

Church Buildings Team Bulletin November 2025



Welcome

Welcome to the last of our Church Building Team Bulletins for 2025.

We would have liked to have been able to tell you good news about the extension of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme but alas there was no mention of it in the budget at all – we will of course let you know anything as soon as we hear. What we can tell you is news about the National Churches Trust Church of the Year, opportunities for churches in South Kesteven and the National Lottery open week. There is also the usual round up of grant news and deadlines. And do feel free to get into contact with any queries.

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Headlines

National Churches Trust Church of the Year

Join us in wishing congratulations to Old Bolingbroke St Peter & St Paul.

Breaking Grant News

This month's bulletin has been slightly delayed so we could bring you the most up-to-date news about the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. Please read on to find out more.

Snowy Photo Request

If you take a lovely snowy photograph of your church, churchyard, or its wildlife this winter, please send it through to us for use in our January bulletin.



Old Bolingbroke St Peter and St Paul: National Churches Trust Church of the Year

Congratulations are due to Old Bolingbroke St Peter and St Paul on their fantastic achievement of the National Churches Trust Church of the Year Award.

Commended for their “outstanding example of what a small rural church can achieve through energy, imagination, and community spirit”, their project clearly demonstrates the positive impact a church is able to have on its community.

In the words of one panel member, Old Bolingbroke “has it all — history, heritage, community, and heart” — a model of how a small rural church can be enterprising, inclusive, and deeply rooted in local life.

This marks the second win in a row for Lincolnshire following Aslackby’s award in 2024, with our humble villages punching well above their weight in this national competition.

Additionally, Old Bolingbroke also achieved the Church and Community Volunteer Award for their exemplary community spirit and drive to preserve this very special church.



In a village of just 350 people, volunteers have transformed their beautiful historic church into a thriving hub of local life. The team’s creativity is remarkable – from pet services and pop-up pubs to concerts, talks, and heritage events linked with the nearby castle – all helping to bring new people in and make the church hugely relevant again.”

The judges admired how the community came together to care for both the building and the people it serves, combining heritage restoration with genuine outreach. They particularly noted the church’s ethos of self-reliance – a group of twenty to thirty supporters determined not to wait for others to act, but to take the future into their own hands. – National Churches Trust

Watch the video about their church development project on YouTube [here](#).

You can visit Old Bolingbroke church every day from 9am until dusk and there is a layby for parking. Its postcode is PE23 4HG. Find out more on their website [here](#).

News, Events, and Resources

Conservation Masterclass

Early this month we hosted our Conservation Masterclass for students from the University of Lincoln. Working in partnership with the Lincoln Cathedral Works Department, we took students on a full day of learning about how we care for our church buildings big and small.

We hope this will go some way to inspiring the next generation of heritage professionals to work in church buildings and continue supporting the valuable work that you do.



DAC Tour

This month the Diocesan Advisory Committee visited two churches who have recently completed projects. You will have heard *High Toynton St John the Baptist* make the news in 2020 when its tower collapsed, and its repairs are now complete and the building is sound once again. *East Keal St Helen* have recently had a toilet and servery installed which we were pleased to see in good use by their busy community café.

These really show what can be done when a community pulls together.



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Opportunities for Churches in South Kesteven

Would your church be interested in hosting a pop-up cinema? Parishes will be able to choose from a range of titles and find something for their community to enjoy.

There are also opportunities to host concerts as part of their Music in Quiet Places programme which gives talented artists opportunities to perform in our most atmospheric church buildings.

Contact Events Manager Sally at South Kesteven District Council sally.bird@southkesteven.gov.uk for more information.

Unprecedented Demand for Church Works

Matt has been reviewing all of your QIs, thank you for sending these over.

Across the 614 churches we care for in the Diocese of Lincoln, we are looking at urgent repairs costs of £18 million.

This increases to £32 million if we include all works needed within the quinquennial period.

We are currently experiencing the highest demand for support with church repair and development projects, as are many of the grant funding bodies.

Find out more about our current approach to grant funding below, following our Meet the Funder Events.

We are still very much here to help your churches thrive, but thank you for your patience while we navigate this busy time.

News from our Churches

Snowdrops at Edlington

Saturday 14th Feb 10-3

Join Edlington St Helen for their yearly snowdrop festival this February, a fantastic event where the community comes together to welcome visitors to this lovely spectacle.



