



CHURCH HERITAGE

News from the
Church Buildings Team



St Giles, Holme



**Welcome to the newsletter from the Church Buildings Team,
giving a quick overview of key information and updates.**

All the information in this newsletter is correct at the time of writing.
If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the team directly.

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

At the time of writing this, the scheme had closed to applications due to all the funds being allocated. There is currently no information on what will happen to claims that were expected to be submitted before the end of March, but data is being gathered to understand the impact. See the [GRANTS](#) section for more information.

Festival Week Returns

After the success of last year, Festival Week will take place again this summer. The programme will be released soon, but to get a flavour of what will be on offer, take a look back at the 2025 programme. [Festival Week](#).



GOOD NEWS

A Future for The Abbey Church - St Andrew the Less Community Project

In February 2025, a small group of people living in and around the Riverside area of Cambridge came together to discuss how St Andrew the Less, also known as The Abbey Church, could be restored and used by the community. Or, at least, how the land attached to the church could be turned into an orchard or wildflower meadow.

Fast forward and ambitions for both the church and land are now somewhat larger.

The Mission of the St Andrew the Less Community Project is now:

‘To secure the long-term preservation and public use of St Andrew the Less, ensuring this historic Cambridge landmark once again serves as a place where heritage, community, and the natural environment flourish together for public benefit.’

‘Re-developing a church is a huge undertaking, but we cannot shut the doors on 900 years of history’.

The project is collecting local perspectives to help shape what happens to the church.

Please complete a [short survey here](#).

Find out more and subscribe to the project newsletter here: [St Andrew the Less](#).

Urgent Porch Repairs Completed

[St Peter's and St Paul's church in Watlington](#) was added to the Heritage at Risk Register in 2019. Since then, a programme of repairs has progressed, with the most recent being to the south porch. The porch was in a “poor condition with evidence of damp in the walls, in stark contrast to the more stable and dry environment achieved within the main body of the church”.

Thanks to local fundraising and a grant from the Buildings For Mission Minor Repairs and Improvement Fund (now closed for applications), the repairs were completed before Christmas.



The
St. Andrew
the Less

Community
Project



St Peter and St Paul's, Watlington

REMINDERS

Quinquennial Inspections

Please ensure that your Quinquennial Inspection (QI) is up to date, as well as your maintenance plan and logbook. Reminders are being sent out for QI's due this year; please contact Sam if you have any questions.

More information: [Quinquennial Inspections](#).

Get Ready for Ride and Stride

One of the biggest fundraising events for historic church buildings takes place on the **12th September**. It's a national event, but it is organised locally by County Historic Churches Trusts. There are numerous ways to take part to make it as inclusive as possible. Find out more in [Cambridgeshire](#), [Norfolk](#) and [across the country](#).

You can also take part in [Heritage Open Days](#). 11th - 20th September.



Faculty Consent and the OFS

If you have a problem or a question concerning the Online Faculty System (OFS), the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), and/or a Faculty or List A/B application, call 01353 652729 or email dac@elydiocese.org and the Church Buildings team will help.

SAVE THE DATE: 2026 BIG UPDATE

The HRBA's BIG UPDATE is taking place on Wednesday 10 June at the Dutch Church, Austin Friars. This is an annual all-day event bringing you up to date with what happening in the Sector. [More Information](#)

DAC Meeting Dates		
Meeting Date	Papers Deadline	Target Feedback Date
26th March	12th March	3rd April
28th May	14th May	11th June
16th July	2nd July	31st July
23 rd September	8th September	7th October
19th November	5th November	4th December



Take a Virtual Church Tour

St Mary's
Guilden Morden

[Google Street View Tour](#)

MAINTENANCE MATTERS

Recommended Monthly Tasks from [SPAB's Faith in Maintenance Calendar](#).

March

- Check that eaves, gutters and downpipes have not been damaged by frost.
- Look for cracks and leaks in rainwater goods.
- Clear parapet and valley gutters of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally. Take care in icy conditions.

