

March 2024



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

CHURCH HERITAGE

News from the
Church Buildings Team



St Peter's, Horningsea



St Michael's, Chesterton

**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.

NEW TEAM MEMBER

In January, we were delighted to welcome **Samuel Pedlar** to the team in the new role of **Church and Community Support Advisor**. Partly funded by the Building for Mission (BfM) Project, the role is aligned to an apprenticeship. Samuel will be learning about the heritage/conservation, but his key focus will be supporting churches with community engagement.

The BfM Project has a tight timescale and targets so Samuel will spend a proportion of his time focusing on specific churches, but he will be available to provide general advice and support.

Later this month we will be joined by a new Net Zero Carbon Officer, but more about that in the next issue! In the meantime, look at the **Building Volunteers** section for details about a new church buildings support network; the first meeting will focus on heating.

GOOD NEWS

Weeting Church Re-opens

Almost 18 months ago, loose ceiling plaster and a collapsed pew platform led to the temporary closure of St Mary the Virgin. A determined community raised funds to carry out emergency investigations and minor works. Thanks to their efforts and support from Historic England, the Norfolk Churches Trust, Round Tower Churches Society and the National Churches Trust, the church has re-opened. The PCC are now focused on major repairs and reordering to make the church a more flexible and welcoming place for all.



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](#).

Listed Church Buildings VAT Reclaim

Did you know that you can claim back VAT on building projects? Repairs, professional fees and other works including electrics, plumbing, handrails, security measures etc. are all eligible.

The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS) changed management last year and launched a new website. Unfortunately, the latter heads everything as repairs which gives the impression that other items are no longer eligible. This is not the case; many items linked to alterations, kitchens, toilets etc. are eligible. Please visit the website and read the full list under the repairs heading.

The LPWGS gives grants covering the VAT on eligible items of over £1,000 to listed buildings used as places of worship. Whether your project is small or large, it is worth claiming. The VAT reclaim is often accepted as a source match funding by grant giving organisations.

For further information and questions please visit the website and contact the scheme directly. If you have any problems, please let us know.

[LPWGS website](#).

Get Ready for Ride and Stride

One of the biggest fundraising events for historic church buildings takes place on the **14th 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](#). 6th - 15th September.



OTHER NEWS

National Burial Ground Survey (NBGS) Update

The NBGS began work in this Diocese last year –

it will provide every church with an accurate and updatable online map of its churchyard, showing the locations of all known burials and the details on headstones. We would encourage all churches to take part. It will give the PCC a very useful tool for the management of their churchyard, now and in the future. [Click here for the E-form for consenting.](#)



Some changes have recently been made to the NBGS. There is no longer any involvement of the company Family Search (owned by the Mormon Church), the digitisation of the records is being done by the surveying company, Atlantic Geomatics Intl. Also, there is no longer any subscription charge to parishes for using the system, so this service is completely free to parishes and dioceses.

Agreement on general terms of access has also been reached with the Chief Archivists in Local Government Group (CALGG), so it is now up to individual archives to make arrangements with Atlantic Geomatics.

Atlantic Geomatics is planning a tour of dioceses in the early part of 2024 to explain these changes and the process for moving forward with the survey, so they will be in touch with you. The CCB contact for the project going forward will be [Dr James Miles](#), taking over from Dr Joseph Elders, who has left the NCl.

Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2023

The Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment Rules 2023 came into force on 1 January 2024. These are possibly the shortest amendment rules in recent time, related to monuments conflicting with the role of the church. In practice this is expected to mean monuments raising issues of contested heritage.

Proposals which involve the movement, removal or alteration of a statue, plaque, memorial, monument or other article because it is considered to conflict with the role of a church as a local centre of worship and mission, must give due regard to guidance issued by the Church Buildings Council: [Contested Heritage](#).

Call for urgent action to save the UK's church buildings.

The National Churches Trust launched a manifesto in the House of Lords on 24th January 2024, calling for urgent action to save the UK's church buildings. '[Every Church Counts](#)', sets out six key actions:

- A network of professional support officers to help volunteers and clergy
- Boosting the 'National Help Service' by basing more community support services in churches
- Additional public funding to help save church heritage for the future
- A strategy to increase tourism to historic churches, including more UNESCO world heritage site designations.
- Regular opening of churches beyond worship times
- Urgent action by Government, heritage organisations and denominations, including the development of a national plan.

Benefact Group's Movement for Good Awards Returns for 2024

The Benefact Group is giving more than £1 million to charities and good causes across the UK and Ireland this year through random draws. The Movement for Good Awards is the Benefact Group's annual programme of giving and this will be its sixth year.

The way it works: charities and good causes are nominated by the public to be entered into a draw. Once nominated, the charity will be included in all the remaining £1,000 draws in 2024.

