

The Big Update 2025

The Historic Religious Buildings Alliance
hrballiance.org.uk

Programme on our website, hrballiance.org.uk under 'events'.

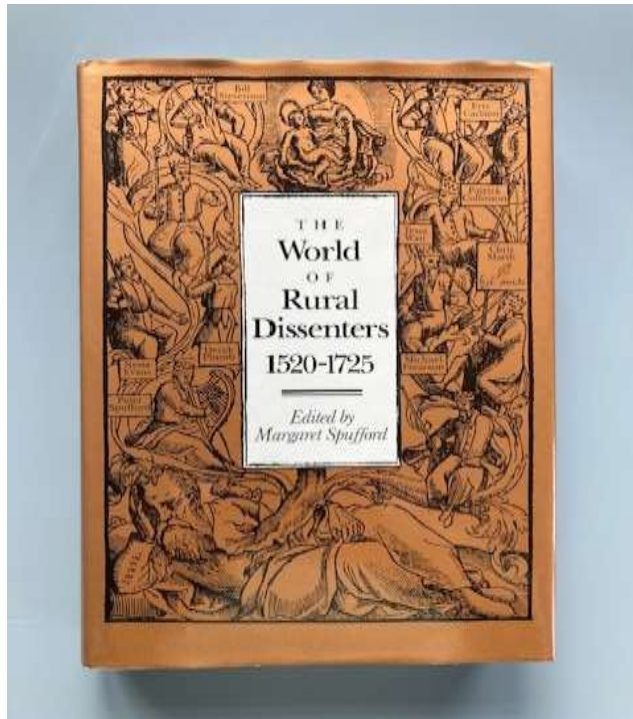
Chairs

1. Morning: Trevor Cooper (HRBA Chair)
2. Morning: Chris Catling (RCAHMW)
3. Afternoon: Becky Payne (HRBA Development Director)
4. Afternoon: Charlotte Dodgeon (HRBA Events/Venues Officer)

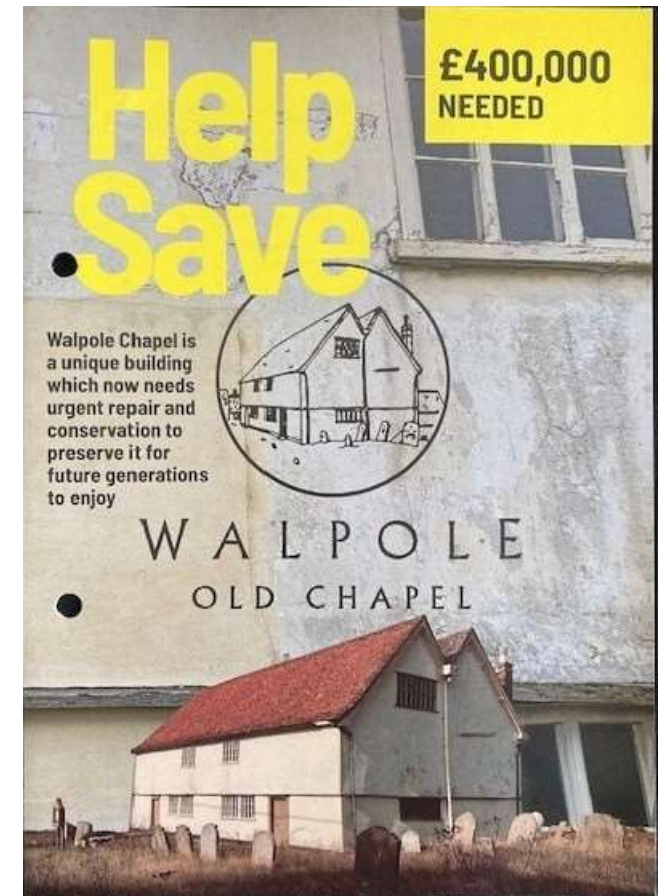
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Walpole Old Chapel and its friends – the story so far...



Jacquie Burgess
On behalf of the
Friends of Walpole Old
Chapel



The Chapel in winter



‘One of the finest early meeting houses ... a historic gem’.