National Lottery Open Week

From the 7th to 15th of March funded venues are putting on special events and offers to say thank you for the £30 million raised for Good Causes every week by lottery players. If your church has received NLHF funding, this is a great opportunity to put on an event and have it shared on the National site. Sign up [here](#).

If you have events coming up at your church or a message you'd like to share with us, please email
churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org

“A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.” - Greek Proverb

A Message from St Mary and All Saints, Kirkby Underwood

As time passes by, we sometimes forget that as we grow older, so too do those around us. Over the past two years, we have been blessed to receive generous legacies from some of our faithful churchgoers who have sadly passed on.

Their kindness has enabled us to repair our church pathway, removing the worn patches that made walking difficult for some. A new church sign is also being crafted, and we are planning to refurbish our entrance gates in the near future.

We look forward to continuing to use these gracious gifts to help maintain and care for our beautiful church – something we know those who left us these legacies would have dearly wanted.

If you find yourself nearby, do take a moment to stop and see the improvements taking place.

If you need support to make the most of a thoughtful bequest please contact the team.

Net Zero Carbon Team

As the weather cools, many of us begin to worry about our church heating – whether it's costly to run, struggling to keep up, hasn't worked properly for a while or the building has been unheated for years. Now is a good time to start planning for the sustainable heating of your church. A Net Zero Site Visit can offer a fresh perspective, helping you look at your buildings with new eyes.

If you'd like to learn more or arrange a visit for your church, please contact:
george.davies@lincoln.anglican.org



Grant News



National Lottery Heritage Fund Update

We met recently with our local NLHF representative Kat Oughton, to get the latest on how to put in a successful funding bid.

Currently the NLHF are **not** funding new capital works exclusively relating to facilities or other non-urgent projects, due to the high demand of immediately needed repairs. This is because the case for 'Saving Heritage' (one of their key investment principles) is much stronger for repairs than for reordering or facilities.

When considering if your project is likely to be funded, put yourself in the grant panel's shoes. If Church A applies for a servery for £100,000, while Church B applies to repair a leaking roof for £100,000 – who is going to get priority? There are ways to approach a project with a combination of the two and/or with a combination of funders – and we are here to help you navigate this changing world of grants. Get in touch with Sophie or Matt to find out more.

It was great to hear though how many of you signed up for the Lincoln Bishop University Meet the Funder event and spoke to Kat there, thank you for attending.

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme - VAT Reclaim

Unfortunately as yet we have no update from government about the future of the LPoW scheme, but rest assured information will be issued as soon as we have it.

Meet the Funder - Benefact Trust

If you missed our Meet the Funder event this month, you haven't missed out – slides are available [here](#) and the Q&A is summarised below. Thank you to Grants Officer Usman Saeed for presenting.

Would you like to attend this Meet the Funder event in person? Please let us know and we will include it in our planning for 2026.

Q&A

Is it better to break up a project into small parts or do everything at once?

If you have the funds to meet the 30% match funding requirement, do as much as you can at once (assuming it makes a cohesive project and you can meet the rest of the costs).

The Church Buildings Team can assist with how to 'package' phases of work – for example, if an aspect of works requires scaffolding, try to do as many high level works at once as you can fund. But projects that jump across different disciplines or areas of the church are less likely to appeal to an architect or a funding body.

How much could Benefact contribute to a £30k project?

It is likely that 7.5% of that cost can be provided, but an uplift may be possible for the most deprived areas, as defined using the [Index of Multiple Deprivation](#).

Can we apply to other funders at the same time?

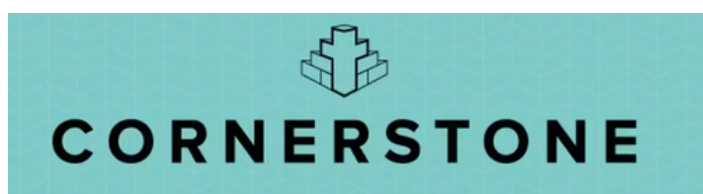
Yes – other funders can help you to meet Benefact's 30% match funding requirement.

Grant Information

Where to Start

Please get in touch with us to help you with a funding plan to know what to apply for and when. We keep in contact with many grant providers so have the latest information and can offer feedback to give you the best chance of success.

