



Church Buildings Team Bulletin November 2024

Welcome

Welcome to the November edition of the Church Buildings Team Bulletin.

The poet John Keats, in his poem To Autumn, described it as the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness. For those who look after church buildings we might also think of it as the time to clean gutters of fallen leaves and to be aware of slippery paths. In this edition our good news story comes from Little Steeping and gives an outline as to how they went about raising funds for the repair of their church tower. We have a focus on flooding and how the parish dealt with a deluge at Leasingham St Andrew. The National Lottery Heritage Fund has announced priorities for its grant giving which include church buildings and we have a low-down on their latest investment principles. We have news and views from our Net Zero Carbon Team colleagues and our usual round up of news, events and resources.

As ever we value comment and feedback. Please get in touch...

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Headlines

Congratulations to Aslackby St James - National Churches Trust Church of the Year Award 2024

We were delighted to hear that Aslackby St James had been awarded the Church of the Year Award at the National Churches Trust Church Awards, held in Lincoln Cathedral on 22nd October. These are the church equivalent of the BAFTA's. For more information, see [this story](#) on the diocesan website.

Electrical testing is mandatory!

When was the last time you had the electrical system tested in church? This needs to be done every 5 years and can highlight issues before they become a danger to the building or to someone's life. We have seen some horrors recently that could have resulted in catastrophic fire. Please ensure that your test is up to date, particularly before you start increasing the load on the system with Advent and Christmas events.

Good News - Little Steeping, St Andrew

Basil Harwood, Churchwarden writes:

St. Andrew's Church, Little Steeping, has recently undertaken a significant restoration project, focused on preserving its historic tower externally by addressing pointing issues and lead flashing. The project, which began on July 1st 2024, comes after two and a half years of securing grant funding from various organisations, these being the National Churches Trust, Kochan Trust, John Warren Foundation, Marshalls Charity, Lincolnshire Churches Trust, Benefact Trust and the Headley Trust.

As with any project, planning is the key to success. First of all contact the DAC team, their involvement from an early stage is essential. Be guided throughout with close consultation with your appointed Architect.

The Church Buildings Team can work alongside you, has extensive knowledge and experience and can suggest which grant funders to approach for your particular project. This process is not for the faint hearted, some applications are simply two sides of A4 paper, others are several online only pages. It takes an amount of time and patience to navigate the application forms and processes. Some applications are more involved / demanding than others.

The restoration, scheduled to last 8-9 weeks, involved meticulous work to maintain the structural integrity of the tower. Contractors removed cementitious mortar from several areas, replacing it with an approved Hot Lime Mix mortar, closely matching the original materials used in the tower's construction. A small portion of the east-facing elevation of the tower was taken down and carefully rebuilt. Stainless steel pins were inserted in selected places to give extra mechanical bonding of the masonry.

The project addressed issues with the tower's leaded roof, which had been allowing water to seep in. On the inside face of the parapet the pointing had eroded away quite significantly, especially where pointing was between stone and lead. All of the remaining mortar was removed and replaced with lime mortar mixed with double boiled linseed oil, thus allowing for expansion and contraction given the two differing materials. Lead in certain places had cracked and this was expertly repaired. The restoration not only preserves the tower's aesthetics but also ensures the long-term stability of this historic church, safeguarding it for future generations. The above works have been crafted by Paul Booth Stonemasonry of Lincoln, the teams dedication and passion going into every inch of this structure. All under the watchful eye of Jonathan Capek of Scorer Hawkins Architects (Skendleby).



Focus on Flooding

The Revd Al Jenkins, Priest in Charge of The North Lafford Group of Parishes, writes to share wisdom learnt from flooding in Leasingham.

*'The rains came down and the floods came up.
But the house on the Rock stood firm'*

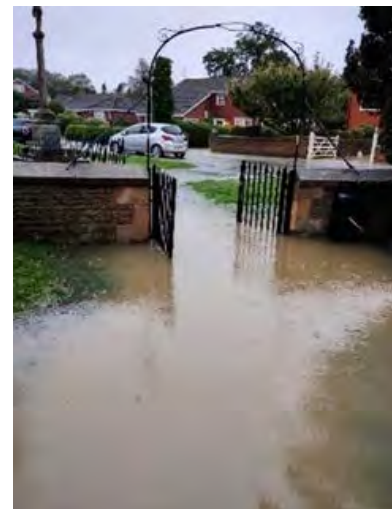
Many of our villages, homes and churches were seriously affected by Storm Babet in October 2023, the rain was so heavy that the village waterways could not contain it. Widespread flooding caused damage across the Benefice.

St Andrew's Church, Leasingham was particularly affected. The PCC and some very kind parishioners arrived quickly and began to try and mitigate the damage.

