

Changes to the administration of the Wolfson Foundation Funds for Fabric Repairs of Parish Churches

Changes have been announced making it easier for parishes to apply for funding to support fabric repairs.

The Church of England, working with the Wolfson Foundation and the National Churches Trust (NCT) will announce tomorrow that during 2020 administration of the Wolfson Foundation funds for fabric repairs of churches will move from the Cathedral & Church Buildings Division of the Church of England to the National Churches Trust.

The Wolfson Fabric Repairs grants programme supports fabric repairs for Grade I and II* (England), A and B+ (Northern Ireland) listed Anglican church buildings throughout the United Kingdom. £400,000 per year is awarded to projects, including urgent roof repairs, improving rainwater goods, drainage works, and wall repairs. In 2019, awards were given to 79 parishes.

The move to the National Churches Trust will result in a simplified funding application process for fabric repairs. Parishes will be able to submit one application form and be considered for up to two fabric repair grants. This will reduce form filling for the parishes. There will also only be one reporting and claims process for the two grants, again reducing the burden of paperwork on parishes.

Through making this small administrative change to the way funding is applied for, parishes can continue to benefit from the vital support the funds from the Wolfson Foundation can provide. The Cathedral & Church Buildings Division will continue to provide support and advice to parishes on faculty applications, and will also continue to provide input into the Wolfson grants programme through representation on the National Churches Trust's Grants Committee.

The Church of England's conservation grants programmes administered by the Cathedral & Church Buildings Division (ChurchCare) will continue with its focus on conservation of historic interiors whilst the National Churches Trust will focus on fabric repairs (in addition to its other programmes for maintenance, project development and installation of facilities).

What will this mean for parishes?

Parishes can still apply for a **fabric repair grant from ChurchCare** in January 2020, with the application deadline of 27 January 2020. All parishes with ChurchCare grants will be able to claim their grant from ChurchCare. For all questions about existing grants contact **John Webster**, Cathedral & Church Buildings Division Conservation Grants Administrator.

From **28 January 2020**, new applications for fabric repair grants should be sent to the National Churches Trust. Applications can be made via the Cornerstone or Gateway grant application forms depending on the size of the repair project. For projects costing over £100,000 applicants apply through Cornerstone, with the first application deadline of 2 March 2020. For projects costing up to £100,000 applicants apply through Gateway, with the first application deadline of 14 May 2020. More information [here](#).

Becky Clark, Director of Cathedral and Church Buildings, welcomed the change. "We are delighted with this opportunity to simplify grants for our parishes. We know that, for those caring for our 16,000 church buildings, fundraising is ever more important, but we also know that much of this work is done by dedicated volunteers. Anything we can do to make their lives easier is a top priority. The transfer of the Wolfson Fabric Repairs Grants programme to our friends at the National Churches Trust provides a welcome reduction in paperwork for the amazing volunteers who keep our church buildings alive, open and sustainable for all to use. The value placed on this grant fund by the Wolfson Foundation is also important, and we are delighted that they have worked with us to ensure this new arrangement gets their funding out into communities across the country. Within ChurchCare we continue to work to provide support to our parishes through advice and guidance, and with grants for conservation of historic church interiors, monuments, bells, clocks and organs."

Paul Ramsbottom, Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation said, "Historic churches are some of the country's most wonderful and loved buildings – inspiring joy in visitors and worshippers alike. We are delighted to be continuing to support churches across the UK and hope that the new arrangements will make life easier and simpler - particularly for that noble volunteer band on whom most churches rely for their fundraising. I also want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the team at the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division. They are powerful advocates for church buildings, and we have appreciated and relied upon their expertise and wisdom over many years. They will remain valued partners. We look forward to working with the National Churches Trust."

Claire Walker, Chief Executive of the National Churches Trust said, "The National Churches Trust supports places of worship of historic, architectural and community value throughout the UK. Many of these are the nation's most important historic buildings. Thanks to the expertise of our Church Support team and Grants committee, last year the Trust made 188 awards to churches and chapels totalling £1.3 million. We are very pleased to have collaborated with the Church of England's Cathedral & Church Buildings Division on making it easier for parishes to apply for grants for fabric repairs, and we look forward to working with the Wolfson Foundation so that churches can continue to play a vital role in the life and well-being of local communities for many years to come."