You can also browse available grants through the Charity Excellence Framework, Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service or use Cornerstone.



Cornerstone is a new programme developed by the National Giving Team which offers three distinct functions: Insights, Pathways, and a comprehensive Grants database. If you are interested in being involved, please contact the Generous Living Team for more information generosity@lincoln.anglican.org

Grants with No Deadlines

Benefact Trust ☐ The Barron Bell Trust ☐ The Beatrice Laing Trust ☐ The Bernard Sunley Foundation ☐ Church Buildings Council Conservation Reports ☐ The Clothworkers' Foundation ☐ Garfield Weston Regular Grant ☐ The Hobson Charity Ltd ☐ John Warren Foundation ☐ The Kochan Trust ☐ Lincolnshire Churches Trust ☐ National Lottery Community Fund: Reaching Communities Fund ☐ National Lottery Heritage Fund: £10,000 to £250,000 ☐ Tesco Community Grants

Share your Grant News

Please do share your grant news, good and bad with us. We know that parishes starting out on a project find it really helpful to hear what others have done elsewhere. Help us to build the network across our Local Mission Partnerships.

Upcoming Grant Deadlines

December	
10 th	Sleaford Renewable Energy Plant Grant
17 th	National Lottery Awards For All
31 st	The Lincolnshire Wolds Grant Scheme
February	
4 th	East Coast Community Fund (Ørsted's Race Bank and Hornsea 1 offshore wind farms)
28 th	West Lindsey, East Lindsey, and Boston Borough Council Community Grants



Monthly Tasks



SPAB's Faith in Maintenance Calendar

December

- Parapet and valley gutters need to be cleared of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally. Extra caution is needed in icy conditions.
- Gulleys beneath rainwater pipes should be cleaned out regularly and drains should be rodded out if they overflow during wet weather. Remove silt and debris and ensure water discharged freely.
- Make sure fire safety equipment has been checked

January

- Have the electrical systems checked by a qualified person at least once every five years.
- Smoke alarms should be regularly tested and cleaned. Remember to replace the batteries too!
- Parapet and valley gutters need to be cleared of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally. Extra caution is needed in icy conditions.

February

- Make sure that the tower, roofs and windows are bird-proof before nesting starts. Do not disturb bats.
- Check the condition of any ladders in the tower and ask the tower captain to ensure that the bells and bellframe are in good order.



Ecclesiastical Insurance's Church Risk Calendar

December - Christmas

- Christmas is a wonderful time of year, but special events and services, extra visitors, and festive decorations in your church can increase the risk of accidents and damage. A little extra planning can help keep everyone safe.

January - Ladders

- If using ladders or stepladders check that they are right for the job, free from defects and used properly, being appropriately positioned and secured.

February - Tree Management

- Trees form a natural part of the landscape and bring many benefits. However, they can present a number of hazards as they age and careful management is needed.

Key Dates

The DAC agenda dates and meeting dates for the next few meetings can be found below.
Please get in touch with Steven or Peter for further information.

Meeting Date	Agenda Close
Thursday 29 th January	Thursday 15 th January
Wednesday 11 th March	Wednesday 25 th February
Tuesday 5 th May	Tuesday 21 st April

Contact Details

Please contact the team if we can help with any church building related query.

Steven Sleight, DAC and Pastoral Secretary, steven.sleight@lincoln.anglican.org
01522 504069

Peter Duff, Assistant DAC and Pastoral Secretary, dac.assistant@lincoln.anglican.org
01522 504045

Matthew Godfrey, Historic Churches Support Officer, matthew.godfrey@lincoln.anglican.org
01522 504048

Sophie Clark, Church Development Officer, sophie.clark@lincoln.anglican.org
01522 504018

Contributions and Suggestions Please

Have you got a good news story about your church building, carried out a project, found grant funding or have something you'd like to share? We would like to include your contributions in future editions. If there is a subject you would like us to cover, let us know and we will see what we can do. Email the team via churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org

Church Photographs

It would be really helpful if you could share your photographs of churches with the Church Buildings Team. Whilst we have an archive, they are not as up to date as they could be. Clear pictures through the seasons of the exterior as well as key items and facilities in the interior are always useful. Get in touch with the team via churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org