



THE CHERISH PROJECT

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THE NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST

We're here to...

- **BUILD UP**
- **OPEN UP**
- **SPEAK UP**

for churches, chapels and meeting houses across the United Kingdom.

We want to keep churches open and in use



The National Churches Survey

Take part now

Giving every church **a voice**



If you work or volunteer at a church, chapel or meeting house, we want to hear from you.

Your response will provide essential evidence to build a clearer picture – to tell a stronger, more informed story about your church, and others like it, so that together we can address some of the biggest challenges facing churches and help ensure their future.

Please take part now in The National Churches Survey to give your place of worship a voice. <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/survey>

The Need for Cherish

Scotland, Wales and North-West England

Launched 2023 to provide targeted support to build capacity, reduce the risk of loss and promote sustainability. Also to tackle specific issues including

- **Financial instability**
- **Volunteer shortages**
- **Increasing number of POW 'at risk'**
- **Church closures**



Target Areas and Issues

NW England

- 10 of 20 most deprived areas
- High proportion of the country's 'Buildings at Risk'

Scotland

- Church closures
- Culture of church use

Wales

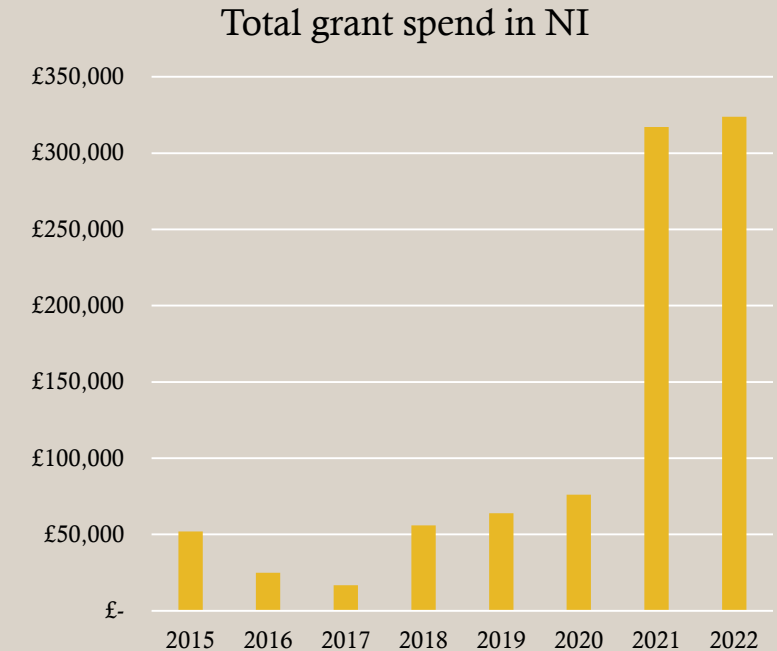
- No central body to review and manage closures
- Lack of Support for POW



TREASURE IRELAND

What worked well:

- Country-based officer with to engage 1 to 1
- Grants as a hook
- Steering Groups keep buy in of local partners
- Forums give place to share best practice
- Mix of online and in person training events



What Cherish Offers

- On the ground Officer Support
- Grants £500-£10,000
- Training – online and in person
- Business Planning and other Support
- Advocacy





The Story so far

- Over 600 churches advised/visited
- 53 grants awarded totalling £363,332
- Demand increasing
- Wider denominational spread
- Development Grants (esp Wales)



More stuff we are doing

- Partnerships...too many for one presentation
- Training and talks (NCT and Other)
- Membership of forums
- Mentoring
- Tourism
- Activities, Walking festivals, pilgrimages, art festivals
- Events (e.g. Paisley Abbey)

The Difference We are Making

“thank you... for your support in helping our grant application to be successful. There was the day when we met at the church, the moment you put our financial statement into the correct state when we could have fallen at the first hurdle, and other behind the scenes stuff I’m sure.”

“I was fortunate to get £67k funding from the lottery. £5k Welsh church fund (via Pembrokeshire CC) £18.5k from the Dept of Culture, Media and Sport under the Listed Places of Worship Scheme to cover the VAT costs (thanks directly to your advice)”

“Many people thought this church had been closed because the church had been shut down for two years,” “When we came in, we saw the local people – people that attended this church before! People were excited that the church is open again.