April

- Check the roofs for frost, snow and wind damage. Look for signs on the ground like broken bits of slates and tiles.
- Check for splits and cracks in areas of flat or sloping sheet roofing.
- Inspect lead flashings and mortar fillets at chimneys for signs of decay.
- Clear leaves and debris from gutters and rainwater pipes regularly. Cast iron gutters may also require repainting.

May

- Regularly clean out gulley and drains to make sure water flows freely away from the building.
- Make sure that windows and ventilators are operable so that the building can be ventilated.
- Lubricate door and window ironmongery and check security of locks.
- Have the boiler serviced, bleed radiators and ensure that the frost thermostat is operational.
- Clear away any plant growth from around the base of the walls and in particular from the drainage channel.

Further information: [Building Maintenance](#) and [Practical Pathway to Net Zero Carbon](#)



SPRING CLEAN

Spring can be a great time for an annual tidy and clean of your church. Many of us wouldn't question using our domestic cleaning products in churches, but not only could we be doing more harm than good, we might actually be cleaning far more than we need to.

There is a difference between cleaning and 'conservation cleaning' and many people enjoy exploring conservation practices that will help them to safeguard the history and heritage of their church. Changing practices and attitudes can take time, but with an understanding of the basic principles you can gradually make small changes that will have long-lasting benefits. Visit the website for [advice on church cleaning](#).





Heritage | Community | Preservation

Heritage Skills & Maintenance Day

**A hands-on celebration
of traditional skills,
conservation and care**

Join us for a fascinating day exploring the skills, stories and practical work that keep Norfolk's historic churches standing strong.

Across a series of beautiful churches, experts will be on hand with demonstrations, talks and plenty of opportunities to *have a go yourself*.

Saturday, 18th April 2026

**10am - 2.30pm - The day finishes with tea and activities at Great Cressingham Village Hall.
Free Event**

www.norfolkchurchestrust.org.uk/events/heritage-skills-and-maintenance-day/



Scan the QR code to find out more

RISK CALENDAR

Taken from [Ecclesiastical Insurance's Church Risk Calendar](#).

March - Flood safety

Climate change is resulting in more extreme weather events. Though it's impossible to flood-proof your church properties, there are some simple actions you can take to reduce the damage caused.



April - Working alone

Working alone can present several hazards, including an increased risk of assault and/or aggression. Review situations where people complete tasks alone to check the precautions in place to protect them.

May - Events

Events are a great way to engage with the wider community and raise vital funds. Larger events or unusual fundraising activities can present additional risks. These may need to be properly managed to ensure everyone remains safe and your event is a success.

BUILDING VOLUNTEERS

Church Buildings Support Network

The popular evening zoom meetings continue.

Over the next few months the following sessions are available to all:

- March 9th - Focus on support for Unlisted Churches
- March 11th - Friends Groups and Festival Churches, Community Engagement and Consultation
- March 18th - Insurance and Theft with EIG
- April 8th - Grants and Fundraising
- May 6th - Faculty and Permissions

A programme of in-person events is still being finalised, but will include:

- **Faculty and List B Drop-in Session with Sam and James:**
5th March, 10am - 1pm at Etheldreda House
- **Friends Conference:** 5th May, 10am-4pm
at St Peter and St Paul's, Alconbury
- **Festival Church Conference:** early June

For more details please visit the [CBSN webpage](#) or [contact Samuel](#).



**Do you have a Friends/Action/Project Group?
Samuel would love to hear from you.**

Please email Samuel with details of your group (e.g. what you are called, what church the group supports and why) and the name of your key contact. Samuel will use this to contact your group about latest training and advice.

LISTED PLACES OF WORSHIP GRANT SCHEME (LPWGS)

The LPWGS has now closed (it was due to end on March 31st 2026 or when all the remaining funds were allocated, whichever was sooner).

A new grant scheme, called The Places of Worship Renewal Fund, will be launched in the new financial year.

