On June 24 1818, the Incorporated Church Building Society (ICBS) passed a resolution making churches more accessible. Grant money from the ICBS would be given to churches with the most free seats. The ICBS wanted to give money not only to build churches, but to ensure their interiors were "allocated wholly to the lower classes who could not afford pew rents and did not possess the local influence to be given proprietary rights over pews".

Open seats with backs were to be installed, because that way the greatest number of seats could be made available comfortably. All seats were to face the preacher as far as possible and the benches "whether pewed or not" should be set from east to west so that the congregation did not turn their backs on the altar. Comfort was a consideration, but if there were to be cushions or fabric of any kind it was cautioned that such "woollen linings" were liable to become dusty, damp or attract vermin.

The National Churches Trust (NCT), the body that carries on the work of the Incorporated Church Building Society, is, in this 200th anniversary year of the society, continuing this legacy.

Open churches
The aim is to try to make church buildings comfortable (heating), accessible (ramps and toilets), welcoming (helping parishes to tell the story of their local community through the church) and open, working with insurance companies to keep the doors unlocked and the space freely available for community use as well as for worship.

In what we often describe as a secular society, the work of the NCT is needed more than ever. Public sacred spaces such as church buildings, of every denomination, can be places where people can meet, work together and build community.
Dear Friends and supporters,

As we approach the end of 2018 I’d like to say a really big thank-you.

To all the 636 new Friends who have joined the National Churches Trust this year. To the churches and chapels whose voters have voted to keep their buildings in good repair.

The past year has marked the journey to St Paul’s Cathedral’s 300th anniversary of the Royal Building Society.

It is important for me to say thank you to all the donors who generously support our work, which in 2018 is enabling us to award grants of over £1.2 million for the conservation and improvement of churches throughout the UK.

Our financial reports show that churches are becoming increasingly important as symbols of community and of shared values. But too often we fall short of the potential that reflects the Parish Church’s value to communities, from its historic role, to its contribution to the local economy, the housing and the environment.

We are working hard to prepare our churches for the future, to ensure that they can be maintained and improved, and to ensure that they can continue to be a focus for our families, friends and communities.

This has been a difficult year in many respects, with the cost of a large number of repairs exceeding what local authorities can afford. Our vision is that we can help churches and other historic buildings to continue to provide a focus for community life.

Two major repair and renovation projects have been awarded through the 2018 Church Archdiocese Awards. Of course, local congregations always go out of their way to support our local communities.

In his recent budget, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a rate of 5% of VAT on repairs to historic buildings. If this is talk of introducing a flat £500 cheque, to the winners.

If the welcome within churches is becoming more inclusive, and we are seeing an increase in the number of people from different backgrounds coming to church, we need to be looking at how we can make our buildings more welcoming and how we can make them a place of worship that people can enjoy.

I do hope that you can join us at St James’s church, Piccadilly, on the New Year, please do use the website’s handy map for community events. The National Churches Trust’s new church tourism website ExploreChurches.co.uk presents the Presidents’ Award to the winners.

We hope that we can encourage more people to be passionate about our re-imagining of the role of churches and chapels for the future.

Happy New Year and a prosperous 2019 to all of you. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, take them with you!}

Clare Walker

2018 Church Archdiocese Awards

King of Prussia
The restoration and restoration of the interior of the historic King of Prussia, St Margaret’s church, London. The design was created by Reginald Thomas, a London-based railway arch and chapel.

The award has been created by the National Churches Trust to encourage and promote the architectural and decorative heritage of the Gothic Revival masterpieces.

Fenwick Sircom, Patron of the National Churches Trust, presented the King of Prussia Award to Tony Adams, the architect, and was entertained by our Vice President’s special guests. It is warm, if the stony space is peopled with an open-hearted, open-minded and well-intentioned crowd, then the church buildings can be what they are intended to be: a reflection of a deep connection with the generation that we are. At the same time welcoming others with open arms, and the most who stumble across our doors, is not even sure what they are.

There is a wonderful atmosphere, wildlife, national heritage.

The study shows that churches and chapels offer a number of experiences for visitors looking for a different way of spending time; helping wildlife and an escape from the ordinary, is beyond what a parish can earn.

The mystery of these church buildings has brought back to life the nation’s priceless heritage of churches.

A key aim for the project was to provide modern, energy-efficient and high-quality catering facilities to support its growing role as a space for community events. The architects designed a new refreshment facility that can be entirely concealed when not in use. Underfloor heating could cause the future of our churches to be threatened.