Outside of the church building bund floats were put in place alongside sandbags to mitigate the water ingress. As you can see from the photographs there was a great deal of water which cascaded down Captains Hill.

The damage to the church fittings was extensive and the resultant building of a good relationship with the Insurance Assessor helped immensely. Several meetings of the PCC and contractors brought a few things to light which we feel would be useful lessons learned. Amongst these are:

- **Ensure you have a PCC call out list. This could be on WhatsApp or other social media.**
- **Ensure you follow your architect's advice at your Quinquennial. This helped us in some areas.**
- **Check your soakaways are clear (if you have them).**
- **Ensuring your guttering and downpipes are in good repair and cleaned regularly.**
- **Ensure the curtilage of the church is cleared of weeds and, if cracks or breaks appear have them repaired.**
- **Purchase some absorbent flood barriers, readily available they will soak up water and provide a barrier quite quickly.**



We had some of this in place and some we have had to set up with hindsight. We are seeking to put a drop in flood barrier at the church gate, similar to this one at a neighbouring property. This is a simple affair which will allow us to stop the water at the gate should we need to.



The church was out of use for nearly 8 months. We feel that this would, in all likelihood, have been a shorter period if some early interventions had been implemented. Finally, thank you to everyone who helped to reopen the church in June 2024.

News, Events and Resources

Parish Data available

Census Dashboards have been compiled for each parish on the Online Parish Returns System with a summary of various pieces of useful data.

These can be useful for grant applications, planning mission and understanding more about your context. To search for your parish, follow this link:

<https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org/census-dashboards/>



New Tourism Welcome Guide

The Churches Visitor and Tourism Association in conjunction with the National Churches Trust as part of the Discover Churches project in Herefordshire and Shropshire have published a toolkit to help churches engage with those that visit them. The guide aims to encourage curiosity about new ways of attracting visitors, inspiring and sharing knowledge, values and experiences. This is a first draft and further suggestions and case studies are welcome. To download the toolkit and other associated resources, visit the National Churches Trust website here:

<https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/explore/discover-churches-toolkit>

House of Good report: Health

The National Churches Trust has published the House of Good: Health report. This research shows that the UK's churches take an immense amount of pressure off the NHS and provide essential support services that it would cost an extra £8.4 billion a year to deliver. This is equivalent to nearly 4% of UK health spending.

Cornerstone: Guided support for churches, including grant database.

Contact the [Generosity Team](#) to gain access to the grant database of this great new resource. Cornerstone is a new and exciting programme from the Church of England which helps parishes to develop generosity and giving by looking at data and analysing feedback. The Diocese of Lincoln has been at the forefront of its ongoing development and has recently undertaken a pilot programme with 11 parishes from across the county. Cornerstone is a guided process working with a small team from each parish. The Generosity Team will also be running workshops in the Spring about this - fill in this [form](#) to take part.



A Pitstop for Rural Churches

The Diocese of Norwich ran a conference in the summer to help engage and inspire rural churches to positive action on their journey towards Net Zero Carbon. Further details and videos of the seminars can be found here:

<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/a-pit-stop-for-rural-churches-towards-net-zero-by-2030-seminar-videos-available/>



Advent and Christmas **Follow the Star** **Calm and Bright**

In case you need to find templates and other helpful resources for connecting with your community this Advent and Christmas - follow this [link](#).

Net Zero Carbon Team

As we write this bulletin, the work and effort for the year is coming to a culmination. The Annual Review for 2024 is complete and ready for the Diocesan Synod, where they will also be considering the Carbon Footprint Report based on all of the energy returns data you provided earlier in the year. We think it makes a really good and interesting read, and hopefully in a way that everyone can understand, but with the option to deep dive if you want to. We've included a link to the document here. Please let us know if you have any queries and we would be more than happy to answer them.

Hot off the press today are the initial plans coming together for the Energy (EFT) Returns for next year. This is something to pencil into your diaries as the dates are going to differ from this year! Next year, 2025, the plans are that the EFT Tool will be made available in early January and will likely then run through to the end of June for your submissions. There are going to be some subtle changes, and we will hopefully be able to talk more about them in the next Bulletin. It gives us more time than this year and time to gear up for it, but we would be the first people to admit how much work this is for everyone. Watch this space for more details.

The audits are now just about complete for the churches that were successful in their bids for free energy audits and funding. The results should be coming back soon, and we can then look at the Action Plans and how we leverage the funding. A further tranche of Energy Audits are being planned by the National NZC Programme, not to mention a number of other funding streams. We'll be posting details as and when they become available, so once again watch this space for more updates on this.

The Autumn/ Winter site visit programme has now commenced. We are working our way through the list, so please bear with us if you have not heard back recently!

The team is here to help, however trivial the query may appear to be.