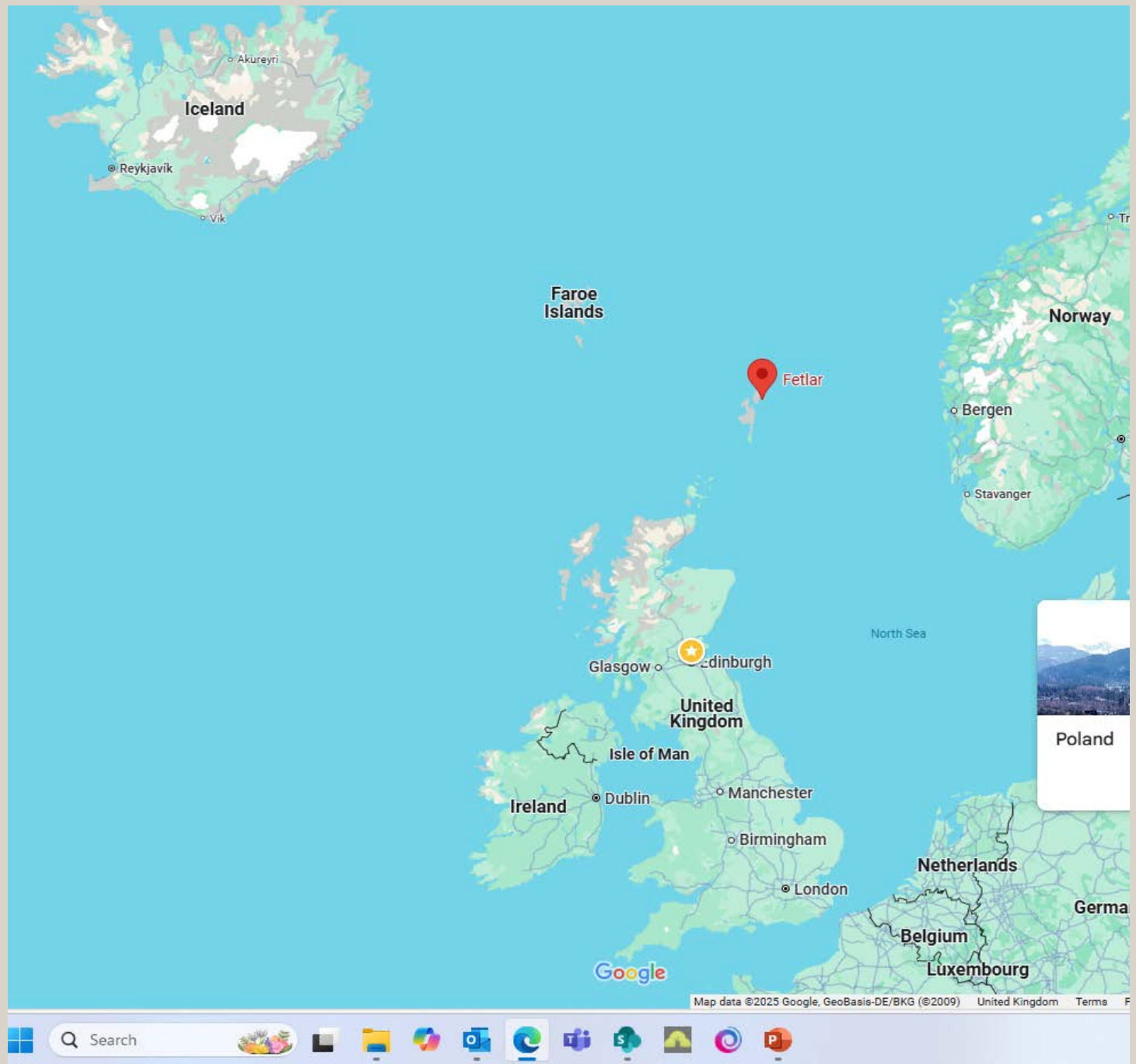


“It's very difficult for small local communities to raise money and to address problems related to churches and chapels of historic value,” “The help from the National Churches Trust is very important to allow the community... to survive and learn from techniques from the past. To learn about how to conserve, and not just the fabric of the building, but also its value and its character. And it's very difficult to raise money in general. And with the help of the National Churches Trust, we can allow the survival of this building and the community.”

The Scottish Experience

POW in Transition & Building Resilience





Scottish Experience

Working with others

- Church Bodies
- Heritage Bodies
- Other funders
- Support Agencies



Tourism Potential

Pilgrim Routes
(St Andrew, St Ninian, Iona Abbey,
Dunfermline Abbey, St Magnus)

Church trails e.g. NC500



On going challenges

- Mentoring
- Conservation Skills (accreditation)
- Match Funding
- VAT



Watch this space...