Winners are drawn at random. The more times a charity is nominated, the more chances it has to be selected.

There are two different draws: one for grants of £1,000 and another for grants of £5,000. In addition, later in the year, 50 larger grants of £10,000 each will be awarded.

Charities can **register their interest now**.

Full details can be found on the [Benefact Group website](#).



BUILDING VOLUNTEERS

Church Buildings Support Network

We are trialling a new form of support for parishes by setting up a support network. The aim is to bring together people who are involved in looking after church buildings, to share experiences and resources and provide encouragement and support. Everyone is welcome - volunteers, paid workers, clergy, Friends Groups etc.

The network will be introduced this year with a series of informal meetings, mostly online, but with one or two face-to-face gatherings. It will be managed by Holly but will develop according to the needs and wishes of participants. Details of the meetings will be published as far in advance as possible. You don't need to sign-up to become a member or attend every meeting. Booking is only required to help manage sessions.

There will be a dedicated section on the Diocesan website for the network which will include details on the format of meetings, content and how to book. In the meantime, the current plan is:

Online Zoom Sessions (7pm-8:30pm)

- **April 17th - Heating**

General discussion about challenges/opportunities and what support is needed. Chance to ask DAC staff questions and meet the new Net Zero Carbon Officer.

Contact Holly to register for the session (see final section of newsletter for contact details).

- **June 4th - Toilets and Kitchens**, featuring The Aisle Project at St Mary's, Feltwell.
- June/July – New to the Diocese. A general discussion on church buildings with advice from existing volunteers. *You don't have to be new in role to attend.*
- October – Lighting.

Face-to-Face Meetings

Summer (dates TBC). Proposed venues: St Mary's Feltwell and Ss. Mary & Andrew Whittlesford.

Any questions or comments, please contact Holly.

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.

For guidance, including maintenance plans and videos visit our [website](#).



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. You can find an [introductory guide to church cleaning and other resources](#) on the Diocese's website.



USING THE OFS: PART TWO LIST A/LIST B APPLICATIONS

The Online Faculty System (OFS) can be accessed here: <https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org>.

When you start a new application, you will be offered a choice to start either a **List A/List B** item or to start a **Faculty** Case. If you are unsure, please contact us for guidance. After selecting the type of case, you will be asked to enter a summary of the proposed works and a contact number (n.b. whenever the OFS asks you to do something, there is a yellow guidance box at the top of the page).

Click **Finish Form** and the system will assign a case reference (e.g. 2024-095372) and populate the case with the standard details held by the OFS on your church. For List A/List B items you will then be asked to work through three further steps to confirm the List A or List B classification.

First indicate the area affected by the works (either Church buildings etc., or Churchyard) and click the **Next** button to move on to the List A category selection. If the works fall within List A, select the category from the list or select **None of the above** at the bottom of the list and click the **Next** button to move on. If you have selected a List A category, The next page will confirm that you do not need any permission for the works. If you selected **None of the above**, select the appropriate List B category from the list presented on the next page or **None of the above** at the bottom of the list.

Click **Finish Form** to complete the selection process. You will then be presented with the **Details** dashboard showing the sections you have completed and possibly further sections to be completed. For List A items no further work is required; click **Submit** to complete and file the application. For List B items you must complete the List B applications details section before the application can be reviewed for approval. Open this section by clicking on the **Notepad** icon at the end of the dashboard line, enter details of the proposed works in the text box and click **Finish Form** to return to the dashboard. Then click **Submit** which will forward the application to us for processing. You can upload additional details of the proposed works such as quotations, specifications, photographs etc., at any time. Select the **Supporting documents and images** tab next to the **Details** tab. Click the **Add** button which opens a Drag and drop box and a Description box. You can upload one file at a time by dragging the file from your file window into the Drag and drop box, or searching for the file by clicking the **Select file** button. After identifying a file to upload, enter a description of the information being uploaded into the Description box and click the **Upload** button to add the file to the case. Uploaded files will be listed at the top of the tab. Note the Description box is not cleared after each upload so if you need to change the contents of this box for each new uploaded file.

We will review the application and may seek advice from DAC members and/or seek further information from you before advising the Archdeacon whether the application can be approved. If the application is uncontentious, it should be possible to gain approval within 10 working days. If the matter is urgent, please contact us for advice.

Finally, if you were unable to select an appropriate List A/List B category, the system automatically converts the application to a full faculty application (covered next time).

