# The changemaker churches supporting their local



Event held at St George's, one of the Camden 4 churches

Two church projects are using new and innovative approaches to help the most deprived and vulnerable members of their local community.

Churches are often thriving community hubs – bringing together both religious and non-religious groups for services, events and workshops. However, in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, five churches are taking this one step further.

For 2022, our CEO Eilish McGuinness has pledged to champion innovation and collaboration. These changemaker churches are harnessing these opportunities to help their local communities.

## Somerset’s St Peter and All Hallows church

This historic church in West Huntspill has been awarded £678,200 of National Lottery funding to help tackle isolation caused by COVID-19.

Lockdown’s impacts on the community and surrounding areas included a rise in isolation, mental health conditions and digital poverty. The project aims to rebuild connections in the community, reaching elderly people, young people and

under-served or isolated groups.



Front view of St Peter and All Hallows church

Plans for the Grade I listed church include:

- creating a talking café with IT support – to help reduce isolation and address digital skills gaps which are making people less connected
- installing an honesty café with locally sourced products
- building toilet and kitchen facilities for group events, such as exhibitions and activities for schools and clubs

The project will also help tell the story of St Peter and All Hallows' long history, dating back to 1208.

Project Coordinator, David Lemon, said: "During the eight hundred years that a church has stood on this site, it has continually developed and changed to meet the changing needs of that community, and this is another step on that journey."

## The Camden 4

A grant of £70,735 will support a new and unique collaboration between a group of four historic parishes. They are known as the Camden 4: Holy Cross, St George the Martyr, St Mary the Virgin and St Mary Magdalene.

All of the churches are on the Heritage at Risk Register, and have been impacted by COVID-19.

The pilot project is calling for volunteers to help this cluster of historic churches play a larger role within the life of their local communities.



A training workshop held at St Mary's, led by the London Historic Buildings Trust.

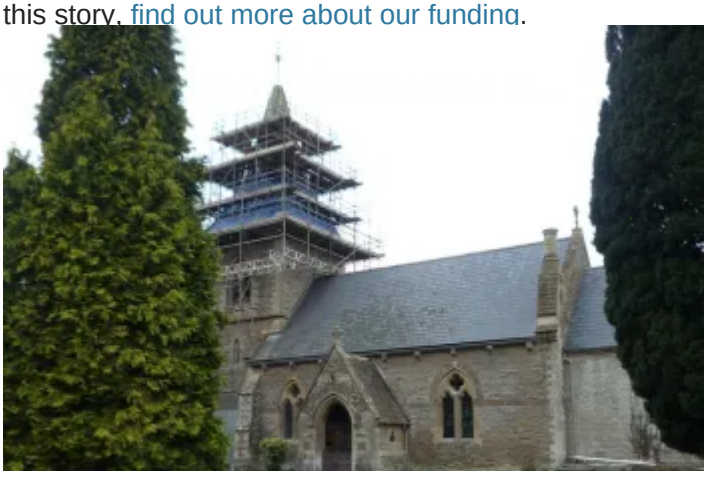
The volunteers will take part in a series of heritage activities that are designed to appeal to both new and existing church users:

- community consultation, listening to the views of local people
- sharing stories of the buildings and surrounding area in new ways
- helping organise open days and evenings, as well as local events such as workshops and concerts

The project aims to secure a sustainable future for all four of these historic buildings.

## Embracing new opportunities

We want to support new opportunities for heritage projects to innovate and learn from each other. If you are inspired by this story, find out more about our funding.



St Peter & St Paul Church, Stoke Lacy. Credit: Fabian Gusto (CC BY-SA 2.0)



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Heritage Minister Nigel Huddleston's visit to grantee Alexandra Palace. Credit: Lloyd Winters



## stive boost for heritage

A World of Good exhibition

## Four projects shortlisted for excellence in environmental sustainability