



# SUSTAINING MAJOR PARISH CHURCHES

Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities

October 2016



PROJECT PARTNERS



Funded by  
Historic England



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## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### What is a Major Parish Church?

Major Parish Churches represent some of the most unique, significant and well-loved places of worship in England. The Church of England has identified more than 300 'Major Parish Churches'. This is a recognition of historically significant parish church buildings with a different scale of opportunities and challenges faced compared to the vast majority of 12,267 listed Church of England church buildings. A Major Parish Church has all or some of the following characteristics: they are physically large (over 1000m<sup>2</sup> footprint); are grade I, II\* or II listed; have significant heritage value; are open to visitors daily; and make a civic, cultural and economic contribution to their communities.

### Reasons for the Research

The project partners - Historic England, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Greater Churches Network, the Church of England's Church Buildings Council and Doncaster Minster – want to understand the potential challenges and opportunities within Major Parish Churches. This project has investigated the perception of these buildings, their physical condition and the resources available to maintain, repair, manage and sustain them.

This research, funded by Historic England, provides a robust baseline of evidence based on a sample of Major Parish Churches from across the country. We focussed on a large sample of buildings, providing both substantive evidence and individual narrative. We are extremely grateful to all those who gave of their time and expertise to make this possible.

### Aims of the Project

The project partners aim to use this gathered information to:

- achieve a clear understanding of the condition of Major Parish Churches
- understand more about their resources and demands
- identify factors that may influence future sustainability
- articulate the distinctive characteristics and challenges of this particular group of churches
- assess the capacity of the parish and the surrounding community to manage the distinctive challenges.

### What research has been carried out?

A report has been produced setting out the findings of the study, based on a substantial foundation of data. Over 300 Major Parish Churches have been analysed, 60 churches surveyed online, 300 architects and diocesan representatives contacted. This resulted in 50 individual case studies and 12 further in-depth case studies to illustrate a wide breadth of issues.

### Summary Findings

#### Characteristics

These buildings are important repositories of the material, cultural and spiritual history of the nation. Major Parish Churches are primarily defined by their scale and significance, but other characteristics including visitor numbers and wider ministry can identify further similarities.

#### Challenges

The great majority of these buildings remain well cared for and in a good state of repair. Substantial amounts of historic fabric can be costly to repair and maintain, many do not have the facilities to sustain complementary uses, most find it increasingly difficult to recruit skilled volunteers, few have effective strategic plans in place and paid staff or incumbents face considerable pressures on their time. There is a substantial disparity between income and expenditure.

#### Perceptions

Very few Major Parish Church representatives consider their church buildings to be a hindrance or a burden, though public understanding of how these buildings are funded or managed is low. Even within the Church of England, there is a general perception that some Major Parish Churches are equivalent to and have access to the same resources as cathedrals.

#### Sustainability

A Major Parish Church needs to grow its congregation to continue delivering its core mission and ministry but demands upon resources may limit its ability to do so. A variety of new models of governance are being tested but long-term effectiveness is still unclear and financial support from national funding bodies is vital for major projects.

#### Opportunities

The dedication of those responsible for care and maintenance is an unparalleled resource. Capturing those existing skills and widening their reach through additional capacity will be crucial in the future. Many Major Parish Churches have successfully implemented projects to increase sustainability and should be held up as examples of best practice. Major Parish Churches require support to improve strategic planning and income generation, to provide new community and visitor facilities, to increase clergy staffing and to grow capacity. There is a requirement for more support with funding sources, a strategy for repairs and a forum for sharing best practice.

#### Next Steps

The report and case studies will be a valuable resource to those responsible for the management and care of Major Parish Churches, both individually and strategically at local, regional and national levels. This research provides a the foundation from which to stimulate debate about the potential future of Major Parish Churches.

## FINANCES

*Two-thirds of Major Parish Churches* have not been the recipient of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Grant funding per project ranges from **£3,900 to £11 million**.<sup>01</sup>

The three top items of expenditure for Major Parish Churches surveyed were parish share, building fabric repairs and payroll. **44% of Major Parish Church** representatives chose building fabric repairs as their largest item of expenditure and **43% chose parish share**.<sup>03</sup>

Of those for which parish share information was available, **24% did not pay it in full** (2015) and for many of those who did it is their largest item of expenditure. The average parish share for a Major Parish Church is **£53,800**, with a range from **£229,000** to **£5,300**<sup>05</sup> per church.

The average **cost** of a major repair and development project for a Major Parish Church is **£550,000**. When grant aid is obtained, an average of **£350,000 is funded** through the Heritage Lottery Fund.<sup>04</sup>

Half of Major Parish Church representatives surveyed stated that their **income** does **not meet** their **expenditure**. Of those whose income does meet expenditure, this is often **'only just'**. Deficits are often due to **large or unexpected** capital projects for alterations or repairs.<sup>06</sup>

**12% of Major Parish Churches** have received a Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund grant since the scheme began in 2015. The average **grant** received under this scheme is **£97,500**.<sup>02</sup>



## CONDITION

**16% of Major Parish Churches** are on Historic England's 2015 Heritage at Risk Register. This is compared with **6.8% of all Church of England** parish churches.<sup>07</sup>

**57% of Major Parish Churches on the Heritage at Risk register** are found within areas of high deprivation. This is significantly higher than the proportion of **Major Parish Churches in areas of high deprivation (35%)** when Heritage at Risk is not taken into account.<sup>08</sup>



01 Heritage Lottery Fund grants to the 50 case study churches, 1994-2016

02 Ibid.

03 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

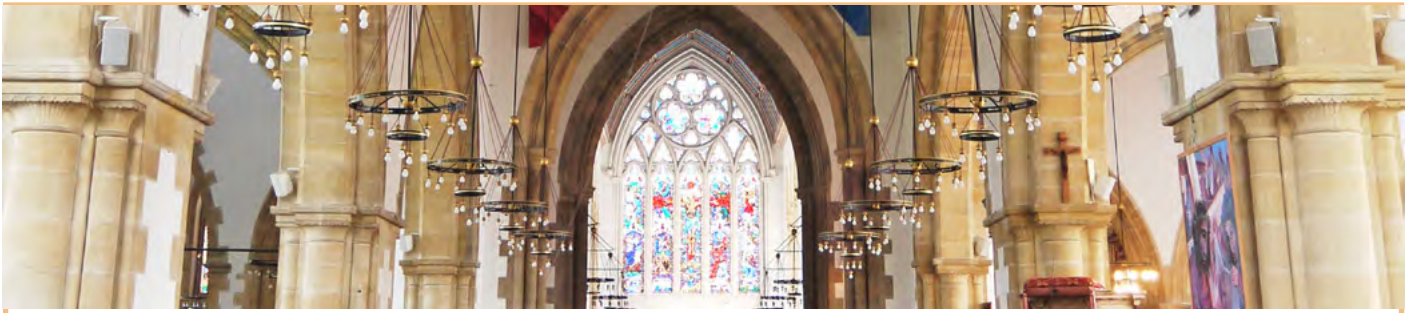
04 Heritage Lottery Fund grants to the 50 case study churches, 1994-2016

05 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

06 Ibid.

07 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches. Search the Heritage at Risk register here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/>

08 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches and the government's Index of Multiple Deprivation



## RESOURCES

The Church of England Financial Review 2004-2013 stated that parish churches spend **17% of their outgoings** on church and building costs. Major Parish Churches spend **37% on urgent Quinquennial Inspection costs** alone.<sup>10</sup>

**Almost 90%** of Major Parish Church representatives believe that the **scale and significance** of their church is a **positive ‘help’** to mission and ministry.<sup>11</sup>

Over **80% of Major Parish Church** representatives have a Statement of Significance in place but **fewer than 50%** have a Conservation Management Plan or equivalent.<sup>09</sup>

**Over 70% of Major Parish Churches** have WC facilities and good physical access to the building. **25% of Major Parish Churches** have a shop and **23%** have a café. **5% have a dedicated heritage centre** or museum. Occasionally, a Major Parish Church will **not have running water**.<sup>12</sup>

**80%** Major Parish Church representatives believe that the designated heritage status of their Major Parish Church is a **positive ‘help’** rather than a **hindrance**.<sup>13</sup>



## SUSTAINABILITY

**Over 60%** of Major Parish Church representatives surveyed believe the **history and architecture** of their Major Parish Church is what **makes it special**.<sup>14</sup>

**36% of Major Parish Churches** have **additional listed or scheduled structures** for which they are responsible.<sup>15</sup>

**Over 40%** of the Major Parish Church representatives mentioned **lead theft as being a recent problem** at their building.<sup>16</sup>

**Half of Major Parish Churches** have an average attendance of **141 people**.<sup>17</sup>

An electronic copy of the Sustaining Major Parish Churches report and case studies can be found here: <https://historicensland.org.uk/research/current-research/threats/heritage-in-changing-society/major-parish-churches/>

The Sustaining Major Parish Churches film can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/183370054>

09 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

10 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents . Read the report here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1886486/financialoverview.pdf>

11 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

12 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches, drawn from the churches' websites

13 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

14 Ibid.

15 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

16 12 in-depth case studies

17 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches. Average weekly attendance taken from the Church Buildings Councils statistics. Find this information here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2432327/2014statisticsformission.pdf>

# Sustaining Major Parish Churches

## 1.1 REASONS FOR RESEARCH

The Church of England has identified more than 300 parish churches in England that form a diverse collection of historically significant church buildings, with functions beyond those of most parish churches. These are identified as Major Parish Churches in recognition that these buildings and those who serve in them face challenges and opportunities on a different scale to the vast majority of the Church of England's 12,267 listed church buildings (for the full definition, see section 1.4).

Following the research of the Church Growth Programme (2011 to 2013) into mission and growth,<sup>01</sup> this new research has recorded the experiences of the people who care for these buildings in the context of a body of evidence. The project partners, Historic England, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Greater Churches Network, the Church of England's Church Buildings Council and Doncaster Minster sought to improve understanding of the potential challenges and opportunities facing Major Parish Churches by investigating the perception of Major Parish Churches as analogous to cathedrals due to their scale, historic significance and role within the community, in addition to their parochial responsibilities. The research also focussed on the physical condition of Major Parish Churches, as well as the resources available to maintain, repair, manage and sustain them, alongside a better understanding of how they respond to expectations from the wider community.

The research, funded by Historic England, sought to provide a robust baseline of evidence, based on a sample of Major Parish Churches from across the country. A strong emphasis on the experiences of individual churches across a large sample, issued as case studies, has provided both substantive evidence and a national voice to those caring for these buildings. All the data contained in this survey is drawn from parishes, dioceses or national organisations, and is publicly available. The value of the survey is the collation of this information into a single body of work for the first time, which is standardised in a way that enables assessment on a national scale.

The project partners aim to use this gathered information:

- To achieve a clear understanding of the condition of Major Parish Churches
- To understand more about their resources and demands
- To identify factors that may influence future sustainability
- To articulate the distinctive characteristics and challenges of this particular group of churches
- To assess the capacity of the parish and the surrounding community to manage the distinctive challenges.

Beyond the core aims of the project listed above, the individual church case studies have provided an opportunity for those caring for Major Parish Churches to share their experiences, both good and bad. The survey does not seek to label individual churches as successes or failures. The study provides an insight into what managing Major Parish Churches is like for the people who do it everyday, articulating in their own words and respecting their particular circumstances.

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01 Church Growth Research Programme, From Anecdote to Evidence (2014)



## 1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report will be of use to both those responsible for the management of Major Parish Churches and those working with them strategically, at local, regional and national levels. Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) may find inspiration or commonalities with one another and the evidence may help diocesan staff, DACs and project partners to assist Major Parish Churches more effectively. For the first time national statutory and funding bodies will have a considerable repository of information about Major Parish Churches to inform their response to applications for grants and casework advice. The documentation will also provide a shared body of information, which can be accessed by all.

The findings of the survey have been set out over the following sections:

### **Section 2 - Articulating the distinctive characteristics of Major Parish Churches**

This section defines the geographic and social context of Major Parish Churches, as well as the characteristics of their scale and significance relative to other parish churches and cathedrals.

### **Section 3 - Understanding the opportunities and challenges**

This section considers the impact of caring for such a significant or large building and identifies the challenges and demands, opportunities and resources of Major Parish Churches.

### **Section 4 - Summary of findings**

This section summarises what the survey has found and offers possible topics for further investigation, as well propounding possible opportunities for strengthening future sustainability.

The findings contained in this report are based largely on a substantial evidence base of short and in-depth case studies, which are included as appendices I and J. Facts and figures within the report relate either to a survey of 300 Major Parish Churches, an online survey of 63, 50 case studies or 12 in-depth case studies.

This study does not offer recommendations; rather, it provides a robust evidence base from which discussion on the future sustainability of Major Parish Churches can take place. The study will be used in several ways in the future:

- To contribute evidence to the Church Buildings Council's ongoing research into Major Parish Churches
- To inform the *Review of English Cathedrals and Churches*, set up under the Culture White Paper to consider the funding and sustainability of Church of England cathedrals and parish churches;
- To provide a resource for Major Parish Church representatives looking for examples of good practice in the management and use of church buildings
- To act as a discussion point for future recommendations and strategic support for Major Parish Churches
- To enable a shared understanding of the issues amongst partners and stakeholders

## 1.3 AUTHORSHIP

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A full list of project partners and the report team is included in appendix E of this report.

## 1.4 DEFINITIONS

The term “Major Parish Churches” was adopted by the Church of England in the early 21st century to define those churches with a specific set of characteristics, which will be explored in section 2. In essence it is defined as a church building that has all or some of the following characteristics: physically large (over 1000m<sup>2</sup> footprint), grade I or II\* listed, have significant heritage value, usually open to visitors daily, make a civic, cultural and economic contribution to their communities (the full definition is included in appendix B).

The 300 Major Parish Churches identified as part of this study consist of approximately 220 very big<sup>02</sup> parish churches (over 1000m<sup>2</sup>) and approximately 80 other churches, which, though smaller in size, are significant because of their histories and the expectations placed upon them. The 300 churches collated within this list are a snapshot of Major Parish Churches today as the definition of what makes a church ‘major’ is relatively fluid and may change overtime.

All churches which are members of the Greater Churches Network (GCN) fulfil the criteria for a Major Parish Church and several of them have been chosen for case studies. The GCN is an independent network of churches that are large and significant, whose ministries are ‘cathedral-like’, who have a significant ministry to visitors and who have to employ paid staff. It holds annual conferences and regional gatherings. The GCN now offers ‘associate’ status to churches which fit the Church Building Council’s criteria for a Major Parish Church, opening up a wider conversation about a grouping for all Major Parish Churches, alongside the GCN. The full definition of the GCN is in appendix B and a list of members can be found in appendix H.

## 1.5 METHODOLOGY

Purcell was commissioned by the project partners after open public tendering to research Major Parish Churches and produce finding on their distinctive characteristics, opportunities and challenges, particularly those factors that influence their sustainability. The project was funded by Historic England.

### 1.5.1 Phase I: Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

The initial stage of research required a clear understanding of the state of Major Parish Churches. The list of 300 Major Parish Churches was collated by the Church Buildings Council, agreed by the project partners and originated from a baseline of data provided by Historic England. It was supplemented by additional information on each church, including building period, index of multiple deprivation, minster status, facilities and activities, recent projects and condition. This information was collected from a variety of sources including the Church Heritage Record, A Church Near You, the National Heritage List and individual church websites (links to these datasets can be found in the introductions to the case studies in appendices I and J). This data was analysed to understand the characteristics, challenges and opportunities of Major Parish Churches but also to produce selection criteria for a smaller subset of cases for detailed assessment. More information on the full list of parish churches defined as Major Parish Churches can be obtained from the Church Buildings Council.<sup>03</sup>

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<sup>02</sup> Classifications of size i.e. very big and big are defined by the Church Buildings Council on the Church Heritage Record for all parish churches.

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<sup>03</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/our-buildings/churches/major-parish-churches.aspx>



The 300 Major Parish Churches dataset mapped geographically. Each church is identified by Church Heritage Record number. Map produced by the Church Buildings Council, Research and Statistics Unit, 2016.

### 1.5.2 Phase 2: Online surveys

From the 300 Major Parish Churches identified by the Church Buildings Council, a sample of 80 churches was chosen in order to explore their characteristics in more detail. The subset was a representative sample from the main group where the Major Parish Churches selected exhibited some or all of the defining characteristics, were geographically spread across the country, dated from different periods and served a range of communities. A 12-point scoring system was used to achieve the sample, with churches scoring a seven or more being included.

The subset of 80 churches was asked to participate in an online survey that focused on six themes:

- Impact of significance
- Organisation and responsibility
- Finances
- Making changes and doing repairs
- Current use
- Welcoming visitors

Church wardens, incumbents and other appropriate church representatives were invited to participate in the study at the identified churches. The use of a standardised online survey allowed responses to be compared and contrasted with other churches. Out of the 80 invited 63 churches responded to the request to participate, which formed the basis of the initial case studies. Of the 63 churches that responded, 10 surveys were not completed fully and were not pursued for the next phase.

At this phase of the project, DAC Secretaries,<sup>04</sup> Archdeacons, Support Officers across all 42 dioceses, as well as conservation architects at Purcell were invited to fill in an online survey relating to their experiences of working with Major Parish Churches. 30 diocesan representatives responded from 20 dioceses along with 12 conservation architects.

### 1.5.3 Phase 3: 50 Case Studies

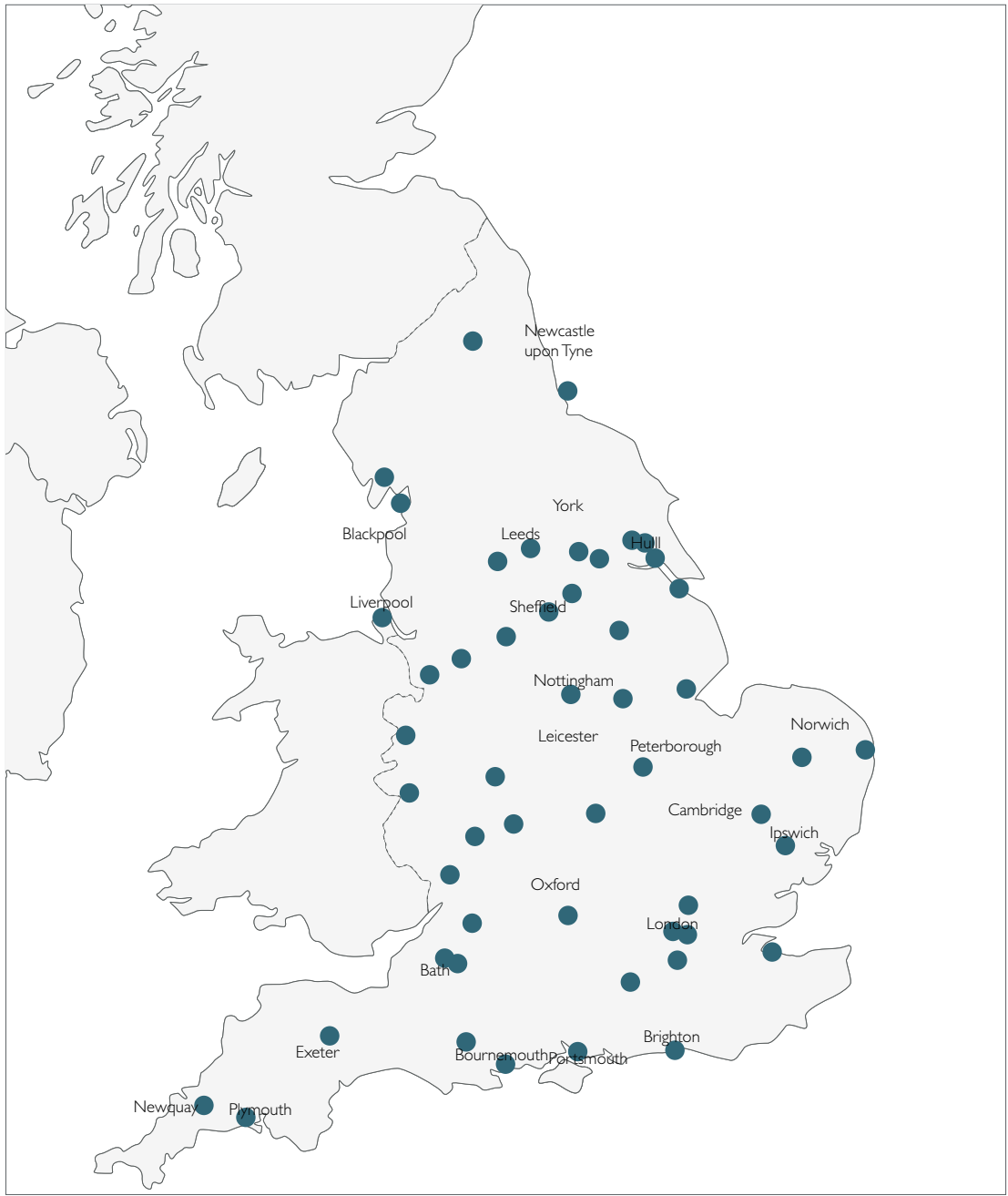
The online survey responses from Major Parish Church representatives formed the basis of 50 initial case studies. Since completion of the case studies, one PCC has withdrawn from the survey due to a change in local circumstances.