The 17th Century Meeting House, St. Andrew, Suffolk

1190

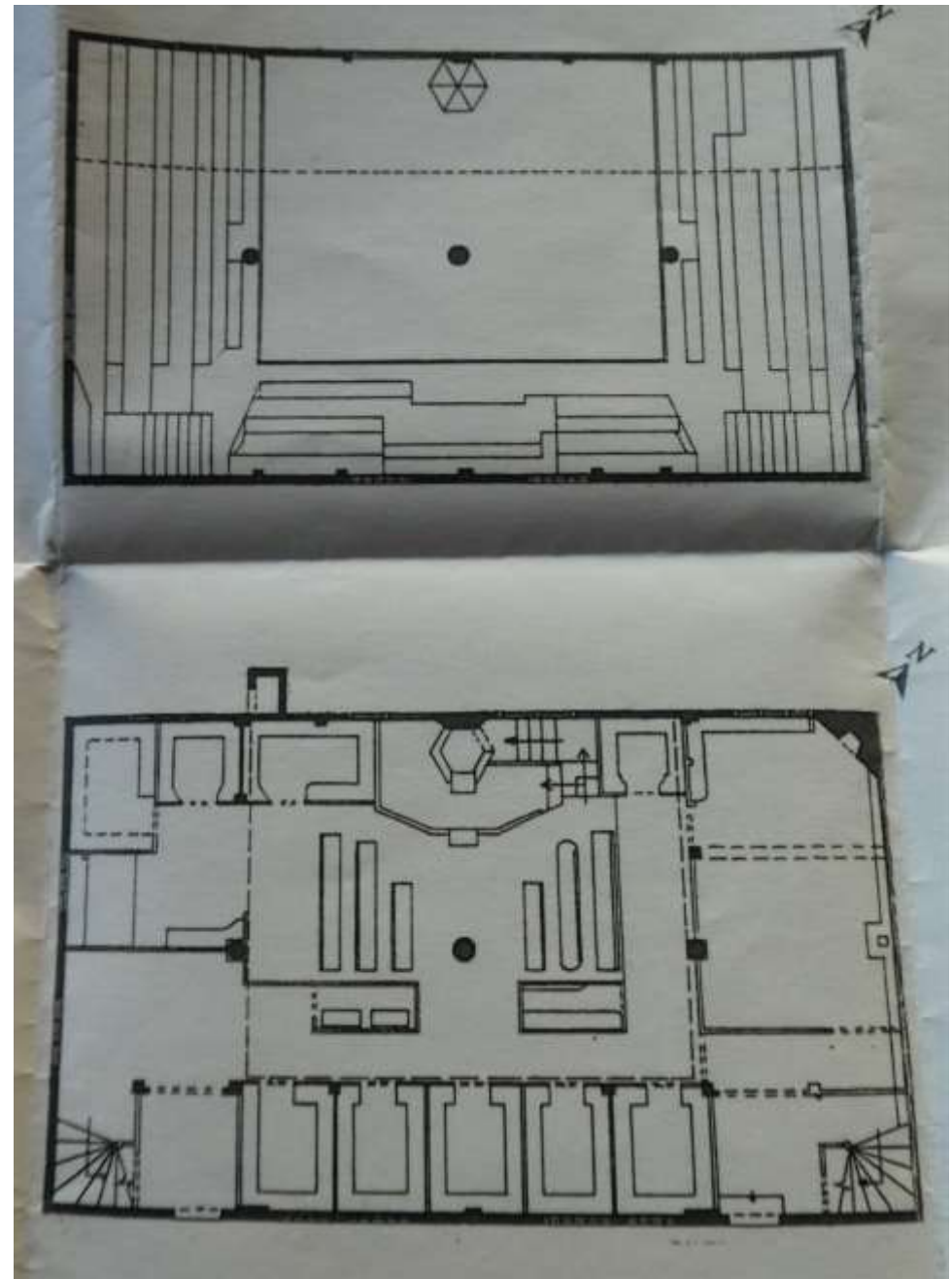
