



Grants for church buildings

Standard Note: SN/SC/1674

Last updated: 13 January 2005

Author: Gemma Wallace

Science and Environment Section

This note describes what grants are available for the repair and renovation of church buildings. Schemes are non-denominational except where otherwise indicated.

Contents

A.	Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme	2
B.	English Heritage	2
C.	Heritage Lottery Fund	2
D.	Church of England	3
E.	Roman Catholic churches	4
F.	Methodism	4
G.	Wales	4
H.	Scotland	5
I.	Access for disabled	5

A. Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme

In December 2001 the Government launched the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme. This provides grant aid for church repairs to the equivalent of a reduction of VAT to 5%. Application forms and further information can be obtained from the website www.lpwscheme.org.uk, by telephone (0845 601 5945 - calls charged at local rate), or by writing to The Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme, PO Box 609, Newport NP10 8QD. The majority of churches are listed buildings and therefore eligible for the scheme. The history of VAT and church repairs is treated in a separate Library standard note, *VAT and churches* (SN/BT/1051).

B. English Heritage

From 2002 English Heritage is offering repair grants for places of worship in England, under a scheme funded jointly by English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. This scheme only supports urgent repairs to the fabric of a building and is open to all places of worship in England listed grade I, II* or II. The aim is to grant-aid as many places of worship as possible and to target funds at single repair projects costing less than £200,000 (including fees and VAT), normally to be carried out in a single contract. The scheme also places emphasis on securing a “realistic level of guaranteed access to grant-aided places of worship for the public outside normal hours of worship”. Full details are given in the booklet *Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England 2002 to 2005*, available from English Heritage or on their website.¹

C. Heritage Lottery Fund

The Heritage Lottery Fund distributes money raised by the National Lottery. Until 2002 the Heritage Lottery Fund, in collaboration with English Heritage, operated a Joint Grant Scheme for Churches and Other Places of Worship, covering repairs, alterations or improvement of facilities. This has now been replaced by the Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England scheme (see above), whose remit is narrower. Projects other than urgent fabric repairs (which might formerly have qualified for the Joint Grant Scheme) must now be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund’s small grants scheme, “Your Heritage”, which offers grants of between £5,000 and £50,000. A successful application is required to “give people a better opportunity to experience heritage by improving access; and help to improve people’s quality of life by benefiting the community and wider public”. Application packs are available from the NLF or on their website.²

¹ http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/Filestore/pdf/worship/worship_01.pdf English Heritage, 23 Savile Row, London, W1X 1AB, tel: 020 7973 3266.

² http://www.hlf.org.uk/dimages/application_pack.pdf Heritage Lottery Fund, 7 Holbein Place, London, SW1W 8NR, tel: 020 7591 6000

D. Church of England

The church building itself is the responsibility of the Church of England, any church hall attached to it is vested in the parochial church council. The majority of Anglican churches are listed buildings. Although the costs of repair and maintenance are borne principally by individual parishes, there are numerous bodies from which assistance may be sought, including the following:³

- The Council for the Care of Churches,⁴ a permanent commission of the General Synod, gives grants for the repair of church furnishings and fittings that are of artistic or historic interest, e.g bells, organs, metalwork, monuments, paintings, stained glass, woodwork and textiles, and churchyard monuments.
- The Historic Churches Preservation Trust,⁵ which derives its funds from the private sector, assists churches which cannot fund the total cost of essential repairs by providing grants and/or interest free loans. The building must be at least 100 years old and still in use for worship.
- The 33 County Historic Churches Trusts in England are independent charities that raise money and help repair churches and chapels within their own boundaries. They are listed in full on the website of the Ecclesiological Society.⁶
- The Incorporated Church Building Society⁷ offers interest free loans for repairs to the fabric of buildings.
- The Church Commissioners have a limited role in this area. I recently spoke to an official, who explained that they do not generally make grants to individual parishes to assist with the costs of repairs. There are certain churches for which they have historic responsibilities - these tend to be the oldest - but they would not discourage any parish from approaching them with an individual case.⁸

Other sources are national charities. These include Allchurches Trust, The Woodroffe Benton Foundation, The Chase Charity, The Manifold Charitable Trust, The Open Churches Trust, The Garfield Weston Foundation and The Wolfson Foundation. There are also numerous local charities. Further details of all these are to be found in *The Directory of Grant Making Trusts 2005-06*,⁹ a comprehensive reference work which should be available in any good

³ Details in this section taken from Architectural Heritage Fund, *Funds for Historic Buildings in England and Wales: A Directory of Sources*, 2000 (copy in Science and Environment Section of Library). This directory is now available online at <http://www.fundsforhistoricbuildings.org.uk/>.

⁴ Fielden House, 13 Little College Street, London, SW1P 3SH, tel: 020 7898 1885. Website: <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/ccc/>

⁵ Fulham Palace, London, SW6 6EA, tel: 020 7736 3054. Website: <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/hcpt.html>

⁶ http://www.ecclsoc.org/churches_trusts.html

⁷ Fulham Palace, London, SW6 6EA, tel: 020 7736 3054 (no website).

⁸ Church Commissioners for England, Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London, SE1 7NQ, tel: 020 7898 1619/20/23. Website: <http://www.churchcommissioners.org/>

⁹ Charities Aid Foundation, 19th edn, 2005. See the Index under "Church buildings".

public library. Those with access to the Internet should also visit the “Fundraising” section of the Church Care website (<http://www.churchcare.co.uk/>.)