Each Major Parish Church representative who responded was invited to take part in a follow-up interview. The survey responses were used as the basis for discussion for a telephone interview with each representative.

The 50 case studies contain information on the six themes used in phase 2, but also provide basic information on the history and significance of each Major Parish Church. The online survey responses were used as an evidence base for the quantitative data, with the case studies providing qualitative data. A list of the 50 case studies can be found in appendix I.

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<sup>04</sup> Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC)



The geographical location of the 50 Major Parish Churches with individual case studies.

#### 1.5.4 Phase 4: 12 In-depth Case Studies

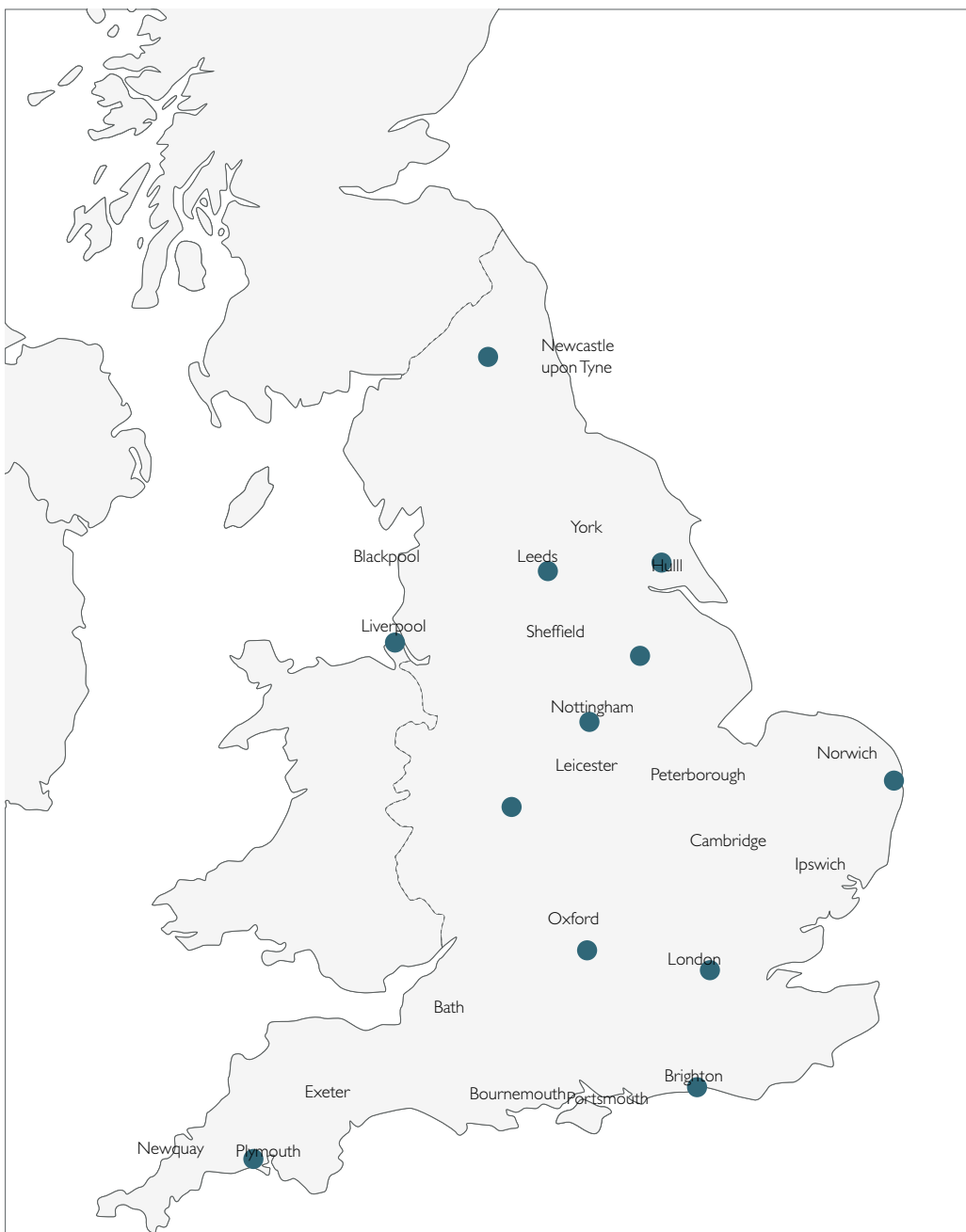
In order to understand the issues and opportunities experienced by Major Parish Church representatives more fully, 13 of those churches featured in the 50 case studies were chosen for more detailed qualitative investigation, with the aim of exploring a cross-section of experiences, roles and ministries in different socio-geographic locations across England.

12 in-depth case studies were produced, of which one was a comparison between two churches in the same town (Beverley Minster and Beverley, St Mary). These in-depth case studies were

informed by site visits and face-to-face interviews, which enabled a deeper appreciation of the daily challenges and opportunities associated with caring for and managing these buildings.

#### 1.5.5 Phase 5: Strategic Reporting

From the substantial evidence base produced in phases 1-4, this report has been produced, setting out the findings and headline facts and figures of the survey.



The geographical location of the 12 Major Parish Churches with in-depth case studies.

### 1.5.6 Phase 6: Major Parish Churches Film

To accompany the survey, a short film has been prepared, which features interviews with key strategic partners and those working to sustain Major Parish Churches. The film gives an overview of what it like to care for a Major Parish Church and also explores popular understanding of how these buildings are funded.

See the film here: [link: https://vimeo.com/183370054](https://vimeo.com/183370054)

## 1.6 EVIDENCE BASE

The constituent components of the evidence base for this report are:

- **Dataset of approximately 300 Major Parish Churches** and associated baseline data such as date, listing, additional status and responsibilities, recent grants, recent projects, average attendance figures, facilities, activities, open outside of worship etc.
- **Online survey of 63 Major Parish Churches** with questions focusing on the six themes of impact, finances, organisation, making changes, current use and welcoming visitors
- **Online survey of DAC secretaries, archdeacons and support offices** with questions relating to sustainability and diocesan initiatives to support Major Parish Churches
- **Online survey of conservation architects** at Purcell focusing on quinquennial inspections, building condition, repairs and sustainability
- **50 case studies** produced in response to and informed by the online survey and telephone interviews with Major Parish Church representatives
- **12 in-depth case studies** produced in response to and informed by face to face interviews and site visits with Major Parish Church representatives

## 1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As with any research project, this study has limitations within its methodology. Due to the size of the dataset and time constraints it was not possible to interview and survey all 300 Major Parish Churches. Therefore, an appropriate sample number of churches for each relevant phase of work was chosen to provide an evidence base from which to explore key themes. While every effort was made to provide a representative sample by using an agreed selection criteria, a degree of participant bias was present, as participation was self-selecting: each participating church chose to complete the online survey and then agreed to take part in the interviews. The PCC representatives were also given the opportunity to withdraw at any time.

The data used to produce this study is, in part, publicly available outside the study: annual reports and information on websites, for example. Additional information obtained through interviews and quinquennial inspection reports is made publicly available for the first time with the permission of those who participated. All case studies have been 'signed off' by those who contributed them and have been given the opportunity to edit or correct drafts.

Many of the opinions expressed within the case studies represent the perspective of a single individual. Whilst they represent their respective PCCs, a subjective interpretation of any given issue may lead to a distorted view. The case studies provide a voice to those caring for Major Parish Churches and record their interpretation, which could include deliberate and/or accidental bias, interpretation and error. Every effort has been made to substantiate claims with factual data, however. The case studies are therefore standalone reports, using qualitative data. As such they are not always directly comparable in every detail. They reflect the stories being told at each place.

Throughout the interviews, the PCC representatives, which were selected by the churches themselves, were given the freedom to discuss the issues surrounding their Major Parish Church that they considered to be important. This created a natural narrative for each case study, emphasising those issues each interviewee found to be important. The case studies' resultant idiosyncrasies of content bring a unique understanding of each Major Parish Church but result in data that is not always directly comparable.

The differing role of PCC representatives, which were selected by the churches themselves, has also had an impact on the emphasis of the narrative. Participants ranged from churchwardens and other PCC members to paid employees, volunteers and clergy. Experiences are therefore not as comparable as they would be if every participating church representative had been a churchwarden, for example. It is hoped that the cumulative picture from these varying perspectives is as useful a contribution as the individual accounts.

# 2

## Articulating the Distinctive Characteristics

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Major Parish Churches are distinguished from other Church of England parish churches by their scale and significance. 74% of Major Parish Churches are over 1000m<sup>2</sup> (making up 1.4% of parish churches as a whole) but 'scale' does not exclusively mean size. It also refers to extant volume of significant historic fabric.

All Major Parish Churches are distinct for their local, national and sometimes international significance. All Major Parish Churches are listed, comprising Grade I (67%), II\* (32%) or II (2%), compared to 78% of all Church of England parish churches (of which 27% are Grade I listed; 27% are Grade II\*; and 24% Grade II).<sup>01</sup>

Almost 90% of all church representatives surveyed believed the scale and significance of their Major Parish Church to be a 'help' to mission and ministry.<sup>02</sup> This demonstrates that there is a substantial recognition among PCCs of the role their church's architecture and heritage play in delivering their core work.

This section defines the characteristics that commonly relate to Major Parish Churches. Beyond the primary defining characteristics of scale and significance, there are other characteristics where similarities and differences can be identified. These include condition and the role of Major Parish Churches in wider ministry. Other parish churches may display some of these characteristics in some form, but it is the combination of scale, significance and wider ministry that makes a parish church 'major'.

### 2.2 GEOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

#### 2.2.1 Geography

Major Parish Churches can be found the length and breadth of England, though this does not make them ubiquitous. The 42 dioceses of the Church of England each has an average of 393 church buildings under its auspices, of which on average, seven can be defined as Major Parish Churches.<sup>03</sup>

Major Parish Churches are slightly more likely to be found in urban areas (59%) when compared with all Church of England parish churches, 55% of which are located in urban areas.<sup>04</sup>

Analysis of the locations of Major Parish Churches running at a deficit (those whose income does not meet their expenditure) indicates that there is no geographical division or predominance in terms of financial resources.<sup>05</sup>

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01 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

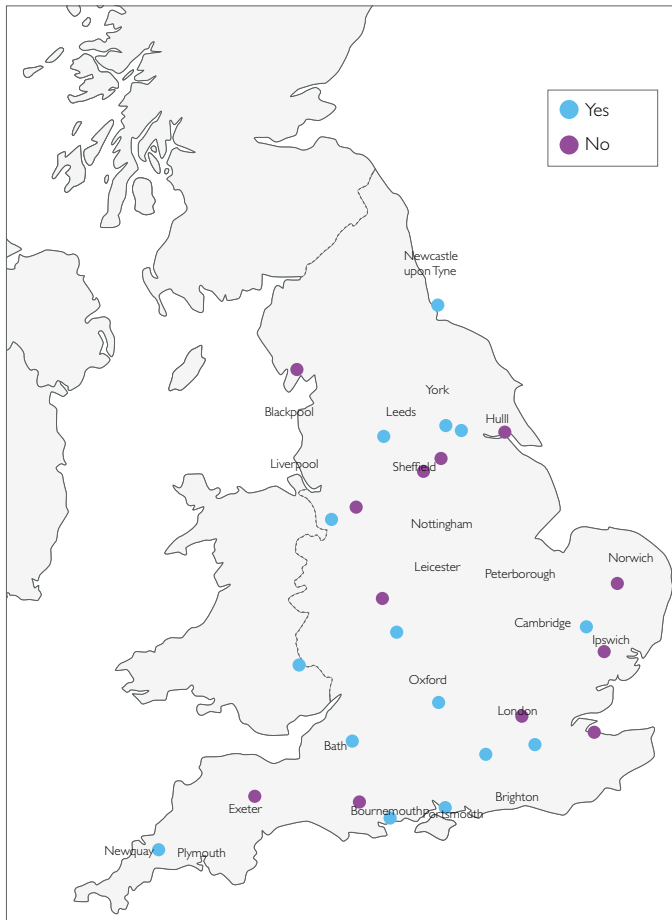
02 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

03 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

04 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

05 Map analysis of 63 Major Parish Church online survey respondents





Map showing which Major Parish Church's income meets their expenditure

### 2.2.2 Demography

Using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation<sup>06</sup> to identify the level of deprivation of each parish it is evident that Major Parish Churches are spread fairly evenly between areas of high deprivation (36%), medium deprivation (37%), medium deprivation (36%) and low deprivation (27%)<sup>07</sup>

Local deprivation can affect a church's experience. The PCC of Birmingham, St Agatha, which is located in an area of high deprivation, reports that it must consider its missional response to occasional acts of extreme violence in the parish.<sup>08</sup> Dorchester Abbey, by contrast, is located in an area of low deprivation. Its PCC reports that it must continually seek to meet its parish's demand for cathedral-standard cultural activities.<sup>09</sup> The impact of location and levels of deprivation on Major Parish Churches and their PCC's work was acknowledged by an archdeacon who took part in the survey: *'There are variables as some buildings are in wealthy areas, others in areas of deprivation.'*<sup>10</sup> This is as much a factor in the sustainability of Major Parish Churches as other parish churches; all face similar socio-economic factors. This context however impacts on resources and approaches to sustainability.

The size of the parish populations that surround Major Parish Churches vary enormously, with the largest being the parish of Great Yarmouth, which stands at approximately 29,000. The smallest parish population is 100. Milton Abbey; Fotheringhay, St Mary; Thornham Parva, St Mary; London, All Hallows by the Tower; London, St Mary-le-Bow; and London, Walbrook, St Stephen all have only 100 residents in their parishes.<sup>11</sup>

Despite its parish population being the largest, Great Yarmouth welcomes the lowest average percentage of that population (0.4%) to scheduled acts of worship. Beverley, St Mary, by contrast, welcomes 172 people, on average, to its services every week; equivalent to 3.3% of its relatively modest parish population of 5000. Great Yarmouth's average weekly attendance numbers 120 people, however, which places it among a group of over 50% of Major Parish Churches that welcome over 100 congregants per week.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>06</sup> The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD, 2010) is a UK government qualitative study of deprived areas in English local councils, covering income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education skills and training; barriers to housing and services; crime; and living environment. The Church of England maintains its own IMD based on ecclesiastical parishes. This can be found at <http://www2.cuf.org.uk/poverty-lookup-tool> Because of the variations between ecclesiastical and civil parishes, the two are not always identical.

<sup>07</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>08</sup> Birmingham, St Agatha in-depth case study

<sup>09</sup> Dorchester Abbey in-depth case study

<sup>10</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>11</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents. This does not include Toxteth, which has no residents in its parish.

<sup>12</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches



### Beverley Minster and St Mary's

Beverley is a town in the East Riding of Yorkshire containing two substantial Major Parish Churches. Beverley Minster is the largest parish church in England with a footprint of 3489m<sup>2</sup> and dominates views of the town for miles around. The challenges facing each church are different, but there is commonality. Building repairs are among both churches' principal anxieties, with St Mary's having to meet repair costs of over £5 million and the Minster repair costs of £8 million. There is a universal recognition that Beverley would not be the town it is today if the Minster, in particular, had not been built.

*"The church building is a crucial tool in mission and ministry: our size and heritage significance enables us to engage with a wider group of people than an 'ordinary' parish church."*

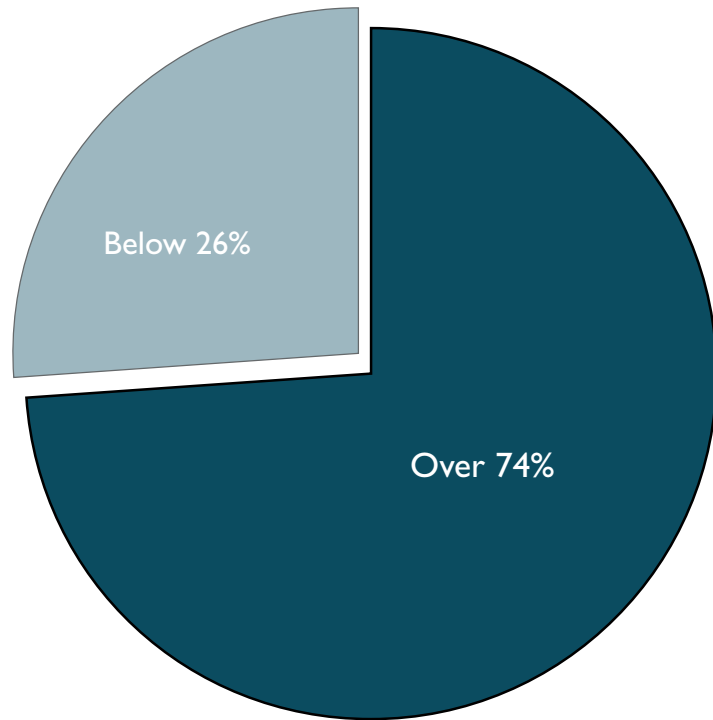
Representative of Ludlow, St Laurence  
(Ludlow, St Laurence case study)

## 2.3 SCALE

Major Parish Churches are not defined by size alone, though physical size is a contributing factor: 74% have a footprint of over 1000m<sup>2</sup>.<sup>13</sup>

Beverley Minster, at 3489m<sup>2</sup>, is the largest parish church in England. Boston, St Botolph has a tower that extends to 83m, and is one of the tallest towers in England. Guilford, Holy Trinity is the largest Georgian church in Surrey. Nottingham, St Mary is the largest medieval building in Nottingham.<sup>14</sup> Many Major Parish Churches are the largest buildings in their respective towns, cities and villages.

With such a scale comes the responsibility of maintaining and repairing what is often a considerable quantity of significant historic fabric. This is discussed in more detail in the following sections.



The proportion of Major Parish Churches with a footprint over 1000m<sup>2</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>14</sup> 50 case studies

## 2.4 SIGNIFICANCE

Significance, or interest, is defined by Historic England as: *'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting' along with the complementary: 'The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, often set out in a statement of significance.'*<sup>15</sup>

The types of heritage interest set out across the following pages are those recommended within National Planning Policy (NPPF). However, community interest and spiritual interest have also been included, which are concepts derived from Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008). Community interest highlights the values ascribed to a building by others and how this contributes towards its significance. Spiritual interest is particular to an active place of worship and highlights this value to those who use the building for this purpose.

Major Parish Churches are significant for their historical importance; they have landmark and spiritual value; substantial historic value; and they provide a large space for people of all faiths and none to gather for valued and valuable religious, cultural and community activity.