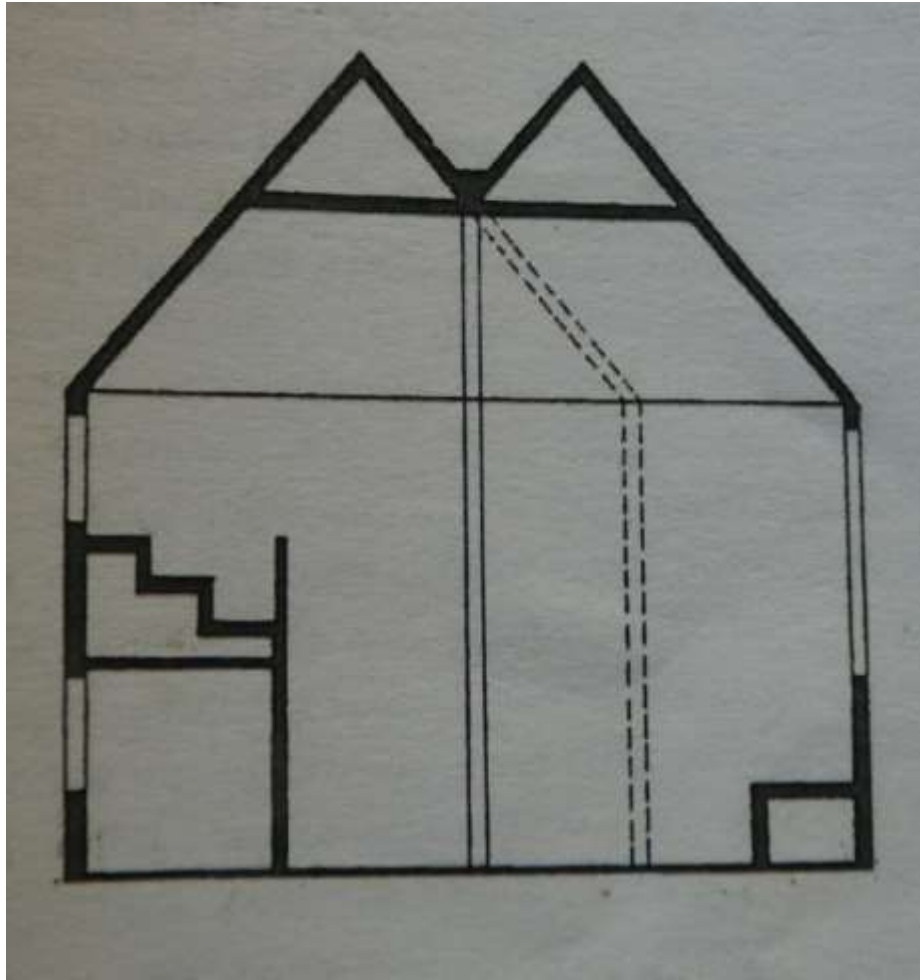
An Inventory of
Nonconformist
CHAPELS
and
MEETING-HOUSES
in Eastern England