The building is open or closed, church buildings, but can often be entirely concealed when not in use. On a breezy day, or perhaps on a windy day, the church buildings can be what they are intended to be: a reflection of a deep connection with the generation that we are. At the same time welcoming others with open arms, and the most who stumble across our doors, is not even sure what they are.

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New grant programmes

In line with the National Churches Trust’s new strategy for 2018–2020, several new grant programmes will open for applications in the first few months before the end of 2018.

Grants of £10,000–£50,000

Big thank-you to all the churches of the National Churches Trust who selected us for the 10th of the National Churches Trust Grant.

A £10,000 grant will help to fund the ongoing repair works to restore the church in its original condition and for the replacement of the lead belief roof and the windows in the north aisle of the top part of the western tower which had been in a poor condition. The church is better known as Stow-upon-the-Wold, in Gloucestershire.

The other churches shortlisted were St John’s, Abberley, Worcestershire; St James, Deddington, Oxfordshire; and St Andrew, Overthorpe, Wakefield.

In 2016, the Friends of the National Churches Trust were thrilled to be shortlisted for a £10,000 endowment in the Churches of the Year Awards. This was the first time the Friends of the National Churches Trust had entered in the wake of the Pilgrim Fathers and founded a new Boston in the United States. In 2017, the project won the first prize at the National Churches Trust Annual Prize for its innovative approach to working strategically with others to fund historic church building projects at local level.

Grants of £30,000–£80,000

Projects developing new approaches to fund raising and enhancing buildings in a way that what we have been working with in the past, which are large or small, both individually and thematic.

Grants of £20,000–£50,000

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Building resilience thorough innovation

Faith in the USA

The National Churches Trust has been working with churches in the USA to explore new ways to deliver a sustainable future for church buildings and which needed additional support to fund raising and enhancing buildings in a way that what we have been working with in the past, which are large or small, both individually and thematic.

Our strategy for 2019 – Building Resilience

What would our museums and galleries look like today if they had not been able to invest almost £8 billion in the UK’s rich and diverse heritage?

New grants for religious activity

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We are helping more of the UK’s churches and chapels

Thanks to the generosity of our Friends, our donors, including trusts and foundations, and our legators, in July 2018 we were able to help 54 churches and chapels in England, Wales and Northern Ireland with funding of £310,060.

Churches receiving grants include:

**St Barnabas, in the village of St Barnabas, Cornwall:** This Grade II* listed college church, the Cathedral of the West built in 1820, received a £10,000 National Churches Trust Repair Grant to help fund urgent tower and spire stonework and window repairs. It boasts a splendid carved stone Golden Chapel together with a unique collection of medieval tombs and memorials. St Barnabas is on Historic England's Heritage At Risk Register.

**St Michael-in-the-Hamlet, Toxteth Park, Liverpool:** Grade I listed, one of only two surviving cast iron churches by John Cragg and Thomas Rickman, the church received a £20,000 National Churches Trust Repair Grant to help fund urgent roof repairs. Built in 1815, the tracery, pinnacles, mouldings and building frame are all of cast iron. The church was part of the Cast Iron Shore – an area on the Mersey full of iron works. The church is on Historic England’s Heritage At Risk Register.

**Brighton Unitarian church:** This Grade II listed building, received £150,000 National Churches Trust Repair Grant to help repair the classical portico entrance. Brighton Unitarian Church was built in 1820. Architect Amon Henry Wilds designed the church in the style of the Temple of Theseus, with a classical portico, columns, and steps. It is part of Brighton’s Regency picturesque in a prominent position opposite the Royal Pavilion and the Corn Exchange.

**St Bartholomew, Tong, Shropshire**
A magnificent Grade I listed church, often called the ‘Westminster of the West Midlands’, received a £10,000 National Churches Trust Repair Grant to help fund urgent tower and spire stonework and window repairs. It boasts a splendid carved stone Golden Chapel together with a unique collection of medieval tombs and memorials. St Bartholomew is on Historic England’s Heritage At Risk Register.

**Christ Church, Derriaghy, Co. Antrim, N Ireland.** A £20,000 National Churches Trust Repair Grant will help fund vital repairs to a landmark spire, a prominent feature on this Grade A listed building. Significant weather damage and corrosion has resulted in the crumbling of stone work in the spire. Without the work, this iconic building would have to close.

Robert Simons, Member of Select Vestry, said: “The parishioners of Christ Church greatly appreciate the grant given by the National Churches Trust. This support has created a confidence that will see us through the project. We look forward to its completion and having a church that will remain open for worship for another hundred years or more.”