78% of parish churches are listed: 27% are Grade I listed; 27% are Grade II\*, and 24% Grade II. By comparison, 67% of Major Parish Churches are Grade I listed; 32% are Grade II\*; and only 2% are Grade II. The high designations of the vast majority of Major Parish Churches at Grade I or Grade II\* places them in the top 8% of listed buildings in the country. Major Parish Churches are therefore officially recognised as being of exceptional or more than special national interest.<sup>16</sup>

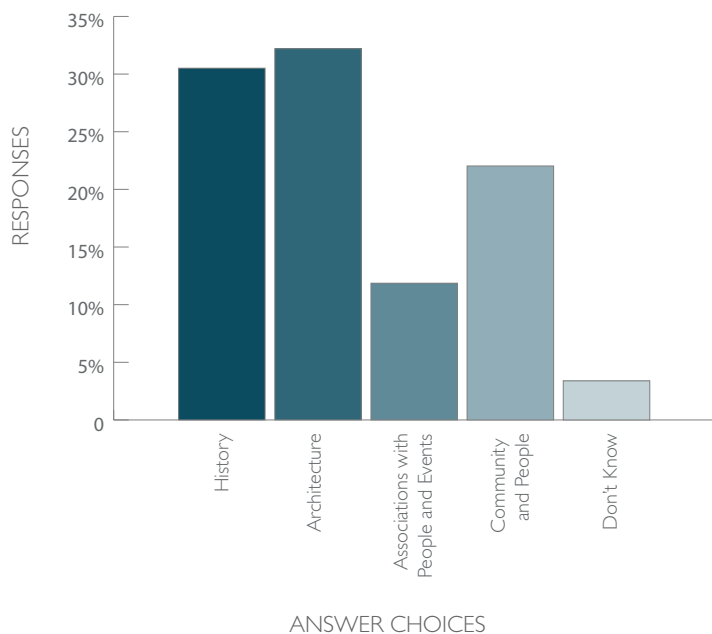


### Hadleigh, St Mary

The heritage of St Mary's is very helpful and important. The history of the church building and the people associated with it enable the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to tell stories about significant lives and events, and weave these into the day-to-day life of the church, giving them currency. There are annual opportunities and significant national events that the church engages with, which help to remind people of the significance of the building. Furthermore, it is a particular help for gaining grants and external funding.

*"The exciting thing about the history is the way in which it tells the story of the town and of 'the church' and you can see this reflected in the building down the ages."*

Representative of Bradford on Avon, Holy Trinity. (Bradford on Avon, Holy Trinity case study)



The Major Parish Church representatives surveyed were asked to choose the one thing that made their building special

<sup>15</sup> Conservation Principles, Historic England, 2008

<sup>16</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

### 2.4.1 Setting and Townscape

Many Major Parish Churches have substantial landmark status within their built or landscape environments, often acting as a defining feature of their town or rural location.

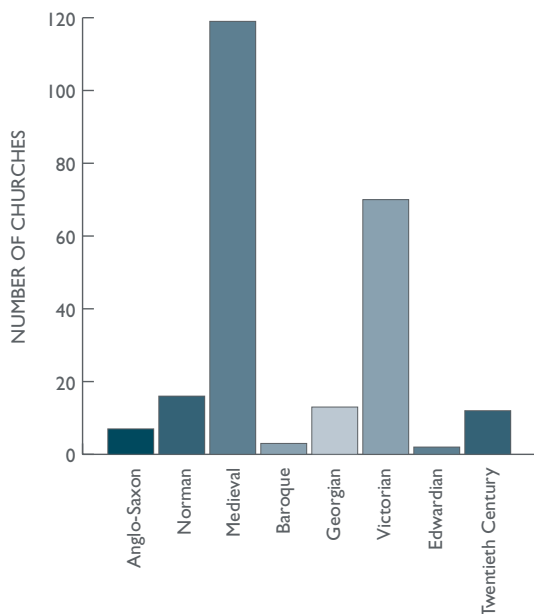
Grantham, St Wulfram; Newark, St Mary Magdalene; and Doncaster Minster can easily be seen from trains along the East Coast, which links London to Edinburgh. This places them along a route that includes the cathedrals of Peterborough, Lincoln, York, Newcastle and Durham, giving them a strong, visual value along a major transport route.

Some Major Parish Churches become the symbol of their location. Beverley Minster, for example, is often used on publicity materials produced by local organisations and businesses, to promote the town of Beverley.<sup>17</sup> The tower, or 'Stump' of Boston, St Botolph, located in the centre of Boston, has become a symbol of its historic port town.<sup>18</sup>

Other examples of visually prominent Major Parish Churches include Ludlow, St Lawrence; Cartmel Priory; and Minster-in-Sheppey, St Mary and St Sexburga.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.4.2 Archaeological Interest

47% of Major Parish Churches are Medieval or older in origin (2% Anglo-Saxon and 5% Norman) and retain substantial amounts of highly significant historic fabric, often dating back to their origins as stone-built churches.<sup>20</sup> 53% of Major Parish Churches date from the Baroque, Georgian, Victorian and Modern periods.



Major Parish Churches: Building dates.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Beverley Minster case study

<sup>18</sup> Boston, St Botolph case study

<sup>19</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>20</sup> Church Buildings Council, Church Heritage Record architectural periods

<sup>21</sup> The building date of a Major Parish Church is taken from the categorisation given in the Church Heritage Record for each church <https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/churches>

This is not to say that Medieval and earlier Major Parish Churches have been exempt from substantial restoration and rebuilding, particularly during the Victorian period and often by leading architects of the day. Doncaster Minster, for example, was rebuilt by George Gilbert Scott (1811 – 1878),<sup>22</sup> as was Croydon Minster.<sup>23</sup> Grimsby Minster was substantially altered in the twentieth century by G F Bodley (1827 – 1907) and Charles Nicholson (1867 – 1949).<sup>24</sup>

15% of Major Parish Churches are responsible for a Scheduled Ancient Monument in the curtilage of the churchyard.<sup>25</sup> For the PCC of Stow Minster, the Scheduled Ancient Monument in its care includes the churchyard but also extends to the entire footprint of the ground underneath the church, which is unusual.<sup>26</sup> The designation of an area of ground as a Scheduled Ancient Monument often means that there is substantial potential for archaeological investigation to yield evidence of previous human activity. In fact, the curtilages of Major Parish Churches often hold the potential for such investigations to be rewarded with new discoveries. Of the Major Parish Churches who feature in the 12 in-depth case studies, only Birmingham, St Agatha was deemed to have 'no known archaeological potential'.<sup>27</sup>

### 2.4.3 Historic Interest

Major Parish Church buildings' histories and associations are of great national interest. 12% of Major Parish Church representatives, when asked, selected 'associations with people and events' as the principal thing that made their church special.<sup>28</sup> Salient examples of Major Parish Churches' historic associations include, but are not limited to, Stratford-upon-Avon, Holy Trinity being the burial place of William Shakespeare;<sup>29</sup> Fotheringhay, St Mary and All Saints' having substantial links to the history of English royalty;<sup>30</sup> and Waltham Abbey enjoying the patronage of King Harold.<sup>31</sup>

Major Parish Churches have often been at the heart of important historic events, such as the English Civil War, the Black Death, the Reformation and Dissolution of the Monasteries, and the First and Second World Wars. Christchurch Priory,<sup>32</sup> Dorchester Abbey,<sup>33</sup> Stratford upon Avon, Holy Trinity;<sup>34</sup> and Howden Minster<sup>35</sup> are among those Major Parish Churches that bear the scars of the Reformation to a greater or lesser degree.

<sup>22</sup> Doncaster Minster case study

<sup>23</sup> Croydon Minster case study

<sup>24</sup> Grimsby Minster case study

<sup>25</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>26</sup> Stow Minster in-depth case study. Legislation does not generally allow land beneath a church to be scheduled and Stow Minster appears to be an anomaly <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1012976>.

<sup>27</sup> Birmingham, St Agatha in-depth case study

<sup>28</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>29</sup> Stratford-upon-Avon, Holy Trinity case study

<sup>30</sup> Fotheringhay, St Mary and All Saints case study

<sup>31</sup> Waltham Abbey case study

<sup>32</sup> Christchurch Priory case study

<sup>33</sup> Dorchester Abbey case study

<sup>34</sup> Stratford upon Avon, Holy Trinity case study

<sup>35</sup> Howden Minster case study

#### 2.4.4 Artistic and Architectural Interest

Major Parish Churches are great works of architecture and repositories of history, as reflected by their designations as Grade I, II\* and II listed buildings. This is demonstrated in ancient, medieval fabric as well as more modern structures. Bow Common, St Paul, which was built between 1958 and 1960, was judged to be the 'UK's best modern church' by the National Churches Trust in 2013 due to its architectural design being 'hugely influential and a signpost for future Anglican liturgy'.<sup>36</sup>

Major Parish Churches also house great works of art and design, from wall paintings to sculpture to stained glass and furniture. Very significant artefacts and features include, but are by no means limited to;

- **Dorchester Abbey:** Jesse Window. A fourteenth-century window that combines architecture, sculpture and stained glass
- **Beverley, St Mary:** Fourteenth-century carving of a rabbit. Thought to be the inspiration for Lewis Carroll's white rabbit
- **St Germans Priory:** A monument commemorating Edward Eliot (1772) sculpted by John Michael Rysbrack (1694 – 1770)

#### 2.4.5 Community Interest

Around 20% of Major Parish Church representatives surveyed considered the community and people to be the principal thing that makes their church special.<sup>37</sup> Community significance is often linked with a sense of history, place and continuity. Croydon Minster, for example, was described by its representative as 'a church with a living past and a growing future because our heritage and history live and continue to grow in the community'.<sup>38</sup>

Major Parish Churches often actively engage with the local community through cultural activities such as concerts and social events. Hartlepool, St Hilda offers a arguably typical programme of activities that includes concerts, bazaars, coffee mornings and afternoon teas, which are often used as fundraisers.<sup>39</sup> Other Major Parish Churches offer a less conventional programme. As well as offering music recitals and concerts, Malmesbury Abbey, becomes the venue for the annual 'Malmesbury Skate', which sees the Abbey transformed into an indoor skate park for young people.<sup>40</sup>

Some Major Parish Churches engage in activities that use the church as a base for broader community work. The PCC of Toxteth, St James, has set up the LivGrow charity to support the ministry of the church and fund future youth and community workers.<sup>41</sup>

The PCC of Shoreditch, St Leonard operates a drop-in centre near to the church building, which is used by homeless people and people with drug and alcohol dependencies.<sup>42</sup>

36 [www.bestmodernchurches.org.uk/?p=184](http://www.bestmodernchurches.org.uk/?p=184)

37 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

38 Croydon Minster case study

39 Hartlepool, St Hilda case study

40 Malmesbury Abbey case study

41 Toxteth, St James' case study

42 Shoreditch, St Leonard case study

Through tourism, Major Parish Churches are contributors to the local economy. Representatives of Dorchester Abbey;<sup>43</sup> Hexham Abbey;<sup>44</sup> Beverley Minster, Beverley, St Mary;<sup>45</sup> and Great Yarmouth Minster<sup>46</sup> all state their conviction that their churches make valuable contributions to the local economy. Whilst research has been done into the economic impact of visitors to cathedrals, no comparable data is available for Major Parish Churches.

More than 80% of British adults agree that parish churches are an important part of heritage and history, and play an important role for society as a space where community activities can take place.<sup>47</sup> The community value of Major Parish Churches is distinct from parish churches due to their extended reach within the community, their tourism appeal and the civic/commemorative duties they perform.

#### 2.4.6 Spiritual Interest

Major Parish Churches, like all Church of England churches, express the Christian faith. Their spiritual value is intrinsic; it is why they were built. The Christian faith is expressed through their art and architecture and their service to God and His people. Individually, they each embody the history of Christianity in a particular location, but collectively they reflect a national Christian identity. They are places of formal and informal worship; community; and spiritual continuance.

PCCs are often keen to point out that the deep respect with which they care for their Major Parish Church buildings is not the equivalent of idolatry.<sup>48</sup> A representative of Wymondham Abbey, for example, stated that '*the Abbey is a beautiful building, but the work of the church is all about people*'.<sup>49</sup>

Some PCC representatives acknowledged that the prominent and significant architecture and art of their Major Parish Churches can be used to enhance religious experience. A representative of the twentieth-century Bow Common, St Paul, for example, stated that '*the architecture of the building lends itself to the experience of worship. It helps the community to access something of God*'.<sup>50</sup> In a statement that succinctly reflects Cartmel Priory's architectural significance, community value, historic interest and spiritual value, a representative of the PCC said '*the architecture attracts people, both visitors and worshippers. Its history gives a sense of the continuity of worship from the twelfth century to today*'.<sup>51</sup>

43 Dorchester Abbey in-depth case study

44 Hexham Abbey in-depth case study

45 Beverley Minster and Beverley St Mary's in-depth case study

46 Great Yarmouth Minster in-depth case study

47 National Churches Trust ComRes poll on Church Buildings, 2016

48 A point discussed in more detail within the Church Building Review Report, 2015

49 Wymondham Abbey case study

50 Bow Common, St Paul's in-depth case study

51 Cartmel Priory case study

# 3

## Understanding the Opportunities and Challenges



### Brighton, St Mary's

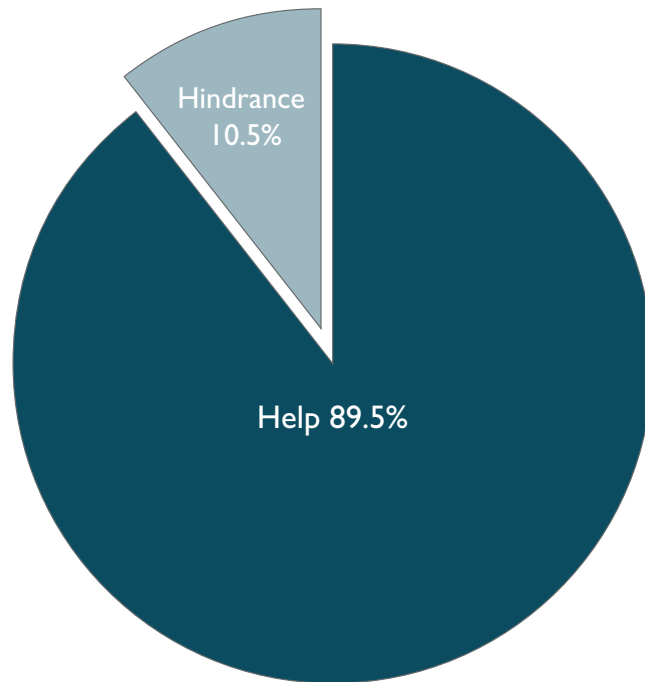
*'Our building comes with big problems and a repair bill of about £1.5 million, plus a likely bill for a new facilities block of £650,000. But the sheer loveliness of the interior and the affection it evokes, the fact that it is so obviously a successful piece of architecture that people respond positively to, is what makes it worth fighting to raise the funds to save and enhance it. Our building is our single biggest asset because it brings people in.'*

(Brighton, St Mary's case study )

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section draws on the evidence base of over 50 case studies gathered as part of this survey. Six key themes are explored; impact of significance, organisation and responsibility, finances, making changes, current use and welcoming visitors.

### 3.2 THE IMPACT OF THE BUILDING'S SIGNIFICANCE



Major Parish Churches were asked whether the size and/or heritage significance of their church a help or a hindrance:

#### 3.2.1 Help or hindrance?

Almost 90% of the Major Parish Church representatives surveyed believe the scale and significance of their church buildings are a help rather than a hindrance.<sup>01</sup> For many, the building represents their biggest asset, *'both for its rich and varied history, but also the role it plays in mission and ministry today.'*<sup>02</sup> Many rejected the notion that the scale of historic fabric or national importance is a constraint as they often use their heritage as a tool for mission and ministry. For example, the PCC of Toxteth, St James in the City in Liverpool (see page 25).<sup>03</sup> The tradition it maintains in our towns and villages, and the versatile way it can accommodate different types of activities and worship.<sup>04</sup> Nottingham St Mary stated that *'looking after the church on very limited resources is a major challenge but we use the building to help people connect with their Christian heritage.'*<sup>05</sup>

<sup>01</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>02</sup> Brighton, St Mary's in-depth case study

<sup>03</sup> Brighton, St Mary in-depth case study

<sup>04</sup> Bow Common, St Paul in-depth case study

<sup>05</sup> Nottingham, St Mary's case study

Just under 80% of Major Parish Church representatives surveyed felt that the national designation of their church buildings as Grade I, Grade II\* or Grade II was a help rather than a hindrance. Access to specialist advice, funding and higher visitor numbers were all noted as benefits of being a designated heritage asset. Access to funding was cited in survey responses as being particularly helpful. Having a unique or rare feature allows for the development of greater opportunities. At Hexham Abbey, for example, a new scheme of interpretation was recently introduced as part of a wider project to carry out much needed repairs to the church building.<sup>06</sup>

While scale and significance, and their listed status is an overall help, this response from the Major Parish Church representatives was qualified by related concerns. For example, the substantial repair costs they face, the demands associated with the statutory process for making changes and the sheer difficulty in maintaining a building of such a substantial scale. At Hexham Abbey, the PCC representative highlighted that even changing a light bulb can be a massive operation.<sup>07</sup> More information on the statutory process and statutory bodies can be found in section 3.5.

A small proportion (11%) of Major Parish Churches felt that their building was a hindrance. For example, Leeds Minster's representative described how the historic building is a barrier to change overall. The radical Victorian liturgical plan of the building filled the nave and galleries with seating, which is considered to be unusable for contemporary liturgy and is thought to preclude many other uses.<sup>08</sup> At others, like Stow Minster in Lincolnshire, the sheer size of the building can be intimidating to visitors and those responsible for its care.<sup>09</sup>

*"Is the scale and significance of a Major Parish Church a help or hindrance? I think it can be both! It can help as there are often more people involved and interested in the church because of its size or heritage value, but it can be a hindrance as there is more fabric to deal with and more statutory interest so more organisations need to agree to any work."*

*Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell*



#### **Toxteth, St James**

The PCC of Toxteth, St James in the City in Liverpool, made the conscious decision to establish their Student City church in a closed Georgian church (which was also on Historic England Heritage at Risk register) because the building was considered to be an expression of the traditional function of worship. The benefits of worshipping within a heritage asset include the awe that it inspires in visitors and the passion it inspires in the local community. The poor condition of the building was not seen as a major constraint to their ambition.

<sup>06</sup> Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

<sup>07</sup> Hexham Abbey in-depth case study

<sup>08</sup> Leeds Minster in-depth case study

<sup>09</sup> Stow Minster in-depth case study

### 3.2.2 Condition and Repairs

The nationwide fabric condition survey, based on Quinquennial Inspection reports, carried out by the CBC in 2013<sup>10</sup> (funded by Historic England) found that 4% of Major Parish Churches were in 'very bad' condition and 16% were in a 'poor' condition. This total of 20% of Major Parish Churches in a 'poor' or 'very bad' condition is compared to 12% of Church of England parish churches.<sup>11</sup>

The most common repair issues were related to high-level stonework and roofs. 28% of Major Parish Churches have 'very bad' or 'poor' condition high level stonework and roofs. This is compared with 17% of all Church of England parish churches. A fifth also has issues relating to rainwater goods and general condition, and 14% have structural concerns.<sup>12</sup>

Out of the 50 Major Parish Churches involved in this research project, 40% of representatives cited urgent or extensive repairs to be the most significant challenges facing them. The church architects surveyed for this study believed that the biggest threat to the fabric of Major Parish Churches were substantial repair needs.<sup>13</sup>

The significance of Major Parish Churches has an impact on repairs. 98% of Major Parish Churches are Grade I or II\* listed, putting them in the top, 5% of listed buildings in the country. These churches are important for a variety of reasons, but the age of their fabric, the high-quality features and evidence they provide of past human experiences all require repairs to be carried out sensitively. The specialist skills, craftsmanship and expertise needed to carry out high-quality repairs inevitably increases costs. In addition, the amount of scaffolding and duration it must remain in place for repairs adds unavoidable additional costs compared to a similar project on a smaller or less complex building. Linked to this is the threat that PCCs often do not have the financial resources available to carry out such demanding repairs. The financial implications of caring for a Major Parish Church is considered in more detail in section 3.4.

### 3.2.3 Heritage at Risk

The National Heritage at Risk register (HAR) was launched by Historic England in 1998 to help national organisations and the government to understand the overall state of England's historic sites. The annual research provides the Official Statistics on those sites that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development, including places of worship.<sup>14</sup>

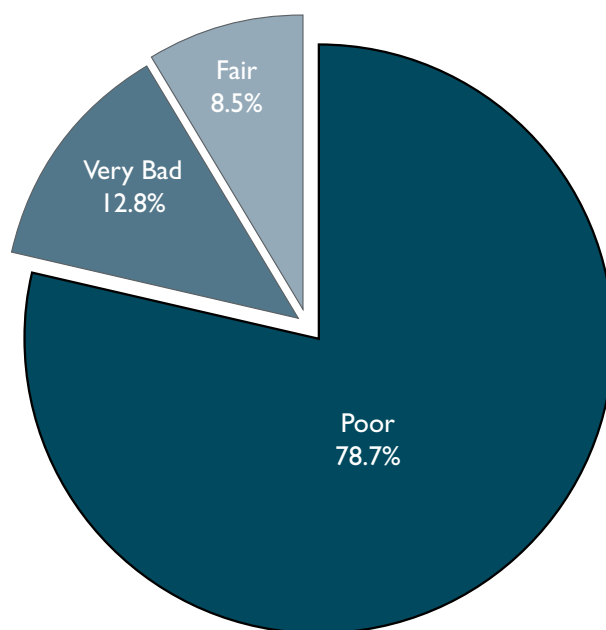
14.7% of Major Parish Churches are on the 2016 Heritage at Risk register, compared with 6.8% of all Church of England parish churches. This higher proportion of Major Parish Churches in poor condition reflects both the sheer scale of fabric but also its significance.