Christopher Stell

Christopher Stell



ENGLISH HERITAGE



Cohere Arts rehearsing *Witchfinder* in the Chapel

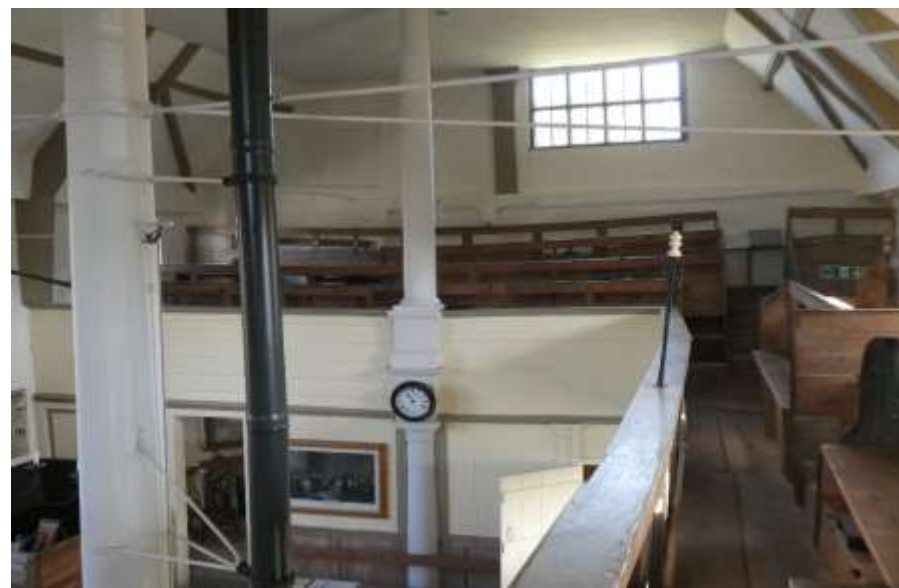


It felt like the chapel had a powerful effect on all the performers by focusing them inside the history, atmosphere and story of Witchfinder. Working in such a beautiful environment, in natural light, is inspiring and energising, and the acoustic supports every sound, from a child's whisper to a full operatic voice. Walpole Chapel is unlike any other space I have worked in and the building played a huge part in the development of our show. A real joy.
Emma Bernard- director

Revd Bill Mahood greets the carol service congregation







The upstairs gallery – made from scavenged timbers



Carrying marks of generations of '*the naughty boys upstairs*'



Graffiti survey made by Christopher Wheeler, Discovery Project volunteer, 2024.





‘The chapel benefits from an active local Friends group. Despite the disruption to the Chapel’s usual programme of events and the associated cleaning which goes with opening, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-21, the Chapel interior remains in good order and it is apparent to any visitors that this is a place that is loved and cared for.’

Ptolemy Dean Architects, 2023 Report

Investigative works, funded through a project development grant from Historic England in 2022

The professional team:

KIRSTIE ROBBINS, Ptolemy Dean Architects – lead consultant*

ED MORTON, the Morton Partnership – structural engineer*

ALISON DICKENS – self employed archaeologist*

WILL NIXON – self-employed, Project manager and main contractor

THOM TAYLOR – self-employed conservation builder and SPAB Fellow

* Continuing involvement in the NHMF/HE conservation and repair work, 2025.





Figure 112. Example area of opening up on the East Elevation, showing the condition of the timber frame, surviving brick infill to the upper storey and no infill at all to the lower storey.



Figure 113. The 2023 SPAB Scholars and Fellows visited during the making good phase of the Project Development project and assisted with the works, and with the discussions as to how best to approach the repair of the very special building.

Heritage, Design and Access statement to support Listed Building Consent Application, September 2023



WALPOLE OLD CHAPEL
REPAIRS AND CONSERVATION OF RENDER AND ITS SUBSTRUCTURE
HERITAGE, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Urgent repair and conservation work to the Chapel underway in 2025

With funding under the NHMF and HE-funded HCT Conservation and Dispersals Programme, the professional team comprises:
EMMA COLLINS and JOSEPH ATKINS, Tricolor, supporting HCT dispersals programme and FWOC in grant applications to NLHF & HE

KATHRYN MOORE, Conservation Programme Manager with Churches Conservation Trust

KIRSTIE ROBBINS, Ptolemy Dean Architects CDM

CLIVEDEN CONSERVATION, main contractor

ED MORTON, the Morton Partnership, structural engineer

STEPHEN SCAMMELL, Sawyer and Fisher, quantity surveyor

TIM FLOYD, timber specialist; ALISON DICKENS, self employed archaeologist; and PHILIP PARKER, bat ecologist

Cliveden Conservation get to work: 10th May site visit







Experimenting with lime wash and daub mixtures



A big ***thank you*** to ...