**Please help us to help more churches**

The National Churches Trust receives no funding from government or church authorities. Help us ensure a future for more churches, chapels and meeting houses by making a donation to support our work. www.nationalchurchestrust.org.uk/donate
Inheritance Tax and Wills

Many of the UK’s historic churches, chapels and memorial buildings are fighting a battle against the ravages of time. Leaving a gift in your will can help us keep our buildings alive for future generations. It is incredible to think that a gift made to charity in a will will be eligible for the amount of Inheritance Tax that is paid by an individual’s estate which exceeds any available tax free legacy on death, as Victoria Radcliffe LeBrasseur of law firm RadcliffeLeBrasseur explains below.

Inheritance Tax is only one consideration that people review their Wills for during their lifetimes and provides important information about their wishes to their executors. leaving 10% or more of your estate to charity with a view to achieving the reduced 36% rate of Inheritance Tax is complex.

Planning and it is particularly important to consider the needs and wishes of beneficiaries when preparing a Will. A simple way to achieve this is to choose a professional Will writer who can recommend a solicitor.

If you would like further information about leaving a gift in your will, you can contact Victoria Crick of Chandlers Solicitors by phone on 020 7722 0800.

It is therefore important that you seek professional advice if you are thinking about leaving 10% or more of your estate to charity.

Many of our clients are great supporters of charities and churches. Some have been associated for many years. We have a number of smaller monetary legacies, but also as a mechanism for ensuring that your estate will be used to meet the needs of your other beneficiaries.

You can also find information about leaving a gift in your will at nationalchurchestrust.org or by phone on 020 7222 0605. You can find information about leaving a gift in your will at www.nationalchurchestrust.org

The Professionals Trades Directory

Fullers Finer Furniture

Fullers Finer Furniture is a member of the National Churches Trust’s Professional Trades Directory which has been creating quality church furniture for over 30 years. One of their most recent projects has been at St Bartholomew’s church in Long Ashton, Somerset, where the vestry was to be upstaged by the magnificent Kirkwood altarpiece. The next stage was to create a room, more welcoming to those using the space. This included replacing the old façade with a half-glazed entrance lobby and a kitchen cupboards.

Many of the old-frontals to be stored out complete with a sliding top and full-glazed entrance lobby. To this end Fullers Finer Furniture built new oak frames which blend in with hanging bars inside for frontals. To this end Fullers Finer Furniture continues to work in churches and charities in the UK. For more information about leaving a gift in your will, you can contact Victoria Radcliffe LeBrasseur of law firm RadcliffeLeBrasseur by phone on 020 7722 0800.

The National Churches Trust’s Professional Trades Directory connects churches with skilled contractors. We believe in the importance of protecting the many traditional craft skills which are essential for the building and conservation of churches. Below we report on the work of one of the director’s members. To find out more or to join for just £100 per year, visit the website of your other choice.

A sink unit and under sink water heater were added. Fullers Finer Furniture built new oak frames which blend in with hanging bars inside for frontals. To this end Fullers Finer Furniture continues to work in churches and charities in the UK. For more information, visit the website of our other choice.

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For full details about all our latest offers please visit our website at www.nationalchurchestrust.org/offers

Meet the National Churches Trust team

Stephen Sklaroff, Trustee

How did you become interested in a career in architecture and church heritage?

My wife and I met as students in Wessex and it just so happened that my studies took me to a small town called Shaftesbury. Walesman John Hooker was the architect and there were quite a few buildings by him and the buildings were by Thomas Peto, who was a famous architect in the 19th century. The more I studied these buildings the more I became interested in church heritage. We later married and had two children and I lived in this town for the next ten years. We were living there in a house called The Old Vicarage, which was built by John Hooker. At the time, it was owned by the National Churches Trust. It was a really interesting house to live in and I became more and more interested in church heritage and architectural history. We worked very closely with the National Churches Trust at that time on the Hooker project. I have been a Trustee of the National Churches Trust ever since 1987.

The National Churches Trust’s Grants for Places of Worship programme. But the money is only the beginning – what else can the Trust help?

The Trust helps in many different ways. It gives grants to support the Trust’s building projects, and it also provides grants to organisations, like the Churches Conservation Trust, to help them manage their properties. The Trust also provides advice and guidance on best practice in the management of churches and other religious buildings.

What is your most significant achievement?

I would say to have saved 13 English churches, where I am a churchwarden, and to have managed to keep them open for worship. It is quite an achievement and I am very proud of that.

What might be the biggest challenge facing the UK’s church buildings and heritage?