The Big Update 2025

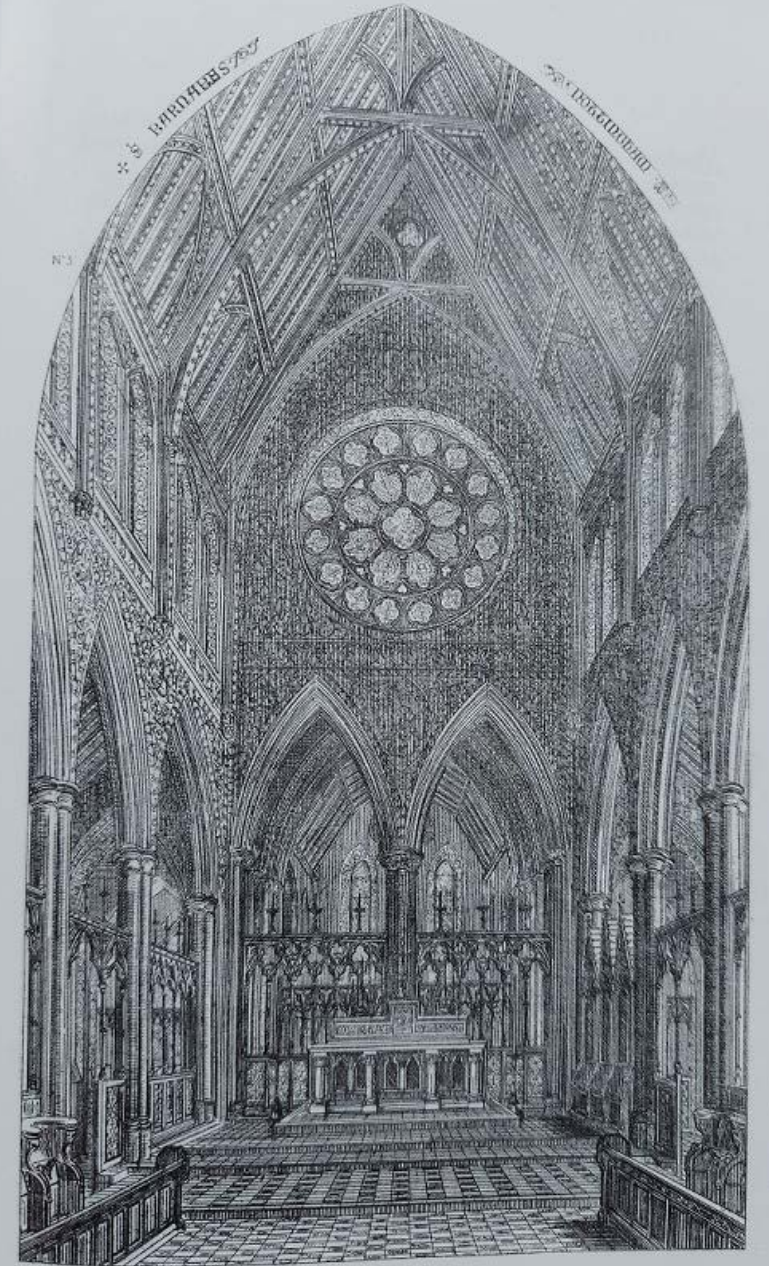
The Historic Religious Buildings Alliance
hrballiance.org.uk

Restoring Pugin at Nottingham Cathedral



Pugin's vision for the Cathedral

- ❖ In contrast with the relative simplicity of the exterior, the interior was intended by Pugin as a display of richness and colour.
- ❖ 'The effect is most solemn, some modern complain is too dark but it is just the thing, they are not used to solemn building'.
- ❖ The interior has undergone repeated transformation seeking to dilute or reinstate something of the colour and atmosphere intended by Pugin.



Scope of the Project

- ❖ Paint restoration focused on the Cathedral's eastern chapels (Chapel of St. Hugh, Lady Chapel and Chapel of Unity) and connecting ambulatory to help inform the recreation of A.W.N. Pugin's original design scheme to walls, ceilings and timberwork.