E. Roman Catholic churches

The majority of the grant-awarding bodies listed so far are non-denominational, even (surprisingly) the Council for the Care of Churches, which is a permanent commission of the Church of England General Synod. The only bodies which would *not* consider the case of a Catholic church are the Incorporated Church Building Society and the Church Commissioners.

There are no dedicated grant schemes for Catholic churches. The likeliest source of advice is the Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the body which advises Catholic churches on "liturgical arrangement, furnishings and fabric".¹⁰ By comparison with the Anglican or Methodist churches, Catholic dioceses are highly independent. Only a minority of Catholic churches are listed buildings (approximately 700 out of about 3,000). There is a list of Catholic funding bodies in the *Directory of Grant Making Trusts*. A spot check on these suggests that they prefer applications from registered charities, but they might be a further source of advice.

F. Methodism

The Methodist Church has several schemes for grant-aiding buildings. These include the Fund for Property, the Listed Building Fund, the Connexional Advance and Priority Fund, the Joseph Rank Benevolent Trust, and other discretionary grants. Full details appear in a leaflet, *Property Scheme Grant Aid*, available from the Methodist Property Office.¹¹ Some religious bodies are unwilling to accept lottery funding, on moral grounds. There is a provision within the Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England scheme (see section B above) to specify that the funds provided come only from English Heritage resources, not from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

G. Wales

Non-conformist chapels are eligible for most of the grant schemes already mentioned. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in Cardiff¹² (chapels specialist: Janet Wilding) can advise on how to formulate an application. The HLF will be looking for evidence of "urgent" need, so

¹⁰ 39 Eccleston Square, London, SW1V 1PL. Information supplied by Sophie Andrae, Chair of Patrimony Sub-Committee. Website: <http://www.liturgy.demon.co.uk/>

¹¹ Resourcing Mission, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1 1JQ, tel: 0161 236 5194. Website: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/rm/property/index.htm>

¹² Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff, CF4 3UZ, tel: 029 2034 3413

the opinion of an architect would be helpful. If a sum is too low to be considered for their usual scheme, it could still be eligible for other schemes, such as "Awards for All Wales" and "Your Heritage". Alternatively, the Chapel might wish to put together a more ambitious proposal that would fall within the HLF's remit.

Cadw (Welsh Historic Monuments)¹³ offers Historic Buildings Grants to "outstanding buildings", including religious buildings in use for worship, of up to 50% of costs, where the structure is currently "in danger of disrepair or dereliction".¹⁴

H. Scotland

Historic Scotland¹⁵ administers a Historic Building Repair Grants Scheme. Grants are awarded after consultation with the Historic Buildings Council for Scotland, both as to the amount of grant and the conditions to be attached to it. Some form of public access is a main requirement of all grants awarded. Main criteria for awarding Grants are: merit of the building as a structure of outstanding architectural or historic interest, the need for assistance from public funds, the nature and urgency of the proposed work, financial viability of the project and a sympathetic end-use, where appropriate.

The Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland¹⁶ operates similar schemes to those in England and Wales.

The Scottish Churches Architectural Heritage Trust offers grants for repair and restoration of buildings in use for public worship.¹⁷

I. Access for disabled

Under Section 19.3 of the *Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995*, places of worship would appear to be service providers and therefore, cannot treat disabled people less favourably than non-disabled people. Section 2.14 of the Code of Practice on goods, facilities, services and premises confirms this. It follows therefore, that churches will be subject to the same access obligations contained in Section 21.2 of the Act as any other service provider.

¹³ Crown Building, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ, tel: 029 2050 0200. Website: <http://www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/>

¹⁴ Cadw, *Historic Buildings Grants and Conservation Area Grants*, rev. 2001 [leaflet]

¹⁵ Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1SH, tel: 0131 668 8600. Website: <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/sw-frame.htm>

¹⁶ 28 Thistle Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1EN, tel: 0131 225 9450

¹⁷ Mrs Florence Mackenzie, Director, 15 North Bank Street, The Mound, Edinburgh, EH1 2LP, tel: 0131 225 8644 (no website).

Unfortunately, there is no statutory or other generally available source of funding for access improvements to public buildings. If they have not already done so, congregations should approach the local council, as some local authority access officers have small budgets to finance work of this kind. Two bodies which can offer further advice and conduct "access audits" are Church Action on Disability (CHAD)¹⁸ and the Centre for Accessible Environments.¹⁹ The Methodist Church has a small Disability Fund to help churches striving to meet legislative requirements to provide disabled access and proper facilities by 2004 (see above, Section D). FunderFinder helps voluntary groups and other not-for-profit organisations identify which charitable trusts might fund their work.²⁰ Through the Roof²¹ is a Christian disability charity, raising awareness of disability issues in churches and the wider community. They aim to make churches and church life more accessible to people with disabilities.

¹⁸ 50 Scrutton Street, London, EC2A 4XQ, tel: 020 7452 2085. E-mail: MLPCFM@aol.com

¹⁹ Nutmeg House, 60 Gainsford Street, London, SE1 2NY, tel: 020 7357 8182. Website: <http://www.cae.org.uk/>

²⁰ 65 Raglan Road, Leeds LS2 9DZ. Tel: 0113 243 3008. Email: info@funderfinder.org.uk. Website: www.funderfinder.org.uk

²¹ Global House, Ashley Avenue, Epsom, Surrey KT18 5AD. Tel: 01372 749955. Email: info@throughtheroof.org. Website: www.throughtheroof.org