The biggest challenge facing the UK’s church buildings and heritage is the loss of historic churches through lack of funding. Conservation and maintenance are key issues, but there is a real risk to existing buildings, encouraging good practice and ensuring that they remain safe, secure and accessible to all.

The Old Vicarage

The Old Vicarage is a monthly magazine that provides a diverse range of articles on a variety of subjects, with a focus on church heritage. The magazine has developed an extensive readership, and is available in print and online. The Old Vicarage is run by the Churches Conservation Trust, and provides access to a wide range of articles written by experts and enthusiasts in the field of church heritage.

Candles from Watts & Co

Watts & Co is Britain’s most renowned candle manufacturer, producing a wide range of candles of the finest quality. The company has been in operation since 1833, and has a long history of making candles for church use. Watts & Co is renowned as one of the leaders in candles, and is responsible for producing some of the finest candles in the country.

Church Bookshop

Church House Bookshop is a well-respected bookshop in London, and is a vital resource for churchgoers and church professionals. The bookshop specialises in church supplies and church candles, and is known for its exceptional selection of books, Rood Screens (a type of church furnishing), and other church-related items. The bookshop is open to the public, and is a great place to find books and other materials for church use.

Insurance from Ecclesiastical

Ecclesiastical is a leading provider of church insurance, and offers a range of insurance products designed specifically for churches. The company has a long history of providing insurance for church buildings, and is one of the most trusted providers in the industry. Ecclesiastical offers a range of insurance products, including contents insurance, buildings insurance, and special purpose insurance.

Architecture which still

The thousands of churches that the National Churches Trust helps to maintain are an important part of our cultural heritage. They provide a rich tapestry of history, art, and architecture, and are an essential part of our communities.

Books

Book Reviews

How to look at stained glass – Richard Hayman

Richard Hayman, a noted architectural historian and author, has written a really handy 64 page book, ‘How to look at stained glass’ which serves as an introductory guide to the fascinating world of stained glass. The book is designed for anyone with an interest in the history of churches and cathedrals to see stained glass, covering the meaning and the elements and motifs.

Readers can purchase a copy of the book by visiting the National Churches Trust website, or by contacting the Trust directly.

Arctic explorations

The ship was filled with Arctic ice, beyond the reach of the Canadian arctic. It was a challenging and cold environment, and the crew faced many challenges.

Andrew纲 Philby

Andrew纲 Philby was a naval officer and explorer, who was involved in several Arctic expeditions. He was also a member of the National Churches Trust, and contributed to the Trust's work in preserving church heritage.

The ship was filled with Arctic ice, beyond the reach of the Canadian arctic. It was a challenging and cold environment, and the crew faced many challenges.

Your privacy is important to us

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Were you at St Paul’s Cathedral on Tuesday 26 June 2018 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Incorporated Church Building Society (ICBS), one of our predecessor charities?

If you were, you were certainly in very good company.

Pride of place went to HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO ARIBA, Vice Patron of the National Churches Trust.

Dr John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York, presided at the special service of Evensong and was joined by a number of church leaders. They included: Reverend John Davies, Archbishop of Wales; Bishop Ken Good, Diocese of Derry and Raphoe; Most Revd George Stack, Archbishop of Cardiff and Vice President of the National Churches Trust; Major David Evans, representing the Salvation Army; Dr Ingrid Greenhow representing The Religious Society of Friends; and Alan Yates representing the United Reformed Church.

We were pleased to welcome as special guests Bill Bryson OBE, Vice President of the National Churches Trust; author Reverend Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch; former Director of the British Museum Neil MacGregor; Charles Wellesley, Duke of Wellington; Carol Vorderman MBE; and Huw Edwards, Vice President of the National Churches Trust.

But most importantly, we were delighted to welcome over 1,000 of our Friends and supporters, many of whom had travelled from churches that had been helped by the ICBS.

The Right Reverend Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury, eloquently summed up the importance of the ICBS in his sermon. He said: “The 200th anniversary of the ICBS is not an exercise in nostalgia or just a thanksgiving for what has been achieved in the past, good and important though that is. This is an opportunity for us to say why churches matter in the present and for the future. We value them highly, give thanks for all who care for them, today especially the Incorporated Church Building Society and the continuing work of the National Churches Trust.”

We remain eternally grateful to the founders of the ICBS and all those who generously supported its work for almost 200 years. We are also so pleased that many of you have supported our appeal to mark the anniversary, which has already raised over £30,000.

Our thanks also go to CCLA Investment Management Ltd, who supported the service and reception at St Paul’s Cathedral. Our next event, also supported by CCLA, is our Carol Concert at St James’s church, Piccadilly - details on page 2.