FAQs

What is the Wolfson Fabric Repair Grants Programme?

The Wolfson Foundation Fabric Repairs Grants Programme has been administered by the Cathedral & Church Buildings Division (ChurchCare) of the Church of England since 2000. With awards of up to £10,000 per project, the programme provides grants to 50-80 Grade I or II* Anglican churches (and A and B+ Anglican Churches in Northern Ireland) listed church buildings per year.

Who do I apply to for a grant?

You can apply to the ChurchCare Fabric Repairs Grants Programme until 27 January 2020. After this date, applicants will be redirected to the National Churches Trust. Applications will be made via their Gateway or Cornerstone grant application forms depending on the size of the repair project. For projects costing up to £100,000 applicants will apply through the **Gateway Grant** Programme and the first deadline will be 14 May 2020. For projects costing over £100,000 applicants will apply through the **Cornerstone Grant Programme** and the first deadline will be 2 March 2020. The first decisions will be made in July.

I have a ChurchCare Wolfson grant. What happens to this grant?

All grants currently awarded are unaffected by these changes in administration. ChurchCare continues to be the main point of contact for the grants already awarded. Please continue to contact [John Webster](#) with any enquiries and for claims. All grants awarded will be paid by ChurchCare, subject to the terms & conditions in the award letter.

Why is this happening?

We know how challenging applying for grants can be for parishes, with applications having to be made to many funding bodies. This move cuts down on the number of applications parishes need to make, to access two funding pots which will now be run by the NCT. The Church of England supports these changes, as part of our desire to simplify processes for our parishes.

Will there be a reduction in funding available?

No. The Wolfson is continuing to provide £400,000 per year towards the fabric repair of historic church buildings.

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These grants were offered in partnership with the Wolfson Foundation.

The Wolfson Foundation

Decision for January submission are due around June 2020

Eligibility criteria

We funded urgent fabric repairs in Grade I or II* listed Anglican church buildings in England, Scotland and Wales, and Grade A or B+ listed Anglican church buildings in Northern Ireland.

We funded urgent fabric repairs. These tend to be repairs that are Category A or B recommendations in Quinquennial Inspection reports. This included urgent roof repairs (including repairs due to lead theft), masonry repairs, rainwater disposal and drainage, and floorwork.

Projects must have been overseen by an architect with appropriate conservation accreditation

- 50% of the required funding needed to have been secured as 'cash in the bank' or pledges at point of application
- Churches should not have benefited from a **ChurchCare/Wolfson Foundation** fabric repairs grant in the previous five years

Our assessment criteria

- Significance of the building
- Urgency of the proposed works
- Need for the works (eg Category A or B works in the most recent Quinquennial Inspection report)
- The appropriateness of the proposals
- Financial need of the parish

We used a parish's financial situation and the UK Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation as indicators to assist this process.

<http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/idmap.html>

Success rate

In 2018, 27 out of 36 applications were successful.

For more details of previous awards, see our [Annual reports page](#).

Conditions of award

- You must have obtained a faculty or the relevant permissions before starting work
- **You must not have started the works before the application deadline**

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You may have started the work at the time of award, but we cannot pay for work that has already been completed at this time.

- You must claim the grant within a year of award.

Claiming your grant

You must send:

- A Copy or copies of the architect's interim or final certificates
- A Copy or copies of the relevant invoice or invoices from the contractor or contractors
- **After all the work has been completed**, a brief project report. Download the template [here](#)

Also of interest

Making changes to your building

[Find out how to manage a building project](#)

Manage your conservation project

[Find out where to hire a conservator](#)

Advice and guidance

[Help and guidance on works to churches](#)

Other sources of funding

[See who else gives grants](#)

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/churchcare-grants/grants-fabric-repairs>