*"The substantial costs of repairing and up-keeping buildings of this size is much higher than most churches in the diocese. This can cause the building to become a hindrance to mission and sustainability."*

*Historic Churches Support Officer*

The ancient fabric of St Germans Priory in Cornwall has very different repair needs to the innovative twentieth-century materials used at Bow Common, St Paul in London, but both have substantial costs associated with their repair and maintenance. Recognising the distinctive characteristics, one church architect identified that *'the size of these churches is always an issue as there is simply so much fabric for the PCC to maintain to the required standard.'*<sup>15</sup>

57% of churches on the Heritage at Risk register are found within areas of high deprivation, compared to 35% of Major Parish Churches overall. This indicates that higher levels of deprivation have an impact on the sustainability of a Major Parish Church.<sup>16</sup>



The condition of Major Parish Churches included on the Heritage at Risk register (2015). In total, 16% of Major Parish Churches are on the Register.

<sup>10</sup> ChurchCare, National Church Buildings Fabric Survey, 2013. The findings of this survey differ from the HAR register entries due to different assessment methods.

<sup>11</sup> ChurchCare, 'National Church Buildings Fabric Survey', 2013

<sup>12</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches, drawn from QI data

<sup>13</sup> 25% responses with this answer

<sup>14</sup> Heritage at Risk <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/buildings/>

<sup>15</sup> Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

<sup>16</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches



### 3.2.4 Condition of Fixtures and Fittings

ChurchCare (Cathedral and Church Buildings Division, Archbishops' Council) has included several artefacts from Major Parish Churches on its list of '100 Church Treasures'. Each listed artefact requires conservation work in order to ensure its survival. Examples from Major Parish Churches include;<sup>17</sup>

- Stow Minster: Twelfth to thirteenth-century wall painting of St Thomas Beckett
- Ludlow, St Laurence: Fifteenth-century misericords
- Waltham Abbey: Fifteenth-century Doom painting

Organ repairs are regularly cited as being a concern. Coyden Minster; Ludlow, St Laurence; St Germans Priory; Waltham Abbey; Congleton, St Peter; Portsea, St Mary; Bradford on Avon, Holy Trinity with St Laurence; Lancaster Priory; and Northampton, Holy Sepulchre all cited recent, current or future organ repair projects with associated costs in the tens or hundreds of thousands of pounds.<sup>18</sup>

*"On a practical level, the scale of the building is entirely different to a small parish church, and even routine maintenance can be a major operation."*

Hexham Abbey in-depth case study

### 3.2.5 Heritage Asset or a Tool for Mission?

One consequence of being a nationally significant Major Parish Church is the emphasis that is often placed on heritage, rather than mission and ministry. Survey responses from both church and diocesan representatives expressed a concern that this role as a heritage asset is often prioritised above the church's role as an active place of worship. One archdeacon described these disparate roles as the need to balance 'a spiritual and community resource, a place of worship, an income generator, and an interesting historic building with a story to tell.'<sup>19</sup>

The importance of Major Parish Churches at a national level can add an additional layer of pressure on those responsible for their care. An internationally significant church building will generate interest and support far wider than its geographical parish, with many individuals, organisations and statutory bodies having a vested interest in its management or development. For example, the eye of the international community was trained upon Stow Minster after it was included on the World Monuments Fund's 2006 Watch List of the world's 100 most endangered historically significant sites.<sup>20</sup> This gave exposure to a rural church with a parish population of under 2,000 but also placed its PCC under the spotlight.

<sup>17</sup> ChurchCare, 100 Church Treasures, 2015 [http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/100\\_Church\\_Treasures/100\\_Church\\_Treasures\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/100_Church_Treasures/100_Church_Treasures_WEB.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>19</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>20</sup> Stow Minster in-depth case study

The perception that Major Parish Churches should be seen as museum pieces rather than as living places of worship is a fear shared by many involved in their management. Pershore Abbey's representative stated that 'we are not a museum, the building must work for today's people' and Stratford on Avon, Holy Trinity said that 'more people come to see Shakespeare's grave than for any other reason but Holy Trinity is not a museum, it is a living church.'

The balance between appealing to and catering for heritage tourists and retaining a principal focus on religious use is an issue that is carefully considered by those responsible for Major Parish Churches.

### 3.2.6 Cathedral-scale Buildings

A re-occurring theme was that Major Parish Churches are often perceived as being analogous to Church of England cathedrals.<sup>21</sup> This assumption is one largely based on scale, significance and prominence.

*"The main challenge to future sustainability is the need to operate with cathedral-style ministry without cathedral resourcing and profile."*

Archdeacon, online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

The additional roles Major Parish Churches take on beyond their traditional parish uses are explored in more detail in section 3.5. It is clear that while many Major Parish Churches are mistakenly thought to be cathedrals this comparison is perfunctory. Major Parish Churches do not have the resources to operate like a cathedral. This was an observation provided by 10% of the Major Parish Churches surveyed.<sup>22</sup>

The representative of Leeds Minster, in particular, noted that the financial, clergy, personnel or management support systems in place for cathedrals simply do not exist for Major Parish Churches.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>22</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>23</sup> Leeds Minster, Dorchester Abbey, Hull, Holy Trinity, Nottingham, St Mary's and Beverley Minster case studies

Two of the Major Parish Churches surveyed were former cathedrals for their diocese<sup>24</sup> and several have become known regionally by titles such as 'Cathedral of the Peak' (Tideswell, St John the Baptist) and Cathedral of South Cheshire' (Nantwich, St Mary). For some Major Parish Churches, the need to manage expectations is high. At Boston St Botolph, the PCC representative wrote that 'people anticipate the experience of a cathedral visit; however, the building is not resourced like a cathedral, and much of the floor space is unused.'

### 3.2.7 Additional Responsibilities

The PCCs of Major Parish Churches are often not only responsible for the listed building they use for active worship, but other designated heritage assets such as ruined abbeys, listed tombs and railings, war memorials, lychgates, chapels or monastic ranges. 36% of Major Parish Churches have additional designated structures for which they are responsible. Of these, 15% are responsible for a Scheduled Monument, which requires consent from the Secretary of State for any changes or works.<sup>25</sup> These additional responsibilities can be both a financial burden (maintaining them in a good condition) and an opportunity to provide improved visitor experiences (through community projects and interpretation).

The responsibility of additional designated heritage assets has implications on both finances and time. For example, at Hexham Abbey the cost of carrying out archaeological investigations and preparing reports are substantial, even for minor works.<sup>26</sup> The PCC has resisted developing their car park due to the associated costs and the statutory process involved. At Stow Minster, repair of a water leak was delayed by six weeks whilst scheduled monument consent was acquired to enable below ground works.<sup>27</sup>

The PCC and clergy responsible for a Major Parish Church are often also responsible for a wider group of churches as 88% of Major Parish Churches are within a larger Benefice<sup>28</sup>. This puts pressure on resources and is a key difference between Major Parish Churches and cathedrals. For example, Nottingham, St Mary must share its financial resources between three churches, and Great Yarmouth Minster has responsibility for two other churches.<sup>29</sup>

### 3.2.8 Heritage Crime

Over 40% of the Major Parish Churches surveyed cited lead theft as being a recent problem at their buildings.<sup>30</sup> The scrap value of the stolen lead is relatively low in comparison to the cost of repairing the physical loss and damage in addition to the emotional impact suffered by the church community. The Sentencing Guidelines for theft offences have recently been reviewed and any person convicted of the theft of a heritage asset, such as church roof lead, may on conviction, be liable to a greater penalty.<sup>31</sup>

Over 40% of Major Parish Churches mentioned anti-social behaviour within and surrounding the church as being a problem.<sup>32</sup> This included vandalism, arson, substance abuse, rough sleeping and minor theft. For example, Toxteth, St James in the City has needed to install heavy-duty metal locks, lock boxes and covers to prevent people cutting through the door to gain access, despite these efforts, attempts to break in are still made.<sup>33</sup>

### 3.2.9 Insurance and Utilities

For some churches, building insurance represents a high proportion of their expenditure, while for others it is only a minor outgoing. Out of the Major Parish Churches surveyed, insurance costs were often the fifth largest item of expenditure, behind building fabric repairs, parish share, payroll and utilities.<sup>34</sup> The cost of utilities were often the fourth largest item of expenditure, behind building fabric repairs, parish share and payroll.<sup>35</sup> For further information, see section 3.4.

Prohibitive heating costs are often identified by Major Parish Church representatives as a burden, which can prevent the building being used throughout the year. While some parishioners or even whole congregations may be willing to sit in a cold church during a service, it is clear that attitudes and expectations are changing.<sup>36</sup>

24 Bath Abbey and Guildford, Holy Trinity case studies

25 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

26 Hexham Abbey in-depth case study

27 Stow Minster in-depth case study

28 Statistics provided by the Church Buildings Council, Research and Statistics Unit, September 2016

29 50 case studies

30 12 in-depth case studies

31 Historic England, National Policing Officer

32 12 in-depth case studies

33 Toxteth, St James in the City in-depth case study

34 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

35 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

36 50 case studies

### 3.3 ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

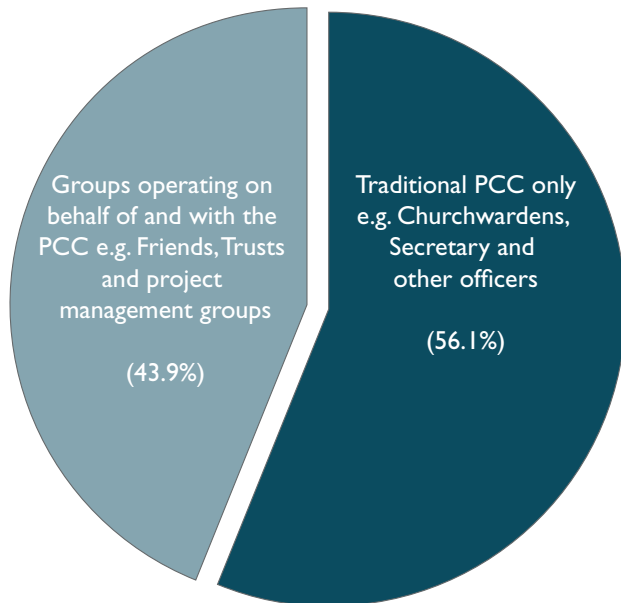
#### 3.3.1 Parochial Church Councils

Major Parish Churches may be large, prominent and significant buildings, but they are not cathedrals and almost all currently operate within the parochial parish system rather than a cathedral-style staffing structure.<sup>37</sup> This means that each Major Parish Church resources itself in the same way as any other parish church.

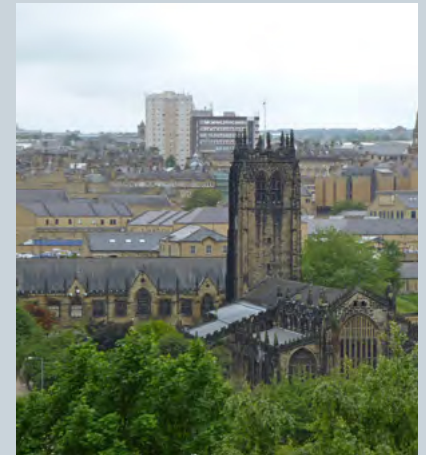
A Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the executive committee of a Church of England parish and consists of clergy, elected member and representatives of the laity. PCCs are *excepted charities* and are governed by Church of England legislation including the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules, amended 2011. The PCC is a body corporate and the assets of a PCC must be held and applied, solely to promote the charitable purposes for which the PCC is established. The PCC has a duty to protect the assets of the charity and is therefore responsible for the repair and maintenance of the church building.<sup>38</sup>

Liabilities are made against the PCC as a body, rather than individual members. However, the responsibility of members of the PCC goes beyond being volunteers who give a few hours of their time to the church, they have significant legal responsibilities and members can be personally liable if decisions were made without the authorisation of the PCC. This can be a source of anxiety to PCC members; for example, at Stow Minster, protracted disputes with insurers and building contractors have placed a substantial burden on the individual members of a small PCC.<sup>39</sup>

A traditional PCC generally consists of officer roles, including a secretary, treasurer and two churchwardens. A PCC will have a mandatory standing committee that makes decisions on behalf of the PCC and may also have a number of sub-committees that provide advice to the PCC; although, ultimately, all decisions and responsibilities rest with the PCC.



Organisational structure of Major Parish Churches<sup>40</sup>



Halifax Minster PCC

*“The diocese has no strategy for how to develop the life of the Major Parish Churches above that of an ordinary parish church, with Cathedrals defensive and parish churches envious of the perceived wealth and resources, which are often sorely lacking!”*

(Halifax Minster case study)

<sup>37</sup> The identified exceptions are St Germans Priory and Sunderland Minster

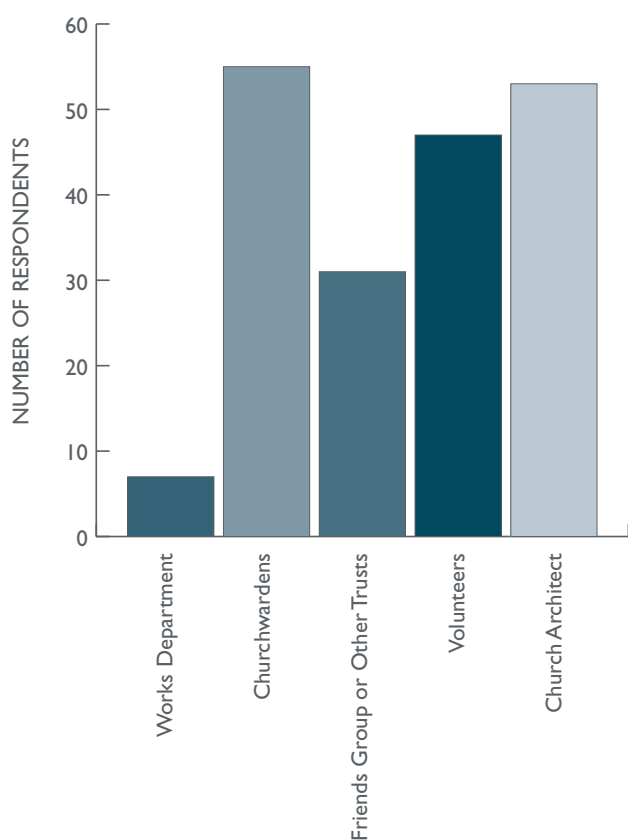
<sup>38</sup> PCC: Legal position of members, Church of England, 2013 <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1701935/legal%20position%20of%20pcc%20members%20final.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Stow Minster in-depth case study

<sup>40</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

### 3.3.2 Supporting Management Structures

44% of Major Parish Churches have sub-committees, groups or trusts that support the PCC,<sup>41</sup> while 48% of Major Parish Churches also have a Friends Group.<sup>42</sup> The majority of these sub-committees operate permanently, although some Major Parish Churches, such as Bow Common, St Paul's have chosen to operate task-based sub-committees, which can be set up or disbanded as necessary.<sup>43</sup>



Those actively involved in the management and maintenance of Major Parish Church buildings<sup>44</sup>

Friends Groups and Preservation Trusts are usually autonomous, registered charities that operate independently of the PCC. Great Yarmouth Minster, for example, has a Minster Preservation Trust, which independently raises funds for the repair and maintenance of the building.<sup>45</sup>

41 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents  
 42 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents  
 43 Bow Common, St Paul's in-depth case study  
 44 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents  
 45 Great Yarmouth Minster in-depth case study

Bath Abbey operates with a traditional PCC structure that retains ultimate responsibility; however, in practice this role is for legal purposes only, with the majority of tasks carried out by the Abbey staff, both lay and clerical. The Abbey has an unusually high amount of staff; the most active of which is the project management group, who manage major projects but also the day-to-day maintenance of the building.<sup>46</sup>

*“Because of the amount of work associated with the Abbey we have established a body which is not unlike a Volunteer Lay Chapter with four co-ordinators for Finance, Fabric, Worship and Mission to work alongside the Wardens - we also have an active group of Friends whose Trustees form a Committee.”*

Dorchester Abbey, online survey

Some Major Parish Churches have recently begun to scrutinise their existing management structures in order to improve efficiency. For example, the new incumbent at Leeds Minster has carried out a substantial overhaul of the existing management systems, and tough decisions have been made to disband the sub-committees and the boys' choir, and close the café. The incumbent is now working to audit the existing arrangements and put more efficient systems in place, providing options for a more sustainable future use.<sup>47</sup>

### 3.3.3 Local Governance Initiatives

The majority of Major Parish Churches surveyed had a traditional PCC management structure (96%) although several have trialled pioneering forms of governance. These are outlined below.

#### St German's Priory

St Germans Priory formulated a new model of governance in 2012 which saw the PCC retain responsibility for mission and ministry, but the responsibility for managing and maintaining the Priory building transferred to a Trust. After many complex and challenging discussions, a lease of the building to the Trust, unprecedented in English canon law, was signed in the spring of 2016. The success of this form of governance has yet to be established.<sup>48</sup>

46 Bath Abbey case study  
 47 Leeds Minster in-depth case study  
 48 St Germans Priory in-depth case study

### Sunderland Minster

Sunderland Minster was set up as an Extra Parochial Place of Worship (EPP) in the early 21st century. An EPP is a building which no longer has a parish or any duties within a parish. This arrangement allows for flexible or specialist functions without by pastoral responsibilities. Sunderland Minster describes itself as functioning like a Parish Church Cathedral and is governed by a Minster Council supported by a Congregation Committee and Minster Advisory Group. The status of the Minster as an Extra Parochial Place has enabled it to develop a distinctive role in the city. It presents itself as a community building for all, offering foodbanks, meditation, interfaith work, as well as playing a prominent role in making Sunderland a City of Sanctuary.

### Toxteth, St James in the City

Toxteth, St James' in the City, Liverpool is a network church;<sup>49</sup> its geographical parish extends only to the boundary of the churchyard. Its role is to support students and young professionals within the whole city and therefore its influence reaches far wider than a normal parish church. The church has also set up independent charitable companies to support the PCC: LivServe and LivGrow. Both are charitable companies limited by guarantee to reduce the risk to the PCC. LivServe focuses on new build development, community facilities and the long-term restoration of the church. LivGrow was set up separately to support the ministry of the church and fund future youth and community workers.<sup>50</sup>

### Hexham Abbey

Hexham Abbey has established the Hexham Abbey Heritage Trust Ltd (HAHTL), which is an independent company, governed by a board of trustees. HAHTL employs eight people, both full and part time and is a limited trading subsidiary that manages the Abbey's shop, café and hire as a venue. The company is run independently of the PCC. The purpose of the trading company is to generate income (which is fed back into the church) but it must ensure it also remain consistent with the vision of the PCC.<sup>51</sup>

### Stow Minster

Stow Minster in Lincolnshire currently runs under a traditional PCC structure. The PCC has, however, asked the Diocese of Lincoln to explore the possibility of removing the church from the parish system, with a view to conferring the status of Extra Parochial Place (EPP) upon it and forming a Board of Trustees to take over its governance. The move from PCC to EPP has not been an efficient process to date and there is some confusion and anxiety among PCC members as to what this means and what impact it will have on Stow Minster's ministry, particularly its ministry to the local community.<sup>52</sup>

### 3.3.4 Effectiveness of New Models of Local Governance

Much thought has been given to local models of governance and legislative frameworks in recent years. The Church Buildings Review found that this needed to be simpler, less prescriptive and less burdensome for laity and clergy.<sup>53</sup>

It appears that while a small number of churches have set up new forms of governance, or explored additional layers of support through the formation of complementary charities/companies, none have been in existence long enough to make a clear assessment of their effectiveness.

