



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

David McKee

The Church of England, working with the Wolfson Foundation and the National Churches Trust (NCT), has today announced 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*, A and B+ 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 (Case Study 1). 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 (Case Study 2).

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 (John.Webster@ChurchOfEngland.org).
- From 28 January 2020, new applications for fabric repair grants should be made via the National Churches Trust. Applications can be submitted using 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**.

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."

Case studies of Wolfson Foundation funded projects

King's Lynn Minster, St Margaret with St Nicholas, Diocese of Norwich

Grant for fabric repairs to the Minster's north Choir Clerestory's 15th century stone tracery and the North Porch parapet.

Need: The rapid deterioration of King's Lynn Minster Clerestory is one of the key reasons the building is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. Urgent repairs to the clerestory windows and stonework were needed as structural elements were failing and some even falling to the street below. In addition, there was a need to secure the North Porch parapet's coping stones which were in danger of falling.

Significance: King's Lynn Minster, a Grade I listed building, founded as a Benedictine Priory in 1101. The west façade shows stages of development in the 12th, 13th 14th & 15th-century styles. The present form is mainly 13th century. The Crossing and Choir are original, but the aisles were enlarged by the 15th century when the Choir Clerestories and the North-West tower were also rebuilt.

Community: The parish of King's Lynn falls within the top 2.5% of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country and significant financial support was needed to support the local community.

Funding: Total Project cost £850,227. The Wolfson Foundation grant of £10,000 in 2017 rounded off the parish's impressive fundraising campaign and enabled them to commence these much-needed repairs in 2018. Other funding partners included the Heritage Lottery Fund, the PCC of King's Lynn St Margaret with St Nicholas, Alan Evans Trust, Norfolk Churches Trust and St Margaret's Trust.

Further information: Further information on the parish can be found on their [website](#), or by visiting [Explore Churches](#).

Steeple Morden, St Peter and St Paul, Diocese of Ely

Grant for fabric repairs to the nave and north aisle roofs.

Need: The original urgent repairs needed to the nave roof tiles to prevent the danger of loose falling tiles, were exacerbated by the theft of lead from the north aisle roof. This project, therefore, was to repair both the nave and north aisle roofs, to prevent water

ingress into the church building, and the associated decay of roof timbers and staining of the internal ceilings. These urgent repairs have made the building weatherproof for many years into the future.

Significance: St Peter and St Paul, a Grade II* listed building, has stood as a focal point in the centre of the village for generations. The oldest parts date from the late 13th century, with the north and south aisles, and south porch, added in the 14th century. The original spire, which collapsed in 1625, was rebuilt in the 19th Century with a tower and spire over the south porch.

Community: The church is situated in a rural community and is regularly used beyond worship for a wide range of activities including use by the local school, coffee mornings, concerts and other events. Its image is often used as the emblem of the village. It is open daily.

Funding: Total Project cost £188,900. The Wolfson Foundation grant of £10,000 and a National Churches Trust grant of £15,000 provided part of the funding for these essential fabric repairs, which were completed in 2018. Other funding partners included the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund, Friends of St Peter and St Paul, and Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust.

- The parish reported, "Overall the project went well. Handling the amount of information, especially as there were four grant bodies contributing funds, became fairly demanding. Organising the information at each stage and for each grant body would have been set up differently if the stages and processes to be followed had been considered more fully at the start."
- This illustrates how simplification of the administration of fabric repair grants through the transfer of the Wolfson Foundation funding from the Cathedral & Church Buildings Division to the National Churches Trust will help to reduce the administrative burden on church volunteers managing their fundraising and charitable funds, by reducing the number of applications and reporting processes.

Further Information can be found at:

[Steeple Morden Church Website](#)

[A Church Near You](#)

[Explore Churches](#)

[National Churches Trust](#)

Who we are

Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division Church of England

- Providing policy, advice, support and information on the Church of England's 16,000 buildings and 42 cathedrals. The national Cathedral & Church Buildings team (ChurchCare) work with dioceses and parishes to help church buildings stay open, welcoming, sustainable places, playing their part in the life of the nation.
- ChurchCare supports the conservation and responsible development of Church of England church buildings for worship, mission and community engagement. The team also run the Church of England's environmental campaign and work environmental sustainability into everything they do. [Find out more](#)

Press Contact: [Nick Edmonds](#), 0207 898 1326,

Grants Enquiries: [John Webster](#)

Twitter: @CofE_ChurchCare

National Churches Trust

The [National Churches Trust](#) is the leading national independent charity concerned with the protection and welfare of churches, chapels and meeting houses throughout the United Kingdom. We aim to:

- Provide grants for the repair, maintenance and modernisation of church buildings
- Act as a catalyst to improve and bring more resources to the management of church buildings
- Promote the value of church buildings to the community at large

Press Contact: [Eddie Tulasiewicz](#), 07742 932278, 020 7227 1936

Grants Enquiries: grants@nationalchurchestrust.org

Twitter: @NatChurchTrust

The Wolfson Foundation

The Wolfson Foundation is an independent charity that supports and promotes excellence in the fields of science, health, education and the arts and humanities.

Since it was established in 1955, over £900 million (£1.9 billion in real terms) has been awarded to more than 11,000 projects throughout the UK, all on the basis of expert review.

Twitter: @wolfsonfdn

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