

# Building Faith in our Future

The Church Heritage Forum published **Building Faith in our Future** in October 2004. The report focused on how church buildings contribute to the vitality of communities and sought to promote partnerships to sustain and develop these roles. We are now working to drive these objectives by promoting a national campaign which will target decision-makers in Government and other relevant audiences. This second e-bulletin since the publication of **Building Faith in our Future** sets out developments to date and asks how you can help as we move the campaign forward.

**Becky Payne**, Policy Officer, Cathedral and Church Buildings Division, Church of England is co-ordinating much of the work detailed below and would welcome your ideas, local examples and feedback. Becky can be contacted on 020 7898 1886 or [rebecca.payne@c-of-e.org.uk](mailto:rebecca.payne@c-of-e.org.uk)

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## 1. Key Messages

The campaign will promote several key messages:

### 1) Churches matter and deserve (everyone's / your) support:

- They are at the heart of communities
- They are a channel for delivering community objectives
- They are our heritage

## 2) Without support they are at risk:

- Funding from statutory bodies such as English Heritage is decreasing
- We do not have equal access to funding opportunities, awards and partnerships
- We are under pressure due to rising costs

## 3) We are asking for:

- A level playing field in terms of access to funding and resources
- Recognition of our current role and our potential role
- Funding that meets half the cost of building repairs

## 2. Progress

**The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division has continued to make progress on all the action points set out in [Building Faith in our Future](#).**

### Discussion

We are very encouraged by the interest shown in the document and have now arranged a SECOND reprint.

The next sessions of **Church of England General Synod**, in February 2006, will include a debate on the Church's Built Heritage. The motion supports the recommendations of [Building Faith in our Future](#) and, encourages the Church Heritage Forum to take them forward, working closely with parishes, dioceses, and others, and also calls for increased public funding and the continuance of the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme. It will provide an opportunity for the Synod to hear how dioceses and parishes are responding to the opportunities and challenges presented by church buildings.

The **Ecclesiastical Insurance Group's** annual competition in 2005 was for the best ideas for using church buildings to reach out to the community. Winners were announced on 17 November and the winning entries are listed on the **EIG's** website ([www.ecclesiastical-insurance.co.uk](http://www.ecclesiastical-insurance.co.uk)).

The awards made under the King of Prussia's Gold Medal Award and the Presidents' Award at the **Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association's** AGM in November 2005 also featured some very good examples of imaginative and well designed adaptations to historic church buildings to facilitate increased community use. More information to be found at [www.easanet.co.uk](http://www.easanet.co.uk).

## Further research

Following receipt of the figures for the outstanding repairs needs for Church of England churches in 2003, the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division is continuing to work with English Heritage on the re-run of the **Church Fabric Needs Survey** which we hope will further define repair costs.

By revisiting the same sample of 140 churches in five areas of the country which were originally studied in 1994-5, the aim is to identify the cost of repairs carried out over a further ten years up to 2004, examine what has been done and what still needs to be done and hopefully determine the reasons for those repair and maintenance choices. Results due to be published in Spring 2006.

The **ORB national telephone survey** previously run in October 2003, was run again in November 2005, again commissioned by the Church of England and English Heritage. The results revealed that nearly nine out of ten adults (86% of the population) in Great Britain had been into a church building for one purpose or another within the past 12 months, confirming the levels recorded in 2003. Among Christians this figure was 91%, among those of no religious persuasion it was 75% and among those from non-Christian religions it was 73%.

The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division is also collaborating with English Heritage on a new survey, **Mapping of Places of Worship in Need**, planned to commence in early 2006 to identify geographical areas (**not** individual churches) in which financial information indicates that congregations are under particular pressure because of the relationship between available income and repair costs: this will help English Heritage target its own resources.

There are three pilot **church maintenance schemes** commencing in three dioceses. They are St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, Gloucester, and London. They are all working to a slightly different model. All three are being part-funded by English Heritage. The intention is to monitor the comparative effectiveness of all three which would then provide good models which other dioceses could follow.

As **Building Faith in our Future** illustrated, Church of England churches along with other faith groups make a huge contribution to **social action** in their local communities. Within all the nine **English Regions**, surveys have been carried out to map the size and range of this contribution. The majority of these surveys have been undertaken by the regional faith network supported by their regional development agency. We are also investigating whether it is possible to determine an overall figure of what faith groups contribute to their communities for the whole of England by means of extrapolating from the data we already have. In the meantime, we are continuing to keep track of this work and here is an up to date table (copy attached) which summarises those reports which we know about. Please let us know if you come across others.

### 3. VAT

The **Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme** has been extended until 2008. Almost **£32 million** has been awarded in grants up to the end of June 2005 throughout the United Kingdom. Up until 31 December 2005, **£31.25 million** was paid to listed places of worship in England, an estimated 89% of them Anglican churches.

