

## Buildings for Mission Guidance

### Minor Repairs and Improvements (MR&I) grants February 2024

*For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? 1 Thessalonians 5:11*

The Buildings for Mission scheme is intended to help repair and restore the buildings in which we get to worship God. The plan for these funds is to help church communities make the necessary repairs to keep their churches safe, usable and welcoming. Our church buildings need to be warm and dry for mission to be fruitful and sustainable, and we recognise that this is challenging for many churches both from a fabric and an energy-usage perspective.

Following the Taylor Review of the sustainability of English churches and cathedrals, government-funded pilot schemes in 2018-20 tested the idea of a small grants fund linked to the provision of support officers. A detailed evaluation of the impact of the initiative was published in October 2020. It was reported that the grants brought forward necessary maintenance and minor repair work, by two to five years on average, for which funding would otherwise have taken much longer to raise, if at all. In some cases, the grant funding enabled work to be completed where it could otherwise only have been partially afforded or was long overdue. The hastening of maintenance and minor repair work is likely to have prevented irretrievable loss of historic fabric and to have saved costs of the order of 15-20% (excluding any knock-on effects of deferring the work). This is the 'stitch in time' principle.

The Minor Repairs and Improvements Grant Fund builds on this. The aim is that the most urgent repairs can be undertaken before the condition of the building deteriorates further and therefore making costs rise.

In addition, small-scale improvements which are essential to sustaining worship and mission use will also be eligible.

## The Vision

Maintain our buildings, repair and improve, to protect and grow mission in safe, usable and welcoming churches.

## Purpose

The Diocese of Truro offers grant funding for the minor repairs and improvements. Eligible works are listed below.

## What can the money be spent on?

### Repairs

- Repair of building fabric (external): roof coverings, roof structure, walls, parapets, pinnacles and other architectural features, towers, spires, windows, doors, rainwater disposal system including below-ground drainage.
- Repair of building fabric (internal): ceilings, floors, doors, walls and wall linings (plaster/panelling but not wall paintings, mosaics etc).
- Repair of building services installations where essential for health and safety and/or continuity of worship and mission use.
- Emergency repairs or holding works, e.g. propping, covering, protection etc.

### Improvements

- Additions, alterations or adaptations specifically to overcome building design defects or obsolescence (e.g. undersized hoppers or drainpipes) or to improve access for maintenance.
- Additions, alterations or adaptations where essential to improve physical access, e.g. handrails, ramps etc.
- Improvements to building services installations where essential to sustain worship and mission use, such as improvements to heating, lighting, wiring, kitchens, WCs. Where necessary, this might include the installation or upgrading of pipework or cabling to the perimeter of the churchyard or curtilage.
- New installations or improvements to existing installations for digital connectivity, whether through a wired connection or 4G/5G mobile Wi-Fi, where essential to sustain worship and mission use.
- Bat mitigation measures, including relevant ecologists' fees and production of a bat management plan, where the impact of bats is a barrier to worship and mission use. A one-off deep clean can be an eligible cost as part of a mitigation plan.

### Other eligible costs

- Professional fees to design, specify, inspect and certify the repair or improvement work
- Ecologist's fees to prepare a bat management plan

### What will not be eligible for funding

- Routine maintenance
- Routine cleaning
- Work to furnishings, such as bells and bell frames, books and manuscripts, church plate, clocks, monumental brasses and decorative metalwork, monuments, organs, paintings and wall paintings, stained glass, textiles, wooden objects. These may qualify for the grants administered by [ChurchCare](#)
- Conservation reports. These may qualify for the grants administered by [ChurchCare](#)
- Routine inspection (Quinquennial Inspections, periodic inspection of electrical installations, appliance testing, gas safety checks, etc)

- Routine servicing of building services installations
- Any work covered by insurance

Applicant churches will need to apply to the Listed Places of Worship (LPW) grant scheme. Please note, this has now been extended to cover non-listed places of worship. More information is available here [Listed Places of Worship \(LPW\) grant scheme](#).

## What grants are available?

Small grant up to £3,000  
Large grant £3-8,000

Where churches are able to fundraise themselves, it is encouraged that match-funding is offered by the church to enable to MR&I grant fund to support as many churches as possible.

NB: Loans may be available in some circumstances to aid cashflow where necessary

## Key criteria

The project must:

1. Be able to show how the works will enable the church to support the vision for mission
2. Have support of the vicar (or Rural Dean)
3. Not have already been started
4. If over £1000, need to be subject to competitive procurement ie. three quotes, where possible.
5. Follow the standard Faculty and DAC process\*

The applicant must

1. Be willing to share learning from their project with others
2. Be willing to provide regular progress reports and a completion report and visit

## Who can apply?

Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) are expected to be the applicant in most cases, with confirmation of support from their vicar (or Rural Dean if without a vicar).

Please note that MMF contributions, PCC accounts and any previous grants awarded will be considered as part of the process.

A demonstration of commitment to paying MMF is expected.

Do not start an application before you have spoken to our team. Please email or call in the first instance: [faye.edwardes@truro.anglican.org](mailto:faye.edwardes@truro.anglican.org) or 01872 301467

## Project planning

Applicants need to be able to explain what the overall goal of the project is and what the objectives are.

The goal is the end result. This will vary depending on the nature of the project, for example it might be 'to replace the ceiling of the ringing chamber in the bell tower as it is rotten' or 'to install an accessible toilet inside the church to enable our whole congregation to attend more services and events'.

The objective is a statement that describes the plan in manageable steps.  
Example objectives below:

1. Instruct church architect to advise what is required
2. Make faculty application/receive faculty permission
3. Explore and apply for full/partial funding
4. Instruct specialists to carry out works

## Making an impact

Applicants must be able to clearly express what the expected outcomes of the project are for their building, congregation and/or community.

- The benefits of the project will be that churches with fabric and repair problems are in better condition and therefore better able to remain open and sustainable.
- The project will help foster robust and flourishing congregations and release resources, energy and potential for mission and outreach.

## Timetable

Considered monthly by the Buildings for Mission Panel.

## Completing the form

This can be done either electronically or as a paper application.

Please answer the questions fully, making sure to provide the correct information where it has been specified exactly what is required.

Please include as much information as possible, making sure the eligibility criteria (above) is met.

## Support

If you have any questions about applying please contact the Church Buildings Support Officer for support with the project and any specific questions that may arise.

\*NB. This process does not in any way remove the requirement for the Applicant Church/PCC to obtain faculty or approval under list B, as necessary, or any other necessary

permission before the work goes ahead. The offer of a grant does not imply support for the proposal for the purposes of faculty.

## Contact

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