£1.9million to increase the resilience of places of



Welcoming visitors to St Tydecho Church in Gwynedd, Wales. Credit: National Churches Trust

We're partnering with the National Churches Trust on a new funding programme, targeting three areas of the UK.

The three-year Cherish programme will deliver support to places of worship in Scotland, Wales and the north west of England (Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cumbria).

The National Churches Trust will distribute the £1.9m funding on our behalf to safeguard the future of some of the UK's most treasured historic buildings. Grants will be available from May.

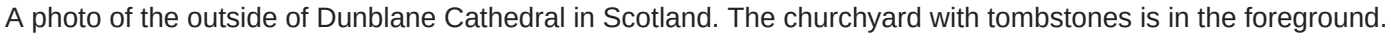
Practical support for places of worship

Cherish will provide support with boosting skills and resources for places of worship and their communities, including:

- **grants** for small repairs, project development and maintenance from £500–£10,000, beginning in May 2023
- **maintenance** advice to address problems with historic buildings to avoid the need for expensive repairs
- **crisis support** for communities facing the potential loss of their local historic buildings
- **resourcing** for local issues through three support officers
- **digital toolkit** including buildings care and income generating advice

- **training** to improve local capacity to look after buildings in need, including skills in project management, writing funding bids, maintenance and tourism
- **visitors and tourism** support through improving access and awareness of places of worship, creating tourism trails and engaging with partners across UK heritage

Support will be tailored to local needs highlighted in our research with stakeholders. Places of worship in Scotland and the north west of England will get help with exploring community uses for their buildings, while places in Wales will benefit from developing their visitor offer.



A photo of the outside of Dunblane Cathedral in Scotland. The churchyard with tombstones is in the foreground.

Dunblane Cathedral in Scotland. Credit: Tom Parnell

A proven way of making a difference

This partnership builds on the success of Treasure Ireland, a pilot project run by the National Churches Trust which helped over 300 places of worship in Northern Ireland with support and small repair grants.

Claire Walker, Chief Executive of the National Churches Trust, said: “Churches and chapels are some of our most historic and beautiful buildings. At the centre of local communities, they also provide a home for countless community support such as playgroups, drop-in-centres and warm spaces, as well as serving their core purpose as places of worship.

“As well as providing much needed immediate help and practical support, this partnership will allow us to develop new ways of supporting churches and chapels so that they can remain open and available, in use and valued by all."



a group of people having a meeting inside a church

A places of worship forum taking place in Northern Ireland, part of the Treasure Ireland project. Credit: Nina McNeary

Joining forces with the National Churches Trust

> This grant will direct funding to where it's most needed, protecting and caring for some of our most precious and fragile heritage, at the heart of communities.
>
> *Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of the National Lottery Heritage Fund*

Our collaboration on Cherish is a sign of things to come. When we asked your opinion on our new 10-year strategy, you told us collaboration was crucial to how we can better support the UK’s heritage.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “As the UK’s largest funder of heritage, we want to collaborate with organisations who share our vision and understand heritage and the people they support.

“Our long-term partnership with the National Churches Trust builds on our wide-ranging experience of grant-making to conserve heritage and bring new life and purpose to cherished churches and chapel buildings.

“As we look to launch our new ten-year strategy this week, we’ve listened to what the sector and the public want. This grant will direct funding to where it's most needed, protecting and caring for some of our most precious and fragile heritage, at the heart of communities.”

A congregation worshipping inside a church

The congregation of St Mary's Catholic Church, Manchester. Credit: JLWong

Project applications and further information

The National Churches Trust will invite applications for support from May 2023.

For further news about the National Churches Trust and the Cherish programme, sign up to the free National Churches Trust newsletter.



Wildlife Trust workers Lorna Parker and Kate Carver with Great Fen insulation products



y Fens Peatland project

Roman Baths, Bath © 2017 aroundworld/Shutterstock.



Places of worship