On the 11 November 2005, the Government launched the **Memorial Grant Scheme** which will return, in grant aid, the amount of VAT incurred on the construction, renovation and maintenance of eligible memorials. For more information go to:

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/historic\\_environment/memorial\\_grant\\_scheme/](http://www.culture.gov.uk/historic_environment/memorial_grant_scheme/)

The Churches Main Committee, which represents some 40 Christian denominations and the Jewish Community throughout the UK, submitted a further paper to the European debate on reducing **VAT** on repairs to historic places of worship. We had hoped for progress during the UK Presidency last year, but the long-running problem of creating a solution acceptable to all member states remains.

### 4. Liaison with Government Departments

David Lammy, MP, Minister for Culture has met with church groups and promised a Government response to **Building Faith in our Future**.

Having received recognition from Government of the benefits of the **'ecclesiastical exemption'** and agreement that it should continue, we are continuing to work with English Heritage and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to develop voluntary pilot projects in two dioceses (Bath and Wells, Lincoln) and with two cathedrals (Rochester and Canterbury) to streamline the overlap of the different legal systems. This is in line with the proposal from DCMS that individual cathedrals and churches (or groups of churches) should be able, voluntarily, to enter into 'Heritage Partnership Agreements' together with local authorities, English Heritage and other appropriate partners to establish a framework for handling works need consent and to streamline the process of management. Full details of the DCMS statement can be seen at

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive\\_2005/ecclesiastical.htm](http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2005/ecclesiastical.htm)

We have been involved in consultations with both the **DCMS** and the **Department for Education and Skills (DfES)** who are jointly developing initiatives to promote the use of the built environment in education; also with DfES who are producing separately a manifesto on 'Education Outside the Classroom'. Alongside the Pilgrims' Association (who bring together cathedral education and visitor officers), we have been attending working groups to ensure that the contribution of cathedral and church buildings to this area is fully recognised. Manifesto due to be launched in Spring 2006.

The **Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)** has commissioned research into the contribution by faith groups to social capital in rural communities entitled '*Faith in Rural Communities: contributions of Social Capital to Community Vibrancy?*' Research is being carried out by three organisations: the University of Coventry, the Church of England (through Dr Jill Hopkinson, National Rural Officer) and the Arthur Rank Centre. The study is ecumenical and is seeking to involve other faiths present in the communities being studied. It is expected to be completed in mid-2006.

**Heritage Counts**, the annual state of the historic environment report, was launched on November 16 2005. The theme was rural heritage and included information on the condition of rural places of worship and their potential as community buildings and deliverers of rural services. The majority of the regional reports included good examples of churches enjoying greater community use which at the same time was helping to sustain those buildings. More details can be found on the English Heritage website:  
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.5837>

The **All Party Parliamentary Historic Churches and Chapels Group** is continuing to meet with attendance from ourselves and other heritage bodies. We welcome their continuing support.

## 5. Liaison with Other Partners

**The Hoare's Bank Group**, formed out of a meeting held at Hoare's Bank in June 2004 continues to meet four times a year and provides a forum for the majority of the organisations involved with historic churches to discuss matters of common interest around the long term future of these buildings. It enables to organisations to keep each other better up to date with their own 'church building' activities, as well as discussing areas such as future campaigns, and agreement on priorities for factual research (e.g.: current state of repair needs, looking at benefits of new facilities in churches, required competencies for managing a church building and how do we best provide those for PCCs). By exchanging ideas and information, the groups involved are starting to work more effectively together on projects and indeed in some areas, form effective working partnerships.

The Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) has managed to secure a **six month secondment from VisitBritain**. Andrew Duff, (Head of Customer Contact Services at VisitBritain) started on 3 October. He is working closely with CCT, the Churches Tourism Association and the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division to bring those involved in church tourism in the Church together with the tourism sector and enable the development of a shared vision and the preparation of a co-ordinated 'framework for action' on the marketing of the historic churches 'experience' to potential visitors.

We have also been working with ViRSA (Village Retail Services Association) an organisation that gives advice on setting up **community shops in rural areas**. By exchanging information on how this could happen within church

buildings we hope to be able to open up more opportunities for rural communities and their churches.

## 6. Giving Advice

The [www.churchcare.co.uk](http://www.churchcare.co.uk) website is being developed to provide comprehensive advice on building matters, funding, contacts and more links.

A **website directory of artists and craftspeople** who are available for commission by churches and cathedrals for new art of all kinds from stained glass to candlesticks was launched on 7 November. The website which is under continual development is at [www.churchart.co.uk](http://www.churchart.co.uk) .