The details of this grant scheme still need to be worked out by DCMS. We currently know the following:

- The new grant scheme will run for 4 years from 2026/2027
- It will have a total pot of £92m, thus will average £23m a year
- It will be available in England only
- Only Listed Places of Worship in active use (min. 6 services per year) are likely to be eligible
- It will be managed by Historic England with a formal application process and grant panel
- Criteria will be linked to Government policies, such as the important of Place and national identity, and supporting deprived areas.
- Small to large projects are likely to be supported.
- It will be a capital grant focusing on repair and conservation work.
- The aim is to give a significant proportion of project costs to a parish, however, there is concern that this will mean the money will be fully allocated very quickly each year.
- There are likely to be a few funding streams in order to take into account different projects and needs.
- Whether it will be an enabling grant or a funder of last resort has yet to be determined.

Current projects:

Historic England are currently gathering information on how many Places of Worship were intending to make their applications between the date the fund closed (18th Feb) and 31st March. As well as any claims submitted before or on the 18th February which were rejected due to insufficient funds. Please send Holly the following details so she can collate information for the Diocese of Ely:

1. The total value of the project
2. The total amount of eligible VAT
3. The amount of VAT you will no longer be able to claim this financial year (2025-2026)
4. The postcode of the place of worship (optional, but will help to understand the spread of claims)

We will keep you informed as and when we receive further details. You can also receive regular updates by signing up to the HRBA newsletter: [Historic Religious Buildings Alliance](#)



GRANTS

Current Deadlines

March

- 1st The Jack Patston Charitable Trust
- 1st Thalia WB Community Fund
- 3rd National Churches Trust Large Grants
- 16th Church Care - Clocks
- 31st Simon Gibson
- 31st William and Jane Morris Fund

April

- 13th Church Care - Organs
- 14th National Churches Trust Medium Grants
- 30th ON Organ Fund

May

- 1st Cambridgeshire Community Foundation
- 5th Church Care: church plate, churchyard structures, brasses & metalwork, monuments, textiles, wooden objects
- 13th Augean Landfill Fund
- 14th The Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust
- 20th FCC Communities Foundation
- 21st Norfolk Churches Trust
- 28th National Lottery Heritage Fund
- 31st Aurelius Charitable Trust

Early June

- 1st Thalia WB Community Fund
- 1st Church Care - Wall Paintings



Grants without Deadlines

- The Archer Trust
- Benefacts Trust
- Church Care - Conservation Reports
- Garfield Weston
- Geoffrey Watling (Norfolk only)
- National Lottery Community Fund: Awards for All
- National Lottery Community Fund: Reaching Communities Fund
- National Lottery Heritage Fund: Grants for Heritage (up to £250,000)
- Paul Bassham Charitable Trust (Norfolk only)
- Suez Community Fund
- Tarmac Funding
- Tesco Bags of Help
- The Barron Bell Trust
- The Beatrice Laing Trust
- The Bernard Sunley Foundation
- The Clothworkers' Foundation
- The Co-op Local Community Fund
- The John S Cohen Foundation
- The Round Tower Churches Society
- TASC Grants

For advice on grants whether it is for repairs or new works, please contact Holly. If you would prefer to search for grants and receive more frequent updates on funding opportunities, you can register for free with the following websites:

- [Cornerstone](#)
- [Support Cambridgeshire](#)
- [Grants Online](#)
- [My Funding Central](#)
- [Funds Online](#)

UPDATES

The following grants have been paused due to the high level of applications received:

- [Congregational & General Charitable Trust](#)
- [Joseph Rank Trust](#) (might re-open in April)

[The Worshipful Company of Glaziers](#) - grants are currently under review, and applications are not currently being accepted.

GRANTS CONT...



Benefact Group's Movement for Good Awards

£1,000 and £5000 Draws - Nominations open all year

The Benefact Group Movement for Good is your chance to help give away profits to good causes. Nominate the causes closest to your heart once and they'll be entered into all upcoming £1,000 draws.

Special draws award £5,000 to charities making a difference in the fields of Health, Community and Animals and Wildlife. Full details can be found on the [Benefact Group website](#).

OTHER INFORMATION

Martyn's Law

Ecclesiastical Insurance has recently published guidance on Martyn's Law. Whilst it is important for all churches to be aware of this and follow the guidance, **the main impacts will be on big churches hosting very large events/services.**

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, which came into force last year has prompted many enquiries from parishes, church buildings and clergy colleagues wanting to know what the impact will be of this new legislation for churches. Ecclesiastical is pleased to be able to share a new guidance note, produced by the in-house Risk Management Team.