GRANTS

Current Deadlines

March

- 1st The Joseph Rank Trust
- 1st Thalia WB Community Fund
- 5th National Churches Trust Large Grants
- 6th Mick George Community Fund
- 25th Church Buildings Council (Bells)
- 29th Skinner's Charity Foundation
- 31st Simon Gibson
- 31st William and Jane Morris Fund

April

- 8th Church Buildings Council (Clocks)
- 8th The Worshipful Company of Glaziers
- 15th The Steel Charitable Trust
- 30th ON Organ Fund
- 30th National Churches Trust Small Grants

May

- 1st Cambridgeshire Community Foundation
- TBC The Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust
- 2nd Congregational & General Charitable Trust
- 9th Norfolk Churches Trust
- 15th Augean Landfill Fund
- 30th National Lottery Heritage Fund

Early June

- 1st Thalia WB Community Fund
- 1st The Joseph Rank Trust
- 3rd Church Buildings Council (Organs)
- 5th FCC Communities Foundation
- 10th Church Buildings Council (Church Plate)
- 10th Church Buildings Council (C/yard structures)
- 10th Church Buildings Council (Brasses, metalwork)
- 10th Church Buildings Council (Monuments)
- 10th Church Buildings Council (Textiles)
- 10th Church Buildings Council (Wooden objects)



All Saints', Haslingfield

Grants without Deadlines

- The Archer Trust
- Benefact Trust
- Church Buildings Council Conservation Reports
- Garfield Weston
- Geoffrey Watling (Norfolk only)
- Henry Smith Charity
- LPWGS (VAT Reclaim)
- 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 Foyle Foundation Small Grants (closes April 2025)
- The Hobson Charity Ltd
- The Jack Patston Trust (Cams only)
- The Jill Franklin Trust
- The John S Cohen Foundation
- The Rank Foundation Pebble Grants
- The Round Tower Churches Society
- The Swire Charitable Trust - grants under £25,000
- TASC Grants

Suspended Grants

- The **Tudor Trust** remains closed until further notice.



Take a Virtual Church Tour

St Mary the Virgin,
Godmanchester

[Google Street View Tour](#)

Changes to the National Lottery Heritage Fund

After a short pause, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, aka Heritage Fund, is open for applications and there is good news - the prescriptive outcomes have gone and repairs are back in focus!

A new strategy centres around four investment principles:

- **saving heritage**
- **protecting the environment**
- **inclusion, access and participation**
- **organisational sustainability**

Visit the [Heritage Fund's website](#) for more details.

Applications for funding must take all four principles into account, but the strength of focus, and emphasis on each principle, is for you to decide and demonstrate. The focus of the Heritage Fund is on what each **individual applicant needs**.

Church repairs: where possible, work should lead to the removal of a church from the Heritage at Risk Register or the category vulnerable. For churches without these formal designations, work should address items marked as urgent and Very Bad or Poor on a quinquennial inspection or other report. Other non-urgent works may be supported; it depends on how you address the investment principles.

There are two funding programmes:

National Lottery Heritage Grants: £10,000 - £250,000. A one stage application with decisions in 8 weeks. No deadlines, some match funding preferred but not required. Project Enquiry recommended.

National Lottery Heritage Grants: £250,000 - £10million. A two-stage application process with a mandatory Expression of Interest. Quarterly deadlines and 5-10% match funding required depending on the grant size.

Competition is likely to be high due to the backlog of repairs across the heritage sector. If you are interested in applying, please contact Holly in the first instance.

Holly will be running two online zoom sessions to discuss the changes in more detail. Please email her if you would like to join one of the sessions.

- **Wednesday March 13th, 7:00 - 8:30pm**
- **Thursday March 21st, 7:00 - 8:30pm**

Hands-on Heritage Supported by Lottery Players

There is a shortage of people with heritage skills and knowledge. Repair projects offer an opportunity to help shine a light on this, and inspire and train people. Consider how your project could help, whether it is a simple hard-hat tour or an open-day when people can meet contractors, architects etc., or a careers events with a school.

St Andrew's church in Soham is currently delivering a Hands-on Heritage programme with support from the Heritage Fund (under the previous grant scheme). [Read more here with links to some inspirational videos](#). Whilst this type of large-scale activity programme should no longer be required to gain support for repairs, the church has been delighted with the positive impact it has had.

With urgent repairs still required, the church will continue to champion heritage skills and inspire young people wherever possible.



Foyle Foundation's Grants Programme to End in 2025

The Foyle Foundation has announced that it will complete its grant giving programme in 2025. Since it became operational in November 2001, the Foundation has disbursed more than £146.6 million in grants across the UK in the fields of the Arts, Learning, Community Small Grants, State School Libraries and formerly Health.

Applications will be accepted for the final rounds of grants for projects that can be completed by the end of 2025. **The Small Grants scheme is the one churches are more likely to apply to; this will close on 30 April 2025.**

The full details for each grants scheme along with the online application form can be found on the website: [Foyle Foundation](#).