Chapel of St Hugh



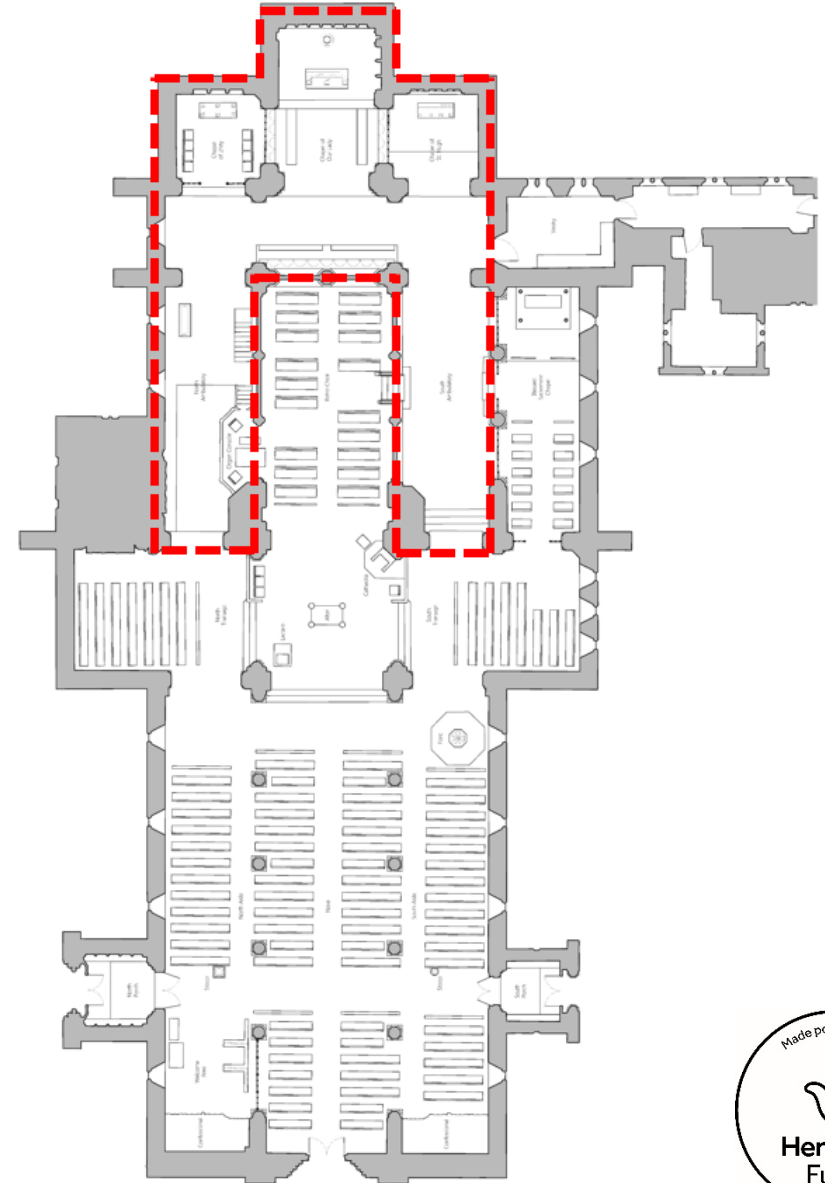
Chapel of Our Lady



Chapel of Unity



East Ambulatory



Wall Painting Trials

- ❖ With an initial schedule of planned 40 trial areas, a total of 102 investigation windows were opened
- ❖ Successful completion of the wall painting trials will provide a methodology for future large-scale projects with equally challenging and ambitious objectives
- ❖ Schedule completed on time and within the allocated budget and resources



The Lady Chapel

- ❖ The scheme of stars found within the ceiling panels
- ❖ Decoration and effect are more pronounced, with every third panel painted with floral motifs
- ❖ A central monogram on a red ground within a five-petalled flower with gilded sunbursts



Analysis of Decorative Paint Schemes

Detailed analysis of successive layers of decoration will both inform proposed conservation works and allow for comparison with other known Pugin schemes