A problem that has recently arisen with the EPP system is the ability of a church to register as a separate charity under the Charity Act for the use of a consecrated building as an active place of worship. One solution to this may be to retain a parish that encompasses only the churchyard or church building.<sup>54</sup>

A simple solution employed by several churches wishing to re-orientate their governance has been to develop partnerships with other churches or organisations to strengthen initiatives. Beverley Minster and Beverley, St Mary for example plan to submit a joint grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to capitalise on being two Major Parish Churches in one small town.<sup>55</sup> Great Yarmouth Minster on the other hand has partnered with a local school leading to music and language classes taking place in the church vestry as the school is over capacity.<sup>56</sup> Establishing long-term relationships with clients who hire the church or church hall are also shown to be of value as they provide a steady income.<sup>57</sup>

### 3.3.5 Regional Initiatives

At a diocesan level, new strategies that will affect Major Church Buildings are being explored in several regions. The Diocese of Norwich is developing a Diocesan Churches Trust to assist church communities with low population density and low congregation numbers. Its launch is being grant-aided by the Allchurches Trust and is likely to have an impact on all ten of the Major Parish Churches in the diocese.

In the Diocese of Exeter new initiatives similarly focus on the burden on PCCs of rural churches with small congregations. Diocesan and Church Commissioners' funding has been allocated to the initiatives and one element is temporarily removing many of the responsibilities for the church building from approximately 100 existing PCCs.

49 A network church is one that operates over a wide area, for example a city centre, and within a specific remit, such as a student or Fresh Expressions church.

50 Toxteth, St James' in-depth case study

51 Hexham Abbey in-depth case study

52 Stow Minster in-depth case study

53 Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

54 Anonymous source

55 Beverley Minster and Beverley, St Mary's in-depth case study

56 Great Yarmouth Minster in-depth case study

57 Bow Common, St Paul's and Brighton, St Mary's case studies

In the Diocese of Lincoln, a categorisation exercise has sought to place church buildings into four categories: Key Mission Church, Local Mission Church, Festival or Celebration Church. Benefices are encouraged to bid for diocesan resources.<sup>58</sup>

The Diocese of London is using Bishops' Mission Orders and Licences under Faculty to encourage new mission initiatives and shared or additional use arrangements for church buildings. The Diocese of Manchester has established a task group to develop a strategy for church buildings and the Diocese of Oxford has a New Communities Group, which is leading work on the provision of church, mission and ministry in new housing areas.<sup>59</sup>

### 3.3.6 National Initiatives

Several recent national initiatives have focused on church buildings and ways of helping them to be more sustainable in the future. These are outlined below.

#### Greater Churches Network

The Greater Churches Network is an informal association of non-cathedral churches which, by virtue of their great age, size, historical, architectural, or ecclesiastical importance, display many of the characteristics of a cathedral. Most churches in the group also fulfil a role which is additional to that of a normal parish church.

The network aims to provide help and support nationally to those dealing with the special problems of running a 'cathedral-like' church within the organisational and financial structure of a parish church; to enhance the quality of parish worship in such churches; and to promote wider recognition of the unique position and needs of churches in this category.<sup>60</sup> It has very limited resources and the primary contact is the Chairman.

There are over 50 Greater Churches and 14% of Major Parish Churches are members of the network. A list of the Greater Churches can be found in appendix H.

At a regional level, there are several 'larger churches' groups also existing within some dioceses to provide mutual support. One archdeacon described this as 'a self-help group designed to identify needs, share resources and ideas.' Another archdeacon used a larger churches group to work towards a different balance of funding to release the burden on our larger churches.<sup>61</sup>

#### Church Buildings Review Group (2015)

The Report of the Church Buildings Review Group (2015) was an attempt to undertake a comprehensive review of the Church of England's stewardship of its church buildings and includes a wide range of statistics and theological reflection, plus a survey of initiatives being undertaken in dioceses. The report identifies principles to shape the Church of England's approach and makes recommendations.

The report recommended that there should be no single Church of England strategy and that all parish churches should have their own initiatives. There was a recognition that, collectively parish churches bore an extensive responsibility for safeguarding the nation's material and spiritual heritage, stating *'Our 16,000 church buildings are a visible sign of ongoing Christian faith in communities throughout England as well as being an unparalleled part of our country's heritage.'*<sup>62</sup>

The report recommended that parish churches need more assured financial support in the long-term, that guidance on legal models for new uses is needed, that red tape should be reduced, that the establishment of so-called 'Festival Churches' should be explored and diocesan building reviews or audits should be carried out regularly. The report also stated that in order to facilitate new, creative models of managing and caring for buildings and free up clergy and laity for mission and ministry the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 should be amended to enable a PCC to formally transfer its care and maintenance liability to another body.<sup>63</sup>

#### English Churches and Cathedrals Sustainability Review

The UK Government has set up a *Review of English Cathedrals and Churches* under the Culture White Paper, which is charged with exploring new models of financing repairs and maintenance of churches and cathedrals, including reviewing existing maintenance costs and repairs funding from lottery and central government grants. The review will also identify and develop a series of tools/resources/models, draw on successful case studies, and existing management within the Church of England, Churches Conservation Trust and Heritage Lottery Fund. It will do this by consulting with stakeholders including: Church of England, church-goers, charities, local residents and business on ideas for uses of listed buildings for purposes beyond worship and current barriers that prevent these and how to generate revenue from these.

<sup>58</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

<sup>59</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

<sup>60</sup> <http://greaterchurches.org/about/>

<sup>61</sup> Archdeacons of Southwark and Hereford diocese, online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>62</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

<sup>63</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

### Festival Churches

Festival Church is a name recently coined for those rural church buildings identified by a diocese as no longer used for weekly worship, but which remain local icons and community assets. They are generally, (but not necessarily) at the opposite end of the spectrum to Major Parish Churches. An Association of Festival Churches has been set up by the Church Buildings Council to give support and advice to parishes looking at the 'Festival Churches' model. No churches have yet adopted the model but several dioceses are interested in exploring the concept further.<sup>64</sup>

### 3.3.7 Historic Titles

Some buildings retain their pre-reformation titles, such as Sherborne Abbey, Hexham Abbey and Christchurch Priory, while others have been given honorific titles very recently, such as Leeds and Sunderland Minster. Those titles may identify the historic roots of the building but often have little bearing on their practical management today, although these titles do influence the perceptions of local people and visitors. St Germans Priory, for example, made the conscious decision to rename the parish church a 'priory' when the new management trust was established.<sup>65</sup> Beverley Minster is an historic foundation and its extensive ministry around the region and beyond is arguably facilitated by both the beauty of the building and the Minster's historic function as a site of pilgrimage.<sup>66</sup>

### Minster Status

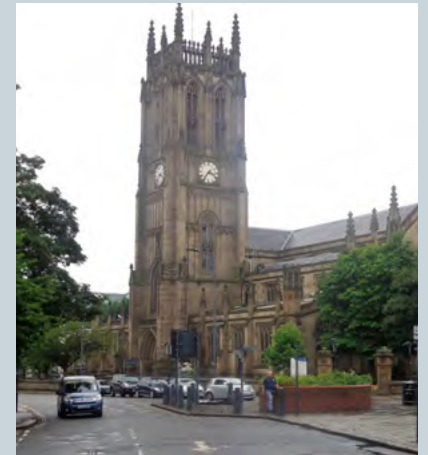
6% of Major Parish Churches have the honorific 'minster' in their titles.<sup>67</sup> Historic minsters are generally derived from Anglo-Saxon foundations but can be associated with any large or significant church. The title 'minster' was revived in the 1990s and is now bestowed upon existing parish churches for a variety of reasons, but generally it acknowledges the additional civic responsibilities of the church.

Several Major Parish Churches have been granted Minster status in recent years in recognition of their wide ministries. These include Doncaster Minster (2004); Croydon (2011); Grimsby Minster (2010); Halifax Minster (2009); Rotherham Minster (2004); and Leeds Minster (2012).<sup>68</sup>

The widely-held perception that a minster church has duties or roles beyond the traditional parish is an important one and requires further exploration beyond this study. Further understanding of why the minster title is conferred is also needed. An overview of some of the modern Minster churches surveyed as part of the initial case studies are included below.

### Leeds Minster

The Parish Church of St Peter-at-Leeds was designated Leeds Minster by the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds in 2012. The honorific 'minster' status was conferred upon the church in an attempt to address cultural and financial decline at the church, largely without consultation with the wider city as to what that might mean or whom it might benefit. No plan was put in place to make use of the new title and even the signage within the city continued to read 'Leeds Parish Church'. This has led to much confusion within the city as to what the church is, and how it serves the community. The current incumbent believes that 'Leeds Parish Church' was a more appropriate, and universally well-known title for the church.<sup>69</sup>



### Leeds Minster

Leeds Minster is the civic church of the City of Leeds and is a unique place of worship with a fascinating history. The last 20 years have seen a social and physical disconnect with the City of Leeds, with reserves dwindling to virtually nothing and with no agreed solutions to increase income. The title of 'Minster' was conferred in 2012 as an attempt to address the long-term decline. However, this was perceived to have not been managed effectively and is a source of confusion to many people. The arrival of the recently appointed incumbent has brought the Minster into a transitional period, which has seen many of the previous management and governance practices reviewed. Tough decisions have been made to disband the sub-committees and the boys' choir, and to close the café. The new incumbent is working to audit the existing arrangements and to provide options for a more sustainable future use.

64 <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/open-sustainable/association-of-festival-churches>

65 St Germans Priory in-depth case study

66 Beverley Minster and Beverley, St Mary's in-depth case study

67 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

68 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

69 Leeds Minster case study

### Doncaster Minster

In a similar way to Leeds Minster, many local people still know Doncaster Minster as the Church of St George. The Minster was officially given the title of Minster in June 2004 in recognition of the wider civic role of the church within the borough of Doncaster, which is the largest in the country. However, the church was also historically known as the Minster Church of St George, so occupies a role as both a modern and historic minster. The Minster takes on many 'cathedral-like' duties and was described by the architectural historian Pevsner as the most cathedral-like church of George Gilbert Scott's parish churches.<sup>70</sup>

### Halifax Minster

The parish church of St John the Baptist was granted Minster status in 2009 and is Halifax and the Calderdale's Civic Church. The Minster seats more people than Bradford and Wakefield Cathedrals and considers its role as a Major Parish Church within the diocese to be unique.<sup>71</sup>

### Croydon Minster

The parish church of St John the Baptist was granted Minster status in 2011, reflecting its wide ministry and continued ecclesiastical significance to its surrounding community. The PCC believes the mission of the church is to reach out to all people of the parish and wider community and to be a centre for pilgrims seeking to connect with the local heritage.<sup>72</sup>

### Grimsby Minster

The parish church of St Mary and St James, Grimsby is situated in a prominent location in an area of high deprivation. The bestowal of minster status upon the church in 2010 sought to boost the regeneration of the town whilst providing a new centre of the community for local people. The Minster has good visitor facilities and makes use of its building to engage people through arts, events and social action.<sup>73</sup>

### 3.3.8 Human Resources

On average, the Major Parish Churches surveyed have six to ten individuals regularly involved in the management and maintenance of the church building. These include clergy, architects and churchwardens, skilled local people and Friends groups mostly comprising volunteers.<sup>74</sup> The day-to-day running of church buildings often falls to church warden (83%) or clergy (85%), with few Major Parish Churches hiring paid officers for visitor services (4%), HR and Finance (7%), marketing (5%), or curatorial duties (5%).<sup>75</sup>

#### Clergy

The number of stipendiary clergy per parish church was analysed as part of the Church Buildings Review in 2015.<sup>76</sup> This study found that in some dioceses there is an average of four church buildings per member of stipendiary clergy (Hereford and Lincoln Dioceses) and between three to four in others (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, Norwich, Salisbury, Gloucester, Truro, Exeter, and York).<sup>77</sup> Therefore, in many cases, Major Parish Churches have a higher proportion of stipendiary clergy support compared with a smaller parish church, but far from the resources and paid staff at most cathedrals.

Half of the Major Parish Churches assessed for the in-depth case studies only had one full-time clergy member. 16% had no stipendiary clergy at all; for example, Brighton, St Mary and Birmingham, St Agatha only has a House for Duty priest each. Those that had more than one incumbent status priest were Hexham Abbey (with two full-time clergy), Nottingham, St Mary (1.5) and Leeds Minster (1.5). Great Yarmouth Minster has the most resource, with three stipendiary clergy, two OLM, one retired priest and three lay-readers; however, these are spread across the three churches within the group.<sup>78</sup> Definitions for the different types of clergy can be found in appendix B.

12% of Major Parish Churches surveyed online were in interregnum at the time of research.<sup>79</sup> Stow Minster, for example, has been interregnum for over five years. In the case of Stow Minster, this lack of leadership is a negative experience leading to stagnation and the inability to make crucial strategic decisions, potentially threatening progress, and ultimately, sustainability.<sup>80</sup>

70 Doncaster Minster case study

71 Halifax Minster case study

72 Croydon Minster case study

73 Grimsby Minster case study

74 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

75 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

76 This was across all parish churches, not exclusively Major Parish Churches

77 Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015. Only in London does the number of stipendiary clergy exceed the number of church buildings.

78 12 in-depth case studies

79 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

80 Stow Minster in-depth case study



On the other hand, a short period of interregnum can present an opportunity for PCCs to step back and assess the future direction of change. At Great Yarmouth Minster, the PCC is preparing for the retirement of the incumbent by updating the Parish Profile. They see this as a way to refocus energy, consider priorities and ensure that support for the church building, including some deferred major projects, will be on the agenda for the new incumbent.<sup>81</sup>

Over 50% of the Major Parish Church representatives surveyed online have an incumbent who is very active in this area of work. Only 2% said their incumbent was not active in this area of work.<sup>82</sup> It is clear that the requirement to manage the repair, maintenance and interpretation of a major historic building of national significance falls not only on the volunteers of the PCC, but on those whose principal focus is the ministry and mission of the church. The ability of incumbents and assistant clergy to successfully navigate the challenges and opportunities that come with a Major Parish Churches can have significant implications when applying for funding and delivering successful schemes.<sup>83</sup>

Leadership from clergy is often considered to be a vital resource for PCCs and others involved in the management of Major Parish Churches. Representatives from Brighton, St Mary<sup>84</sup> Waltham Abbey<sup>85</sup> and Blandford Forum, St Peter and St Paul<sup>86</sup> all cite the importance of clergy leadership in this regard.

As pointed out by a representative of Shoreditch, St Leonard, the role of the clergy in Major Parish Church management can be rather nuanced: 'it is not necessarily a priest's job to look after a church building, but it is [her/his] responsibility.'<sup>87</sup>

*"The incumbent is a man of vision and likes to be involved whenever possible in the management of the building for which he has had, and continues to have, some innovative ideas to help make the best of what we have and to think forward to what might be possible as developments in the future."*

Malmesbury Abbey case study

81 Great Yarmouth Minster in-depth case study  
82 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents  
83 Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell  
84 Brighton St Mary case study  
85 Waltham Abbey case study  
86 Blandford Forum, St Peter and St Paul case study  
87 Shoreditch, St Leonard case study

### Paid Part or Full-time Staff

PCCs and clergy of Major Parish Churches are often supported by paid employees, reflecting the specialist ministry expected by the community. 42% of Major Parish Churches have a director of music; 26% have a youth worker; and 22% have tour guides.<sup>88</sup> Directors of Music are usually part-time posts, as are youth officers.<sup>89</sup> Some Major Parish Churches, such as Bath Abbey and Beverley Minster, have a large, complex staffing structure with dedicated departments.<sup>90</sup> The average number of paid staff per Major Parish Church is five but this encompasses ranges from Bath Abbey (20 paid staff) and Beverley Minster (16), to Beverley, St Mary (1) and Bow Common, St Paul (0).

### Volunteers

Volunteers are vital resources for Major Parish Churches (as they are for all parish churches) and play an important role in maintaining church buildings. All Major Parish Churches rely heavily upon volunteers to operate. These volunteers can be members of the PCC or part of a pool of PCC supporters and sub-committees. Quite often, they act as welcomers, tour guides or stewards. The average number of volunteers for a Major Parish Church is 57.<sup>91</sup> Many Major Parish Church PCCs are, however, keen to recruit additional volunteers to improve capacity and resilience, such as at Guilford, Holy Trinity<sup>92</sup> and Rotherham Minster<sup>93</sup> where the PCCs would like to increase volunteers in order to address skills gaps and/or capacity issues.

Recurring concerns include the lack of volunteers with specialisms such as business planning and heritage skills;<sup>94</sup> the burden of the complexities of the Faculty process;<sup>95</sup> the 'finite working life' of a retired volunteer;<sup>96</sup> and a shrinking pool of people to draw upon locally.<sup>97</sup> There can also be issues with managing volunteers without a paid management structure in place.

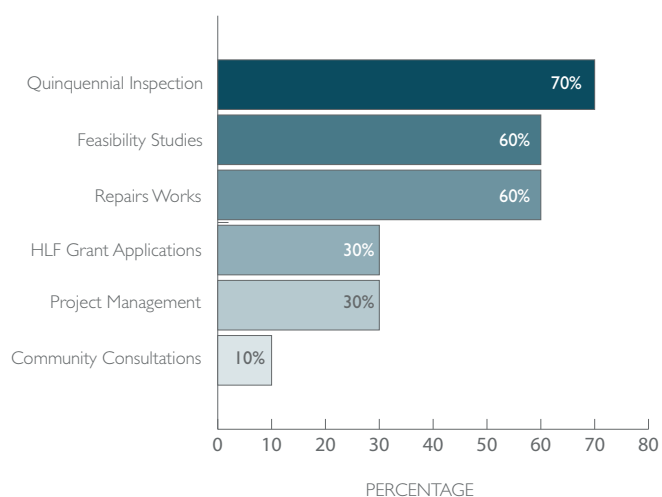
There is no doubt that volunteers are crucial to keeping Major Parish Churches open on a daily basis (which is often an expectation of the public), and providing valuable information to visitors. Recruiting more volunteers is certainly a key component of any model for future sustainability.

88 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents  
89 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents  
90 Bath Abbey case study and Beverley Minster case study  
91 12 in-depth case studies  
92 Guilford, Holy Trinity case study  
93 Rotherham Minster case study  
94 Howden Minster case study  
95 Tideswell, St John the Baptist case study  
96 Dorchester Abbey, film contribution  
97 Northampton, Holy Sepulchre case study

## Church and Project Architects

Many Major Parish Churches receive support in building management and maintenance from their church architect or an architect contracted to deliver a particular project. This support can form part of a commissioned package of services provided by the architect to his/her Major Parish Church client. Alternatively, services may be commissioned piecemeal. Services might include, but not be limited to, the production of a Quinquennial Inspection report (QI), routine maintenance advice, scheduling and specifying repairs, and managing large repair projects and/or substantial new build and conservation works.<sup>98</sup>

As an articulation of what can be a vital relationship for PCCs, Nottingham, St Mary's representative stated '*our architect is very local to the church and is an invaluable resource for the PCC. He is always the first port of call for building-related matters.*'<sup>99</sup> This highlights the varied role architects are expected to take on for Major Parish Churches: '*archaeologist, architect, art historian, sensitive engineer all in one body.*'<sup>100</sup> It is apparent that architects are relied upon to provide specialist knowledge that might be lacking within the PCC.



Services provided to Major Parish Churches by the conservation architects surveyed

The architects surveyed for this study noted that because the majority of repair or conservation projects require HLF funding (which has a focus on broadening access to heritage), they now see a focus firmly on community engagement and use. One respondent stated that '*there is almost always some element of extension or new facility, in addition to conservation and repair work and provision of interpretation.*'<sup>101</sup> This shift in the funding landscape has been driven by the funding priorities of the main national funders, such as the HLF. It is likely that the need for wider engagement and education beyond repairs will continue to rise up the agenda.