**NATIONAL HERITAGE
MEMORIAL FUND**



Historic England

Supported by
Councillors Locality Funding



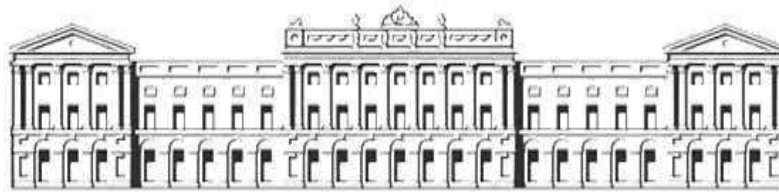
Suffolk
County Council



**Suffolk
Historic
Churches
Trust**

**Stuart Heath
Charitable Settlement**

Heveningham Hall Country Fair Trust



**Donations from
all the Chapel's
Patrons, Friends,
audiences,
visitors and local
people.**

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WHO BUILT WIGAN'S CHURCHES?

10 June 2025
St. Marylebone Parish Church

Pat and Will Sharp



ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, SWINLEY



Image from
Christine Thompson

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, 1929



Image from Wiganworld.co.uk

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, PEMBERTON



Image from
Martin Holden



ST. CATHARINE, SCHOLES



Image from
Martin Holden



ST. MATTHEW, HIGHFIELD



Image from
Christine Thompson

ST. MATTHEW, HIGHFIELD



ST. MATTHEW, HIGHFIELD



QUEEN'S HALL, METHODIST MISSION



Image from
www.Wiganworld.co.uk

QUEEN'S HALL, METHODIST MISSION



Image from
Martin Holden

ST. JOHN'S, STANDISHGATE



Image from
John Barton

ST. MARY'S, STANDISHGATE



Image from
<https://taking-stock.org.uk/>

ST. FRANCIS, KITT GREEN



Image from
Christine Thompson

PARISH MAGAZINES



ST. ANNE'S, BEECH HILL THAT "DO" AGAIN



Images from Wiganworld.co.uk

Available for
DANCING,
WHIST,
CONCERTS,
BAZAARS,
Etc.

"ANCIENT & LOYAL"

BATHS ASSEMBLY HALL
MILLGATE, WIGAN.
Entrance, College Avenue.
Telephone 845.

CAFÉ,
REFRESHMENTS,
CATERING
&
KITCHEN-
SERVICE

Address all
enquiries to:-
JOHN THOMAS GRUNDY,
Superintendent
& Hall-Manager.

Joseph W. Grundy
Wigan

ST. CATHARINE, SCHOLES



Image from
Martin Holden



ST. ANNE, BEECH HILL

Image from
Christine Thompson















ST. PAUL'S

GOOSE GREEN N° 2

(12)



With thanks to www.Wiganworld.co.uk for the
Walking Day photographs

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The highs and lows of social media

Rachel Morley



**FRIENDS OF
FRIENDLESS
CHURCHES**

Who are The Friends of Friendless Churches?

SAVING 'FRIENDLESS CHURCHES'

AIM OF NEW BODY

The formation of an organization called "The Friends of Friendless Churches" was announced last night by Mr. Ivor Bulmer-Thomas, of Edwardes Square, Kensington, W., and Mr. Lawrence E. Jones, of Coleman Street, E.C. The aim is to secure the preservation of churches and chapels of architectural or historic interest which are outside the scope of existing organizations.

The organization has taken powers to help to preserve these buildings, whether belonging to the Church of England or any other religious body, "as places of worship or for other appropriate purposes or simply as buildings of architectural or historic interest."

It has as its first objective the saving of the church of St. Mary-at-Quay, Ipswich, which was bombed during the war, and for which demolition proposals have been made.

In their announcement Mr. Bulmer-Thomas, who is acting chairman and honorary director of the society, and Mr. Jones, honorary secretary, emphasize that the society "is in no sense a rival to any existing body."

Other officers of the society are named as: Lord Somervell of Harrow, Mr. T. S. Eliot, O.M., and Sir Albert Richardson, vice-presidents; Lord Winster, treasurer; Canon C. B. Mortlock, chaplain; and Mr. John Betjeman, editor.



Funding landscape



Activity on our social channels



26 March 2020



Thread



Friendless Churches  @friendschurches · Mar 26, 2020

...

THREAD

As we all get used to our new ways of working and living, we thought we'd share some stories from our churches. We'll travel across centuries to share short stories about the people to kept apart from the world, and those that stuck together in close community. (1/6)



3

34

113



Friendless Churches  @friendschurches · Mar 26, 2020

...



Today, we venture deep into the Black Mountains.
To St Ellyw's church, Llanelieu.

But who was St Ellyw, we hear you ask!

Ellyw lived in the 5th century. She was the grand-daughter of Brychan,
Prince of Brycheiniog...

... and beyond


← Thread

 Friendless Churches  @friendschurches

The Welsh have a word for the u
you feel for a place that no long
you can never return.


Hiraeth is a homesickness you
years ago and far away, if it eve

#thread




6:29 AM · Jun 24, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

1,868 Retweets 295 Quote Tweets 6,856 Likes




 friendlesschurches


St Baglan's Church, Llanfaglan




View Insights


Boost Post




 Liked by h.a.spain and 1,815 others




friendlesschurches The old church at Llanfaglan was never big or rich. In its heyday, the parish had a population of less than 200, and when the church inventory was made in 1788 it listed, a silver chalice, a board of Ten Commandments that were almost invisible, and "one ladder, two spades, two shovels".

 friendlesschurches

Strict and Particular Baptist Chapel, W



View Insights



  

 Liked by emilyguerry and 832 others

friendlesschurches A tiny brown long-eared bat with the sweetest face in the hands of a


We're re-roofing the chapel at Waddesborough, Buckinghamshire, and this little bat had carefully removed a few weeks ago when we stripped the roof.

← Thread

 Friendless Churches  @friendschurches


This is the most important #thread we've ever written.

The Church Commissioners are running a consultation that makes deeply worrying proposals that we believe would diminish the democracy of the church closure process, and reduce transparency and accountability of the Church.



6:57 PM · Oct 11, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

241 Retweets 50 Quote Tweets 441 Likes

 FRIENDS OF
FRIENDLESS
CHURCHES

Mixing it up



Behind the scenes

Mythology & Folklore

Art

Nature

Forgotten folk

Greatest makeovers

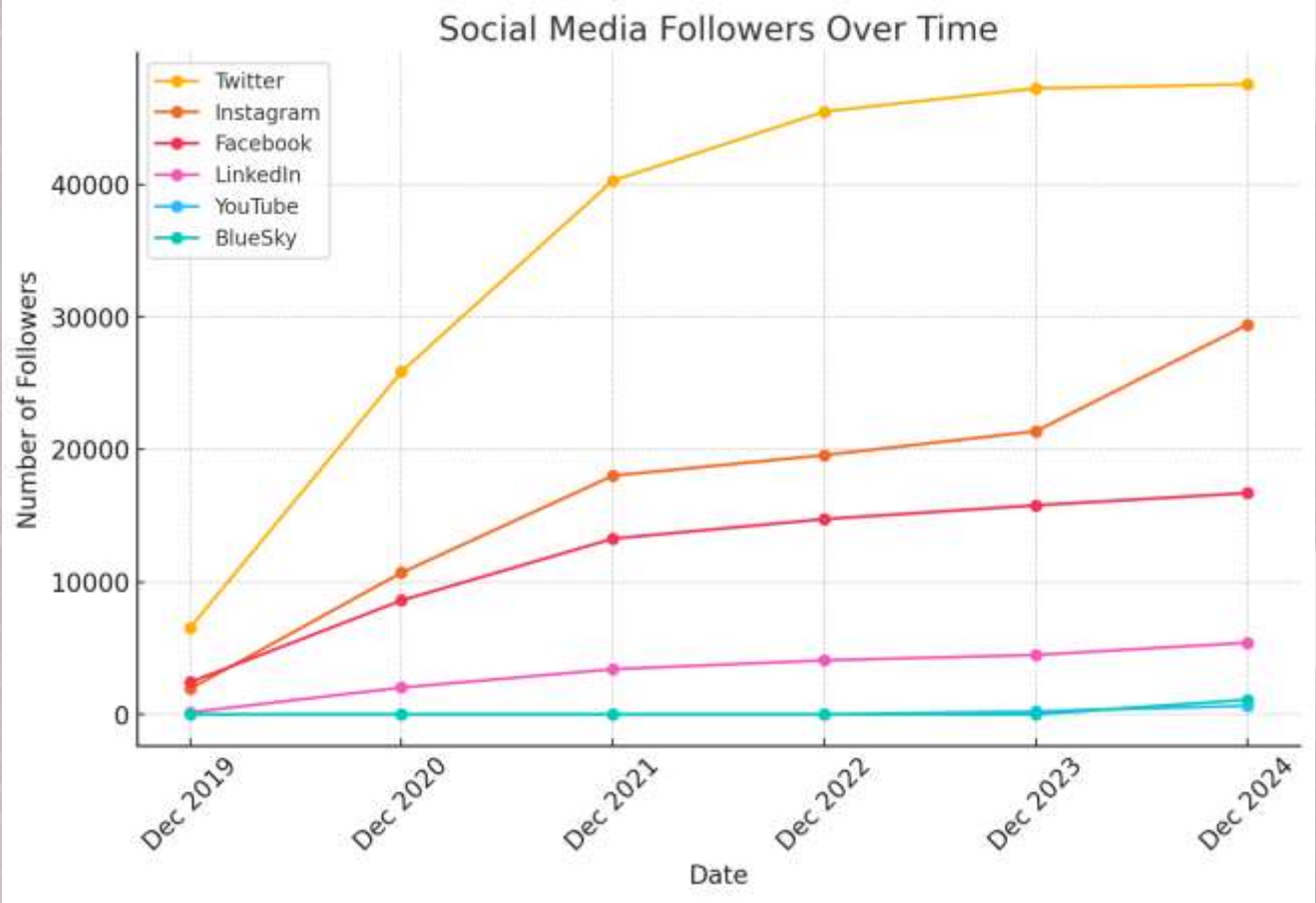
Architecture

Curiosities and curious facts

Poetry

History

Followers



Channel	Followers Dec 2019	Followers Dec 2020	Followers Dec 2021	Followers Dec 2022	Followers Dec 2023	Followers Dec 2024
Twitter	6536	25866	40286	45489	47244	47558
Instagram	1920	10694	18014	19565	21369	29402
Facebook	2422	8599	13262	14739	15777	16706
LinkedIn	150	2025	3410	4078	4486	5408
YouTube	0	0	0	0	225	648
BlueSky	0	0	0	0	0	1101
Totals	11028	47184	74972	83871	89101	100823

A Pot of Gold

1. Marketing on a budget
2. The world is your oyster
3. Social circles
4. Real-time updates
5. Fundraising tools

Turning likes to people and pounds

Year	Total new members
2017-18	188
2018-19	287
2019-20	524
2020-21	624
2021-22	671
2022-23	103
2023-24	370

Year	Total donations
2017-18	£82,638
2018-19	£27,030
2019-20	£122,787
2020-21	£115,992
2021-22	£359,671
2022-23	£216,065
2023-24	£1,567,440

A Capricious Mistress

1. Algorithmic rollercoasters
2. Keeping fresh
3. Elon Musk
4. Online noise

Support your social media

Become a Friend

Join the Friends of Friendless Churches

One of the best ways to support the FoFC is by becoming a member.

Membership benefits include:


- Making a tangible difference to historic buildings
- Membership pack with a printed guide to FoFC churches
- The substantial and highly regarded FoFC magazine
- Invitations to AGMs and associated events

Please click the link below to find out more about our membership options, or to renew your existing membership.

[Join or renew now](#)




Support your social media



"A Female Parish Clerk?"

Before the early 1900s, a handful of women dared to fill the traditionally male positions of Parish Clerk and churchwarden. Their roles made them newsworthy, and the public reacted with amusement, admiration, amusement, or dismay. Take a journey through historical newspapers to find out more.


[Read more](#)



Celebrating Women in Our History

Stories of amazing women who inspired, founded, beautified, preserved and enriched our historic churches in England and Wales.


[Read more](#)



The Sedgwick Club Visits Penmorfa Church, 1887

In Seaside in Penmorfa, Gwynedd is a fossil and geology hotspot that played a major role in the new sciences of geology and palaeontology in the Victorian era. In 1887 a group from Cambridge University's Sedgwick Club visited the church. The visiting geologists included a number of pioneering women.