[Martyn's Law explained for places of worship](#) | [Church Made Simple](#) | [Ecclesiastical](#)

A few key points to note:

- Places of worship have until April 2027 to meet the requirements for the standard tier, with compliance overseen by the Security Industry Authority (SIA). The SIA has committed to providing guidance and support throughout the rollout.
- All places of worship will be classified as standard tier premises, regardless of maximum capacity or the type of activities they host. This applies to everything from small services to large weddings, fetes or concerts. Importantly though, we recommend a positive approach to this legislation to help embed safety and security into your culture.
- Though places of worship will always be classed as standard tier premises, larger or major churches, conducting a wide range of complex activities, may wish to consider adopting elements of the enhanced tier as best practice in line with our recommendation to take a proactive approach.

If you have any questions, please contact Joseph Davies, Church Support Manager at Ecclesiastical Insurance: joseph.davies@ecclesiastical.com, 00345 777 3322



ENVIRONMENT AND NZC

The Church of England NZC Programme Grants

Funding for the next triennium's (2026-2028) NZC projects in churches will be launched over the next few months. In the meantime, a NZC grants overview has just been released, outlining the upcoming grants for churches and church halls – the [information sheet](#) will be on our NZC webpage. There are a variety of different grant streams, such as Quick Wins, Give To Go Green and Decarbonising Churches.

If you have a project and would like to find out more when information comes available, please contact sacha.watson@elydiocese.org.

You can also find guidance relating to [other NZC grant funding opportunities here](#).

Please note that, for grants from the Church of England NZC Programme, registration to [Eco Church](#) will be a requirement. It's easy to do, you will likely find that you are already doing a number of the actions in the Eco Church survey and may be well on your way to achieving the Bronze Award. We also offer regular Eco Church support zoom sessions, which you'd be welcome to join. Again, please contact Sacha to hear about upcoming sessions.

Church Buildings Council's Heating Guidance Updated

This is a fairly major update with new information and up-to-date practices. Please visit the [Heating webpage](#) for new guidance notes on the following:



- Heating principles
- Heating perspectives
- Heating approaches
- Heating checklist
- Heating pitfalls
- Options appraisals
- Heating Permissions
- Temporary Heating Solutions



Love Your Burial Ground Week and Count on Nature: 6th - 14th June

[Love your Burial Ground Week](#) is a celebratory week which has been running for many years.

Caring for God's Acre has been encouraging all who help to look after churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries to celebrate these fantastic places in the lovely month of June – in any way you choose.

We've seen history talks, picnics, volunteering work parties and even abseiling teddy bears!

Churches Count on Nature 2026 is part of Love Your Burial Ground Week, focusing on the brilliant wildlife to be found in churchyards and chapel yards. It is a joint initiative promoted by Caring for God's Acre, the Church of England, the Church in Wales and A Rocha UK.

Over 27,000 wildlife records have been submitted during this dedicated week over the past two years, and many recorders are continuing to submit records through the burial grounds project on iNaturalist UK. Many of the records have been verified and are available to view [HERE](#)

Churchyard Conservation Scheme

Find out how to encourage wildlife and create beautiful, tranquil spaces in your churchyard. Visit your county wildlife trust website to find more. [Cambridgeshire Norfolk](#)

TRAINING AND EVENTS

Church Buildings Support Network: [Programme Details](#)

Heritage Skills and Maintenance Day: 18th April [Event Website](#)

Love Your Burial Ground Week: 6th - 14th June [Event Website.](#)

Heritage Open Days: 11th - 20th September [Event Website.](#)

Ride and Stride: 12th September [Event Website.](#)

CONTACT DETAILS

Please contact Holly if you:

- have any problems with the links contained in this newsletter
- would like to be added to/removed from the mailing list for the newsletter
- have information for the next edition; cut-off date 18th May.

All initial enquiries about works to your building or churchyard and queries about the faculty process or applying for consent should please be directed to the Church Buildings office via dac@elydiocese.org

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Telephone (01353) 652737 or email geoffrey.hunter@elydiocese.org

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Sacha Watson - Net Zero Carbon Officer

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