<sup>98</sup> Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

<sup>99</sup> Nottingham, St Mary in-depth case study

<sup>100</sup> Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

<sup>101</sup> Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

The architects surveyed were all positive about the significance of Major Parish Churches and the role they played in their communities. The requirement for more specific funding for Major Parish Churches and the need to improve their suitability for 21st century use were both cited regularly.<sup>102</sup>

### 3.3.9 Skills, Resources and Local Capacity

The skills and capacity of PCCs to take on a major project or follow through on a vision document is crucial to a sustainable future. . Inexperienced, under-skilled or demoralised volunteers can be unintentional barriers to change and some may deliberately oppose it. 22% of the Major Parish Church representatives surveyed acknowledged that they had identified skills gaps in their management teams.<sup>103</sup> Some also expressed concern that there is a disconnect between the PCC's skills and the expectation of national bodies such as funders and amenity societies. Specific skill gaps include historic building maintenance, project planning, volunteer management, fundraising and visitor engagement.<sup>104</sup>

However, the value of having competent, enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers within Major Parish Churches cannot be overstated, evidenced by the financial value placed on their time by the HLF. At Brighton, St Mary, the value of volunteer time on the first phase of repairs amounted to 14% of the total project costs, or £50,000 on top of the £350,000 capital repair costs.<sup>105</sup>

Some Major Parish Churches, such as Leeds Minster, Doncaster Minster, Great Yarmouth Minster and Toxteth, St James in the City are actively working towards developing additional capacity within their teams in order to cope with everyday management and major project needs.<sup>106</sup> Toxteth St James in the City, for example, asks new members to fill out a personal profile form to highlight any skills that might be particularly useful to the church or to help allocate them to a task they may successfully carry out.<sup>107</sup> This has been received by the congregation as a positive approach. Others have struggled to find the skills they require and Nottingham St Mary acknowledges an over-reliance on the skills of its church architect to absorb the shortfall.<sup>108</sup>

An inherent risk to Major Parish Churches is the reliance on the skills of one individual to manage major HLF or otherwise-funded projects. This is particularly clear at Brighton, St Mary, where one churchwarden works full-time but unpaid to support a sustainable future for the church.<sup>109</sup> This is a serious concern in those churches where a small group of volunteers is the positive driving influence or

<sup>102</sup> Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

<sup>103</sup> Croydon Minster, Doncaster Minster, Bow Common, St Paul's, Minster Abbey, Guildford, Holy Trinity, Portsea, St Mary's, Howden Minster, Cartmel Priory, Boston, St Botolph's, Northampton, Holy Sepulchre and Great Yarmouth Minster

<sup>104</sup> Croydon Minster, Doncaster Minster, Bow Common, St Paul's, Minster Abbey, Guildford, Holy Trinity, Portsea, St Mary's, Howden Minster, Cartmel Priory, Boston, St Botolph's, Northampton, Holy Sepulchre and Great Yarmouth Minster

<sup>105</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>106</sup> Brighton, St Mary's in-depth case study

<sup>107</sup> 50 case studies for the aforementioned churches

<sup>108</sup> Toxteth, St James' in-depth case study

<sup>109</sup> Nottingham St Mary in-depth case study

a single individual is relied upon. The loss of this driving force, for whatever reason, could halt the entire development, introducing an unknown quantity as to whether or not a church be sustained in use.

*“Major Parish Churches are a major part of our nation’s heritage, but are left in the responsibility of a small local group, with skills and capacity a potluck. Support for key national heritage assets should be provided by those outside the immediate parish or congregations.”*

Brighton, St Mary’s in-depth case study

At a diocesan level, those who work to support Major Parish Churches have highlighted the concern that there is a ‘lack of resources among the congregation, in terms of time, knowledge and expertise, to develop and deliver the major repair or reordering projects required to make the building more sustainable’.<sup>110</sup>

### 3.3.10 Diocesan Support

The provision of training, advice and guidance to Major Parish Churches is extremely valuable to them. Much of the advice and support available to them is also available to smaller parishes and is focused on improving sustainability in the long-term. There are several identifiable services offered in support the Major Parish Churches at diocesan level: support from the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (13%), funding advice (offered by 12% of dioceses) and Support Officers, most of whom are part-funded by Historic England (10%) are the most commonly cited.<sup>111</sup>

Support Officers for Historic Places of Worship are a joint, part-funded venture between individual dioceses and Historic England. They assist PCCs to build capacity and manage their buildings.

*“Not nearly enough is done to support Major Parish Churches. There are limitations on how much money dioceses are able to make available to them because of dwindling resources across the piece. I do not feel that there is sufficient acknowledgement of the special and Civic role which most of the Major Parish Churches hold.”*

Fundraising and Development Manager, online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

The DAC gives advice on the architecture, archaeology, art and history of places of worship and advises the diocesan chancellor whether or not permission should be granted for works to a church building. The DAC itself is composed of volunteers, invited to join the Committee because of their specialist knowledge and essentially provides free expert advice to parishes and is therefore a valuable resource. However, some Major Parish Churches are of cathedral scale and significance. Each cathedral has a dedicated Fabric Advisory Committee, and support from the national Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England. A Major Parish Church competes with all other churches in the diocese at the DAC.

Additional skills training for PCCs and volunteers was cited as the most common thing dioceses would like to provide in the future (32%).<sup>112</sup> A proportion of diocesan respondents stated that no additional support is provided to Major Parish Churches beyond the resources provided to any other parish church.<sup>113</sup> The main reasons diocesan representatives cited for not being able to support Major Parish Churches was the capacity of their staff (29%) and financial constraints (35%).<sup>114</sup> As one archdeacon, when referring to the resources allocated to Major Parish Churches by the diocese, stated: ‘essentially nothing [is allocated] beyond what is available to other churches. We work at resourcing through deaneries and a larger church has to be an active part of allocation decisions.’<sup>115</sup>

For those dioceses that do provide additional support to parish churches, including Major Parish Churches, the benefits are quantifiable. An Historic Churches Support Officer post (part-funded by Historic England) was created in the Diocese of Peterborough in December 2014 to help parishes to develop a long-term sustainable future for their buildings. Working with Major Parish Churches was considered to be a priority for the Support Officer. They worked with one Major Parish Church to develop a grant funding strategy for a major repair project and acted as facilitator for another Major Parish Church in writing a Conservation Management Plan. In another diocese, a Support Officer helped a Major Parish Church explore ideas for a sustainable future use and helped to apply for a multi-million pound HLF grant.<sup>116</sup> The role of Support Officers is vital to Major Parish Churches that do not have access to the same management structures as cathedrals but have similar responsibilities for a sizable and significant building.

<sup>110</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>111</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

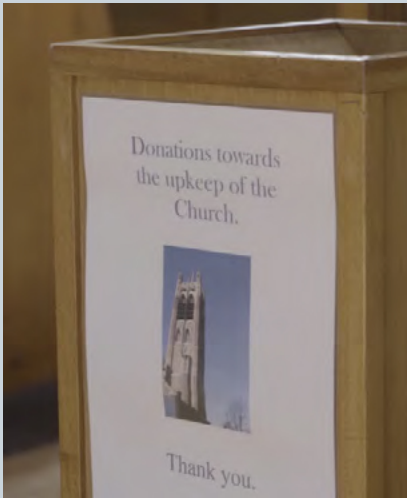
<sup>112</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>113</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>114</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>115</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>116</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons



### Conservation Architect

*"It seems apparent that the major grant funding options for many parish churches are limited to the HLF, National Churches Trust and Historic England, with other sources of potential grant funding hard to identify. The constraints on obtaining these sources of grant funding, the need to meet narrow requirements and extreme pressures on the amount of money available all present significant challenges in building capacity."*

(Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell)

## 3.4 FINANCES

### 3.4.1 Income Versus Expenditure

An astonishing 54% of Major Parish Church representatives state that their income does not meet its expenditure and of the 46% of PCCs whose income does meet expenditure, many 'only just' achieve parity.<sup>117</sup> Often, deficits are due to large or unexpected capital projects for repairs, which was the case at Great Yarmouth Minster<sup>118</sup> Hull, Holy Trinity's PCC is £60,000 in deficit; Nottingham St Mary's has a deficit of £86,000 across three churches; and Tiverton, St Peter's runs an operational deficit of £10,000, which has been the case for several years, resulting in the depletion of reserves.<sup>119</sup> While many Major Parish Churches are fortunate enough to have reserves to draw upon, some, such as Bodmin, St Petroc have no financial reserves at all.<sup>120</sup> Even those with reserves are relying on them at an unsustainable rate.

Other Major Parish Church PCCs, such as Beverley Minster's, run at a deficit and rely on legacies to break even each year.<sup>121</sup> The case studies and online survey financial summaries make it clear that many Major Parish Churches are struggling financially and that any unexpected costs force tough decisions to be made about what can be afforded that year. As one church put it; *'we tailor our expenditure to our income! We are dependent on legacies etc and could easily spend more if we had it.'*<sup>122</sup>

*"We have spent approximately half of our existing reserves (£280,000) in the last three years on paying our priest-in-charge, on repairing the fabric, and in planning for a new build."*

*Brighton, St Mary's, online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents*

Raising sufficient funds for everyday and exceptional costs is clearly a constant concern for Major Parish Church PCCs. One representative described it as *'an endless struggle to make ends meet in spite of ruthless budgeting.'*<sup>123</sup> Challenges range from urban deprivation and mission activity costs to urgent repairs and the need for new facilities. One church noted that over the last twenty years the parish had spent approximately a third more than it had raised a year (£75,000), requiring the reserves to be *'raided until little is left.'*<sup>124</sup> The casualty of dwindling reserves and tight budgets are often paid employees. At Leeds Minster both the administrator and director of music had to be made redundant in order to balance the books.<sup>125</sup>

It is interesting to note that those Major Parish Church PCCs with income not meeting their expenditure are spread randomly across the entirety of the country indicating that the cause is not geographical, but down to local and historical circumstances.<sup>126</sup> (see the map in section 2.2.1)

<sup>117</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>118</sup> Great Yarmouth Minster in-depth case study

<sup>119</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>120</sup> Bodmin, St Petroc case study

<sup>121</sup> Beverley Minster case study

<sup>122</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

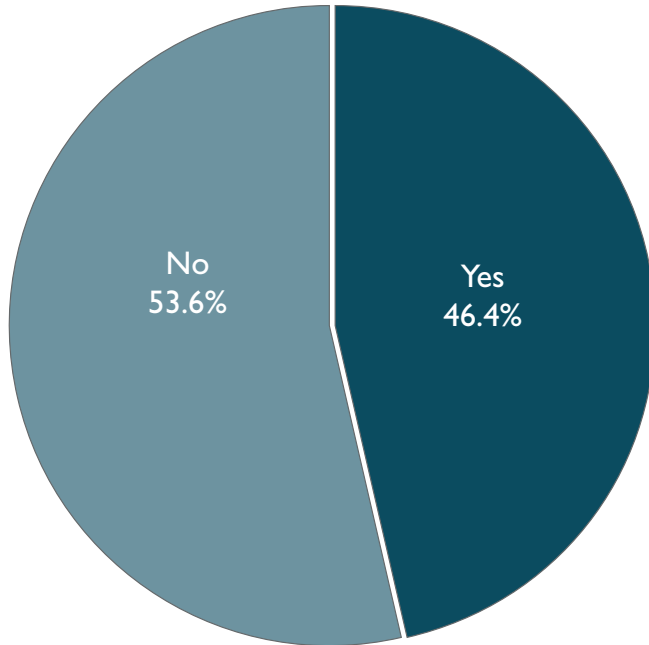
<sup>123</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>124</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>125</sup> Leeds Minster case study

<sup>126</sup> Map analysis of 63 Major Parish Church online survey respondents

## INCOME VERSE EXPENDITURE



Major Parish Church representatives were asked whether their current income met their current expenditure



### Great Yarmouth Minster

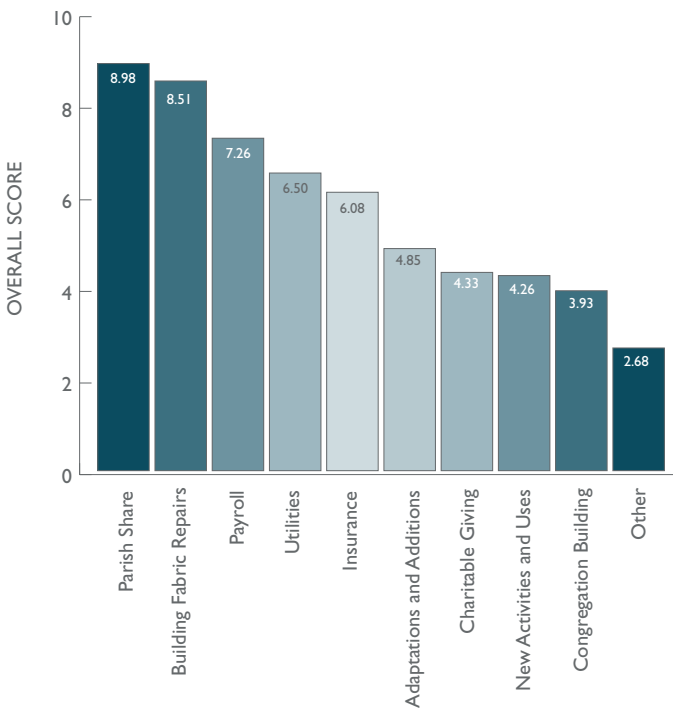
Great Yarmouth Minster PCC spends more each year than it receives. In 2014, the Minster ran at a deficit of £29,000, much of which was due to urgent repairs to the Minster and repairs carried out to historic fabric at the mission hall. This situation has been repeated in 2015 and is very worrying for the PCC.

Hosting events is the Minster's main source of income but due to the levels of deprivation in the area, and the unwillingness to charge commercial rates, they only charge around £100 per evening. The main outgoings of Great Yarmouth Minster are parish share, insurance and maintenance. The parish share calculated for the Minster was £104,000 in 2016; however, the Minster is only likely to be able to pay £42,000.

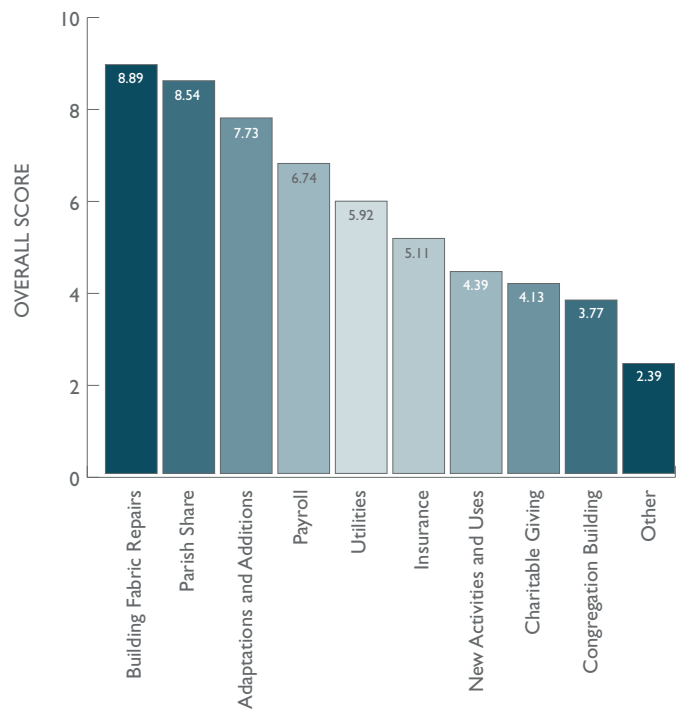
### 3.4.2 Expenditure

The three top items of expenditure identified by those Major Parish Church representatives surveyed online were: parish share, building fabric repairs and payroll. 44% of Major Parish Churches chose building fabric repairs as their largest item of expenditure and 43% chose parish share.<sup>127</sup>

Half of PCC representatives stated that building fabric repair would become the largest item of expenditure in the future, followed by parish share and adaptations to the building.<sup>128</sup> This indicates that repair needs are being held off, or becoming more pressing for many churches.



An indication of how Major Parish Church PCCs have spent their money over the last five years. Each item is ranked in order of expenditure (1 being the highest).



An indication of how Major Parish Church PCCs expect to spend their money over the next five years. Each item is ranked in order of expenditure (1 being the highest).

<sup>127</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>128</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

### 3.4.3 Parish Share

Parish share represents one of the largest outgoings for a Major Parish Church PCC. Parish share (also known as the common fund, or voluntary contribution), is paid by all parishes to their diocese as a contribution to the costs of ministry and mission in the diocese and, as of 1998, pension contributions. It costs £1 billion annually to run the Church of England and around three-quarters of the total budget comes from worshippers in the parishes.<sup>129</sup>

*“The principal challenge at St Laurence’s is financial; the church cannot afford to maintain the building and pay parish share in full. This has been the case since at least the 1950s and there is no indication the situation will change in the future.”*

Ludlow, St Laurence case study

For many dioceses, parish share is a voluntary contribution but PCCs take their responsibility to fulfil this moral obligation very seriously and for some it is their number one priority.<sup>130</sup> However, in some cases, repair and maintenance work have to take precedence due to urgency.<sup>131</sup>

The way parish share contributions are calculated varies from diocese to diocese and there is no prescriptive formula. Several dioceses are currently or have recently revised the way they calculate parish share (methods of calculation vary) but it remains to be seen whether this will have a positive impact on Major Parish Churches. These include the Diocese of Worcester, the Diocese of Leeds and the Diocese of Lincoln.

The average parish share cost for a Major Parish Church is approaching £60,000<sup>132</sup> although of the Major Parish Churches surveyed online, this can range from £5,300 (Fotheringhay, St Mary and All Saints) to £229,000 (Bath Abbey).<sup>133</sup> Over 50% of the Major Parish Churches are up-to-date with parish share although 37% are over £1,000 in arrears with parish share payments and within this 13% are over £10,000 in arrears.<sup>134</sup> Doncaster Minster’s PCC was set a parish share of £56,000 in 2015, of which the Minster was able to pay £12,750.<sup>135</sup> By 2015, Leeds Minster’s PCC had parish share arrears of £405,000, which was partly paid off in 2015 through funds released from the Friends of the Music of Leeds Minster.<sup>136</sup> For Christchurch Priory if the PCC pays the 2016 parish share in full will leave the general account in deficit.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>129</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

<sup>130</sup> Tiverton, St Peter case study

<sup>131</sup> Minster in Sheppey, St Mary and St Sexburga case study

<sup>132</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>133</sup> Fotheringhay, St Mary and All Saints and Bath Abbey case studies

<sup>134</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>135</sup> Doncaster Minster case study

<sup>136</sup> Leeds Minster case study

<sup>137</sup> Christchurch Priory case study

### 3.4.4 Running Costs

Running costs for a Major Parish Church can be as high as £1,000 a day to keep the building open and running smoothly.<sup>138</sup> The Report of the Church Buildings Review Group (2015) stated that contributory costs such as the cost of paid clergy and staff, heating, maintaining and insuring churches and church halls, running activities and the overall responsibility of caring for an historic building is onerous.<sup>139</sup> Some of the running costs of a Major Parish Church are outline below.

### 3.4.5 Building Insurance

Building insurance represents the fifth largest item of expenditure, behind building fabric repairs, parish share, payroll and utilities.<sup>140</sup> The average amount a Major Parish Church pays for insurance annually is £84,500, but this includes a wide range from £2,300 for Toxteth, St James in the City, to £132,000 for Great Yarmouth Minster. A high proportion of the churches surveyed were fully insured for a complete rebuild, whilst the lowest percentage of cover was 70%.<sup>141</sup>

Both Leeds and Great Yarmouth Minsters were substantially rebuilt in the last 200 years. Leeds Minster PCC pays an insurance premium of £15,000 a year to cover a full rebuilding of the church, which is estimated at £43 million.<sup>142</sup> Great Yarmouth Minster is similarly valued at £37 million, but its PCC pays an insurance premium of £132,000 a year for full rebuilding. This is because Great Yarmouth Minster is classified as a cathedral by its insurance company due to its size.<sup>143</sup> It is unclear whether this classification is the reason for the massive disparity in costs for rebuilding compared with Leeds Minster. At the other end of the spectrum, the ancient Saxon church of Stow Minster in Lincolnshire pays a premium of only £6,000 a year for the estimated cost of £9 million for full rebuilding.<sup>144</sup>

### 3.4.6 Utilities

The cost of utilities is often the fourth largest item of expenditure for Major Parish Church PCCs and heating the church building is the main element of this cost, with serious financial implications. The average cost for utilities was £12,000 per year but again there is a wide range between churches.<sup>145</sup> At Bow Common, St Paul in London the heating costs £20 an hour to run and its use is therefore restricted to main services and events only. Nevertheless, the heating bills are unsustainably high in the winter.<sup>146</sup> Due to financial constraints, some churches, such as Shrewsbury Abbey, make the decision to turn off the heating in order to fund other necessities such as parish share.<sup>147</sup> Tiverton, St Peter’s representative stated that they shop around for utilities tariffs in order to get the best deals.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Stratford-upon-Avon, Holy Trinity case study

<sup>139</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

<sup>140</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>141</sup> 12 in-depth case studies

<sup>142</sup> Leeds Minster in-depth case study

<sup>143</sup> Great Yarmouth in-depth case study

<sup>144</sup> Stow Minster in-depth case study. Excluding the chancel as this is the responsibility of the Church Commissioners

<sup>145</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>146</sup> Bow Common, St Paul in-depth case study

<sup>147</sup> Shrewsbury Abbey case study

<sup>148</sup> Tiverton, St Peter case study

Out of the 63 Major Parish Churches surveyed online, 8% had recently completed heating renewal projects and 24% had projects in various stages of development. For example, Nottingham, St Mary installed a new floor and under floor heating system at a cost of £250,000 in 2013.<sup>149</sup> The motivation for these changes is usually to reduce costs and to improve the comfort of congregations and visitors; enabling people to spend more time in the church.