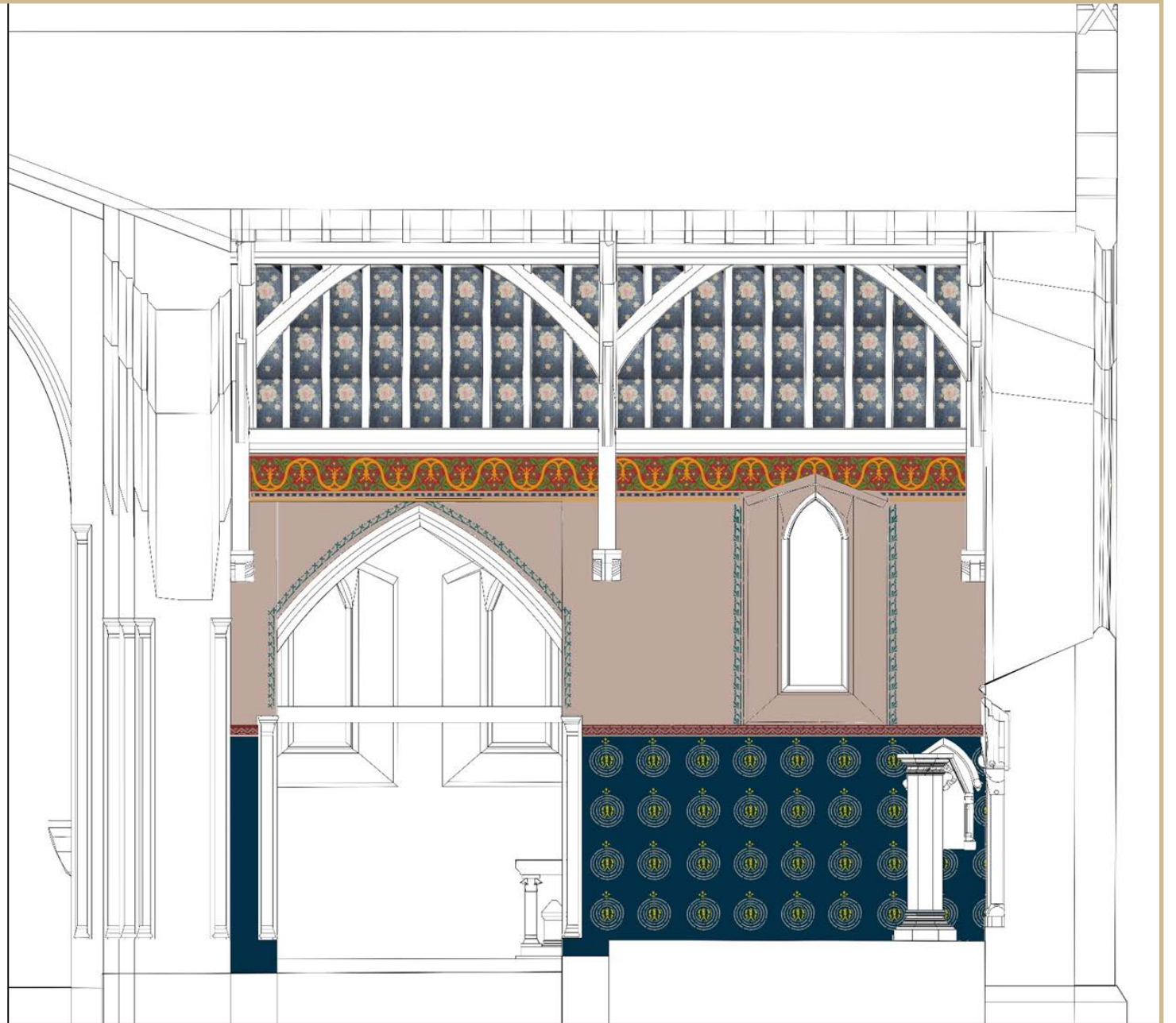
Recording of Decorative Paint Schemes

Tracings made to record
decoration will be used to
create stencils and
templates



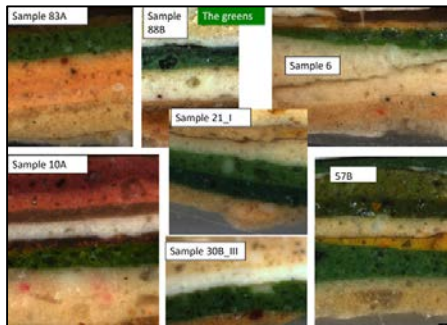
Design Proposals

- ❖ Proposed schemes of decoration based on Development Phase results and recommendations
- ❖ Allows for the re-creation of the earliest phase of decoration in each of the chapels and ambulatories
- ❖ A number of windows to remain open to evidence these earliest schemes

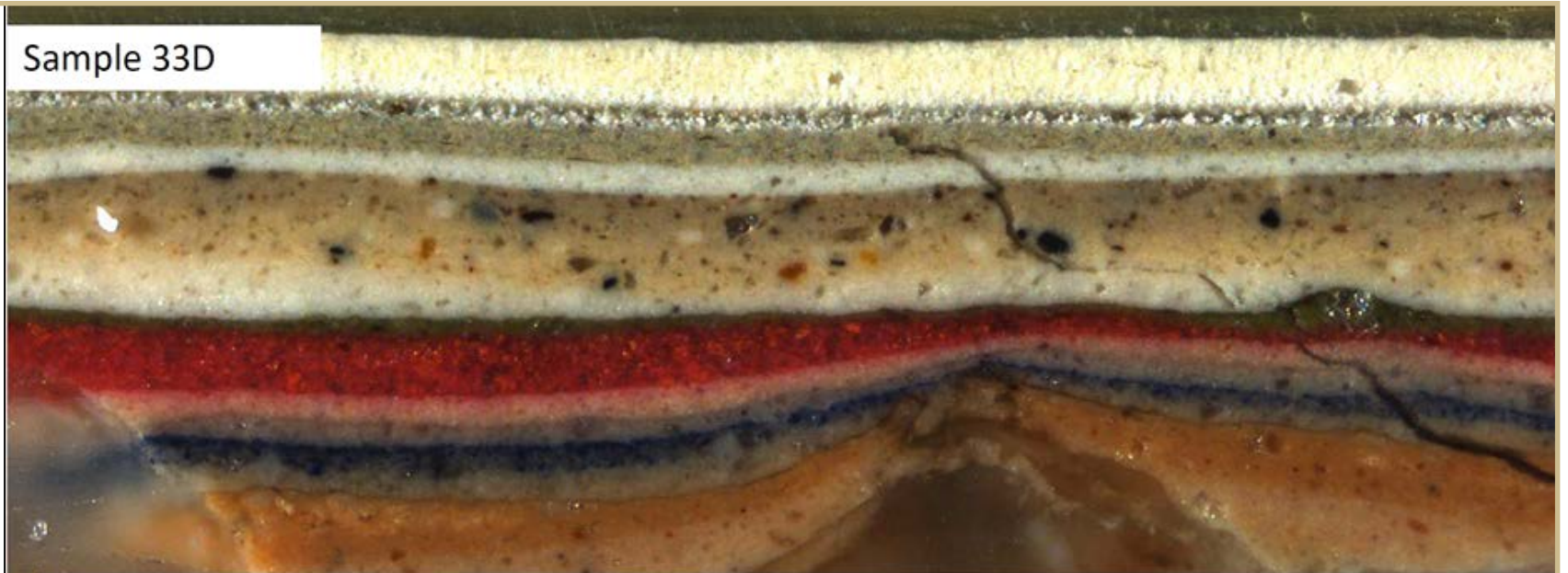


Paint Analysis

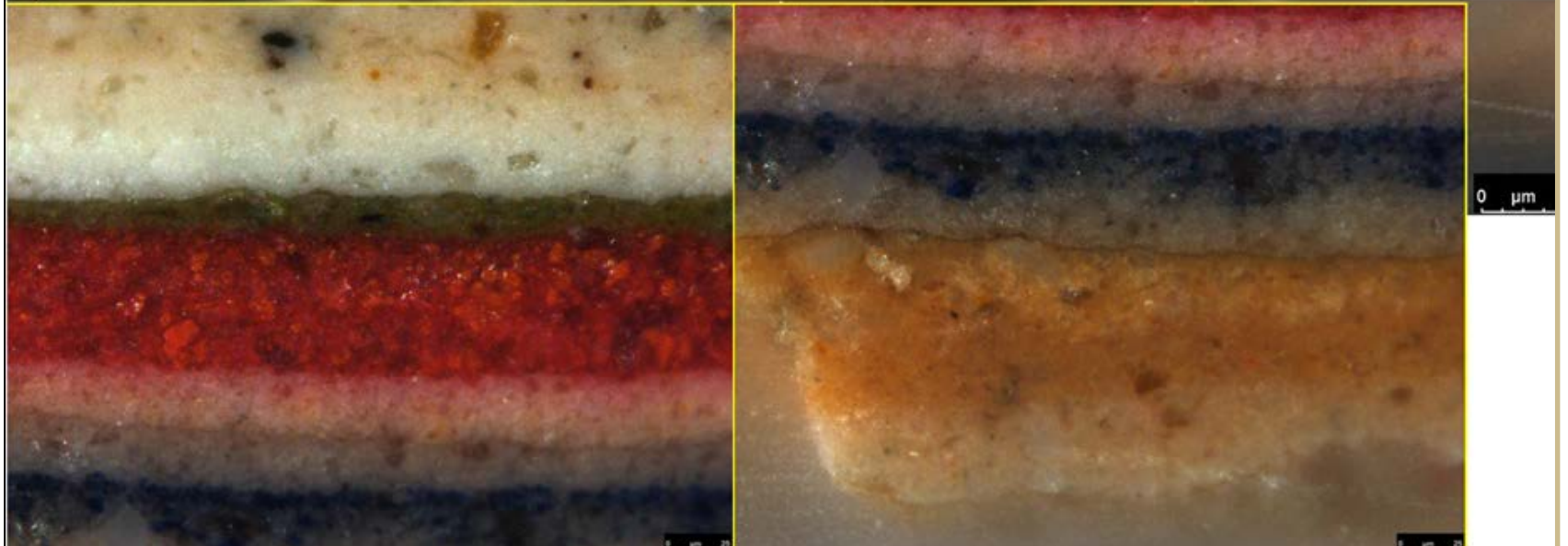
- ❖ Identification of pigments
- ❖ Comparison between areas
- ❖ Replicate materials and match colours



Sample 33D



The blue layer in between the 2 grey layers is very similar to the one found in sample 33B



Developed the skill base within the wall painting specialism by offering paid traineeships to early career conservators.

- ❖ Recruited and trained two full time wall painting conservation trainees to work alongside the conservators for 6 months
- ❖ They learned to lead tours, assist at events, communicate with different audiences, and contribute ideas to interpretation planning



Attracted a wide range of new visitors to the Cathedral

- ❖ Approx 8,500 attendances (Delivery 20,000 over 20 months)
- ❖ Audiences: families including those with SEND children, students, schools, refugees, visitors to Nottingham
- ❖ Approx 72% had not been to the Cathedral before



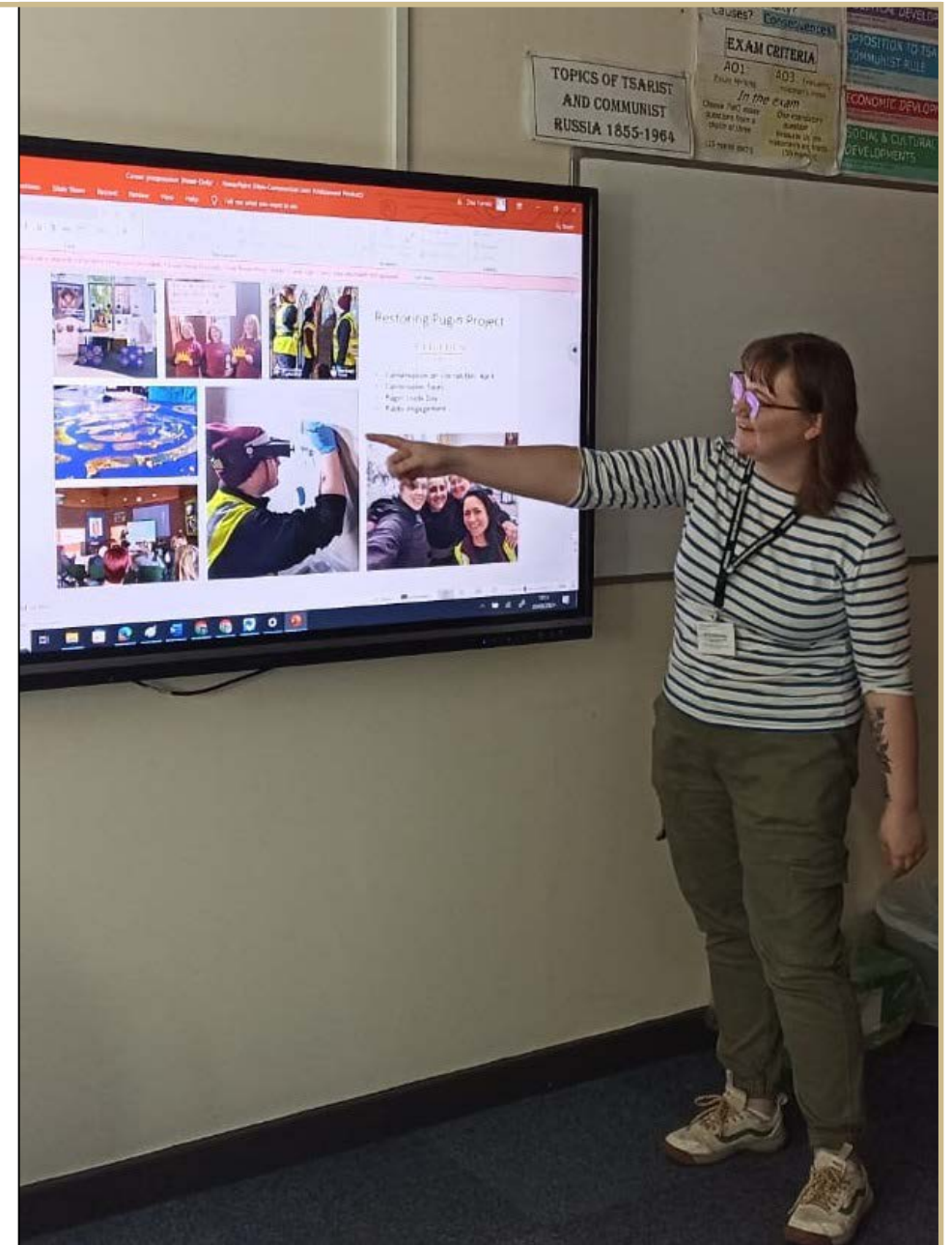
Audience outreach to a wider public

- ❖ 39 activity-based events
- ❖ 45 guided tours
- ❖ Delivery Phase - 120 events, 60+ tours



Promoted heritage career options to young people from communities who would not normally consider them

- ❖ Appointed and trained 3 local young people as part time Heritage Assistants
- ❖ Delivery Phase – 4 HAs @36 hours each
- ❖ Offered careers workshops in 6 local schools including 3 SEND schools
- ❖ Delivery – 16 heritage skills events



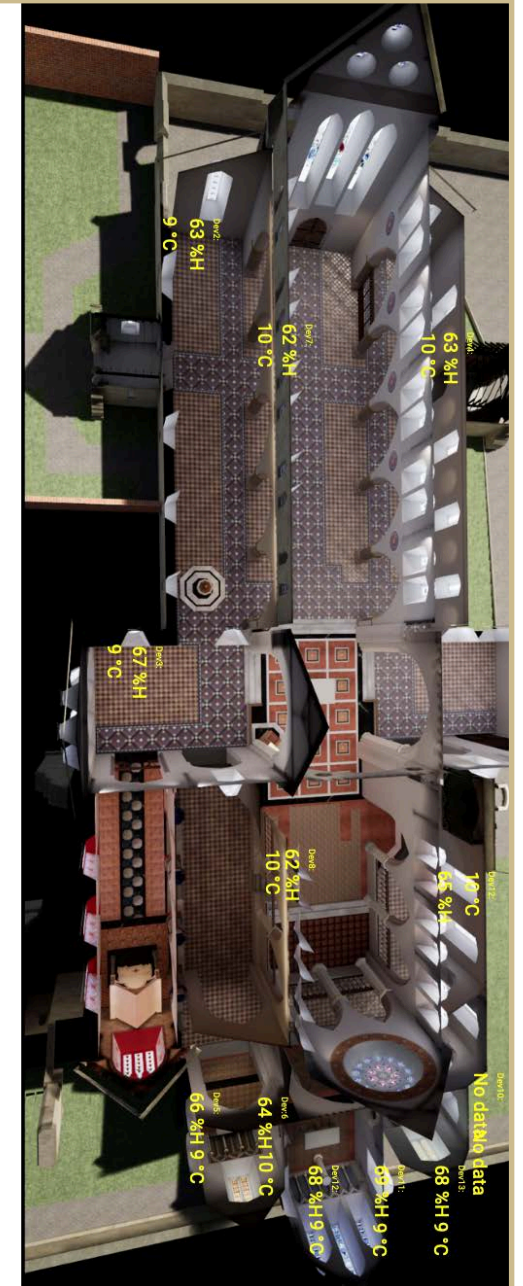
Developed VR experience to explain the changing paint schemes of the Cathedral to a wide audience

