationalchurchestrust.org/managing-building-projects/how-fundraise-your-project

You can stay in touch by signing up to receive our monthly e-newsletter via our website here: www.nationalchurchestrust.org/news/sign-our-e-newsletter. You can also opt to be included in our mailing list (G3), though the best way to ensure you stay in touch is to subscribe as a Friend. Your information will be kept private and secure, we do not sell or share our information. If you wish to opt out of future contact, you can do so at any point by simply letting us know via post, e mail or phone. However, please note that if you are successful in your application contact details will be added to our database in order for us to monitor the grant. You can review our privacy policy here: www.nationalchurchestrust.org/privacy-policy

Common Acronyms

AABC	Architects Accredited in Building Conservation
ARB	Architects Registration Board
AV	Audio-visual
CTBI	Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
DAC	Diocesan Advisory Committee (specific to Church of England)
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
LPWGS	Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme
NCT	National Churches Trust
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects
RICS	Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
UK	United Kingdom
VAT	Value Added Tax
UK Home Countries Heritage Bodies	Department of Communities Northern Ireland, Historic Environment Service (Cadw), Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland