

# **A FUTURE FOR CHURCH BUILDINGS**

**Report by the Church Heritage Forum**

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#### **Foreword**

The buildings of the Church of England affect us all. Many are of great importance in their own right, and matter deeply to their communities. But there is an asymmetrical relationship between the importance of those buildings as part of the cultural inheritance of the whole community and the support we receive from public bodies. The recent debate on the Licensing Bill has demonstrated the extraordinary variety of ways in which church buildings are used for the service of cultural and community activity in every part of the country.

The achievements of thousands of volunteers who are engaged in sustaining this service to the whole community are hugely impressive. There must be a doubt however as to whether these achievements can be sustained without involving further allies. The present position cannot be sustained: we must find a new way forward. I am delighted that the Church Heritage Forum, which I chair, has been able to address this crucial issue and come forward with the proposals for tackling it set out in this report. I commend it to the General Synod.

+ Richard Londin  
Chair, Church Heritage Forum and  
Chair, Cathedral and Church  
Buildings Division  
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#### **The Church Heritage Forum**

The Church Heritage Forum, which was established in 1997, brings together representatives of national and local church interests in matters relating to the Church's built heritage. It enables the Church to take a more proactive role in anticipating developments in the built heritage field; ensuring that heritage concerns are fed into the Archbishops' Council; provides a mechanism for members to reach a view on matters of common concern; provides a point of focus for contact both within the Church and with outside bodies; promotes a wider public awareness of the Church's work in the built heritage area; and enables the exchange of information and facilitates mutual support.

Membership comprises representatives from the following: Advisory Board for Redundant Churches, Archbishops' Council, Association of English Cathedrals, Church Commissioners' Redundant Churches Committee, Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England, Churches Conservation Trust, Council for the Care of Churches, and an archdeacon. They are assisted by several assessors including a Diocesan Secretary and the Secretary of the Churches Main Committee.

## INTRODUCTION

### SETTING THE SCENE

More than 37 million people in England – 72% of the population - declared themselves Christians in an optional question in the 2001 census. Most of these do not attend worship – but nearly two million people regularly attend Church of England services, at least once a month. The Church of England and its buildings matter to many more, whether occasional worshippers or non-worshippers who nevertheless believe they belong to the Church, or respect what it stands for. Uniquely among religious groups, the Church of England provides every person in this country, Christian or not, with a church building where worship is offered and the services of a minister. It is there for them, wherever they live – from the inner cities to the most rural settlement. The Church of England, its people and its buildings, remain a defining thread within the fabric of our national life.

**The Church and its people** reach out ceaselessly to the whole community:

- ❖ by proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel;
- ❖ by living that Gospel through social, cultural or educational work, often in partnership with private, voluntary, charitable and public sectors;
- ❖ by providing a local voice, local network, and local leaders, both paid and voluntary;
- ❖ by underpinning the work of social cohesion and community enrichment;
- ❖ in regeneration work with inner city and rural communities alike;
- ❖ as part of the world-wide Anglican Communion, by supporting and enabling multi-cultural and interfaith endeavours.

**Church buildings** form the springboard and hub of all this activity and much more besides.

- ❖ All churches in use, of whatever age and architectural merit, are places where all people can meet and worship;
- ❖ nearly all serve as centres for community and social service, cultural and educational activity.

Very many are buildings of special architectural and historic importance. These also serve:

- ❖ as focal points within their communities, through their very presence in the landscape or townscape;
- ❖ as a physical expression of the poetic longings within the human soul;
- ❖ to embody the nation's history and collective memory, through their memorials and churchyards;
- ❖ as a treasury of our national cultural inheritance;
- ❖ as catalysts for wider economic benefits to their communities, through tourism, regeneration initiatives, and by stimulating the skills required to maintain them.

But, while being assets, they impose costs and challenges:

- ❖ most of these buildings of national importance are cared for and managed by local people;
- ❖ the wider benefit to the nation and community is met substantially by voluntary contributions and voluntary effort;
- ❖ the welcome public contribution through repair grants and a temporary VAT grant scheme is small compared to the total cost.

The Church cannot maintain this inheritance alone. It is potentially at risk. Never before has there been so much interest in the living heritage of the past. But never before has there been so much past to manage. The Church accepts its share of responsibility to care for the buildings which it needs, and is conscious of their contribution to the nation: we recognise, also, that the best way to look after a building is to make sure that it is used. Through care and devotion, as well as much help from grants, many churches with small congregations have kept their buildings in good repair and open. But the Church

- ❖ needs more help to support and enable its wider work for the nation;
- ❖ cannot keep buildings in use for regular worship solely for their heritage merit.

**Our objective, and our commitment, is:**

- ❖ **to use our church buildings to reach out to the community;**
- ❖ **to grasp the challenges of enabling each building to fulfil its potential for wider use;**
- ❖ **to secure the resources to enable them to do so; and**
- ❖ **to foster partnerships taking account of the contribution which these buildings make to the community and the nation.**

We invite Government – national, regional and local - and other public agencies to share with us as partners in this process.

## SECTION I: THE KEY ISSUES

### *‘Something must be done about our buildings’*

1. The Church of England’s buildings are at one and the same time:
  - **resources** – outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual strength, places set aside for God, and often places of great beauty where people can seek peace, solace and inspiration;
  - **opportunities** for reaching out to the wider community, and providing a place where all members of it can feel comfortable and supported;
  - but inevitably, **challenges** – to use and maintain.
2. There is a good story to tell. Many positive initiatives are happening up and down the country, and we must share them – with each other and with others. There is substantial personal support and commitment. Volunteers continue to make remarkable achievements. Many communities (particularly, but not exclusively, in rural areas) feel a real sense of ownership for their church buildings. But those good things are at risk. In practice, all too often, the challenges predominate (in fact, or general perception or both), because of costs of maintenance and repair, within an overall context of small congregations and financial stringency. We must address these challenges together. How do we do so?
3. This report to the General Synod is a discussion document. It does not claim to have identified all the answers: but it seeks the help and involvement of Synod in the process. Specifically, this report:
  - i) **puts forward a vision**: church buildings as a symbol to the world and a means of outreach to the whole community;
  - ii) **proposes to develop a strategy** in order
    - to tell the positive story of how places of worship are used;
    - to seek a new understanding of the relationship between church, state and other partners in terms of funding;
    - to bring about an improved public understanding of how the Church operates through its buildings;
    - to develop a greater understanding of the growing opportunities and options for use of church buildings including scope for adaptive use; and
    - to encourage and enable congregations to use their buildings to reach out to the community.
  - iii) **identifies some key issues** to be addressed both by public bodies and the Church:

**Key Issue 1:** We need to set the challenges surrounding the use of church buildings within a framework which articulates and celebrates the positive value of church buildings to the Church and nation alike (paragraph 21).

**Key Issue 2:** We need to identify and clarify the relative responsibilities and commitment of different parties while recognising the Church's responsibility to those other parties also (paragraphs 22-32).

**Key Issue 3:** What steps can parishes, churchwardens, clergy, dioceses or national church bodies take to make best use of the existing system, with the limits of existing resources? (paragraphs 33-39).

**Key Issue 4:** Is there scope for simplifying the Church's own legal controls, while ensuring adequate protection and care for churches and their contents? (paragraphs 41-48).

**Key Issue 5:** Can we forge a new funding relationship with central and regional government which underpins the Church's own work more securely while also respecting its mission? (paragraphs 49-58).

**Key Issue 6:** What scope is there for new initiatives to harness private and voluntary funding more effectively for the support of church buildings? (paragraph 59).

**Key Issue 7:** How can the Church best engage with other partners to enable a real understanding of what it has to offer through its buildings and its wider mission? (paragraphs 66-78).

iv) **suggests emerging recommendations** to be refined further (paragraph 80).

v) **proposes, and recommends to the General Synod, a programme of work to develop such a strategy, by means of:**

- further collation of information and good practice;
- working seminars to test and refine proposals for action;
- discussions with government bodies and other agencies; and, based on that work;
- presentation of a more detailed submission to Government and other public agencies in late summer 2004.  
(see paragraphs 81-83).

4. The **submission to Government** and others would be backed by a written report, modest but attractively produced, readable and compelling in its argument, and including case studies, statistics, and specific proposals for action.
5. This is a Church of England initiative. But many of the issues raised are of similar relevance to other denominations, and we hope that the approach to other partners will have similar benefit to them. The Churches Main Committee, who have welcomed the work, will be involved as it progresses.

## SECTION II: THE CONTEXT - CHURCHES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

*O how amiable are Thy dwellings, Thou Lord of Hosts! (Psalm 84 v.1)*

*'People care about the historic environment. They value its meaning, its beauty, its depth and diversity, its familiarity, its memories, the quality of life it affords and the opportunities it offers.'* (*Power of Place: a report by the heritage sector to Government, December 2000*)

6. The church buildings issue has traditionally been seen as a 'heritage' issue, with the main source of concern as being to obtain more money for repair of historic fabric. As some 13,000 of the 16,000 parish churches of the Church of England are listed buildings, and some 4,000 are Grade I, this is not surprising. Churches constitute over a third of all Grade I listed buildings - the jewels and glory of this country's rich architectural heritage. But the issue is much more complex than a question of listing.
7. Both the secular system and the ecclesiastical legal systems for the care and control of Church buildings recognise that a proper balance needs to be struck between conservation and preservation, on the one hand, and sensitive new development, change and adaptation on the other. In addition, the Church's legislation includes the key provision that all those who exercise functions of care and conservation, in relation to both churches and cathedrals, must have due regard to the role of those buildings as centres of worship and mission. But what that proper balance is depends on the particular building and the particular circumstances, and it is best struck if care is taken to understand the building and analyse what needs to be done to it. Getting this balance right is important - both to the Church and all those who use the building, and to those charged with protecting the historic environment. Any building, whether secular or ecclesiastical, is best maintained and protected for the future if it is cared for, used, and valued by its owners: it is those with no obvious use which cease to be viable and become impossible financial burdens.
8. In recent years there has been an increasing realisation that the historic environment means much more than the set pieces of stately homes and the largest churches or cathedrals. Every part of the country, city, town or rural area has its own particular combination of buildings. The juxtaposition of their form, materials and setting within their context is a forceful combination for good or ill - either enabling people to understand and feel positive about their surroundings (and, thereby, themselves), or having precisely the opposite effect. There is a theological dimension to all buildings, be they historic or modern, ecclesiastical or secular. As a recent study by Professor Tim Gorringer (*A Theology of the Built Environment*, Cambridge University Press 2002) has emphasised, each time human beings plan or construct a building they are, whether consciously or not, embodying a view about how they relate to society and how those who use that building relate or might relate to each other. The environment underlies and fashions people's sense of identity and self-awareness to a far greater degree than they often consciously realise: and when familiar landmarks, of whatever kind, are removed the community feels a sense of loss.
9. Church buildings, by their very size, age, space, contents, are supremely charged with this power of place. By their very purpose, they embody the special sense of a place which defines, embodies and transcends the community, the place where past, present

and future, the temporal and the spiritual, can meet with equal validity. This is so whether the surrounding environment is a 'good' one or not: indeed a church building in an area where little else speaks of joy or hope can be a powerful beacon.

10. The contribution of the Church to this wider environment is not confined to church buildings or cathedrals: bishops' palaces, a cathedral close, church schools, universities, monasteries, theological colleges, parsonages, church halls and community buildings all help define a place and contribute to its identity and character. Many such buildings are significant centres of tourism, education or community use. This report, however, concentrates upon church and cathedral buildings as a distinct and readily identifiable group. Nevertheless there are differences between their respective situations, as well as similarities: and there is a huge spectrum.
11. **Parish churches** vary immensely, in size of building, size of congregation, and how central they are within their community. But many face the genuine and frequently publicised problems:
  - small congregations – and sometimes a small community from which to draw;
  - a financial situation dominated by the need to meet running costs and the parish share, together with the perception of an inexorable rise year on year well ahead of inflation;
  - clergy serving multiple parishes, some dealing with congregations in over a dozen different church buildings;
  - difficulties in keeping the church building open regularly, either for prayer or for casual visitors, because of concerns over security;
  - maintenance and repair relying on congregations who may lack professional expertise in project management and fundraising;
  - scope for wider use of the building for purposes other than worship, perhaps by extension or alteration – but challenges inherent in seeking the necessary consents and funds;
  - lack of facilities, or facilities which are outdated.
12. Each church is different. Many are dealing with these challenges positively and creatively; many are in good health, where growth is evident. Some feel beleaguered; a few are on the point of giving up. But the challenges are real for all of them.
13. **Cathedrals** may have apparent advantages: more paid staff (Dean, Canons with different functions, Administrator), a central position within their cathedral city, and often being obvious magnets for visitors. But they face challenges of their own:
  - large complex historic and architecturally important buildings have major ongoing maintenance and repair needs;
  - other buildings within the precinct, which often form a historic entity in their own right, have their own continuing maintenance, repair and development needs;
  - high visitor numbers provide scope for mission, outreach and income, but involve costs and work too: if the 'experience' is to have value, cathedrals must ensure that the visitors can appreciate what they are seeing, can buy a

memento of their visit, and are provided with appropriate access, refreshment and toilet facilities;

- in the most visited cathedrals, the pressure of tourists imposes its own pressures on the building fabric, and can put at risk the spiritual focus and contemplative atmosphere which many visitors seek;
- equally, those cathedrals (often many parish church cathedrals) not on the tourist trail still incur costs of maintenance and repair without the benefits of high visitor numbers;
- for some cathedrals, historic endowments help to cushion everyday running costs, a position which many parish churches would consider luxurious – but they will face heavy demands on those resources to meet other commitments (music and educational programmes, for example).

14. So both groups have concerns about their buildings: many large frequently visited parish churches (eg Bath Abbey) will have pressures akin to cathedrals: and smaller parish church cathedrals will have some of the pressures of both.

### SECTION III: THE VISION

*‘I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put My Name there for ever’ (1 Kings, 9.3)*

*‘Kneeling where prayer has been valid’*

*‘You must have a home before you can be hospitable’*

15. Why does the Church need its buildings at all? Christians have a variety of ways of relating to church buildings: but some fundamental principles should be common.

- The Church is a community of people first and foremost: the body of Christ. Without that centrality of purpose, the building of a church would have been meaningless.
- The concept of a holy place develops through the Old and New Testaments. The nomadic Israelites took the Ark with them (see *Exodus 25.8*; *2 Samuel 7.5*) so that God was with them wherever they went. The Ark was sacred and to be treated with special reverence: there are precise regulations for its construction and treatment.
- With settlement came the establishment of the Temple and the understanding that God cannot be contained or subjugated to a humanly constructed building, but that God graciously invests the holy buildings set up in His Name with the divine presence. (See *1 Kings 6ff*: the description of the planning and building of the Temple emphasise the tremendous human investment that a holy people will make to honour God through a building.)
- Solomon declared ‘I have built You an exalted house, a place for You to dwell in forever’. (*1 Kings 8.13*) But he also acknowledged that God’s home is in heaven (*1 Kings 8.27*). So buildings represent a covenant promise between God and the faithful, that God is indeed with us as part of a gracious promise, though not controlled or contained by us.
- Early Christians inherited both the tradition of the Temple and the Synagogue, as the place for meeting, reading of the scriptures and prayer. The apostles preached daily in the Temple, and from every house (*Acts 5.42*). So there is a link for us between the meeting of Christians for worship in church buildings and Christian witness in our daily lives.
- For Christians, the covenant promise of God-with-us is supremely focused in Jesus. Our buildings reflect not only the graciousness of God’s promise to be among us, but provide the shelter, focus and meeting place for the fellowship of Christ’s body, the *koinonia* of the Church. As such, they can generate the Church’s power to reach out to the world, as a springboard for mission. They help also to focus our hope of heaven, and the belief that our future with God will be realised as He has promised.

16. The church building can thus manifest sacred space:

“A church, once consecrated, once set apart, becomes the dwelling place of God. He is present there in another way than in the rest of the world....When we build a church or set apart a place of worship we do something that reaches far beyond the obvious significance of the fact....We may say that this is a place where the

kingdom of God reveals itself and manifests itself with power. When we come to church we should be aware that we are entering upon sacred space, a place which belongs to God.”

(From ‘*Living Prayer*’ – Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh)

17. It provides the base in which the people of God meet, and from which they can witness to the wider community. Within the Church of England that need takes on particular meaning, given our mission and responsibility for the nation as a whole. Even when worship is not taking place, the church building stands as a presence and symbol. As the Council for the Care of Churches’ report *Mission in Mortar* put it in 1993:

‘If the Church’s main concern is to give witness to the Gospel in the world, could there be a more effective tool than the buildings the Church possesses in every village, city and town in the country?’

This symbol is a powerful one for many on the fringes of Christianity - those whom the Church would wish to encourage into greater understanding. Indeed the sheer presence of so many buildings provides a powerful advertisement on a scale many commercial firms would envy. That advertisement can be negative, or positive. We need to make it a positive one.

18. Of course, committed Christians do not depend upon a church building for their faith. The Christian Church began before its specific buildings; and at times and places throughout its history has operated without them. Unsuitable buildings can be a burden: over-emphasis on the beauty of fittings for their own sake divorced from their Christian significance may veer towards idolatry. But the building can also lead the worshipper through itself to glimpse greater truths, as George Herbert put it in *The Elixir*:

‘A man that looks on glass  
On it may stay his eye  
Or, if he pleaseth, through it pass  
And then the heav’n espy.’

19. The building stands for and embodies many different concepts all at the same time. This is well expressed in *Mission in Mortar*:

‘For the Christian the words House of God imply not intrinsic sanctity but human use. People come there, to respond to God in prayer and worship and to instruct and prepare themselves to serve the world. So the church building can be understood as a sacramental affirmation that God is with us in this place and at this time.

The church building is also a statement of the continuity of God’s presence and of the transmission of faith from century to century..... This witness to what has gone before should not prevent the building both fulfilling current needs and inspiring today’s people. It challenges the present congregation to pass it on as a place both serviceable and beautiful to the future. This

blending of the practical, the historic and the aesthetic, this sense of the duties of trusteeship balanced with the needs of individuals now, are surely valid reasons for the love many worshipping people come to feel for their church building. However different the forms of worship in the Old Testament, Psalm 84 has become a classic affirmation of these emotions....

The church building also has an impact on those who are on the fringes or stand outside it altogether. They may use it for national or family events or not at all. It exists for them also as a living witness to a faith they but dimly perceive.... Especially in a village they may feel a sense of ownership for a building they rarely enter.'

20. If we accept that the church buildings stand as a symbol to the world as a whole, we should recognise also that they reach out to the non-worshipper and the occasional worshipper as well as the committed Christian. They serve also as the nation's memory, encapsulating centuries of continuity, of people both named in memorials and unnamed generations within that community who have lived, worshipped and prayed there. That sense of continuity can speak powerfully for many, mingled with the living and continuing use of the building, and act as a promise of the permanent and the transcendent in a shifting, rootless world.

## SECTION IV: TRANSLATING VISIONS INTO REALITY

***KEY ISSUE 1: We need to set the challenges surrounding the use of church buildings within a framework which articulates and celebrates the positive value of church buildings to the Church and nation alike.***

21. The vision outlined above is a positive one. We need to hold to it, and build on it. We need also to be confident about the major contribution which Christian and other faith communities, sustained by their own commitment, bring to society as a whole. But we cannot ignore the real and pressing issues surrounding the continuing use of church buildings: the major costs of maintenance; the continuing need to think carefully and strategically about the Church's use of those buildings; the need to ensure that the proper respect for the continuity and past embodied in those buildings does not stultify new creativity; or the need to consider new patterns of ministry in the light of the pressures of clergy deployment. We need to acknowledge the reality that, regrettably, demographic changes may mean that there is no demand for a particular building as a worshipping church, and financial stringencies suggest a sense of crisis in keeping many which have small or moderate sized congregations. Those pressures must be faced. But we can seek a better financial climate – justified by the opportunities the buildings can provide.

***KEY ISSUE 2: We need to identify and clarify the relative responsibilities and commitment of different parties while recognising the Church's responsibility to those other parties also.***

22. We need to consider **costs; scope** (and constraints) for use of buildings; and **options** for moving forward. And, because the structures and needs of each building are so varied, there cannot be a single 'solution'. In practice, a range of steps may contribute to a positive way forward, whether at national, regional, diocesan or local level. Many of these will require active partnership both within the Church and between the Church and other bodies, in order to unlock the full potential.

### **Costs: buildings as challenge**

23. The Church receives no core public funding for the repair or maintenance of its buildings. However the costs are substantial. The 2001 figure from Diocesan returns for major repairs to church buildings was £86m, with a further £13m on major repairs to ancillary buildings in use. Maintenance of church buildings cost £16.2m in 1999.
24. Other studies have identified significant, though not always directly comparable, costs. In 1997 the amount spent on repair and maintenance of its buildings and sustaining the worship within them – £205m – represented 29% of the Church's total income. Clergy stipends, housing and training cost £225m (32% of total income) in the same period. Major repairs and maintenance carried out to church buildings were estimated to cost some £120m in 1999. A survey carried out by English Heritage, with help from the Council for the Care of Churches, estimated that church buildings nationally needed approximately £124m at 1998 prices to deal with their repairs. A broad-based update of this study in 2001 estimated the total cost then needed to clear all repairs to all listed churches was in the region of £110m, with maintenance costs

being additional. This study influenced the decision by the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage to continue their grant scheme for repairs to places of worship for 2002-2005. These figures, and these sources of funding, do not however allow for new work to expand a church's facilities or its outreach into the community, let alone to provide new churches where these are needed.

25. The Church benefits from the well-established practice of quinquennial inspections. Nevertheless many congregations may feel daunted by a cycle of quinquennial reports identifying the need for costly repairs, fundraising (quickly leading to fatigue, however great the initial enthusiasm, unless it produces results); the hard work of making grant applications which may not be successful; and the prospect of facing the same situation all over again in a few years even if they succeed with that phase of repairs. Even if the structure is sound, a historic building may also seem to impose other constraints: lack of facilities, limited scope for reordering, and apparent bars on new development because of constraints of historic fabric. Other potential funders may show a lack of understanding about what the church can offer to the community and even suspicion of the Church's role.
26. It is perhaps a sense of impotence at these constraints, rather than a rooted antipathy to the buildings themselves, which leads some within the Church to argue for an abandonment of buildings. But need it be like that?
27. All the Five Marks of Mission can be aided through our buildings if we use them to:
  - Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom – by explaining how the buildings, and their furnishings and contents, tell the story of what God has done in Jesus;
  - Teach, baptise and nurture new believers – through using resources in the buildings, such as books and bibles, and stories in stained glass;
  - Respond to human need by loving service – by providing places of rest, prayer, refreshment, or café and toilet facilities;
  - Transform unjust structures of society – by providing a sense of permanence as a counterpoint to fast changing society, and using the contents for teaching, such as on the ten commandments and lives of the saints;
  - Respect the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the earth – through encouraging quiet spaces, and the preservation of wildlife and plants in churchyards or glebe land; through decoration of churches at harvest time or flower festivals to celebrate our relation with the created world.

**Scope: buildings as springboard: proclaiming, teaching, and respecting creation**

28. A secular user might speak of 'resource' but church buildings can act much more positively than that term might imply. A church can act as a spiritual powerhouse, a place from which people go out enthused with the Spirit and the Love of God. Orderliness, form and beauty can contribute to that sense of holiness and inspiration: so can the sense of hallowing over years and centuries of worship by successive generations.
29. The buildings serve both as a continuing sign of the worship which takes place within them, and a testimony to the past which has shaped them, and shaped us all. In this sense they are inseparable from the development of this nation, with all its

complexity, diversity and individuality: whether nationally or locally, the church has been bound up with virtually every major change within our history. And because they have shaped our development as a society they help define our present too. The buildings – through their form, their art, their glass, their contents, their churchyards – can teach people of all ages, and of any faith or none, to understand better the development of their society and the spiritual values which have shaped it. The multiplicity of buildings and types provides particular richness.

### **Buildings as opportunity: responding and transforming**

30. Here God's people can be welcomed and His love made manifest: a home in which and from which God's people can offer hospitality to the world. Church buildings can provide scope for uses which contribute to their role as a centre of mission while being complementary to their prime purpose of worship. Many such schemes have been developed in recent years: sometimes by subdivision, and adaptation, sometimes simply by further use of the existing space. Some examples are given in Annex II. Such uses include:
- uses bringing the wider community into the building, and thereby fostering the relationship between congregation and wider community: by the informal concerts and plays which many host as a matter of course for a primarily local audience or a more elaborate and ambitious musical tradition drawing people from far and wide, and
  - activities (from nurseries for the young to day centres for the elderly) reaching out to those in the community who need particular help and support. Many value coming to a place which may be more spacious, more inspiring, more interesting, and more stable through its very permanence, than their home surroundings. Personal welcome and friendship are crucial: but the building, well cared for, can give its own sense of welcome.
31. The very presence of the church building within the landscape or townscape provides an opportunity. Vast numbers focus weekend recreation on a visit to an attractive village, a historic town, a country walk, a city centre – all with churches in them. It is estimated that 1,253 million day visits were made to the English countryside in 1998 – generating spending of £11.5 billion. (Source: State of the Historic Environment 2002, English Heritage). There is no shame for the Church in seeking to promote what it has to offer to such visitors, and to encourage recognition of it from the wider community.
32. Some of these uses can be aided by external funding. Some will provide direct income. Some will enhance the good will of the community towards the Church and may make it more likely that the community will respond by contributing at times of specific need. Some will simply be part of the Church's continuing outreach to the world. All of these approaches are valid.

## SECTION V: GRASPING THE OPPORTUNITIES

**KEY ISSUE 3: *What steps can parishes, churchwardens, clergy, dioceses or national church bodies take to make best use of the existing system, within the limits of existing resources?***

33. Not all the answers lie with outside bodies. It can be easy to assert that Government should simply contribute more. But many solutions may lie within our own hands: and if the Church itself can show positively that it is engaging with these issues, then partnership and help from other bodies is more likely to be forthcoming.

34. **Training and empowerment:** Archdeacons constantly and rightly emphasise the importance of maintenance – a prudent duty not confined to church buildings. Many dioceses organise regular days for their churchwardens - many of whom have years of experience and wisdom to impart.

- Can we support clergy, churchwardens, parochial church councils and others better in understanding their buildings and fulfilling the duties of care and maintenance?
- How do we best learn from the experience and skills many already have?
- Are we sufficiently equipped to carry out maintenance while meeting the legitimate requirements of modern regulations on health and safety?
- Can we provide more models to enable preventative maintenance to take place promptly, perhaps on a collaborative basis?
- Can we make more positive use of the knowledge of the amenity bodies, such as the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, who organise courses to increase awareness of how to go about maintenance of historic buildings of all kinds?
- Do we know enough about the effects of insufficient maintenance, and how quickly it leads to a need for major repair? Is further research needed?

35. **Sharing resources and good practice:** much information is already available: the Churchcare website sponsored by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group ([www.churchcare.co.uk](http://www.churchcare.co.uk)) provides accessible information about care of buildings, and the Council for the Care of Churches publish booklets. Many individual Dioceses have guidance notes on specific aspects.

- Are these sufficiently well known and widely available?
- Are they consistent?
- What other issues need guidance?

36. **Making the system work:** it is a truism that a proactive, supportive DAC can do a great deal to encourage a parish to think through what it wants to do to a building and reach a good result. The legislation requires parishes who propose significant changes to a listed church to prepare Statements of Significance and of Need, and to consult. A building which is understood is more likely to produce the sensitive adaptation needed. In all walks of life, including building conservation, increasing professionalism is required. This often seems a burden. We must make it an opportunity, and forge links with those who can help, both within the Diocese, local authorities and other bodies in the amenity world.

- How do we best enable parishes to respond to the needs of their buildings, and identify what development (if any) may be most appropriate for them?
- How do we ensure a sense of partnership with genuine respect between the church, local authorities and the amenity bodies?

37. **Communication:**

- Does communication between local, diocesan, and national bodies work sufficiently well?
- How can we improve it, and share good practice most effectively?
- What are the best tools for communication?

38. **Strategy:** many dioceses are seeking strategic approaches.

- Are initiatives sufficiently co-ordinated?
- Are congregations and deaneries encouraged to plan in a way which relates both to their own communities and to their own neighbours?
- What is the best way of encouraging dioceses to look at their building stock strategically?
- Can the present review of the Diocese and Pastoral Measures contribute to a greater holistic approach towards church buildings, giving priority to extended uses rather than redundancy.

39. Many good initiatives are happening day by day. Sharing these will help us all move forward – and build a greater sense of confidence and hope, both in dealing with buildings and furthering the Church's wider tasks.

## SECTION VI: THE WIDER CONTEXT

40. But the Church in the world must work in the wider context too: that of legislation, the overall financial context, and the context of the current climate of opinion within which government decisions are made.

### The legal context

#### ***KEY ISSUE 4: Is there scope for simplifying the Church's own legal controls, while ensuring adequate protection and care for churches and their contents?***

41. The rules of ecclesiastical law which govern the Church of England are part of the law of the land. At the same time, the Church is part of the nation and subject to the laws of the civil authorities. This raises the whole question of the inter-relationship between the Church and society. While this is not the place to discuss the merits or otherwise of establishment, some comments are relevant to the buildings issue.
42. Whether at national, diocesan, local or individual level, the Church and its people must act within and respect the current law as responsible members of society. It is reasonable for the Church – generally at national level - to seek to influence the development of new legislation, in the interests of justice and fairness for all. Where secular legislation may impact on church buildings, and thus on the Church's mission and worship, it is reasonable for the Church also to seek special arrangements which reflect its own special needs. But if special arrangements in secular law are to be justified, they must be shown also to take account of the legitimate concerns and the needs of society – particularly if the Church seeks wider partnership with others. That may sometimes mean articulating points which are obvious to Church members, but not necessarily obvious to others. Simply asserting that we deserve special treatment is not enough.
43. Recent discussions over the Licensing Bill provide a good example. The case put forward against the licensing requirements, at all levels and from and on behalf of places of worship of all denominations, was a powerful testimony to the contribution to the cultural and community life of this country made by concerts, plays and other events held in church buildings and cathedrals – and the loss which would result from inhibiting that activity. That powerful case persuaded the Government to amend the Bill. Would simply demanding a retention of the existing arrangements, without that evidence, have had the same effect? Certainly not.
44. In the context of buildings, the Church has benefited for many years from the 'ecclesiastical exemption' from listed building control (and from scheduling and hence scheduled monument consent) for church buildings in use. In recent years, the Government has accepted the continuation of the exemption for three main reasons. Firstly, the Church has its own faculty jurisdiction system, supplemented in recent years by the Care of Cathedrals Measure. Secondly, the system has continued to develop over time and refinements have been made to reflect changes in the secular system) as well as the Church's own concerns and needs (for example, by ensuring consultation with conservation bodies). Thirdly, the Government has hitherto accepted that the Church's own system has generally provided a level of protection for historic buildings comparable to that which the secular system would provide.

45. Some voices within the Church consider the requirements of conservation to be an unacceptable burden on the Church's mission. However, the original and continuing purpose of the faculty jurisdiction, exercised by the ecclesiastical courts on behalf of the bishop, is to safeguard the land and buildings (and their contents) which have been consecrated exclusively to God's service, and control the uses made of them. The rules have been evolved to meet the Church's own needs and purposes, rather than simply to preserve the buildings without regard to their spiritual significance or continuing use. The relevant Measures relating to both churches and cathedrals, which underpin the ecclesiastical exemption, specifically require those exercising functions of care and conservation to have due regard to the buildings' role as centres of worship and mission; and the fundamental importance of the exemption is to ensure that worship and mission have their proper place in the equation. This balance would not be guaranteed if local planning authorities made the decisions. The Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000 encourage early consultation and the preparation of Statements of Significance and Statements of Need, so that proposals for change are carefully thought out. Experience suggests that where this good practice is followed it is proving positive, by engaging other parties creatively in the dialogue and developing parishes' understanding of their buildings as a basis for enabling sensitive change. But all this involves effort and time for hard-pressed volunteers, and we need to work continually to ensure that the systems function as careful and fair but also positive tools.
46. The 'exemption' cannot be taken for granted: it must be earned. The Government made clear after the Newman Review of 1997 that they would keep the exemption under review, and reiterated that commitment in *A Force for Our Future* (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2001). DCMS and English Heritage are currently carrying out a comprehensive review of heritage protection legislation, which they propose will lead to a further review of the exemption. If the Church values the exemption and wishes to retain it, it must be able to demonstrate that it is working – for the benefit of all parties.
- Can the system be simplified?
  - Can we encourage and promulgate good practice in its operation?
47. Meanwhile the Church's review of the Dioceses and Pastoral Measures has been considering the arrangements for dealing with redundant churches and is due to report to the Archbishops' Council in the autumn. This review has identified the need to streamline the systems and provide a more holistic approach for dealing with the issues. Its recommendations are likely to include proposals to speed up the decision making process and simplify arrangements for disposing of redundant churches. But the Review has also identified scope to facilitate extended use of church buildings.
48. Currently licences may be made under faculty but in some cases this is insufficient for funding purposes and the new occupier needs to acquire a legal interest in the relevant part of the building. At present the device of partial redundancy is the only route to achieve this. There has been considerable support in the Review's recent consultation for its proposals to amend the legislation to permit leases of parts of churches in use; and an early opportunity is being sought to introduce the necessary legislation in General Synod to achieve this.

## The financial context

**KEY ISSUE 5: *Can we forge a new funding relationship with central and regional government which underpins the Church's own work more securely while also respecting its mission?***

49. Despite the significance of the Church's buildings, and indeed the Church of England's status as the established church, it receives **no** core funding from either national or local government for the upkeep of its buildings in use. The welcome help the Church receives from grants is given in response to particular projects which may qualify for funding. We are proud of the standard of care which has been achieved. But the fact remains that this situation contrasts markedly with the situation in other European countries, many of whom draw a sharp distinction between the Church and State: in France, for example, the state is responsible for maintaining historic church buildings, and in Germany local taxes are levied for church maintenance irrespective of whether the taxpayer is a member of a worshipping congregation. There is still a public perception that the Church Commissioners are very wealthy: But Synod will be well aware that the income from their assets is needed to support clergy pensions and help needier dioceses with clergy stipends.
50. Here, the state's core funding is limited to its contribution (currently 70%) to the funding of the **Churches Conservation Trust**, which maintains those redundant churches for which no suitable alternative use can be found and which have been identified as worthy of preservation in the interests of the Church and the nation because of their historic, architectural or archaeological importance. This percentage contribution from Government, maintained since 1989, is greater than the original split of 60% Church: 40% State set when the Redundant Churches Fund (as the Trust was previously called) was established in 1969. But the 70%, which was agreed as part of a package to compensate the Church for the costs arising from the introduction of the community charge, is not guaranteed in perpetuity, and the funding depends upon a Parliamentary Order, currently required every three years. Moreover, the amount agreed by DCMS and Parliament earlier this year (with the Church following suit pro-rata) amounted to a cut in real terms for the first time since 1969.
51. **Grants for repairs of listed churches** have been available from central Government funds since 1977 (1977-1984 from the Department of the Environment and 1984 onwards from English Heritage). English Heritage are confined by their legal powers: they can only grant-aid 'outstanding' buildings, defined as those listed I or II\*. All grants are discretionary. Since 1996, the English Heritage church repair grant scheme has been operated jointly with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). HLF's powers are much wider: they can grant aid any 'heritage asset' irrespective of grading (or even of listing). But the pressure of demand has been such that the scheme has had to operate strict criteria in recent years, restricting grants to urgent high-level works needed to keep a building wind and weather tight, with a competitive bidding round. Within their own limited resources, English Heritage have striven hard to maintain their grants to churches (though a parish rejected for grant may not perceive so). That both they and the HLF are sympathetic to the continuing need is shown by the welcome recent announcement that **£30m** will be available under the repair scheme in

2003/4 – the highest annual amount ever, and nearly half as much again as the £21m offered in 2002/3.

52. English Heritage have also grant aided **cathedral repair** costs since 1991, although this is currently not guaranteed beyond March.
53. The Heritage Lottery Fund also consider applications for conservation of **contents in churches** (wallpaintings, organs, monuments, etc) under their ‘Your Heritage’ scheme for grants between £5,000 and £50,000, and the Local Heritage Initiative Scheme (jointly with the Countryside Agency) has aided repair of churchyard walls, church histories, and so on. Modest projects for access and interpretation may qualify under their ‘Awards for All’ schemes (grants between £500 and £5,000). Other Lottery distributors may give grants for projects which fulfil their own criteria, notably the Community Fund and New Opportunities Fund for **community use** projects.
54. **The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme**, introduced by the Chancellor in 2001, enables listed churches to reclaim some of the VAT they have paid on repairs, thus effectively reducing the rate of VAT from 17.5% to 5%. The scheme was originally due to finish in April 2003, but has now been extended until certainly April 2004 pending the outcome of discussions in Europe over the revision of the 6<sup>th</sup> VAT Directive. Entitlement is automatic provided that the works carried out qualify. Take-up and payments made have improved markedly in recent months with over £10m paid out as at the end of April 2003.
55. **Local and regional authorities** are likely to become increasingly significant. **Local authorities** have power to grant aid repairs of historic buildings, though with pressures on resources not all do – and the amounts are often small. However, **Regional and European funding** may be available for regeneration work, including employment generation through heritage tourism. (eg St Paul’s Old Ford, in East London, a huge Grade II church of 1876 previously threatened with demolition is now being transformed through major internal alterations to provide meeting rooms, a fitness centre and an art/community project, with worship retained at the east end: partners included money from HLF New Opportunities Fund, and European funds).
56. **The Home Office** are also showing increasing interest in funding work by faith communities, recognising the contribution which they can make to social cohesion .
57. **The Council for the Care of Churches** administer grants from funds provided by other trusts – notably the Wolfson Foundation (for fabric repair) and the Pilgrim Trust (mainly for contents). These amounted to £500,000 in 2002: the funds available are likely to be less in 2003, given the international financial situation. Again, these are discretionary, and the criteria of the funders concerned may change at any time.
58. **The Allchurches Trust**, with money provided by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, made grants to the Church of England in the order of £4m in 2002.

**KEY ISSUE 6: What scope is there for new initiatives to harness private and voluntary funding more effectively for the support of church buildings?**

59. **Private and voluntary sources** should not be underestimated. There may be scope for engaging some silent supporters – be they the 37 million Christians identified in the 2001 census, or sympathetic non-Christians who value the buildings’ presence - to be more active in funding for support of church buildings. Current Giftaid arrangements provide useful incentives for private giving.

- Many churches and cathedrals have Friends’ organisations, which tap into the latent sympathy for the building from non-worshippers who nevertheless value its presence: while the relationship between the Friends and the PCC needs to be clearly defined, these can provide a valuable source of financial support;
- The County Historic Churches Trusts, and the national Historic Churches Preservation Trust, provide advice, enthusiasm, and financial help and can stimulate fundraising (notably through the annual Bike Ride which in 2002 raised well over £1m nationally).
- Might diocesan advisors encourage, within their overall stewardship strategies, specifically direct some schemes towards buildings?
- Is there scope for enhancing existing initiatives nationally to provide greater support for church buildings and cathedrals?

60. However, the most substantial sums of money are likely to come from public sources. With continuing constraints on public expenditure, this cannot be a bottomless pit: public expenditure must relate to public priorities. And for any society, these priorities depend on current prevailing values.

**The social context: the climate of opinion**

*‘A sense of continuity does not have to stop new ideas – just the opposite. The deeper the root, the greater the range of nutrients..... (Kim Wilkie, Indignation! Quoted in Power of Place)*

*‘With sensitivity and imagination, it [the historic environment] can be... a force for regeneration and a powerful contribution to people’s quality of life’. (A Force for the Future, DCMS, 2001)*

*‘A historic church... can help define a neighbourhood and create a sense of local cohesion’. (State of the Historic Environment Report, English Heritage, 2002)*

61. The value judgements surrounding the legislation relating to the built environment, and the priorities for expenditure, are now more propitious to the Church’s own need to evolve and grow than they have been for a very long time.

62. At the request of the Secretaries of State for Culture, Media and Sport and of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, the heritage sector produced a report in 2000 (*Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment*). This followed widespread consultation with papers available on the Internet, a range of discussion

groups, and a Steering Group (chaired by the Chairman of English Heritage and including the Bishop of London as the then Chairman of the Churches Main Committee). It also included a MORI poll of 3,000 people. *Power of Place* set a context agreed by the heritage sector as a whole and based on widespread consultation. While it was not specifically aimed at church buildings: but the general thrust is relevant to them, as a key part of the historic environment.

63. The summary pages from *Power of Place* are reproduced at Annex I. Much of the content is not new: Government policy at least since the 1970s has acknowledged the contribution of the 'cherished familiar local scene' to the historic environment; and the fact that the best way to preserve and maintain any historic building is to use it (wherever possible for the use for which it was designed). Both policies have obvious relevance for church buildings. But the new thrust in the report was to articulate more strongly than before, as a basis for action, the contribution which the historic environment makes to the cultural and economic well-being of the nation: the need for places, as well as people, to evolve and grow, balancing the need to care for the historic environment with the need for change; the importance of working in partnership, understanding and debating the basis for decisions about the historic environment; based on proper understanding and research to identify priorities. Conservation is no longer regarded in isolation – as something valuable enough, but distinct from the mainstream of modern life.
64. The Government response, *A Force for the Future* published in 2001, welcomed the general thrust of the report. Crucially, it acknowledged the relevance of the historic environment to wider government objectives: urban and rural regeneration; the development of culture in its broadest sense; local and regional identity; tourism; education; the inclusion of all in society.
65. Secular authorities do not always understand how church buildings relate here. Some churches have found that their needs as a worshipping community are not respected when they plan projects with wider community benefit. But it is also incumbent upon the Church to explain its own needs and priorities. This context gives both urgency and real scope for developing engagement with a wide range of partners, to achieve within society a greater recognition of
  - the substantial part which church buildings play in these wider agendas;
  - the relevance of those agendas to the church to society at large; and
  - the value of church buildings to the public, both as part of the nation's inheritance and as buildings with a positive use.

## SECTION VII: DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS

**KEY ISSUE 7: *How can the Church best engage with other partners to enable a real understanding of what it has to offer through its buildings and its wider mission?***

66. Different parts of the Church have different partners among Government departments and agencies. Some of those partnerships are well developed, others less so, others at present embryonic or non-existent. This section lists some of the key partners we have – or need to develop – in relation to church buildings. It may not be comprehensive: but it is a start.
67. **English Heritage (EH):** since 1977 (with its predecessor the Department of the Environment) EH has been the major source of funds for church repairs. It has been acknowledged by Government as the leading body in the historic environment sector. It is consulted on certain faculty cases, and on DAC membership. Working relationships are well established at central and generally at diocesan level, though tensions may arise on individual grant cases and faculty applications. EH are currently seeking to develop their own strategy for church buildings, with a continuing and increased emphasis on sensitive adaptation to keep churches in use for worship.
68. **The National Lottery:** the Church nationally had qualms about the introduction of the Lottery, but it has proved a significant funder of work to church buildings – predominantly from the **Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)** but also other distributors including the New Opportunities Fund, Community Fund, and (previously) the Millennium Commission. HLF have a wider remit than repairs alone. It is required to ensure that its funds benefit the community as a whole, not the furtherance of any particular interest group or faith: but it is ready to recognise the wider cultural, social and educational value of much activity in church buildings. Relationships with HLF are positive and developing at central level: their regional structure is evolving. But the future of the Lottery distributors is currently being considered by the DCMS following a consultation exercise last year. Current proposals suggest that the NOF/Community Fund will be merged and strengthened: but there is no guarantee that the HLF will continue in its present form for the longer term.
69. **Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS):** a key partner as the government department responsible for:
- government policy relating to the historic environment, including the current review of heritage protection legislation and the ecclesiastical exemption;
  - tourism, culture and overseeing Regional Cultural Consortia;
  - overseeing EH, HLF and other Lottery distributors, and sponsor for the Government's contribution to the Churches Conservation Trust;
  - the Licensing Bill;
  - the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

Relationships are positive and developing. The Department accepted the Churches' case for exemption from public entertainment licensing on basis of the contribution which such events made to the wider community. It is showing increased emphasis on community and voluntary activity.

*EH, HLF and DCMS were all approached following the General Synod's resolution in November 2002 on Mr Roy Thompson's motion, which urged additional funding for church repairs. All are ready to participate in further discussion on this current strategy work.*

70. **Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM):** is responsible for planning policy generally, and urban regeneration. It can call in individual planning or listed building consent applications, through its Regional Offices, who also administer Single Regeneration Budget Funds: some have been used to help church buildings. The Church has links at national level through Mission and Public Affairs Division.
71. **Home Office:** is responsible for community development, and was previously involved in Urban Aid Programme. Again, the Archbishops' Council has links through Mission and Public Affairs Division.
72. **Treasury:** links are developing in relation to the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and the discussions on VAT Directive (led by Churches Main Committee), in both cases in association with DCMS.
73. **Lord Chancellor's Department (LCD):** there are currently links between Legal Office of the Archbishops' Council and LCD's Church and State Division.
74. **Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA):** is responsible for rural and agricultural issues, including rural regeneration. The Church nationally has links through the National Rural Officer and the Rural Affairs Panel.

*DCMS officials have invited Church Heritage Forum officers for discussions with representatives of other departments to begin to explore the buildings issues further.*

75. **Local Government Association (LGA):** links need to be developed further, but the LGA are showing sympathy in their publications and statements to the contribution which faith communities can make to the community. Individual dioceses or parishes will have links with specific departments in local authorities on education, social service or other issues.
76. **Regional funding and Regional Cultural Consortia (RCC):** these bodies will be increasingly important as the regional structure grows stronger, and are a potential source of partnership particularly on regeneration issues. This represents a new set of partners for the Church, and it has not always been an easy partnership to make. But experience suggests that once regional bodies understand what the church and its buildings offer, they quickly become more responsive.

*A seminar in March this year, attended by church representatives from all regions and a smaller number from RCCs themselves, shared experience and good practice in dealing with the consortia.*

77. **European funding:** again an increasingly important area, but one which will be affected by the enlargement of the European Community.

*Contacts developed in discussions over the VAT Directive might be developed further.*

78. **University and research contacts:** may be able to help with elements of research to underpin the Church's case.

*Staff are discussing with the Universities of Surrey and Nottingham Trent the possible scope for research to test more objectively the common assertion that church buildings in the environment matter - even to people who do not enter them.*

### **A Good Story to Tell**

79. As a Church we have between us a wealth of experience, good practice and imaginative ideas for using our buildings to the full for the benefit of the wider community. Each Synod member will know examples; a few are given in Annex II (Facts, Figures and Case Studies), with fuller statistics about the costs and use of church buildings. There is scope to develop these into a powerful case: and, by sharing and telling this story with confidence, to open up the scope for new partnerships.

## SECTION VIII: EMERGING RECOMMENDATIONS

80. The detail will need refining and developing: but several key avenues already present themselves. Bringing about **new partnerships and funding** depends upon enhancing **understanding**; on a responsive **legal framework**; on **strategic thinking** within the Church itself; and on **enabling** each other to move forward. These avenues are interdependent, not mutually exclusive.

### **Funding**

- a) The Church needs to seek a new set of funding partnerships, at national and regional level and within Europe, which take account of the wider contribution which it makes to society;
- b) Church bodies at parish, diocesan and national level need more comprehensive guidance about the avenues of funding available for church buildings;
- c) The present central public support for repair of cathedrals and church buildings, while welcome, is not enough by itself;
- d) The tourism potential and cultural, educational and regenerative opportunities provided by cathedrals and church buildings – all benefiting the wider community beyond the church itself – deserve financial recognition in their own right;

### **Understanding**

- e) Developing a greater mutual understanding will be key to maximising access to limited public funds; just as the church needs guidance on what funding bodies can provide, so government (central, local and regional) and other funders need education and guidance on the Church, its remit and activities;
- f) Church buildings matter to non-worshippers too; that thirst for knowledge and meaning deserves to be satisfied – and can be a powerful tool for mission;
- g) There may be scope to harness more strongly the sympathy and funds of the public who are interested in church buildings, but not – or not yet – in Christianity.

### **Strategy**

- h) In dealing with its buildings, the Church at each level should take account of strategic considerations, and consult widely.
- i) Collaborative approaches are likely to be the most effective.

### **The legal framework**

- j) The Church's own framework of legal controls which give due weight both to worship and mission, and to care and conservation, must remain informed by a recognition that a living church serving the community needs to grow and adapt;
- k) Carefully-thought out solutions are most likely to be satisfactory to all parties – and maintain the church in use for the longer term. Creative engagement with amenity bodies, and continuing work to enhance their understanding of the church context, therefore remains crucial;
- l) The operation of the Faculty Jurisdiction system needs constant vigilance by all involved to ensure that it is effective, responsible and responsive.

### **Enabling**

- m) The immense efforts of volunteers (from Chancellors to flower arrangers) in looking after church buildings deserve affirmation – and further help.
- n) Schemes for promoting maintenance, whether by financial, organisational or other support, should be explored in collaboration with other bodies.
- o) Further training in the care of buildings (and avoiding problems) should be encouraged and developed. Similarly, schemes for developing the capacity and confidence of churchwardens and others with roles related to the fabric (eg enhancing their ability to liase with grantgivers, complete application forms, etc) would be helpful;
- p) Good practice must be continually reinforced and communicated – both within the church and outside.

## SECTION IX: SO WHAT NEXT?

81. This report has **set out objectives**. It has **recommended development of a strategy**. It has **highlighted key issues**, and **identified avenues for exploration**, many involving other bodies and some involving the Church itself.
82. We hope that the General Synod will support our analysis and the need to produce a strategy to address these key issues. We therefore **recommend**:
- (i) The preparation of a **fuller report**, well illustrated and with comprehensive facts and case studies, **to present to Government** and to other parties in the late summer of 2004.
  - (ii) The report should include clear **recommendations for action** (by Government departments, other public bodies, and by different bodies within the Church itself), identifying both short, medium, and long term goals and timescales: and set them within a holistic context.
  - (iii) Specifically, we propose:
    - a) collation of information and illustrations, building on that in Annex II and seeking to fill the gaps in knowledge identified there (by direct research or commissioning from other sources). **Aim: to provide a robust factual basis for a case to other partners – or to identify where in-depth analysis, beyond the scope of the current timescale, is needed for the future - by end 2003.**
    - b) a series of working seminars drawing on diocesan and local experience, on specific issues (eg stewardship; training; communication; adaptations; urban and rural issues; environmental issues; funding criteria; difficulties with funding agencies – or ways round them; etc). **Aim: to test and refine detailed proposals for action, by spring 2004.**
    - c) continuing discussions with the Government bodies and other agencies listed in paragraphs 67-78 above, handled at national or regional level. **Aim: to identify by spring 2004 detailed proposals for action and partnership by such bodies which are realistic, positive and achievable in terms of their own remit and objectives.**
    - d) drafting of report and recommendations – completion of report by July 2004, for printing and submission to government and others by September 2004. **Aim: a robust and credible case with specific objectives, seeking specific actions.**
    - e) Thereafter, ensuring implementation, with continuing discussion and monitoring of outcomes. **Aim: measurable change and identifiable progress in terms of objectives identified.**
83. Co-ordination of this work will be for the Church Heritage Forum and the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division. The appointment of a short term member of staff to collate information, and contributions towards the costs of organising working seminars and production of a report have been accommodated within the overall budget for 2004 which is being presented to Synod. But individual Synod members' involvement will be invaluable, particularly in steps a and b: volunteers for working

seminars will be welcomed! (The Annual Conference for DACs, to be held in Canterbury this September, will also include relevant discussion sessions.)

## **CONCLUSION**

84. This report provides no panacea. It is only a step in a longer process. But we believe it illustrates that the Church faces an opportunity to forge a better and wider partnership with others to increase the understanding of the value of church buildings; to enhance their use; to further the Church's own mission; and to respond to the needs of the wider community. Pressures remain: but the climate is propitious. We invite the General Synod to support further work in order to grasp and maximise that opportunity.

Church Heritage Forum  
June 2003

## ANNEX 1

### EXTRACT FROM *POWER OF PLACE*

#### What is the Historic environment?

##### Why does it matter?

01 **Power of Place is about the future of England's historic environment**, its role in people's lives, and its contribution to the cultural and economic well-being of the nation. It demonstrates that, with proper understanding and sensitive and open management, there can be desirable change without losing the places we value.

02 **The historic environment is what generations of people have made of the places in which they lived.** It is all about us. We are the trustees of that inheritance. It is, in every sense, a common wealth. Most of our towns and cities, and all of our countryside, are made up of layer upon layer of human activity. Each generation has made its mark. And each makes its decisions about the future in the context of what it has inherited. That context is irreplaceable. Once gone, it is gone forever.

03 **For most people the historic environment represents the place in which they live.** They value it for the quality of life it can afford them. For others, it is the place they visit and value, for the inspiration and enjoyment that it offers. For the people that welcome and serve those visitors, it is a source of livelihood, a powerful generation of wealth and prosperity.

04 **The historic environment is an incomparable source of information.** For peoples in the distant past, and for more recent generations whose history was never recorded, it offers the only route towards an understanding of who they were and how they lived. Virtually everyone in England – some 98% - believe that the historic environment is a vital educational asset, a means for the understanding of history and

of their origins and identity. It is the most accessible of historical texts.

05 **Although people value the historic environment, this does not represent resistance to change.** On the contrary, most people believe change is necessary and desirable. But, they see that change taking place in the context of the historic environment. Keeping the best from the past provides a powerful justification for gracing our surroundings with the very best of the new. Good new building, high quality design, thoughtful planning, intelligent land use, are desirable objectives in their own right. With proper understanding of the historic environment, clarity of purpose and sensitivity to the quality of place, excellent new building and design will both complement and enhance the historic environment.

06 **Decisions about the future of the historic environment largely rest upon value judgements.** These decisions must be consistent, transparent, and never arbitrary. They need to be widely accepted. This means that they need to be understood. They must be made openly, tested and refined by continuing debate. This debate must not be exclusive; everyone should be able to participate easily.

07 **About all, people care about the historic environment.** They value its meanings, its beauty, its depth and diversity, its familiarity, its memories, the quality of life it affords, and the opportunities it offers. And people feel strongly that children should be encouraged to understand and value the historic environment as they do the natural world.

#### What are the issues?

08 **The future is not secure.** In the past 50 years, much development simply ignored or trampled through its context, in city, town or countryside. Agricultural policy has taken little account of its impact on the rural landscape. The development of new transport links is destroying the tranquillity of the countryside, while both traffic and measures to control it seriously damage the appearance of historic towns and villages and thus the quality of life of the people who live in them. Poorly designed housing and commercial development have degraded the places where many people live. Good new architecture, especially in the context of historic areas, is often watered down through fear or ignorance on the part of decision-makers.

A sense of continuity does not have to stop new ideas – just the opposite. The deeper the root, the greater the range of nutrients...

Redevelopments which are inspired by the identity of an area can capture a uniqueness which draws people long after the fizz of new buildings has passed.

Kim Wilkie, Indignation!

09 **Like people, places have to evolve, react and grow.** We must balance the need to care for the historic environment with the need for change. But to succeed, our approach to the conservation of the historic environment must stop being piecemeal – a token façade, an earthwork isolated in arable. As in the natural environment, the overall health of the habitat is an important as that of individual species.

10 **We need to understand better the character of places** and the value and significance people ascribe to them. Character assessments are the key. They may be large or small scale, carried out on a regional basis or for an individual conservation area, building or historic garden. They are certainly not intended to fossilise or to increase existing controls. They afford the information to make the whole spatial planning system a better and more creative process. The most significant elements of the historic environment will

always need individual designation, combined with careful and detailed control.

11 **Heritage organisations must work more in partnership.** The National Trust, the Council for British Archaeology, the Civic Trust, Save, the national amenity societies and their local counterparts have done much to build public consciousness of the issues as well as providing an unrivalled source of specialist knowledge and detailed local scrutiny. Groups of specialist owners provide invaluable forums for discussion, advice and lobbying. The Heritage Lottery Fund has made substantial new resources available, promoted a wider view of heritage and placed a new emphasis on education and improved access. However, the sector is fragmented. Government department agencies, owners and developers call all achieve more by working closely with each other and with other environmental agencies and organisations.

12 **Before we do anything, we need knowledge.** Without understanding what exists today, its value and its condition, we cannot take sound decisions about its future. We need targeted, integrated research and regular ‘state of the historic environment’ reports to identify priorities and provide the basis for informed decisions.

13 **Secondly, we need leadership.** This report looks forward well into the new century. If its recommendations are adopted, local authority and government agencies will be working in partnership with well-informed owners, developers and local people. Comprehensive information about the historic environment will be readily and widely available. There will be financial and other support for owners to complement a new statutory duty of care. The law will be streamlined and brought up to date. The result will be an historic environment in better condition, more widely understood, increasingly valued, and able to make an even better overall contribution to society. To achieve this requires vivid and forthright leadership, at all levels, commitment and consistency.

14 **We do not expect this to happen overnight, but many of our**

**recommendations can be acted on immediately.** Additional resources, though difficult to find, are essential. But we know that the historic environment is of enormous importance to this country, valued by

everyone and that investment in it will be well rewarded. We look forward to the Government responding quickly and positively to the recommendations we have made.

People care. MORI's survey of a representative 3,000 people in England found that:

---

98% think that all schoolchildren should be given the opportunity to find out about England's historic environment

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96% think that the historic environment is important to teach them about the past

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88% think that it is important in creating jobs and boosting the economy

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87% think that it is right that there should be public funding to preserve it

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87% think that it plays an important part in the cultural life of the country

85% think that it is important in promoting regeneration in towns and cities

---

77% disagree that we preserve too much

---

76% think that their own lives are richer for having the opportunity to visit or see it

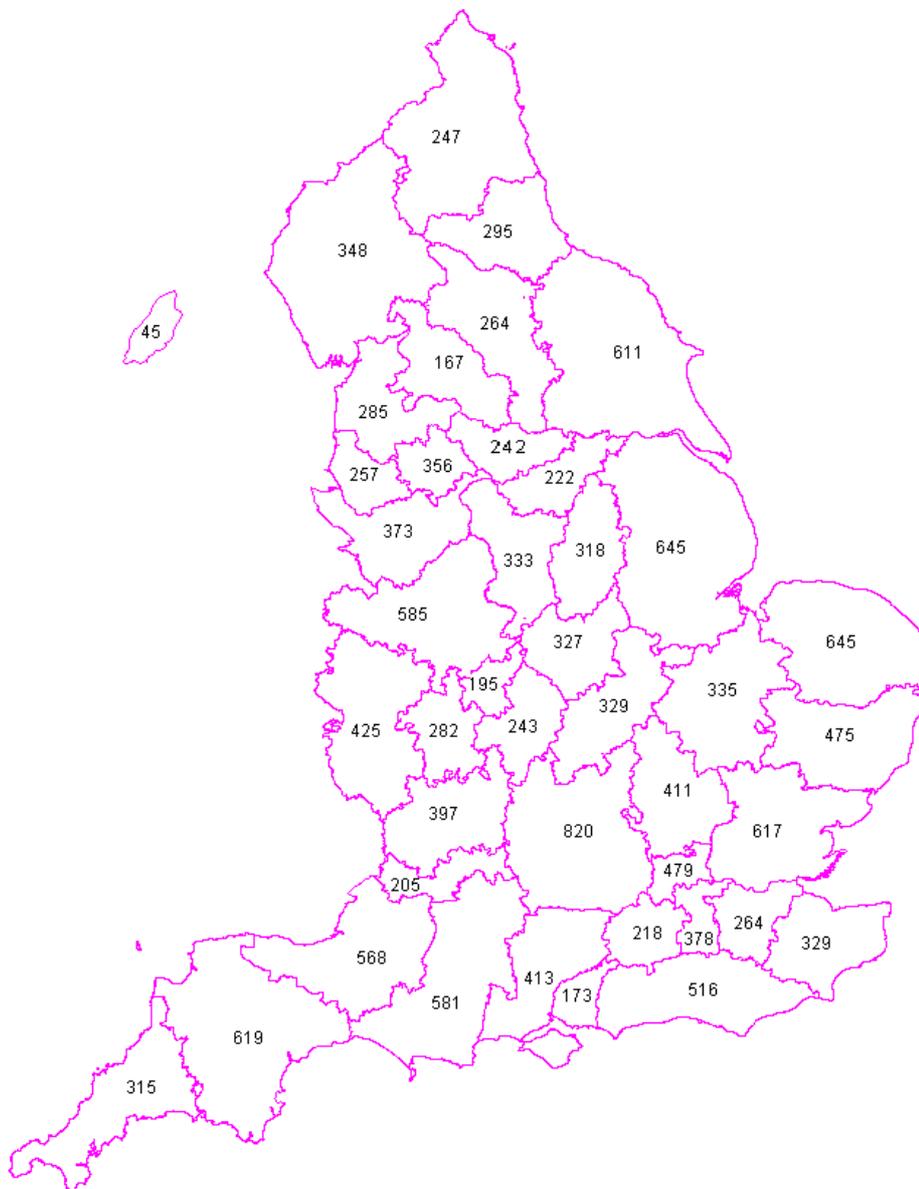
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75% think that the best of our post-war building should be preserved, rising to 95% of the 16-24 age group

## ANNEX II: FACTS, FIGURES AND CASES

### a) NUMBERS OF CHURCHES

NUMBERS OF CHURCHES IN ENGLISH DIOCESES



**b) DIOCESAN STATISTICS: POPULATION, PARISHES, CHURCHES,  
MAJOR REPAIRS AND ROUTINE MAINTENANCE**

<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Population 2001 (000s)</b>	<b>Number of Parishes, 2002</b>	<b>Number of Churches, 2002</b>	<b>Major Repairs to the Church Building, 2001 (£ 000s)</b>	<b>Major Repairs to the Church Hall or other PCC property, 2001 (£ 000s)</b>	<b>One-off question 1999: Routine maintenance of church building 1999 (£ 000s)</b>
Bath and Wells	850	477	568	2,161	234	410
Birmingham	1,388	162	195	1,001	453	287
Blackburn	1,271	211	285	1,534	228	371
Bradford	642	133	167	439	78	224
Bristol	874	167	205	769	92	302
Canterbury	822	261	329	1,742	112	295
Carlisle	482	267	348	1,477	49	220
Chelmsford	2,703	482	617	3,161	759	468
Chester	1,545	275	373	1,253	549	544
Chichester	1,492	391	516	3,265	515	560
Coventry	762	199	243	2,294	138	283
Derby	976	255	333	2,064	277	266
Durham	1,439	249	295	1,919	405	282
Ely	634	309	335	1,691	76	203
Exeter	1,074	498	619	2,178	98	499
Gloucester	601	323	397	1,839	83	363
Guildford	941	168	218	1,300	260	382
Hereford	313	347	425	1,671	58	188
Leicester	889	234	327	2,114	143	270
Lichfield	1,969	429	585	2,890	205	552
Lincoln	951	515	645	1,635	120	335
Liverpool	1,524	211	257	2,385	300	326
London	3,446	413	479	7,993	1,315	1,488
Manchester	1,891	292	356	3,059	511	456
Newcastle	761	177	247	567	201	199
Norwich	818	567	645	2,756	189	384
Oxford	2,102	624	820	5,367	416	845
Peterborough	779	352	379	1,744	116	286
Portsmouth	717	142	173	1,034	110	198
Ripon	774	161	264	883	173	354
Rochester	1,205	218	264	443	1,233	375
St Albans	1,665	335	411	3,623	482	460
St Eds. And Ipswich	594	446	475	2,365	115	220
Salisbury	859	459	581	1,898	350	413
Sheffield	1,164	173	222	596	43	208
Sodor and Man	76	28	45	106	46	27
Southwark	2,394	300	378	3,035	1,153	798
Southwell	1,024	266	318	1,306	185	297
Truro	502	225	315	1,187	69	165
Wakefield	1,069	188	242	949	216	262
Winchester	1,234	306	413	1,691	320	435

Worcester	812	180	282	1,523	246	308
York	1,348	472	611	3,534	481	346
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,376</b>	<b>12,887</b>	<b>16,202</b>	<b>86,445</b>	<b>13,200</b>	<b>16,154</b>

**Notes:**

The relevant finance statistics for Rochester and York were collected in slightly different categories than used for other dioceses. In this table they have been matched as closely as possible to the standard categories. The routine maintenance of church buildings is not normally collected separately from other church running costs, however a one-off question did collect this separately for 1999. If the 1999 figure of £16.2 million had increased in line with overall church running costs, the 2001 figure would be £17.6 million. Population figures are based on the 2001 Census, Crown copyright. The Diocese in Europe is not included as its financial statistics are not collected in the same way as those for other dioceses.

**c) CHURCHES AS PLACES FOR MARRIAGE AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIAL CONTINUITY**

“Churches are the locus for much support of adult relationships – married or not – as well as for families and communities more broadly.” (Roehampton Social Research Unit)

**Churches as Centres of Worship**

- In 2001, average weekly attendance for all ages was 1.2 million (falling in a range over a month of between 0.8 million and 1.7 million). The peak attendance at Christmas Day/Eve was 2.6 million. (This amounts to around 64 million “worshipper visits” annually.) Electoral roll numbers (2001): 1.4 million. (Source: Archbishops' Council Research and Statistics Department).
- 20–33% of the population claims to attend the major festivals; 30–55% have attended Christenings/baptisms, weddings or funerals in the last year (Opinion Research Business Survey 2001)
- 63,600 marriages and blessings took place in Church of England Churches in 2001 (roughly a quarter of all marriages in England and two-thirds of all those with religious ceremonies), 104,100 funerals and 160,200 baptisms and thanksgivings.
- Over 90% of churches conduct baptisms, 63.5% offer bereavement support, 36% house blessings, 23% parenting classes and 9.6% marriage enrichment courses. Nearly two-thirds of churches provide adults’ groups. Over half of ministries support youth and activity clubs and a third are involved in a church school. Nearly 30% of churches offer counselling on marriage and adult relationship issues. Many activities, such as parent and toddler groups, pre-school classes and Family Contact Centres, take place on church premises.
- In 2002, the six Church of England cathedrals in the South West (Gloucester, Salisbury, Bristol, Wells, Exeter and Truro) held 6,963 regular weekly services p.a. with a further 536 special services attended by 502,662 people (note: there were 2.2million tourist and 39,749 student visits in the same period).

**d) BUILDINGS: THE FACTS**

“The Church of England has the largest estate of listed buildings.” (*State of the Historic Environment Report 2002*, English Heritage)

- 16,250 cathedrals and churches in use, of which around 13,000 listed.
- 3-4,000 cathedrals and churches in use are listed Grade I (32-42% of the total of c. 9,500 Grade I listed buildings) and a similar number are Grade II\* (14-19% of the total of c. 21,500 Grade II\* listed buildings). (English Heritage)
- 8,500 of Anglican cathedral and church buildings are of pre-Reformation foundation (around 20% of all such listed buildings). (English Heritage and Heritage Monitor 2000/1)
- 1,626 churches have been declared redundant for worship since 1969 (121 1998-2002)
- Of these, 331 have been vested in the Churches Conservation Trust for preservation; 925 have been converted to alternative use; 360 have been demolished and the site disposed of, and 10 have been vested in dioceses or government departments.

### **The Wider Cultural Contribution – Church Music and Art**

- Churches support a unique English change ringing tradition, the basic principles of which were established by the early 1600s, and contain around 6,000 peals of swung bells (out of an estimated 6,050 world-wide). There are around 40-50,000 bell ringers of all ages in the UK.
- English organs are part of a European tradition but had a distinctive evolution. Particularly in the nineteenth century, the English organ developed to support choral music (e.g. a wider range of quiet stops). It is estimated that there are over 10,000 historic organs in Anglican churches.
- Choral singing of the “traditional” Anglican kind can help develop social as well as musical skills through the working together of adults and children, and part singing.
- RCSM schemes are aimed at those singing church music, but the skills they develop are of equal value in their secular lives. “Voice for Life”, RCSM’s all-age training scheme, encourages singers to use their voices as well. 300-400 churches affiliated to RCSM send children to cathedrals in a typical year to make music in that context.
- Churches also contain a significant proportion of the nation’s historic stonework, woodwork, wall paintings and stained glass. For example, St Peter’s Church, Jarrow has the oldest stained glass in Europe, dating from the seventh century, in a window of the original Anglo-Saxon church (now the chancel).

### **Case Studies**

- Rare 13th century wall paintings were discovered in the historic Grade I listed Norman church of St Mary Magdalene, in East Ham, one of London’s poorest boroughs. English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund provided a grant of £63,000 to fund the investigation and conservation of these paintings. The project will result in this important medieval decoration being once again visible for the community and for generations to come. The grant will be used to establish the full extent of the painting and their condition, and to determine their ongoing conservation requirements. The Reverend Quintin Peppiatt, Vicar of St Mary Magdalene, said: "This project is incredible. These paintings form an important part

of an historical church that is well used and loved by the local community, everyone in the Parish is excited by the work that English Heritage is helping us to do and keen to see the end results. I think that it is tremendously important to conserve features like these for future generations." (English Heritage Website)

- The parish of Shobrooke, St Swithun in Devon was awarded a grant of £8,000 from the Pilgrim Trust by the Council for the Care of Churches in June 2002. This grant, combined with others, enabled the parish to set about an historic repair and re-build of their important cob (that is, earth and straw) churchyard wall. The unusual nature of the building material, coupled with the rare art of constructing earthen structures in this country aroused a great deal of local interest. Cob structures are characteristic of the Devon countryside, and Shobrooke has a high proportion of such treasures. The failing churchyard wall was an important component of the village's cob heritage. The work was carried out using subsoil from an orchard adjoining the churchyard. Local schoolchildren and villagers took part in an organised 'demonstration day' learning how to mix cob, and a series of lectures by invited speakers was given in the village hall about the uses and repair of cob structures.

### **Churches as the key element in the townscape and the environment**

“The church is usually the oldest and most important listed building in a settlement as well as an icon for community memory and a focus for social activity.” (*State of the Historic Environment Report 2002*, English Heritage)

“At a more local level a historic church...can help define a neighbourhood and create a sense of local cohesion.” (*A Force for Our Future*)

“Our church is the only building within the parish which belongs to everyone and is the place which gives the identity to this small hamlet” (St Mary’s Carelton Forehoe, Norfolk)

- Cathedrals, Greater Churches or other significant parish churches lie at the centre of virtually every major city and town in England and can be powerful symbols of the town. St Paul’s Cathedral is the internationally recognised signature of London. Strategic views of it are legally protected against development.
- There is a church building, regularly open to the public and generally free of charge, in every parish in England and in (or close to) most of England’s 10,000 villages.
- The church is frequently the last remaining community building in rural areas and is heavily represented in sparsely populated areas (49% of churches are located in the East Midlands, East of England and West Country which contain 26% of the population). It is frequently the defining landscape building in the settlement.
- In August 2001, Durham Cathedral was voted Britain's favourite building in a survey of the best and worst of British architecture. The Norman cathedral - which along with Durham Castle dominates the city's skyline - won more than 51% of votes cast by listeners to BBC Radio 4's Today programme, beating more modern structures like the Eden Project, in Cornwall (22.5%), London's Tate Modern (11.96%) and Stansted Airport (7.02%).

### **e) COSTS**

### **Repairing and maintaining churches**

- A survey of listed and unlisted churches of the major denominations found that the average expenditure per church in 1999 for repairing church buildings was £10,474 – the average for listed buildings was £11,117 and for unlisted £8,558. (*The Impact of VAT on Church Properties* – Jeremy Eckstein Associates)
- The same survey indicated that the average annual expenditure per church on maintenance was £2,134 (£2,150 unlisted, £2,127 listed). This conceals the cost of minor repairs and works undertaken by volunteers free of charge.

### **Adapting churches**

The £7.5m Rural Churches in Community Service Initiative enabled 100 churches of various denominations to provide new facilities for community use.

### **Case Study**

**St James, Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire** - The church school is behind the church but much higher. The school had no room to expand and wanted space for music, drama and assemblies. In 1980 the church created a room at the west end of the nave, providing a functions room, kitchen and toilet at ground floor level with storage above. By converting the storage space into a large, airy room, accessible from within the church and from the school playground via a bridge, the church now accommodates:

- school activities, including housing the school library on the mezzanine floor
- a School's Out scheme
- a Youth club
- a Parent and Toddler group
- a drop-in facility for parents of children at school
- community meetings
- a Music group.

Not only is the upper room useful, it is extremely attractive as it re-incorporates features of the building which were hidden from view by the original re-ordering in 1980, all achieved at a cost of £51,500.

**Holy Trinity, Holmfirth, Yorkshire** – Holmfirth is the home of the television programme, *Last of the Summer Wine*, and the café, in which so much of the programme's action is set, stands opposite Holy Trinity church. Due to the television programme, throughout the year Holmfirth has a daily influx of coach parties, comprising mostly middle-aged and elderly day-trippers. There were many teashops catering for the needs of the visitors, but nothing for young people.

Holy Trinity church responded by converting its choir vestry into a cybercafé, Café 100. Although the project had an adult youth leader, the young people themselves planned the layout, colour scheme and furnishings for the café, and did the decorating.

- The conversion of the vestry was relatively straightforward, but providing access direct from the street to meet the disability requirements was not and took a significant proportion of the £62,000 project budget. As well as providing a meeting place, Café 100 also incorporates advice sessions on drugs, contraception, alcohol and relationships.

### **Our Volunteers**

“Grants to places of worship not only repair important historic fabric but also support what is both a religious and cultural community focal point as well as an important tourism asset...The cost of opening is extremely low and therefore very cost-effective as it relies on local volunteers” (*State of the Historic Environment Report 2002*, English Heritage)

- The church “employs” over 32,000 churchwardens with direct responsibility for the care of church buildings, together with a further 26,000 PCC secretaries and treasurers and several times that number of sidesmen and church welcomers, cleaners and maintenance teams. If churchwardens alone spend one hour a week (a huge under-estimate) in caring for churches, this amounts to over 1.5 million hours annually.

- The main faculty authorities (Chancellors and Registrars, the CCC and DACs) draw on around 1,000 individuals to serve as members and advisors. Many are experts of national, some of international, standing. Based on the time spent in preparing for and attending meetings, site visits and for other professional advice given, the benefit in kind from their time is conservatively estimated at £6,000,000 p.a. (based on RIBA scales (June 1999) for a senior architect and simple project to indicate “typical” professional fees). No attempt has been made to cost the benefit in kind given by parish architects/surveyors as part of the “family doctor” relationship most develop with their client churches.
- An English Tourism Council survey in 2001 found that a third of all volunteers working in “historic visitor attractions” were in places of worship. (*State of the Historic Environment Report 2002*, English Heritage)

**Table of Permanent, Seasonal and Volunteer Staff at Visitor Attractions\***

Category	Sample	Average full-time permanent	Average part-time permanent	Average full-time seasonal	Average part-time seasonal	Average unpaid volunteers
All site categories	57	9	4	1	11	6
Garden	120	5	2	1	4	11
Historic house	261	6	3	2	10	32
Historic monument	43	1	2	2	1	7
Other historic properties	98	2	1	1	2	14
Heritage/visitor centre	94	5	5	2	2	9
<b>Place of worship</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>85</b>

Source: ETC Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions 2001

(\* Visitor attractions are defined as places recording more than 25,000 visitors annually)

### Churches Needs – Grants and Deficits

- 21% of respondents agreed with the statement “My congregation can no longer afford to pay for its church building” (62% disagreed). 32% agreed with the statement “In order to survive, my church building needs more grants from the state”. (Church Times Survey, 2002)
- In 2001 the English Heritage Cathedral Needs Survey indicated the cost of work (excluding maintenance and development) required by 2006 to be £57.1 million.
- During 2002/03, the repairs scheme for listed places of worship operated by English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund received 598 applications for church repairs with a total estimated project cost of £68.4m. Of these, 270 were awarded grant offers totalling £20.7m against eligible project costs of £38.7m. The overall success rate for applications in that round was nearly one offer for every two applications with an average grant rate of 53%. Parishes attracting grants are required to find the balance of £18m. Of this around £3.5m is likely to be recovered from the VAT grant scheme.
- A recent analysis of applications for grants made to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust in 2002 indicated that the main sources of funding for church repairs from applicants in 2002 were:

EH/HLF/CADW	50%	Parish reserves
14%		
Parish fundraising	10%	HCPT/ICBS
8%		
Landfill Tax	3%	County Trusts
2%		
Other	13%	

**Main sources of grant funding for repairs to listed church buildings (all denominations) in England in 2002**

	£m
EH/HLF	21.0
VAT grant scheme	6.7
Landfill Tax	2.0
County Trusts (excluding Landfill)	1.4
Garfield Weston Trust	3.5
HCPT/ICBS	1.5
Other	<u>4.0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40.1</b>

(Based on information supplied by the DCMS and HCPT)

***Case study***

St Andrew's, Ashford Bowdler is a small Grade II\* listed church in the diocese of Hereford reputed to have been founded in 1211 and stands on the banks of the River Teme, during flood conditions, one of the fastest flowing rivers in the country. The total population of the parish is 52, the electoral roll is 22 and the average Sunday attendance 15 (or almost 30% of the population).

The foundations of the East Wall are part of the riverbank and in 2001 it was established that major structural underpinning was urgently required to the retaining wall supporting the east end of the church to prevent collapse into the river below. The minimum level of work required was estimated around £300,000; other repair works to the church of over £100,000 were also required.

Parish events and appeals raised £9,350 for the structural work and the PCC also committed £9,750 (95%) of its Accumulated Repair Fund. Appeals to some 75 charitable organisations attracted a further £15,000, some of which had to be committed to the other repair works. The balance of the funding was largely made up of an English Heritage grant of just under £200,000 and a Historic Churches Preservation Trust Millennium Fund Grant of £30,000. The repairs to the riverbank were completed just before Easter 2003 preserving the church for future generations.

“In this context a recent comment in our visitors’ book is perhaps relevant. It simply said ‘This is rural England at its very best’.” (Captain Michael Shallow, RN - St Andrew’s PCC)

**f) REGENERATION**

“Conservation-led regeneration works. We can prove it!”  
(*Heritage Dividend 2002 – Measuring the results of heritage regeneration 1999-2002*, English Heritage)

“Faith communities are a significant component of the community sector and many also act as anchors for voluntary organisations at...local levels. Faith communities are present in the majority of urban neighbourhoods consistently targeted as suffering the greatest degree of deprivation.

Within neighbourhoods, faith communities often include people who are effectively excluded by other forms of organisation and who the statutory and even voluntary services find hard to reach. This includes many members of black and minority groups. In many neighbourhoods they may be the only surviving effective community organisation. In addition such neighbourhoods usually have few community resources. A building owned by a faith group is often the only tangible resource.

Faith buildings can provide:

- A focus for activity
- A safe place for people to come together (an essential prerequisite for any kind of community development)
- A locus for sustainability”

(*Building on Faith – Faith Buildings in Neighbourhood Renewal*, Church Urban Fund 2002)

### **Case Study**

*Hoxton, St John (Diocese of London)*

In 1996 this building was in a poor condition with a leaking roof, no heating and a declining congregation. Grants from English Heritage, HLF and others, together with creative thinking and hard work by the parish have enabled this church to become a focus of community life. The project cost £2 million, restoring the church and creating:

- “Newpin”- a nursery school and family crisis centre at the west end
- a community café in the crypt with disabled access
- the ACCESS project offering training and advice for the long term unemployed
- A fitness centre for elderly, disabled and able-bodied locals

“The driving force behind this project was the belief that an historic and much-loved local landmark could become a beacon for hope and regeneration. This was seen both in a symbolic sense and in the tangible form of community projects being established within the church, restoring life and usefulness to a previously neglected building....Reinventing the church to meet current needs not only provided a sustainable function but also helped to access substantial regeneration funding.” (*Heritage Dividend 2002 – Measuring the results of heritage regeneration 1999-2002*, English Heritage)

## **g) TOURISTS, PILGRIMS AND VISITORS**

### **Visitor Numbers**

- There were approximately 12 million cathedral visitors in 1999 and 2000, dropping to 11.5 million in 2001 and 2002. 78 greater churches or churches neighbouring tourist attractions (e.g. Beaulieu or Hever) attracted around 4.5 million visits.  
(Source: Heritage Monitor)

- A recent survey showed that 85% of tourists to Winchester visited the Cathedral.
- 9 of the top 20 (and 5 of the top 7) most visited UK attractions (places attracting more than 25,000 visitors p.a.) in 2000 were Anglican cathedrals or churches. (Source: Heritage Monitor)
- 40% of all tourist visits to tourist attractions in urban areas were to places of worship (English Tourism Council Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions, 2001)
- Total annual tourist visits to parish churches were estimated at 12 million in 2000. It is estimated that there are around 35 million visits to parish churches for other than “ecclesiastical” purposes annually.
- Nearly half of church visitors are not worshippers. However, 70% of those visitors who are not worshippers identified praying as something they would like to do in church.
- In summer 2000, a study of visitors to Midlands parish churches carried out by Bob Gibson of Nottingham Trent University identified the following categories of visitors:

“Spiritual Pilgrim”	7.66%
“Nostalgia Pilgrim”	7.89%
“History/Cultural Experience Seeker”	16.35%
“Heritage Herd”	25.02%
“Drifter”	28.75%
“Local Supporter”	8.9%
“Thirsty/Hungry Shopper”	5.41%

(From an unpublished PhD thesis)

### ***Case study***

Lincoln Diocese has been active in church tourism for over twelve years, working in close partnership with the local authorities within the area of the diocese. The latest initiative is the Cascade Scheme, an ecumenical project involving the Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic churches, and aiming to link the cathedral and all the churches in the diocese into one tourism process. At the cathedral visitors are given information about 9 “Cascade churches” around the diocese, generally buildings stewarded most of the time (and often with high visitor numbers because of their architectural interest). From these, visitors can then find information about 45 “Stream churches” in the local area and from there can be directed to the remaining “Pool churches”. The process also works in reverse. Around 300 churches are currently involved in the project. The style of welcome expected to be offered decreases at the various stages (e.g. Pool churches will probably not be stewarded, and may have a keyholder at certain times). However, each participating church is encouraged to produce a welcome leaflet leading visitors round the church building and including information on the meaning of particular features, such as the font, altar and pulpit and items of special significance. They are also encouraged to provide a prayer corner with a board or book for prayers of intercession and thanksgiving and guidance on personal prayer, and to set out copies of the Bible, hymn and service book used in that church to aid familiarity.

Lincoln St John the Baptist is a Grade II\* church, built in the early 1960s and standing in the Ermine estate (so called because it straddles the Roman Ermine Street) an area of post-war Council housing in Lincoln. It is cast in concrete with an aluminium-covered hyperbolic paraboloid roof and is notable for the coloured glass window dominating the east end. The church became involved in church tourism in 2000. A church guide was prepared in collaboration with Heritage Studies undergraduates from nearby Bishop Grosseteste College, and the building is open and stewarded for one hour daily with a key available at other times. Prayer cards and postcards are provided. In 2001, the church was awarded first place in the Lincoln Area Tourist Church of the Year awards and also first place in the Diocesan Tourist Church of the Year Awards (large parishes) and third in the diocese overall.

"People come here from all over. They just don't expect to see a church of this quality in an urban estate" (Sue Brennan, Churchwarden).

"It is wonderful to be given these awards, as it recognises how important our church is in the community. The local junior school were doing a project about tourism and they were thrilled to be able to say they had a tourist attraction right on their doorstep. We get visitors from all over the world coming to see our church in an area that does have some stigma attached. We want to do everything we can to show people just how much the Ermine estate has to offer residents and tourists alike. (The Revd Stephen Hoy, incumbent)

#### **h) EMPLOYMENT GENERATION THROUGH HERITAGE TOURISM**

"Without the historic environment, the UK's tourism industry would hardly exist" (*State of the Historic Environment Report 2002*, English Heritage)

Tourism is one of England's most important industries, representing 4.9% of GDP and generating 7.6% of employment. In 1998 there were 1.25bn day-visits to the English countryside generating £11.5bn. 24% of all trips to the countryside in 2001 were to visit heritage sites. It is estimated that 40% of employment in tourism depends directly on a high quality environment, rising to between 60% and 70% in rural areas. (*State of the Historic Environment Report 2002*, English Heritage)

"Tourism income is fundamental for the rural economy and has played a central role in revitalising many small towns and their surrounding areas." (*Our countryside: the future – A fair deal for rural England*, MAFF/DETR, 2000)

#### **i) EDUCATION**

##### **Number of School Visits**

- It is estimated that there are around 1 million visits by schoolchildren (generally those in the top two years of Primary and first two years of Secondary education) for formal educational purposes, whether as part of the RE syllabus or for subjects under the national curriculum. (The National Trust attracts around 600,000 school visits a year, and English Heritage gives free school admission to around 500,000.)

- 18,000 schoolchildren p.a. take advantage of Winchester Cathedral’s education programme for primary schools. The overall number of educational visits to cathedrals in 1999-2002 was 250,000 p.a.

***Case study***

The *Now and Then* Project is educational event run in the Diocese of Newcastle in which children and adults were invited to enter the life of a Jewish village of the time of Christ. During 2000-2 approximately 5000 people were involved in the Project including 400 volunteers from 10 local churches (of all denominations); around 100 schools took part beginning with children in Key Stage 2 through to 200 GCSE and A-level students. Provision was made for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and physical disabilities. The Project continues in Newcastle diocese until Autumn 2003, and a “DIY pack” has been sent to 200 parishes and schools throughout the country to enable further local initiatives.

**j) CHURCHES AS CENTRES OF OUTREACH**

“Among the typical resources which faith groups...can offer as part of the voluntary and community sector are local networks, leadership and management capacity, buildings with potential community use, and volunteers.” (Faith & Community – Good Practice Guide, Local Government Association, 2002)

“What could be more important [than the Church] in village life? It is beautiful, peaceful and the only communal place in our Parish. The village need its church so people can meet, support each other, express their own emotional needs and aspirations in an atmosphere of goodness and concern as Christ taught.

