

Lincoln Cathedral: North West Turret Phase 2 (1 of 3 projects funded)

Awarded £395,000 in July 2014 and a further £12,000 in May 2016 towards a £469,000 project

The Cathedral

The grant award was for the second stage of a three-phase project of works to the medieval west front, costing £1.25m in total. The turrets were exposed to weathering and the masonry was suffering from deterioration, including parts coming loose and falling to the ground below, a public highway and the main pedestrian approach to the cathedral. To help prevent injury an abseiler was being employed to check on all loose and potentially unstable stones, until such time as the turret could be scaffolded and a full masonry conservation and repair programme undertaken.



Replacement carving. Photo credit: Buttress Architects.

Outcomes

The repair work has ensured that this section of the cathedral does not pose a threat to the public through falling masonry. The fund has sustained the in-house work team and has enabled them to continue with their 100-year conservation plan.

Economic and social impact

The funding across all three projects resulted in the retaining of specialist skilled workers in the in-house works department who were able to develop their skills further, learn additional skills and have better job security, enabling some to remain in the area rather than relocating to secure similar roles. The projects all supported apprentices. The cathedral also has links with the local college and university and offers on-site experience to trainees in stonemasonry.

Community confidence in the cathedral has improved throughout all of these projects, with more tourists visiting the cathedral, more worshippers and an extensive programme of events relating to the First World War.

Works completed and timescale



The NW turret. Photo credit: Buttress Architects.

All of the works, other than scaffolding, were carried out by the cathedral's in-house works department and were completed in March 2016. The works involved cleaning and recording masonry and assessing individual stones, masonry repairs, replacing stones including ashlar blocks, mouldings, corbel stones, copings, finials and carved capitals. Other works included the renewal of the 14th-century pinnacle, which was re-fixed with a stainless-steel dowel rod.

The Cathedral

Lincoln is one of the great cathedrals, visible for miles around as it sits on a ridge with its hugely tall tower. The west front is covered in friezes of sculpture of the 13th and 14th centuries. Internally it has a profusion of ornamental carving, particularly in the Angel Choir. It also has a wonderful 14th century carved pulpitum. The cloisters contain interesting wooden bosses and a library over the north walk which was re-built by Wren in 1674. The cathedral is the key tourist attraction of Lincoln and hugely important to the local economy. It is the only Church of England cathedral to be on the Historic England Heritage At Risk register, with annual fabric repair needs estimated at £1.6 million in 2014.

Lincoln Cathedral: NW Transept and Triforium Roof repairs (2 of 3 projects funded)

Awarded £300,000 in November 2014 and a further £480,000 in July 2016

The need

The first grant was for the start of a four-year programme of work to the northwest transept triforium roof. This had been an area of concern for many years. Much of the organ, including the air reservoirs, are located here. The roofs had been leaking for a long time and temporary sheeting was fixed over the organ to keep the rain out. Repeated attempts had been made to repair leaks, but the lead was failing and could no longer be satisfactorily be repaired. As the lead fails so the timbers become wet and rot occurs. This particularly affects the wall plates and gutter construction. The second grant covered the continuation of the triforium roof repair on the north side of the Cathedral between the north transepts, masonry conservation and repair from parapet level to ground on the northwest transept east elevation and St Hugh's Choir north, and re-instating a section of the organ which needed to be dismantled for the previous phase as it was located directly beneath the roof.



Photo credit: Buttress Architects.

Outcomes

The roof repair projects at Lincoln have meant that this area of the cathedral will be watertight for generations to come. This will result in a dryer and warmer environment inside the cathedral. The fund has sustained the in-house work team and has enabled them to continue with their 100-year conservation plan. It has also ensured that the sections of the Father Willis organ located in this area, which are largely in their original 19th century condition, are safe from water damage.

Economic and social impact

The funding across all three projects resulted in the retaining of specialist skilled workers in the in-house works department who were able to develop their skills further, learn additional skills and have better job security, enabling some to remain in the area rather than relocating to secure similar roles. The projects all supported apprentices. The cathedral also has links with the local college and university and offers on-site experience to trainees in stonemasonry.

Community confidence in the cathedral has improved throughout all of these projects, with more tourists visiting the cathedral, more worshippers and an extensive programme of events relating to the First World War.



Photo credit: Buttress Architects.

Works completed and timescale

Lincoln Cathedral completed all work within the stated timescale. This first grant involved lead stripping and recasting, construction of new parapet gutters, reboarding, and roofing repairs to cover St Hugh's Choir and the transepts. The second round included masonry repairs, stones and carvings being replaced, removal of damaging and over-hard mortar; and repointing.

Cathedral quote

I really hope the government sees fit to extend the fund to help our English Cathedrals going forward. It has been so important for us and we are continually grateful. We are worried at Lincoln that without this kind of funding what the future of Lincoln Cathedral will be. (Carol Heidschuster, Works Manager).

Lincoln Cathedral: Lead Pinnacles Repairs (3 of 3 projects funded)

Awarded £38,000 in November 2016 towards an £89,000 project. The balance was covered by legacies and donations including an 'Adopt a Pinnacle' appeal.

The Cathedral

Long-standing problems with the twelve timber pinnacles on the three cathedral towers, identified over 20 years ago, had become acute, with instances of lead sheet covering slipping and falling off. The pinnacles are substantial timber-framed structures clad in lead, each the size and complexity of a small spire. They are very visible as part of the Lincoln skyline and there were public safety concerns over loose lead sheets potentially falling to the ground.

Outcomes

All twelve pinnacles are secure and the cathedral is now safe for visitors. The fund has sustained the in-house work team and has enabled them to continue with their 100-year conservation plan.

Economic and social impact

The funding across all three projects resulted in the retaining of specialist skilled workers in the in-house works department who were able to develop their skills further, learn additional skills and have better job security, enabling some to remain in the area rather than relocating to secure similar roles. The projects all supported apprentices. The cathedral also has links with the local college and university and offers on-site experience to trainees in stonemasonry.

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Four of the twelve pinnacles. Photo credit: Buttress Architects.



Before the repairs. Photo credit: Buttress Architects.

Works completed and timescale

Lincoln Cathedral completed all work within the stated timescale. The works, carried out by specialist conservation abseilers, included joinery repairs to the twelve timber pinnacles on the three Cathedral towers, re-fixing of lead, and some minor elements of masonry repair. Doors were repaired to give access into each pinnacle and ventilation introduced to allow for air movement within the structure.

Cathedral quote

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