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) is developing plans for a national scheme for training of volunteers involved in the **maintenance of historic buildings** used as places of worship. We have been in discussions with them on how we can provide support to this project.

The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division has also been participating in a working group with the Church Commissioners and others preparing guidance on carrying out **local building audits** (due to be finalised early 2006). It is hoped that this will provide a practical model that Dioceses can use when undertaken an overall look at their church buildings.

## 7. Request for Good Examples

As part of the overhauling of the [www.churchcare.co.uk](http://www.churchcare.co.uk) website, we are hoping to include some **innovative and imaginative projects** where churches are enhancing the community uses of their buildings, whether by well-designed physical adaptation of the church building and/or outreach into the wider community. We would greatly welcome local examples for possible inclusion on the site. These can include examples from the range of areas set out in **Building Faith in our Future** as in cultural activities, voluntary and community activities, in rural and urban areas, education, tourism as well as innovative funding ideas. Please send your stories to Becky Payne along with a contact name for the project and/or a website link as soon as you can. We would like to be able to share them with Synod members.

Cathedral and Church Buildings Division  
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## BUILDING FAITH IN OUR FUTURE : KEY FACTS

- A 2005 survey showed that **86 per cent** of the population had visited a church building or place of worship in the previous twelve months, for reasons ranging from participating in worship to attending concerts or simply wanting a quiet space. This confirmed the levels recorded in 2003.
- The 2003 survey showed that **24%** of the population think the State already funds maintenance of church buildings. **42%** think it *should*. **16%** believe that local taxes should contribute. Thus over half the population believe that taxation of some kind should bear some of the costs of church buildings. (ORB 2003)
- **Forty-five per cent** of the country's Grade I listed buildings are maintained by the Church of England. These churches and cathedrals are largely supported by the efforts and financial support of local communities. Often, they are the focus of community life and service.
- In total, some **12,200** of the Church of England's **16,000** buildings are listed by the government as being of special architectural or historic interest.
- Three cathedrals are World Heritage Sites: Durham Castle and Cathedral, Canterbury Cathedral, St Augustine's Abbey & St Martin's Church, and Westminster Abbey and St Margaret's Church.
- Every year, around **12.5 million** people visit Church of England cathedrals, including **300,000** pupils on school visits. Three of England's top five historic 'visitor attractions' are York Minister, Canterbury Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.
- In 2003, Church of England parishes spent nearly **£101m** on major church repairs. In answer to a question included as part of the annual Parish Returns, parishes estimated that repairs still needed to their churches came to **£372.8 million** of which **£323.1 million (87%)** was for listed churches. In the same year, the major sources of funding came to less than 40%. Therefore 60% was raised by local fund-raising.

English Heritage grants have effectively remained level since 1995. Had English Heritage been able to maintain its contribution to church repairs in real terms at its highest level of 1995 (when £14m was offered in grant), it would now be offering £19.5m.
- Church of England churches along with other faith groups make a huge contribution to social action in their local communities. Within all the nine English Regions, surveys have been carried out to map the size and range of this contribution. A 2005 study of the economic impact of faith communities produced on behalf of the Northwest Regional Development Agency estimated that faith communities in the Northwest generates £94.9 million. This is made up the estimated economic value of 45,667 faith volunteers contributing c.8.1 million

hours of social and health care and working in regeneration initiatives (equivalent to 4,815 FTE jobs) applying a wage rate of £7.50 per hour, premises made available by faith groups for use of local community groups, and day visitor expenditure generated by faith tourism which also supported 215 FTE jobs.

- Church buildings in particular are a valuable resource to their communities. The North West 2005 study estimated that the 1,385 premises made available to local communities by faith communities in the Northwest generated £811,472 per annum. A 2004 survey carried out in Brighton and Hove found that out of the 55 community buildings identified by the survey as essential to the provision of over 300 community projects and services offered by faith communities, 47 were church buildings and halls provided by the churches themselves.
- A survey commissioned by the Association of English Cathedrals and English Heritage found that visitors to cathedrals generate £91million in spend per annum and directly support 2600 jobs. This increases to £150 million in spend in the local economies within which they are located if it includes their procurement spend, their impact on visitor spend and associated multiplier effects. From 2005 they will **receive** only £1 million per annum in repair grants – but currently **spend** £11 million annually on repairs and maintenance.
- Although, there has not yet been any research to determine the benefits to local economies of visitors to parish churches, we are starting to see that initiatives set up to promote church tourism do have a positive effect on numbers of visitors. The North Yorkshire Church Tourism initiative which ran for three years and in that time increased the number of annual visitors to the 285 participating places of worship by 120%. Total number of visitors recorded for the year 2004/5 was 203,952.