- ❖ In partnership with NTU, appointed a full time Research Fellow for 12 months
- ❖ Used photographic research and paint investigation to recreate 3 virtual schemes
- ❖ Used digital twin technology
- ❖ A resource for on site and outreach events also available online



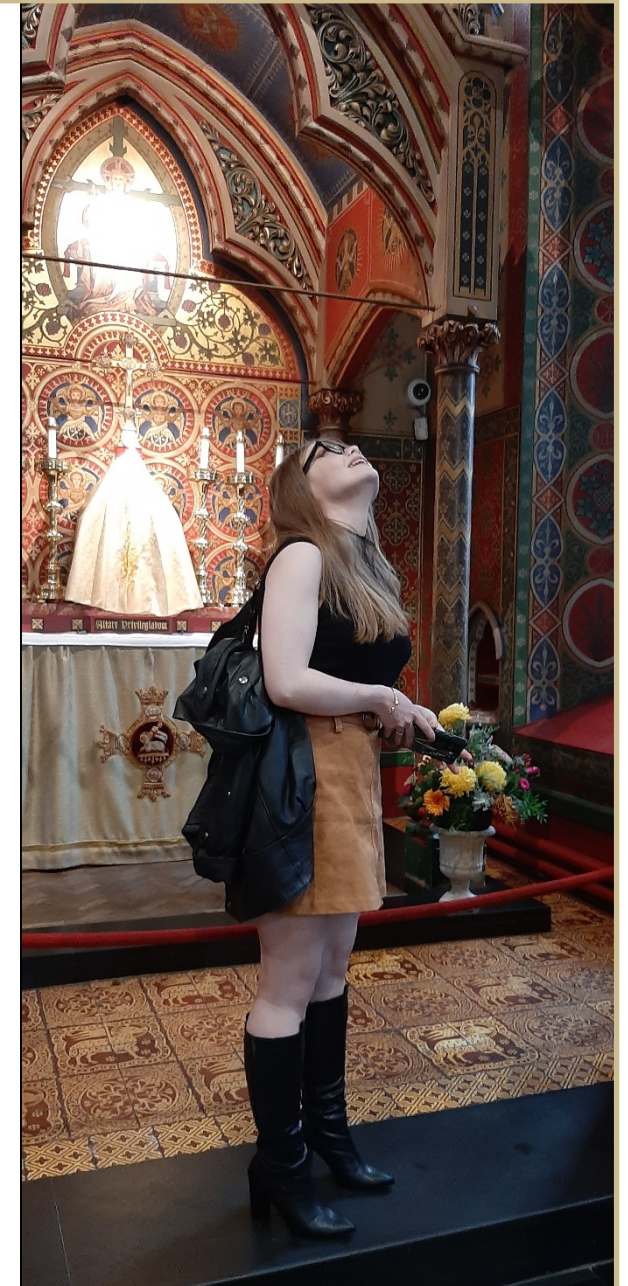
Developed a video game experience exploring the impact of different conservation interventions

- ❖ Appointed a full time Research Fellow to develop the game
- ❖ Installed 30 sensors around the Cathedral to gather 12 months of data to inform environmental variables
- ❖ Held 6 research and development workshops in schools including 3 SEND schools to ensure accessibility
- ❖ Roll out as part of a heritage careers package to schools
- ❖ Develop a user community UK and international



Trained volunteers in visitor engagement and event management skills .

- ❖ Trained and engaged 36 new volunteers, including student placements
- ❖ Worked in partnership with the Cathedral Friends on expanding events
- ❖ Developed strong monitoring and evaluation protocols for continuous improvement
- ❖ Delivery – 50 new volunteers
- ❖ Dedicated volunteer/welcome lead and training systems



Active partnership in Nottingham and county heritage events and initiatives.

- ❖ Civic focus for national events such as the Coronation
- ❖ Membership of Notts Heritage Forum
- ❖ Participation in Light Night
- ❖ Participation in Heritage Open Days
- ❖ Participation in Festival of Science and Curiosity



We are recruiting!

Engagement Consultant

<https://www.stbarnabascathedral.org.uk/what-s-on/latest-news/engagement-manager-vacancy/>

Lead Architect

<https://www.stbarnabascathedral.org.uk/what-s-on/latest-news/architect-vacancy/>



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