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The team at Louth St. James are working on their Demonstrator Church application as part of their journey towards Net Zero Carbon with support from the NZC and Church Buildings Teams.

If you are interested in exploring what might be possible at your church, do get in touch. Little changes can add up to a lot of benefit.



Chelmsford Environment Advent Calendar

Our colleagues in the Diocese of Chelmsford have produced an Advent Calendar with examples of different environment projects. Have a look to be inspired each day in the coming season.

https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/uploads/files/EnviroAdventCalendar2024_final.pdf



Recommended Monthly Tasks (From SPAB's Faith in Maintenance calendar)

November

- Check that the flagpole is secure.
- Check the roofs for damage. Debris on the ground from broken or missing slates and tiles indicates that there may be a problem.
- Clear leaves and debris from gutters and rainwater pipes regularly and check for any storm damage.
- Take part in SPAB's National Maintenance Week in November.

December

- Clear parapet and valley gutters of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally.
- Take care in icy conditions.
- Gulleys beneath rainwater pipes should be cleaned out regularly and drains should be rodded out if they overflow during wet weather. Remove silt and debris and ensure water discharges freely.
- Make sure that fire safety equipment has been serviced.

January

- Have the electrical systems checked by a qualified person at least once every five years.
- Smoke alarms should be regularly tested and cleaned. Remember to replace the batteries too!
- Clear parapet and valley gutters of snow (see above).

Risk Calendar Taken from Ecclesiastical Insurance's Church Risk Calendar, where more information can be found.

November - 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.

December - Happy Christmas

- Christmas is a wonderful time of year, but special events and services, extra visitors and festive decorations in your church can increase the risks of accidents and damage. A little extra planning can help keep everyone safe.

January - Water pipes and heating

- An escape of water can cause extensive and lasting damage. Check that your water pipes are lagged, the stopcock is clearly labelled, and your heating system has been serviced by a registered engineer.

Check out the proformas at [Ecclesiastical Insurance](#).

Grant News

National Lottery Heritage Fund

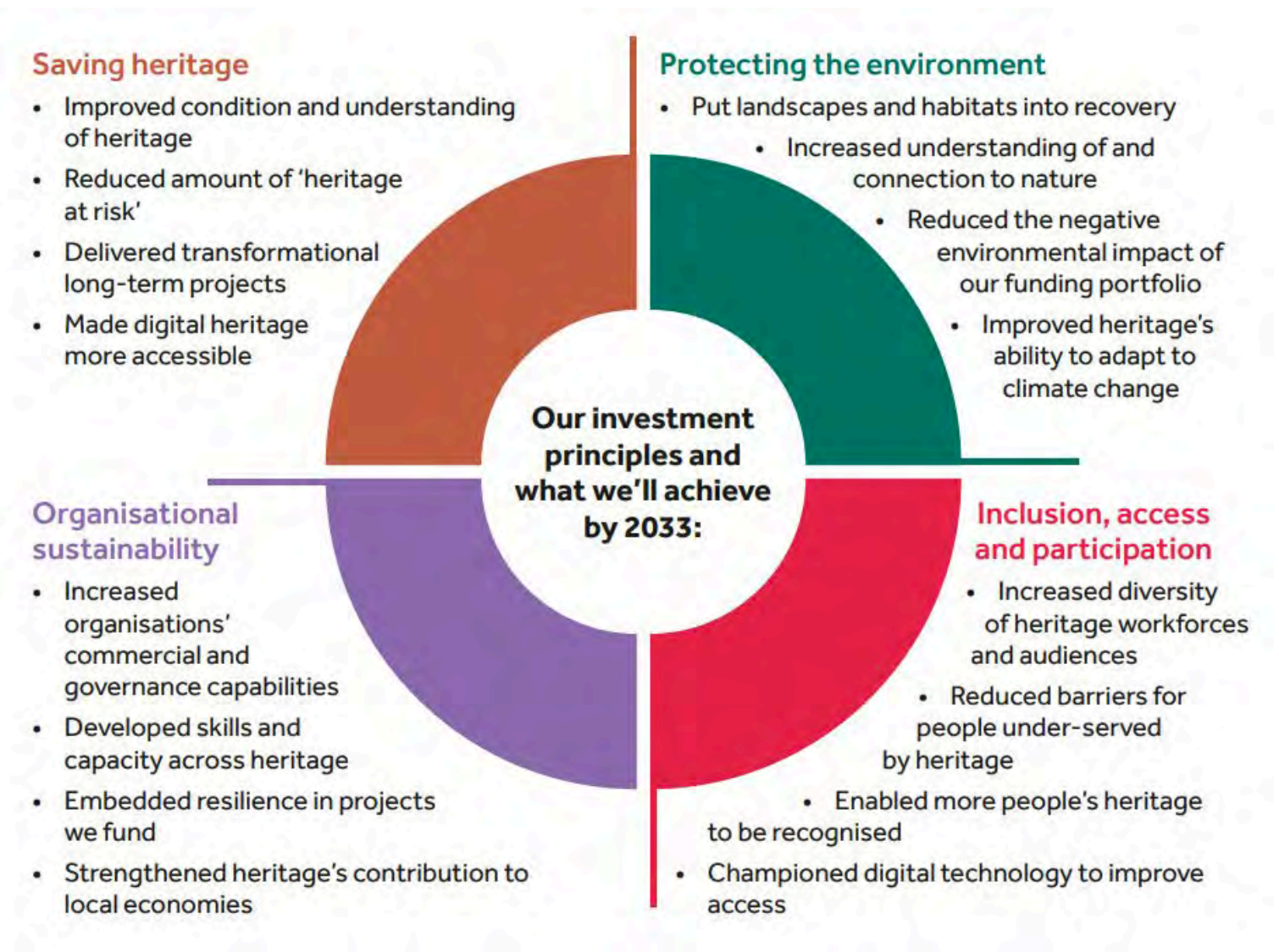
You may be aware of the four investment principles in the NLHF Heritage 2033 strategy (see graphic below). At a recent training event, we heard that it can be helpful to think of them as a pie chart, but that not all slices need to be equal.