Churches are cheaper than mental hospitals, prisons or social services.” (Mrs Doreen Kimberley, churchwarden, St Aethelbert’s, Alby, Norfolk)

- In Yorkshire and the Humber: 3,400 churches (representing all the major Christian denominations) engage in 6,500 social action projects, regularly involving 50-70,000 church goers and 3,000 staff, and benefiting over 150,000 people. The economic value of church social action to the Region is estimated between £55-75 million p.a.
- In parishes with less than 3,000 residents (“rural parishes”), around 50% of churches were in use for non-ecclesiastical purposes. These include: concerts, polling stations, crèches, luncheon clubs. The 1,285 churches in such use, estimated that 250,000 people made use of these facilities. Community activity in other rural churches include: a Post office, village shops, Internet cafes, day care centres, employment and training advice centres, libraries and a farmers market.
- In February 2003, the Bishop of Norwich wrote to churchwardens in his diocese regarding the work done in church buildings, seeking examples of community uses and the problems which might hamper such work. A preliminary analysis of 60 of the responses received indicated the following:
  - 23 referred to visitors, visitors’ books, rota of welcomers or visitors’ guide
  - 11 provided space for community exhibitions
  - 18 held community flower festivals
  - 1 had a teddy bear jump from the tower

- 31 held concerts, choir festivals, recitals or hosted visiting choirs
- 20 welcomed local schools
- 1 had a pageant
- 1 held a marathon Bible reading
- 11 had a Fayre, Fair, Fete or village festival
- 12 hosted an arts and crafts event
- 1 held a village quiz
- 3 held drama festivals in the church plus 1 a pantomime
- 1 used the church as a base for the village youth club
- many held annual services of Remembrance, some especially for the British Legion
- 11 referred to their bells or bellringers
- 6 use the churchyard as a place of quiet
- 8 are creating a conservation area in the churchyard
- several use the church as part of a summer holiday club for children
  
- 9 complained of lack of toilet or kitchen facilities
- 6 had to be locked for fear of vandalism
- 1 was hindered in fundraising because of the “religious” dimension
- 4 said they wanted to move their pews
- 5 said they were the only community centre in the village
- 2 have difficulties with bats
- 6 complained about the DAC or English Heritage as preventing progress in community use

### ***Case study***

Holy Trinity, North Ormesby (Diocese of York) is a late nineteenth-century Grade II listed church and hall situated in an urban priority area in Middlesborough (within the 2% of most deprived wards in England) and facing the market place at the centre of the town. The hall was structurally failing and the parish proposed to replace it with the Trinity Centre, a multi-purpose facility to be open for community use and including:

- 200 seater main hall capable of sub-division
- flexible stage for performances
- meeting rooms and offices of various sizes
- kitchen facilities
- link with main Church

The building was to be one of quality and include unique pieces of artwork by local craftspeople.

An Appeal for £590,000 was launched in April 2002 and raised £800,000 in eight months. Support was obtained from The Community Fund, The Middlesborough Partnership through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, The Middlesborough Single Regeneration Budget, The Northern Rock Foundation, The Church Urban Fund, Dow Chemical Company, The Jack Brunton Trust and many other trusts and local donations.

The project is seen as the flagship for regeneration of the area and partnerships have been formed with a number of groups and organisations. There is to be new social housing developed next to the Centre by the Tees Valley Housing Group and residents will use the facilities. Other users include: performing arts groups; a church-based citizenship project working with local young people; educational training and development and life-long learning projects; the University of Teeside School of Health and Social Care and the Middlesborough Primary Care Trust, and a local history group for an archive of steel community heritage.

The project has recently been awarded the HRH Duke of York's Community Initiative Award

“The parish is a community of people, young and older, who are always looking beyond the church walls to work in and for the local community alongside people of other faiths, or no faith. Our mission is to create an environment where the whole community can come together for support, learning, spiritual development, culture and fun.” (Revd Graham Usher, incumbent)

### **k) CHURCHES AS CENTRES OF CULTURAL ACTIVITY**

- Local musical festivals will often be based on cathedrals or greater churches. To name but three in 2003:
  - Chelmsford Cathedral Festival for 7 days in May included a festival in the community programme of lectures, exhibitions and street performances in locations in the town, as well as concerts and recitals in the cathedral itself.

- Grimsby Parish Church hosts a 9-day festival of music, drama, visual arts, as well as liturgy;
- The Three Choirs Festival is of long-standing and international reputation.
- Truro Cathedral, with funds from Youth Music and DFES, run a Saturday morning choir and work with Cornish primary schools to provide singing opportunities for local children.

The recent debate on the Licensing Bill highlighted the enormous range of cultural activities that take place in church buildings.

### *Case studies*

#### **A rural church – Wigton, St Mary (Diocese of Carlisle)**

- Grade II\* medieval church
- Only regular venue for cultural events in the town.
- 10 events this year: - choral societies, organ recitals, chamber recitals and a concert by local musicians
- All concerts run at a loss or are subsidised except when musicians do not charge. Ticket prices are low (e.g. £2 to hear the Northern Sinfonia) to attract as many people as possible.
- PCC policy is not to charge for use of the building apart from statutory fees

#### **A town centre church – Watford, St Mary (Diocese of St Albans)**

- Listed grade I
- Hosts many events and activities to raise awareness, not money.
- Parish has sought to make St Mary's available to wide spectrum of people through concerts, recitals, dramatic presentations, fetes etc.
- Hosted 30 such events in the past 12 months, few of which cover their own costs

### **1) CHURCHES AS CENTRES OF ARTISTIC WORK**

Parish churches and cathedrals are great patrons of contemporary art, normally exhibited for free.

- In a submission to Culture South West in 2002 the six Church of England cathedrals (Gloucester, Salisbury, Bristol, Wells, Exeter and Truro) reported that they had held an average of 22 different art exhibitions annually as well as sponsoring two artists in residence

### *Case Study*

In 2000, to mark the Millennium, the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and Bury St Edmund's Art Gallery, supported by the Council for the Care of Churches, sponsored the "Stations" project. The project featured interpretations of the Station of the Cross by thirteen contemporary artists in different media, which were exhibited in a variety of church buildings. An estimated 20,700 people visited the various churches during the course of the exhibition.

### *Case Studies*

The North East Chaplaincy for the Arts and Recreation was formed in 1968 and is supported by the dioceses of Durham, Newcastle and York. There are currently four

Chaplains who foster working partnerships between cathedral and church authorities, artists and external agencies to promote a wide range of artistic initiatives.

- Durham Cathedral's Artist in Residence Scheme - Since 1983, Durham Cathedral, with the support of Arts Council England, The University of Sunderland, St Chad's College in the University of Durham, Durham City Arts, Durham City Council and Durham County Council, has supported an artist in residence based in the Cathedral Precincts. This is a year long opportunity providing time and space for an artist, free of other pressures, to respond to the Cathedral as a powerful creative statement in stone, a place for daily public worship, and the centre of a working community of stone masons, joiners, gardeners and office workers, as well as vergers, musicians and clergy and to provide the opportunity for public access to an artist at work (the Cathedral has 500,000 visitors annually). The artist also works closely with the School of Arts, Design, Media and Culture of the University of Sunderland teaching students and with access to the facilities that the School provides. Amongst artists, this opportunity is now one of the most sought-after in the country.

“...the residency...is witnessing to the value of the arts in human existence and challenging both church and community to recognize them as God's gift.” (Canon Bill Hall, Senior Chaplain)

- Art in Northern Churches - This initiative began in the late 1960s and is an opportunity for churches to host challenging contemporary work by leading artists. Two or three artists are selected for each project. One work by each artist is exhibited in each of several churches in the north east for approximately six weeks, and these are passed from one participating church to another so that the work moves from church to church over several months. Visitors and congregations at each church are thus able to see all of the works by the selected artists. At various stages the artists visit the churches to engage congregations and visitors in discussion about the creative process in general and about the works in particular. Finally, the whole collection is shown in an exhibition in a north-east art gallery.

- Individual Commissions:

The Messenger, Bill Viola – In 1996, the UK Year of the Visual Arts, which was hosted by the northern region, acclaimed American video artist Bill Viola was commissioned to carry out a work for Durham cathedral. His response was ‘The Messenger’ in which a water-bound figure rises from the depths to emerge and take a breath of life, before sinking back beneath the surface. The cycle is repeated five times over a twenty-five minute period. The work explores profound themes of life, death and human becoming. A Guardian reviewer wrote that Bill Viola “remains one of the very few Western contemporary artists capable of embodying a convincing sense of spirituality”. This project achieved many

things, including bringing a new audience into contact with contemporary art and a new audience into the cathedral. Though the nakedness of the figure in 'The Messenger' caused controversy, it created many openings for exploring the issues it raised with students, church people and members of the public. The commission was supported from the proceeds of the National Lottery through the Arts Council of England, and by Durham City Arts, the European Regional Development Fund and Northern Arts. 'The Messenger' has since toured internationally.

'Duke Ellington in Durham Cathedral' - Many people are unaware that Duke Ellington was a committed Christian. Towards the end of his life he sought to express his faith in a series of 'Sacred Concerts'. Taking the great symphonic masses as a model, elements of these 'Sacred Concerts' were ordered as a setting for the Mass. Internationally acclaimed jazz pianist and composer Stan Tracey, a noted Ellington interpreter, arranged the music. The Stan Tracey Orchestra then performed the Duke Ellington "Mass" with soloists, dancers and the cathedral choir. Financial support was obtained from private donors and the Durham County Council and Northern Arts, enabling the (free) service in the evening. Peter Hewitt, Chief Executive of The Arts Council of England, has described it as "...one of the most extraordinarily moving artistic experiences of my life".

## **m) CHURCHYARDS AS OPEN SPACES AND PLACES FOR WILDLIFE**

- The churchyard surrounding Birmingham Cathedral, restored with an HLF grant, now serves as a vibrant and well-used open space within the city centre – with the cathedral building as its focus.
- The two Closes of Winchester Cathedral provide open spaces in the centre of the city with differing but equally valuable characters: the Outer Close, much used by the public “particularly in the summer when it is sometimes difficult to see the grass for workers from the city enjoying their lunch breaks” (Winchester Cathedral Conservation Plan). The Inner Close, by contrast, is a quieter and more peaceful space, including a Barbara Hepworth sculpture. It is also used for as a temporary exhibition space for contemporary sculpture every other summer.
- An estimated 5,000 churches have environmental projects in their churchyard and churchyards provide valuable “green lungs” in urban areas. They are often the last remaining areas of unimproved and undisturbed grassland in many areas, providing (especially through the Living Churchyards scheme) an irreplaceable ecological and archaeological resource. There are certain species of lichen which can only be found in churchyards and species of butterflies and moths which are rarely found elsewhere. Churchyard Yews are some of the oldest trees in the country.
- In Norfolk, 50% of the county’s populations of pignut, lady’s bedstraw, sorrel, burnet saxifrage, ox-eye daisy and cowslip are to be found in churchyards.

### **Case Study**

The God’s Acre Project at St Mary Magdalene, Leintwardine (Diocese of Hereford) aims to create stronger links between the church and the community and develop the biodiversity of the churchyard. In 2002, surveys were carried out of birds, bats, plants, trees and lichens to build a full picture of the riches in the churchyard. This included two days with children doing a variety of activities such as mini-beast safaris. In 2003, the Project received a grant of £22,700 from the Local Heritage Initiative and Nationwide Building Society to enable further survey work on butterflies and moths, and the recording of tomb stone inscriptions (it is thought the bodies of 10,000 people are buried in the churchyard, all of them residents of the parish over the last millennium). The major theme of this year’s work will be the ‘Explore the Churchyard’ exercise to develop creative ideas on the interpretation and the use of the churchyard. There will be information boards and trail leaflets catering for adults, children and specific disability groups. Benches will be placed giving quiet places to sit, to study or reflect. There will be educational opportunities - conservation work, guided walks and further schools’ days. The lessons learnt will be published for other communities undertaking similar projects. This idea has come from Peter Privett, a former teacher, living in Leominster, who has done much community based work in the Marches area.

Over 100 people of all ages have been directly involved in the project, plus many locals and visitors. Project members have uncovered the natural treasures of the churchyard, which include a rare 90-year old female mistletoe, nestling among the branches of an ancient oak tree.

“The churchyard is a very special place, a sacred space, a history book full of stories of people and times past. It is an increasingly rare undisturbed place, where wildlife can flourish and children can learn about nature. It is also a place in which to find quiet, to sit and reflect. If the Church is open, welcoming and alive, people are respectful. Visitors

who come from the cities appreciate the peace here.” (Reverend Sylvia Turner, vicar)