#### Building Repairs

The financial costs of maintaining a Major Parish Churches in good condition are high. The Church of England Financial Review 2004-2013 states that parish churches spend 17% of their outgoings on church and building costs.<sup>150</sup> The PCCs of the Major Parish Churches surveyed here spend 37% of their annual budget on urgent Quinquennial Inspection (QI) costs alone.<sup>151</sup>

Comparison of QI estimated costs has shown that the average estimated repair costs for the quinquennium period for a Major Parish Church is £64,500. This is compared with an average of £45,500 across all Church of England parish churches.<sup>152</sup>

Beyond basic repairs and maintenance, the average cost of a major project (often including repairs and development) for a Major Parish Church is £550,000, of which an average of £350,000 is funded through the HLF.<sup>153</sup>

More information on building repairs and associated costs can be found in section 3.5.

#### 3.4.8 Income: Donations

The Church of England has calculated that over £200 million is given tax-efficiently each year through Gift Aid by all parish churches and £200 million is given in cash and donations by congregations and visitors.<sup>154</sup> The Church of England Financial Review 2004-2013 states that, on average, 25% of parish church income comes from one-off donations.<sup>155</sup> Major Parish Churches receive, on average, 22% of their yearly income from one-off donations.<sup>156</sup> The figure is similar for Major Parish Churches, with an average of 22% of their yearly income from one-off donations. The average weekly service attendance at a Major Parish Church is 141 and the average number of visitors is 23,200. The average donation per visitor is £4.08.<sup>157</sup>

Major Parish Churches avoid charging an entrance fee but all rely heavily on donations for entry.<sup>158</sup> Responses to this can be creative, such as charging visitors for a photography permit rather than charging for entry. For some Major Parish Churches, such as Christchurch Priory, the income from planned giving does not cover parish share, so the PCC is reliant on additional donations to meet its obligation.<sup>159</sup> At Stratford-upon-Avon, the donations from many thousands of visitors wishing to visit Shakespeare's grave are used exclusively for work to the church building.<sup>160</sup>

For many Major Parish Church PCCs, the higher the congregation numbers and visitor numbers, the more money they anticipate to be donated to maintain the church building. Toxteth, St James in the City's PCC is actively growing its congregation as a way of sustaining the future of the church.<sup>161</sup>

#### 3.4.9 Other Income Generation

Methods of income generation identified from those Major Parish Churches surveyed online include church hall and church hire, cafés and shops, post offices and event hire. For many, the scale and significance of the building attracts users and has a positive impact on income generation.<sup>162</sup> At least 45% of Major Parish Church PCCs offer venue hire in some form. Additionally, 25% of Major Parish Churches' websites indicate they have a shop and 23% have a café to generate further income.

The Church of England has calculated that each year over £250 million is raised by parish churches through legacies, special events, the letting of church halls, bookstalls, fundraising and parish magazines etc.<sup>163</sup>

Some Major Parish Church PCCs, such as Great Yarmouth Minster, do not consider it their role to compete with other local commercial outlets such as coffee shops, so do not attempt to provide the same facilities or charge the market value for products.<sup>164</sup> Other Major Parish Churches are actively seeking to increase income generation. For example, Ludlow, St Laurence's PCC, which has increased visitor donations by £15,000 since the previous year, is currently reviewing retail and commercial operations. There is an expectation that income through commercial activity could be increased by 20% to 40% and will contribute directly to the maintenance of the church building.<sup>165</sup> The lack of an identified and consistent income stream is of serious concern to many Major Parish Churches and highlights the requirement for additional strategic planning in order to increase financial security.<sup>166</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Nottingham, St Mary in-depth case study

<sup>150</sup> Church of England, Financial Overview 2004-13 [www.churchofengland.org/media/1886486/financialoverview.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1886486/financialoverview.pdf)

<sup>151</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>152</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches and ChurchCare, National Church Buildings Fabric Survey, 2013

<sup>153</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund grants to the 50 case study churches, 1994-2016

<sup>154</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

<sup>155</sup> Church of England, Financial Overview 2004-13 [www.churchofengland.org/media/1886486/financialoverview.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1886486/financialoverview.pdf)

<sup>156</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>157</sup> 12 in-depth case studies

<sup>158</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>159</sup> Christchurch Priory case study

<sup>160</sup> Stratford upon Avon, Holy Trinity case study

<sup>161</sup> Toxteth, St James; case study

<sup>162</sup> Brighton, St Mary's and Dorchester Abbey case studies

<sup>163</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

<sup>164</sup> Great Yarmouth Minster in-depth case study

<sup>165</sup> Ludlow, St Laurence case study

<sup>166</sup> 50 case studies



*“If a sustainable income stream to meet regular maintenance costs could be established, the PCC could manage the building.”*

Portsea, St Mary case study

#### 3.4.10 Sources of External Funding

There are diverse funding sources open to Major Parish Churches, although none can, on its own, cover the full cost of repairs, the need for new facilities and on-going running costs. It is also apparent that while a variety of sources exist, only a couple have the capacity to fund substantial projects or offer grants over £10,000. Major Parish Church PCCs, with limited reserves, such as Nottingham, St Mary’s, are reliant on a stream of grant-aid in order to prevent stagnation.<sup>167</sup> This constant requirement to compete in the grant process and then deliver the funded project can be a burden for PCCs, particularly those that do not have the necessary project management skills.<sup>168</sup>

Whilst the major sources of funding are well known, the requirement to provide match-funding from smaller trusts and funds, as well as the local community is an on-going necessity. Church representatives are often unaware of the smaller or less publicised grant sources. Major Parish Church representatives often state that applying to national funders can be challenging, time-consuming and the emphasis on activities is an unnecessary burden.<sup>169</sup>

Some Major Parish Church representative’s experiences of working with the HLF have been positive, while others have struggled to articulate their needs and have experienced a more fractious relationship. Many welcome the relationship, for the experience and mentoring offered. Others believe that funding bodies hold an undue amount of control and power.<sup>170</sup>

Concerns about national funding bodies from the Major Parish Church representatives surveyed include complex application forms, narrow grant requirements, high level of competition for available funding, onerous application process and the contractual constraints.<sup>171</sup>

*“The guidance we have received from the HLF is considered to have been very helpful, particularly in selecting the most appropriate grant programmes.”*

Christchurch Priory case study



#### Hexham Abbey

The Abbey has three strands of income generation – the Refectory café, the shop and the Priory Buildings (venue hire). The shop is an established, successful venture within the Abbey, while the Refectory café and the Priory Buildings were recently developed as part of a major HLF project and have only been in use since 2014. The trading activities of Hexham Abbey are managed by a trust, which is a company independent from the PCC. Its core purpose is to generate income but must also remain consistent with the vision of the PCC.

The Refectory Café is doing very well and with the support of a new General Manager (employed June 2016) with a specialism in marketing and event management, the venue hire business is also beginning to develop. In 2015, the shop made a profit of £30,000; its biggest ever. The café made a profit of £6,000 in 2015 and the Priory Buildings had an income of £20,000 in 2015.

<sup>167</sup> Nottingham, St Mary’s in-depth case study

<sup>168</sup> Brighton, St Mary’s case study

<sup>169</sup> Nottingham, St Mary’s and Hartlepool. St Hilda case studies

<sup>170</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>171</sup> 50 case studies

It is surprising that several Major Parish Churches have had little contact with national funding bodies. Highnam, Holy Innocents for example has not, to date, approached the HLF for any project advice<sup>172</sup> and two-thirds of Major Parish Churches have not received a grant from the HLF since it was established in 1994.<sup>173</sup> Potential funding streams, including the HLF, are detailed below.

#### 3.4.11 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)

The HLF is by far the largest funder for Major Parish Churches and offers a variety of grant schemes. The average cost of a major project for a Major Parish Church is £550,000, of which an average of £350,000, or 64%, is funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund. Two-thirds of Major Parish Churches have not been the recipient of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, under any funding stream. For most this is because they have not approached the HLF, rather than having an application turned down. The grants awarded range from £3,900 for restoration of a reredos (Doncaster Minster) to £11 million for a conservation and interpretation project (Bath Abbey).<sup>174</sup>

#### Grants for Places of Worship (GPOW)

The HLF's GPOW scheme offers grants of up to £250,000 to places of worship with a primary focus of repairs.<sup>175</sup> The scheme evolved from the Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme (RGPOW), which was jointly administered by Historic England and the HLF. Since 2013, when the HLF assumed control of the scheme (although it continues to be supported by Historic England staff) it re-launched it as GPOW, 389 Church of England parish churches have been awarded a grant, which equates to a 51% success rate for applicants. Funding of approximately £25 million is provided each year in England of which up to 15% can be spent on new work or facilities. A third (35%) of projects have therefore included new works or facilities within the GPOW grant.<sup>176</sup>

#### Heritage Grants

Heritage Grants are one of the largest grants provided by the HLF and range upwards from £100,000 for all kinds of heritage projects. In 2015, five out of sixteen Church of England parish church PCCs that applied were successful. They were awarded a total of £5.5 million, which is a 31% success rate with an average award of £1.1 million per church. This can be compared in the same year with the five English cathedrals that also applied to the scheme. Two were successful (a 40% success rate) and received funding of £12.8 million, averaging £6.4 million per cathedral.<sup>177</sup>

Individual Major Parish Churches are included in these overall HLF statistics. For example, Bath Abbey was awarded £11 million for a large conservation and interpretation project, which is on par with many cathedrals. However, for the majority an award of around £350,000 is more typical. Hexham Abbey and Wymondham Abbey are the only other Major Parish Churches to receive over £1 million, they make up 1% of all Major Parish Churches in total.<sup>178</sup> Major Parish Churches regularly apply to the Heritage Grant scheme for repair and conservation projects as their single phase repair costs are often higher than the maximum grant offered under the GPOW scheme. It also gives them the opportunity to achieve more in a single phase.

#### Our Heritage

Our Heritage is a smaller HLF grant scheme that offers £10,000 to £100,000 for all kinds of heritage projects. In 2015, 66% of the Church of England parish churches that applied were successful and were awarded £1.3 million in total, or £52,000 per church. 75% of these grants have been focused on the conservation of the building or its contents.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Highnam, Holy Innocents case study

<sup>173</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>174</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund grants to the 50 case study churches, 1994-2016

<sup>175</sup> In England, and only in exceptional circumstances will the HLF consider higher requests

<sup>176</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund grants to the 50 case study churches, 1994-2016

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<sup>177</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund grants to the 50 case study churches, 1994-2016. The data available allows Church of England parish churches to be compared to cathedrals. Comparisons to Major Parish Churches are not currently possible.

<sup>178</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund statistics, 1994-2016

<sup>179</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund statistics, 1994-2016

#### 3.4.12 Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund

The UK Government-funded Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund (RRF) was set up in 2014 for urgent repairs to public places of worship across the UK.<sup>180</sup> Two annual rounds of stand-alone funding have been provided to date, the second round had a budget of £25 million. 372 Church of England church buildings have been awarded a grant under the scheme and 13% of the 300 Major Parish Churches have been successful. The average grant received by all parish churches under this scheme is £97,500.<sup>181</sup>

There is uncertainty about whether or not the scheme will continue for a third year. A national survey in 2016 found that 60% of British adults agree with the government providing financial support to churches in order to protect heritage and history for future generations.<sup>182</sup>

#### 3.4.13 Listed Places of Worship Scheme (Value Added Tax (VAT) Reclaim)

The Listed Places of Worship Scheme awards retrospective grants that cover the cost of VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings in use as places of worship. The scheme covers repairs to the fabric of the building, along with associated professional fees, plus repairs to turret clocks, pews, bells and pipe organs.<sup>183</sup> The purpose of the scheme is to encourage the repair historic buildings, as new build is not subject to VAT.

The scheme has operated since 2001, available for all denominations and faith groups and currently makes £42 million a year available. Many Major Parish Churches make use of the scheme during major projects, Nottingham, St Mary for example received £42,700 from the scheme in 2015 as part of their floor and heating project.<sup>184</sup>

The HLF have found that most places of worship are able to provide the entirety of their match funding for a GPOW grant from this scheme.

#### 3.4.14 Funding for Cathedrals

Cathedrals have access to additional and distinct sources of funding not available to Major Parish Churches. Currently, the main source of funding is the First World War Centenary Cathedral Fabric Repair Fund, which runs from 2016 to 2018. To date, £20 million has been allocated to 54 Church of England and Roman Catholic Cathedrals.

#### 3.4.15 Fundraising Strategies

80% of Major Parish Church PCCs have a giving or fundraising strategy in place, although many of these are under-utilised or not inactive.<sup>185</sup> Several were waiting for a new incumbent or the establishment of a Friends Group before developing a strategy. Others continually reviewed their fundraising strategies and saw them as a vital tool for the PCC. The level of deprivation of the parish was highlighted by several Major Parish Churches as being a barrier to giving.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> <http://www.lpowroof.org.uk/>

<sup>181</sup> LPOW RRF statistics provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund

<sup>182</sup> National Churches Trust ComRes poll on Church Buildings, 2016

<sup>183</sup> <http://www.lpwscheme.org.uk/>

<sup>184</sup> Nottingham, St Mary's in-depth case study

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<sup>185</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>186</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents



### Nottingham, St Mary

St Mary's has a backlog of repairs. These include works to the tower, windows, drainage and monuments. A recent Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant through the Grants for Places of Worship (GPOW) stream enabled the nave roof's lead covering to be removed, recast and re-fixed at a cost of c.£220,000.

A new floor and heating system was installed in 2013 at a cost of c.£250,000. The next proposed project will address outstanding repairs along with installing a new lighting system and improving the visitor experience.

*'The most pressing need is money for capital works. The church also needs new facilities to put a different face to the world. One that says 'we are here for you'. - Brighton, St Mary'*

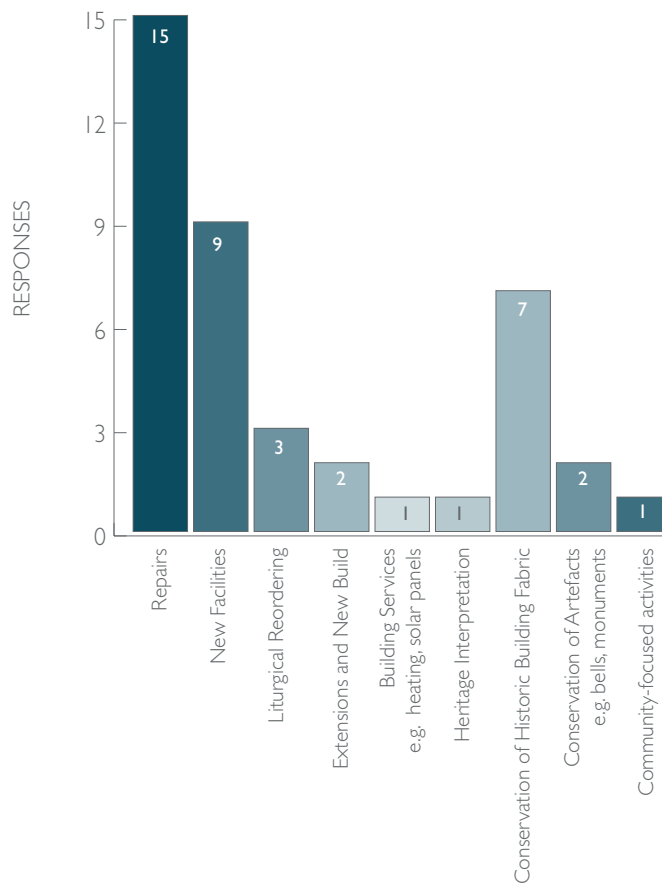
(Nottingham, St Mary's case study)

## 3.5 MAKING CHANGES AND DOING REPAIRS

27% of Major Parish Churches are publicising the fact they have a large repair or regeneration project underway on their website.<sup>187</sup> The diverse scope and breadth of the projects being carried out is illuminating, with many PCCs dealing not only with repair needs, but ways to become more environmentally and/or economically sustainable, as well as providing facilities for the community.

### 3.5.1 Major Projects

Major projects are often multi-faceted, addressing urgent repairs or implementing substantial change, frequently both, particularly if HLF funding is sought. The average cost of a major project at a Major Parish Church is £750,700, accounting for 53% of annual expenditure.<sup>188</sup> Three-quarters of Major Parish Church PCCs have begun or completed a major project within the last five years. Only 7% have no plans to do so in the future.<sup>189</sup> See 'Examples of Major Projects' below for further details.



The main focus of the most significant project Major Parish Churches have begun or completed within the last five years

<sup>187</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>188</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>189</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

### 3.5.2 Smaller Projects

Smaller projects focus on a more limited scope of works such as the conservation of fixtures and fittings or repair. Sometimes this is because funders or availability of funds mean larger works have to be phased e.g. repairs to a single pinnacle at Beverley, St Mary;<sup>190</sup> urgent repairs to the church's cupola, tower roof and electrics, carried out at Blandford Forum, St Peter and St Paul's;<sup>191</sup> and the installation of a composting lavatory at Toxteth, St James'.<sup>192</sup>

### 3.5.3 Carrying Out Works: Statutory Permissions

An Ecclesiastical Exemption operates within the framework of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Instead of listed building consent, all parish churches must apply for faculty permission or a combination of faculty and planning permission (Planning permission is required if any proposed work will alter the appearance of the exterior of the church building). Faculty permission is, in essence, the Church of England's 'in-house' equivalent to listed building consent. The Church of England describes it thusly:

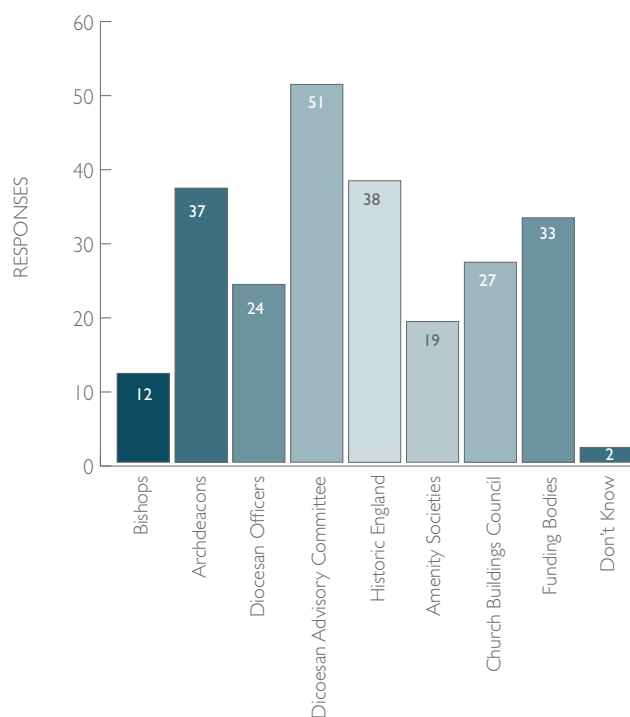
*Although most Church of England churches are 'listed', they are exempt from listed building control, except in certain unusual circumstances (where a church is not primarily in use for worship, or where total demolition is involved). Alteration and change is instead regulated by the faculty jurisdiction...The faculty jurisdiction is the Church of England's regulation of works to church buildings, their contents and churchyards. It ensures that churches are properly cared for, and that whatever is done to them is properly considered beforehand and carried out in the most appropriate way. The system recognises that churches are living buildings, many of which are of great historic significance but all of which exist for the worship of God and the mission of the Church.<sup>193</sup>*

A faculty permission is a licence to carry out work. Whilst some repairs do not require a faculty (clearly defined in the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015) any other work carried out in the absence of a faculty is illegal.<sup>194</sup> All Major Parish Churches must submit to faculty jurisdiction and prepare an application, supporting papers (including architect's drawings, for example) a statement of need and a statement of significance in order to seek permission.<sup>195</sup>

The application process can be a challenging for some PCCs due to capacity. A Major Parish Church representative commented that;

*'because it takes so long to get any urgent and minor works done as we need to be in touch with so many people, where we could have got local, efficient and reasonable workman to do the work quickly. We have to use designated people who are often more expensive and take longer to complete the job, where our local workforce need the business, and for them they feel part of the church community.'<sup>196</sup>*

Lancaster Priory's representative felt that the Grade I listed status of the Priory created additional layers of complication when it came to applying for permissions.<sup>197</sup> Other Major Parish Church representatives, however, recognised the benefits of working within the faculty system, stating that it is 'challenging, but valuable as it stops inappropriate changes being made to the building on a whim'.<sup>198</sup>



Those who have recently been involved in the management of Major Parish Church buildings

<sup>190</sup> Beverley, St Mary's case study

<sup>191</sup> Blandford Forum, St Peter and St Paul case study

<sup>192</sup> Toxteth, St James' in-depth case study

<sup>193</sup> ChurchCare <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/permissions/faculty-jurisdiction>

<sup>194</sup> ChurchCare, Making Changes to your Building <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/permissions/faculty-jurisdiction>

<sup>195</sup> Permissions are sometimes not required for minor works, or can be granted or waived by the recommendation of an archdeacon. Full faculty jurisdiction legislation can be found here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/1568/made>

<sup>196</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>197</sup> Lancaster Priory case study

<sup>198</sup> Blandford Forum, St Peter and St Paul case study

### 3.5.4 Amenity Societies

Faculty permission is ultimately granted by the Chancellor of each diocese (a barrister at law), who takes on board comments from statutory consultees including the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) of the relevant diocese, Historic England and national amenity societies (for a full list of these, see appendix F).