[Read more](#)



A Millennium of Music for Christmas

When music did churchgoers in the past hear at Christmas? Composer, choirmaster and church musician Andrew Gault takes inspiration from his closest 'friendless churches' to tell the story of 1000 years of Christmas music.


[Read more](#)



The Thin Place

What makes this place special? Is it the serene landscape? The ancient, shaly mountains that catch humane arms. The clump of gnarled trees sending their branches protectively around the church.


[Read more](#)



Sgraffito: Scratching the surface

We take a look at the ancient art of sgraffito, how it was revived in the Victorian era, and how it decorates one of our churches in Wales.


[Read more](#)



Find churches · Support us · Events · Stories · About us

Become a Friend

Q En




Welcome to the Friends of Friendless Churches

We rescue and protect historic places of worship in England and Wales

Become a member


About us



Find churches

Search by town, county or postcode to see your nearest FofC churches or use your location.

Use my location



Our newest vesting

This double-naved church is the only church in Britain dedicated to St Doged, and it has recently been vested in our care.

Read more

Support your social media



Felly mae hynny'n wirioneddol
anhygoel dwi'n meddwl

Straeon Mewn Maen: Achub a dathlu eglwysi hanesyddol Cymru

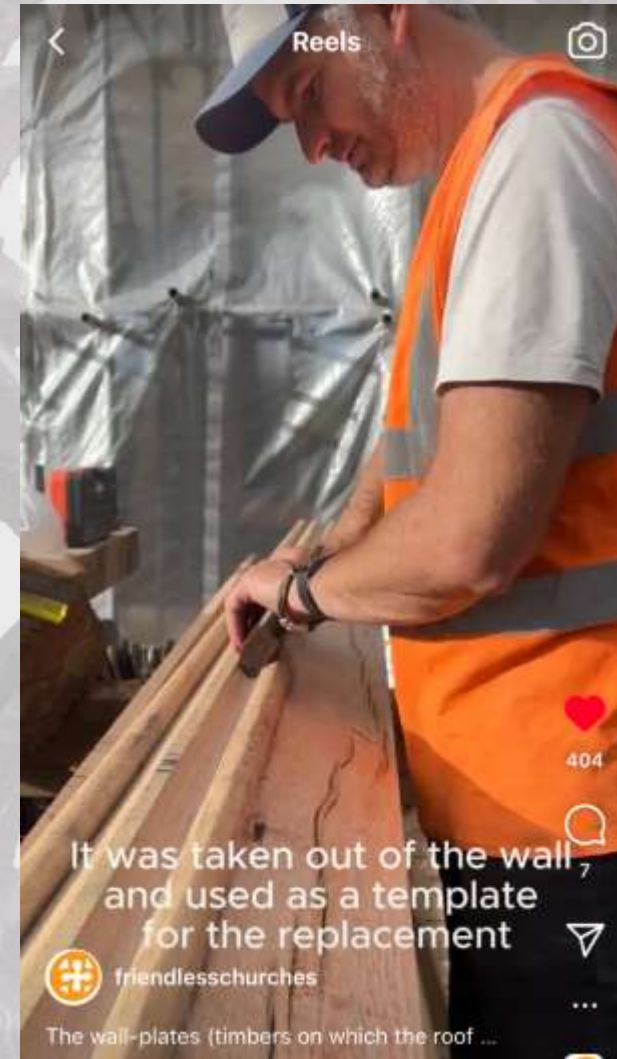
Coast & Country, Series 12: Episode 21

Friday 22 November at 7:30pm



Sean Fletcher meets the heritage builders restoring an ancient church and Ruth Dodsworth explores Wales' largest ancient woodland.

Where to next



Powerful but imperfect

- Put the social back in social media
- Build a community
- Find your organisation's personality
- Give information at the source
- A potentially powerful but imperfect tool

Thank you!

And if you'd like to follow us on social media, you'll find us at:



@friendschurches



@friendlesschurches



Friends of Friendless Churches



Friends of Friendless Churches



@friendlesschurches.bsky.social



@friendlesschurches