Small Capital Grants for Rural Village Halls

The Village Halls Small Grants Fund is provided by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and administered by the charity Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE). It is designed to help volunteers running village halls make easy steps towards capital improvements. The fund reopened in February to new applicants who wish to undertake smaller projects such as disability access, toilet upgrades and new kitchens.

Grants of between £2,000 and £5,000 are available to cover 20% of the eligible capital project costs including the VAT. There is no upper limit for the total capital costs. Smaller projects will be prioritised. All project work must be complete before the end of March 2025.

The fund is open until December 2024, or until available funding is fully allocated.

More information: [Village Halls Fund](#).

Church of England: Updated Grants Directory

Are you looking for grants to help fund a local environmental project? The online directory has been updated and lists organisations which may be able to help you. [Grants Directory](#).

Church Grants: Online Training on Fundraising

The [Church Grants](#) team are hosting free Q&As on alternate Fridays (first was 2nd Feb) until the end of April. No need to pre-register just use this link: [Free Q&A](#).



All Saints', Teversham

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:

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

Free Funding Webinars

Local Funders 12th and 13th March

Support Cambridgeshire have rounded up a range of local funders within Cambridgeshire to come and speak about their funding opportunities and how to access them. Funders include councils, the Cambridge Community Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund Cambridge Team.

National Funders: 19th and 20th March

Community Matters Yorkshire, are once again offering everyone the chance to join a two-day Funding Fair to listen to a range of national funders including, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, National Lottery Community Fund, Bernard Sunley and Clothworker's Foundation.

More Details and To Book

These webinars all work in the same format - each funder is allocated a 30 minute session using Zoom to explain what funding they have and also how the application process works. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions. You will need to book separately for each session you wish to attend. All details and links to each session to book can be found on the Funding Month page on the [Support Cambridge website](#).

This is a FREE event but donations towards the costs are welcome.

RISK CALENDAR

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

March - Ladders

If using ladders or stepladders check that they are right for the job, free from defects and used properly, being appropriately positioned and secured.

April - Tree Management

Trees form a natural part of the landscape and bring many benefits. However, they can present a number of hazards as they age and careful management is needed. *Remember, major works to trees need List B consent and felling may require a faculty.*

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.

Electrical fires in churches hit a six year high

Ecclesiastical Insurance is calling on churches to carry out important safety checks following a surge in electrical fires. The specialist insurer issued the warning after claims for electrical fires hit a six-year high in 2022. The number of incidents fell during 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, but have since risen to levels not seen since 2017.

As churches diversify and adapt their buildings for wider community use, the range of electrical equipment used on premises has increased and evolved in recent years. [More Information](#).



ENVIRONMENT

Love Your Burial Ground Week and Count on Nature 8th – 16th 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 2024 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](#).

If you can't see your records there, don't worry, it is simply in the verifiers 'to do' pile!

If you want to start counting wildlife NOW – [visit this page](#) to find out how to get going and how to share your records all year round.



Green Church Awards Open for Entries

You are invited to enter the new Church Times Green Awards! Describe what your church, school or community group is doing to make a big impact in your community through eco projects.

The awards aim to celebrate the great work of church communities around the country who are caring for God's creation. The deadline for entries is 30th June 2024. [Green Church Awards](#).

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](#)

Church of England Statement on Hydrogen and HVO as Heating Fuel

The Church Buildings Council, after careful consideration of advice from its Net-Zero Building Services Committee, has issued a statement on the use of Hydrogen and HVO (hydrogenated vegetable oil) as heating fuels. The statement which includes details of some recent research, shows why it does not consider that either fuel is appropriate to use as part of the move away from fossil fuels in the church setting. [Church of England Statement](#).

NEW EPC Guidelines for Churches and Church Halls

PCCs leasing space in a church or a church hall might need an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The rules around this have special provisions for certain building types, including listed buildings, and there are circumstances where an EPC is not needed. There is an exemption for religious use, and this guidance is specifically for a lease for another user. For these regulations the building being consecrated, or not, is not a relevant consideration. [EPC Guidance](#).

TRAINING AND EVENTS

Free Funding Webinars: 12th, 13th, 19th, 20th March. [BOOK](#).

Heritage Fund Zoom Sessions: 13th and 21st March. Contact Holly.

CB Support Network: First meeting 17th April. Contact Holly.

Love Your Burial Ground Week: 8th – 16th June. [Event Website](#).

Heritage Open Days: 6th- 15th September. [Event Website](#).

Ride and Stride: 14th September. [Event Website](#).

National Churches Trust free training sessions to help your church.

Every year the Trust delivers training sessions to help empower churches in their work. Most of the events take place online.

[Find out more and register for free.](#)



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 20th 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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