From the conversations we have had with NLHF representatives, colleagues in other dioceses and our own parishes, the majority of church projects should be able to cover each principle, but some 'slices' will be larger than others.

If you would like to explore submitting an application, do let us know.

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

We are aware that, at the time of going to press, no decision has been made about whether to extend this scheme beyond March 2025. It was not mentioned in the Budget at the end of October. We know from our networks that conversations are taking place with Lisa Nandy MP, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and that a decision will be made in due course. We also know how difficult this makes planning projects. As soon as we know, we will let you know!



Grant Information

Where to start

Please get in touch with the team, to discuss which grants to apply for and when. We can help you come up with a funding plan for repairs and new facilities.

You can register with this website for free to search for grant funding:

Charity Excellence Framework:

<https://www.charityexcellence.co.uk/>

The Voluntary Centre Services and Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service host a free web-based funding information service. For further information visit their webpage:

<https://lincolnshirevolunteering.org.uk/find-funding/>

Organisations can sign up to a regular funding newsletter here: <http://eepurl.com/hWu2Vn>

Grants with no deadlines

Benefact Trust The Barron Bell Trust The Beatrice Laing Trust The Bernard Sunley Foundation Church Buildings Council Conservation Reports The Clothworkers' Foundation The Foyle Foundation Small Grants Garfield Weston Regular Grant The Hobson Charity Ltd John Warren Foundation The Kochan Trust Lincolnshire Churches Trust National Lottery Community Fund: Awards for All National Lottery Community Fund: Reaching Communities Fund National Lottery Heritage Fund: £10,000 to £250,000 Tesco Community Grants

Share your grant news and sources

Please do share your grant news, good and bad with us. We know that parishes starting out on a project find it really helpful to hear what others have done elsewhere. Help us to build the network across our Local Mission Partnerships.

Upcoming Grant Deadlines

November	
20th	FCC Communities Fund
21st	National Lottery Heritage Fund grants over £250,000
December	
17th	National Churches Trust Medium grant
January	
1st	Grange Wind Farm Community Fund – near Tydd St Mary
27th	Churchcare Wall Paintings
29th	Sleaford REP Community Power

Idlewild Trust

Please note that the Idlewild Trust no longer funds conservation projects submitted by places of worship.

Foyle Foundation

The Foyle Foundation grant making programme will close to applications from 31st January 2025

Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Partnership

The Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Partnership have launched a new website. <https://lincscvp.org.uk/> and includes information on funding.

Key Dates

The DAC agenda dates and meeting dates for the next four meetings can be found below. Please get in touch with Steven or Peter for further information.

Meeting Date	Agenda Close
Wednesday 18th December	Wednesday 4th December
Tuesday 28th January	Tuesday 14th January
Wednesday 12th March	Wednesday 26th February
Thursday 1st May	Thursday 17th April

Tattershall, Holy Trinity



Contact Details

Please contact the team if we can help with any church building related query.

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Contributions and Suggestions Please

Have you got a good news story about your church building, carried out a project, found grant funding or have something you'd like to share? We would like to include your contributions in future editions. If there is a subject you would like us to cover, let us know and we will see what we can do. Email the team via

churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org

Church Photographs

It would be really helpful if you could share your photographs of churches with the Church Buildings Team. Whilst we have an archive, they are not as up to date as they could be. Clear pictures through the seasons of the exterior as well as key items and facilities in the interior are always useful. Get in touch with the team via churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org