Applicants for faculty permission are required to consult these organisations as appropriate. This can lead to frustrations among Major Parish Church representatives, especially when proposals to adapt the church building are being considered: ‘... we have to endure the amenities societies trying to maintain the building as a museum rather than a living working building.’<sup>199</sup> Other Major Parish Churches have had long disputes with amenity societies which have caused distress to all concerned. An example of such a situation occurred at Dorchester Abbey when a disputed proposal to remove an historic door to make way for a new glass porch was eventually approved by consistory court.<sup>200</sup>

Other Major Parish Church representatives also report on the positive aspects of a collaborative approach. A representative from Nantwich, St Mary stated that the PCC works together with Historic England and national amenity societies as everyone has the same objective: to do what’s best for the building.<sup>201</sup> And many Major Parish Church representatives report productive and positive working relationships with their DACs.<sup>202</sup>

### 3.5.5 Repairs

The Church of England requires that every church building should be inspected by an appropriately accredited architect or chartered building surveyor every five years. This is known as a Quinquennial Inspection (QI). This regular system of review is designed to ensure that church buildings are kept in good repair.<sup>203</sup>

Almost all (94%) of Major Parish Church PCCs have commissioned their Quinquennial Inspection (QI) within the required 5-year period.<sup>204</sup> The QI system is considered to be effective by most architects. It is thought to ensure that an accurate record of building condition is made at regular interval and it is also thought to be a good system for identifying problems. The system is, however, considered to be limited by the lack of standard definitions nationally and the lack of funds available to churches to translate lists of priorities into actions.<sup>205</sup> Over half (57%) of architects include costs with their QI and Major Parish Church representatives frequently cited the QI report as the means by which they monitor the condition of their church building and plan repair projects.<sup>206</sup>

<sup>199</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>200</sup> Consistory Court hears faculty appeals and disputes. See Dorchester Abbey in-depth case study

<sup>201</sup> Nantwich, St Mary case study

<sup>202</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>203</sup> ChurchCare, Quinquennial Inspections advice [www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church/quinquennial-inspections](http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church/quinquennial-inspections)

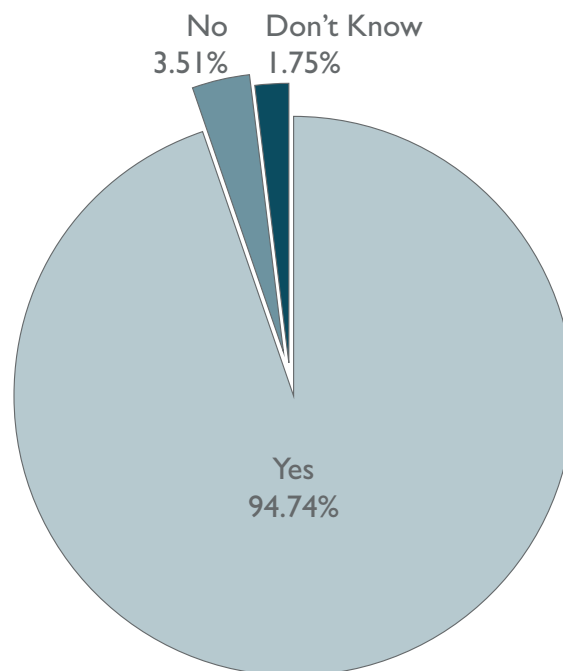
<sup>204</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>205</sup> Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

<sup>206</sup> 50 case studies

*“The way that funding is going, the QI architect is no longer guaranteed to do the work that may arise from the QI (they are often seen as loss leaders)”*

Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell



The number of Major Parish Churches that have commissioned a Quinquennial Inspection (condition survey) within the last five years

The average estimated repair cost for the quinquennium period for a Major Parish Church is £64,500, compared with £45,500 for all Church of England parish churches.<sup>207</sup> For the 12 Major Parish Churches featured in the in-depth case studies, the average cost for urgent repair works rises to £517,000 (but is often in the millions) and 37% of their total annual outgoings are spent on urgent QI costs alone.<sup>208</sup> By comparison, The Church of England Financial Review 2004-2013 states that 17% of parish expenditure in 2013 was spent on maintaining, improving or replacing church buildings.<sup>209</sup>

44% of Major Parish Churches identified building fabric repairs as their current largest item of expenditure and 50% chose repairs as their anticipated largest item of future expenditure. Nine Major Parish Churches cited repairs with a cost or estimated cost totalling over £1 million.<sup>210</sup>

<sup>207</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>208</sup> 12 in-depth case studies

<sup>209</sup> The Church of England Financial Review 2004-2013: [www.churchofengland.org/media/1886486/financialoverview.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1886486/financialoverview.pdf)

<sup>210</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

Over a third (35%) of Major Parish Churches described 'repairs' as the principal focus of a current or recent project.<sup>211</sup> 17% of diocesan representatives described substantial repair needs as being the most significant challenge facing Major Parish Churches. The ability to make buildings suitable for 21st century community use (23%) and acquiring or utilising the skills and financial resources available to them (31%) were, however, considered to be greater challenges.<sup>212</sup>

The cost of building repairs and adaptations is seen as an on-going challenge for Major Parish Church PCCs. It can sometimes impact upon the PCCs' core work or act as a barrier to management. A representative of Toxteth, St James in the City, for example, said, 'a congregation needs to be built but that congregation needs a building. At the moment the building is working against us.'<sup>213</sup>

Architects who took part in the survey considered the two biggest threats to the conservation of historic fabric of Major Parish Churches to be income not meeting expenditure (25%) and substantial repair needs (25%).<sup>214</sup>

### 3.5.6 Building Adaptations

A representative from Bury St Edmunds, St Mary stated that 'the building must be lived in. It must attract people and enable the mission of the church.'<sup>215</sup> In order to be effective in this, however, Major Parish Church representatives often contend that they must provide the necessary infrastructure. As a representative of Malmesbury Abbey put it: 'the ancient beauty of the Abbey gives character to the town itself but we have to work hard in a twelfth-century building to meet the demands of a twenty-first-century living church.'<sup>216</sup>

Facilities for congregations and visitors vary widely between the Major Parish Churches, with almost three quarters have both access for people with reduced mobility and WCs. In addition, 44% have rooms for hire<sup>217</sup>, 25% have a shop and 23% have a café.<sup>218</sup> Of the 12 churches featured in the in-depth case studies, however, the majority require basic facilities such as accessible WCs, kitchen and meeting spaces, and in one case, running water.<sup>219</sup> Toxteth St James, Stow Minster, Beverley St Marys, Truro St Germans, Leeds Parish Church and Birmingham St Agatha's all identified the need for better facilities.<sup>220</sup>

Many Major Parish Church representatives demonstrated concern about the cost or efficiency of utilities such as heating. (see section 3.4) The average cost for utilities for the 12 churches that feature in the in-depth case studies was £12,000 per year. Toxteth St James, Bow Common and Great Yarmouth all identified running costs as a factor preventing them from using the church as they might like to.<sup>221</sup> The desire to introduce new heating systems to improve efficiency and hospitality is among Major Parish Church PCCs' most common ambitions.<sup>222</sup> Out of the 63 Major Parish Churches surveyed online, 8% had recently completed heating renewal projects and 24% had projects in various stages of development, with under floor heating being cited as the preferred option.<sup>223</sup> An example of a recently-installed under floor heating system can be found at Nottingham, St Mary.<sup>224</sup>

Other works to adapt Major Parish Churches include pew removal to create more flexible floor space and the installation of servery facilities to improve hospitality, as was the case at Northampton, Holy Sepulchre.<sup>225</sup>

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211 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

212 Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

213 Toxteth, St James' case study

214 Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

215 Bury St Edmunds, St Mary case study

216 Malmesbury Abbey case study

217 These may be in the church or in the associated church hall

218 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

219 12 in-depth case studies

220 12 in-depth case studies

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221 12 in-depth case studies

222 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

223 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

224 Nottingham, St Mary in-depth case study

225 Northampton, Holy Sepulchre

### 3.5.7 Examples of Major Projects

Several examples of major projects at Major Parish Churches are summarised below. See the 50 case studies and 12 in-depth case studies for a full range of major projects at Major Parish Churches. For the projects discussed below see their individual case studies for further information.

#### Wymondham Abbey

The PCC has just completed a c.£2.5 million development project entitled 'The Abbey Experience' that was largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). This included the building of new multi-purpose extensions, vestries, lavatories and a servery, plus the introduction of a new scheme of interpretation, featuring displays of church plate, archival documents and information boards.

*'The new visitor centre has been very well done... there is a recent new extension which has been built sympathetically to the original building. Amazing building with amazing history. The ladies on reception and in the shop were extremely helpful, knowledgeable and friendly. The abbey had won the 'prize' for the most welcoming church in the UK.'*<sup>226</sup>

#### Doncaster Minster

A multi-phase repair project which has been underway since 2004. So far repairs have been carried out to the nave and clerestory, the chancel, including the roof and stained glass, the south transept, Norman chapel and north transept. The next phase focuses on the Minster's tower, roof and drainage. The project has cost c.£4 million so far and has been funded by grants from Historic England, HLF, other grant givers, as well as by local fundraising.

*'This mini-cathedral is a gem... The interior is beautiful with some stunning stained glass windows and a historic organ built by Edmund Schulze... There is a lot of information about the Minster's history, design and artefacts. The volunteer staff were especially helpful and knowledgeable.'*<sup>227</sup>

<sup>226</sup> TripAdvisor, September 2016

<sup>227</sup> TripAdvisor, July 2016

#### Hexham Abbey

The Big Story project (2014) restored and renovated the former monastic buildings located adjacent to Hexham Abbey. The project saw the installation of a museum, café, lavatories and function rooms at a total cost of £2.3 million, of which the HLF provided £1.7 million, local fundraising of £100,000 and other grant givers completing the balance.

*'Hexham Abbey is truly lovely... loads to see inside and outside, well-explained and described. The exhibition about the history of the Abbey is interesting and informative. the tea shop is great; friendly staff and tasty refreshments... the atmosphere around the Abbey was magical'*<sup>228</sup>

#### Toxteth, St James in the City

The PCC received a grant of c.£407,000 from Historic England in 2012 to carry out urgent roof repairs, which have been completed at a total cost of c.£600,000. The PCC is considering applying to the HLF for a fourth time for the funds to carry out further repairs and construct an outbuilding for facilities.

#### Ludlow, St Laurence

This project is in the very late planning stages and will probably include three core aspects of conservation, interpretation and improved use through re-ordering and complementary activities. The estimated total cost of the project is c.£5 million.

#### Beverley Minster and Beverley, St Mary

A joint, multi-million-pound repair and adaptation project that is in its early planning stages. The project will aim to benefit the town of Beverley as well as its two protagonist churches.

<sup>228</sup> TripAdvisor, September 2016

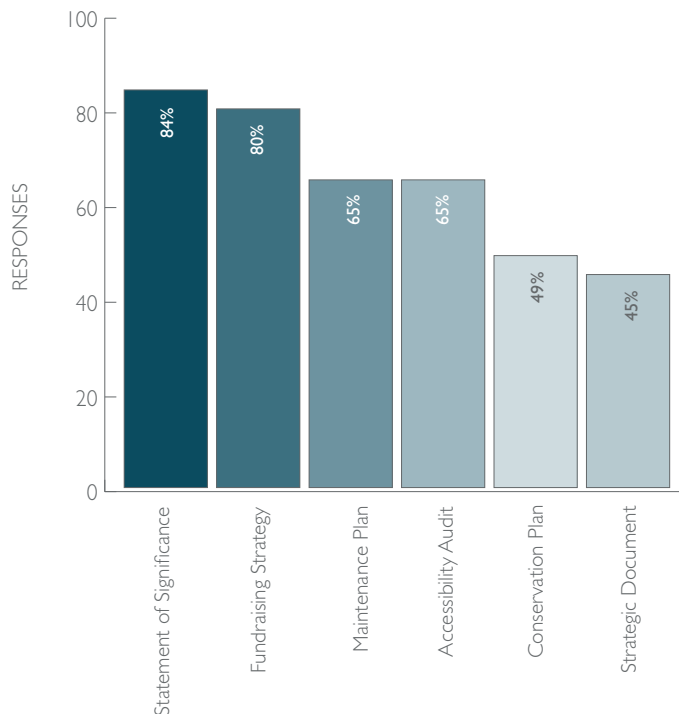


### 3.5.8 Strategic Documents

A diocesan representative suggested that Major Parish Church buildings and their communities are best served by:

*“Encouraging PCCs to prepare informative and accessible Statements of Significance so congregations and others have an understanding of the heritage asset; Encouraging PCCs to take a ‘holistic’ view of the building and not tackle the issues piecemeal. Encouraging PCCs to utilise the iconic and ‘landmark’ status of the building and make it available for use in the civic and community life of the locality.”<sup>229</sup>*

There are many strategic documents Major Parish Church PCCs can and do employ in order to manage their church buildings. There is a general recognition among Major Parish Church representatives that these documents are at least occasionally helpful to those who have them.<sup>230</sup> Over 80% of Major Parish Churches have a statement of significance, 80% have a giving or fundraising strategy and 65% have a maintenance plan, but only 45% have a strategic document such as a long-term business plan or activity plan.<sup>231</sup> Fewer than 50% have a conservation management plan, which is the building management document recommended by the CBC for Major Parish Churches. Representatives of Halifax Minster,<sup>232</sup> Tideswell, St John the Baptist,<sup>233</sup> and Malmesbury Abbey<sup>234</sup> have all said they would like to acquire one were funding available.



The types of strategic or management documents that Major Parish Churches have in place

<sup>229</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>230</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>231</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>232</sup> Halifax Minster case study

<sup>233</sup> Tideswell, St John the Baptist case study

<sup>234</sup> Malmesbury Abbey case study

### 3.5.9 Funding Repair, Conservation and Adaptation Projects

Many Major Parish Church PCCs enjoy the financial support of Friends groups through long-term donations and fundraising events,<sup>235</sup> others, such as Beverley Minster,<sup>236</sup> have associated Trusts that provide an annual endowment for repairs. Regardless of other financial support available to them, PCCs often, but not always, apply for grant aid when undertaking projects. Among the many organisations and Trusts that offer financial support, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is the principal funder: (see section 3.4 for further details.)

38% or 19 of the 50 Major Parish Churches that are the subject of a case study have received HLF funding since 2013. Of these, five of the 19 churches (26%) that received HLF grants have received more than one grant. 38% of all grants awarded by the HLF to Major Parish Churches had a fabric repair focus, while others focused on conservation, restoration or conservation of internal fixtures and fittings, new facilities and interpretation.<sup>237</sup> Other Major Parish Churches have not been so successful in their applications to the HLF. Toxteth, St James in the City, for example, has applied to the HLF three times without success.<sup>238</sup>

Other sources of grant funding available to Major Parish Churches for repair and/or adaptation projects, both major and smaller, include, but are not limited to, The National Churches Trust; All Churches Trust; and the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. The Roof Repair Fund, which has distributed grants specifically for church roofs and rainwater disposal systems since 2015 has awarded grants to six of the 50 Major Parish Churches that are the subjects of case studies, with £97,500 being the average award.<sup>239</sup>

<sup>235</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>236</sup> Beverley Minster in-depth case study

<sup>237</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund grants to the 50 case study churches, 1994-2016

<sup>238</sup> Toxteth, St James' case study

<sup>239</sup> 50 case studies



### Dorchester Abbey

Dorchester Abbey is an ancient and very significant parish church, located in an area of low deprivation. The Abbey's PCC and Rector work very hard to meet the high expectations of visitors who make pilgrimages of interest or faith to the Abbey, or attend a concert or other cultural or societal event there. There is, however, equal demand upon the Abbey and its PCC to fulfil the role of local, accessible and inclusive parish church. Again, this is a challenge often met; however, the pressure of fulfilling this dual role must be managed carefully to ensure future sustainability is not compromised by over-stretching what are, at present, significant resources for a parish church. Prudent and careful stewardship will ensure the future of Dorchester Abbey, and steps have been taken to strengthen governance and capacity within and in support of the PCC.

## 3.6 CURRENT USE

### 3.6.1 Wider Ministry

Many Major Parish Churches are places of worship, visitor destinations, civic venues and venues for cultural activities. Often, they have a profile and reach that extends beyond their parish boundaries to the wider city, county or diocese. This can place a range of demands and expectations upon PCCs. In recognition of these demands, a diocesan representative stated that *'There is often a mis-match between the public perception of the churches and public expectation that they fulfil a "civic" function and the ability of the worshipping community to meet this expectation, as well as maintaining the building and using it for mission and worship.'*<sup>240</sup>

Major Parish Church buildings are often cited by their representatives as central to wider ministry. A representative of Grimsby Minster, for example, said that *'the size and heritage of the building is a great asset in terms of outreach. The space can be used and adapted for all sorts of activities.'*<sup>241</sup> A representative of Hexham Abbey stated that *'the Abbey has two overlapping tasks: serving the local community as the parish church of Hexham, and, with the size and significant historic features of the building, offering a vast number of visitors a place of pilgrimage and education.'*<sup>242</sup> A representative of Dorchester Abbey perhaps best summed up the role of Major Parish Churches in wider ministry by saying that *'the heritage and power of Dorchester Abbey is part of its mission.'*<sup>243</sup> None of the Major Parish Churches who feature in the 12 in-depth case studies restricts the use of the church space to worship only.<sup>244</sup> Certain conditions within Major Parish Churches can be restricting, however. Leeds Minster, for example, is thought by the PCC to be inflexible due to its substantial number of fixed seats.<sup>245</sup>

### 3.6.2 Worship

All of Major Parish Churches hold at least one act of scheduled worship every week, and all are available for occasional offices: baptisms, weddings and funerals. Almost three quarters (73%) also hold weekday services.<sup>246</sup> Over 50% of Major Parish Churches have an average attendance at services of over 100 people with the accumulative, average weekly attendance (Sunday and weekday services combined) being 141.<sup>247</sup> There is generally no obvious correlation between settlement type, number of residents in the parish and subsequent congregation figures. Nationally, a quarter of England's 16,000 parish churches have weekly attendance below 16, and around 2,000 have a weekly attendance below 10. Only 1% of Major Parish Churches have a weekly attendance of fewer than 16.<sup>248</sup> The number of acts of personal, informal worship that take place in Major Parish Churches are very difficult to measure. It is expected that Major Parish Churches frequently provide a place of private prayer and/or reflection for regular and occasional visitors.

<sup>240</sup> Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

<sup>241</sup> Grimsby Minster case study

<sup>242</sup> Hexham Abbey case study

<sup>243</sup> Dorchester Abbey in-depth case study

<sup>244</sup> 12 in-depth case studies

<sup>245</sup> Leeds Minster case study

<sup>246</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

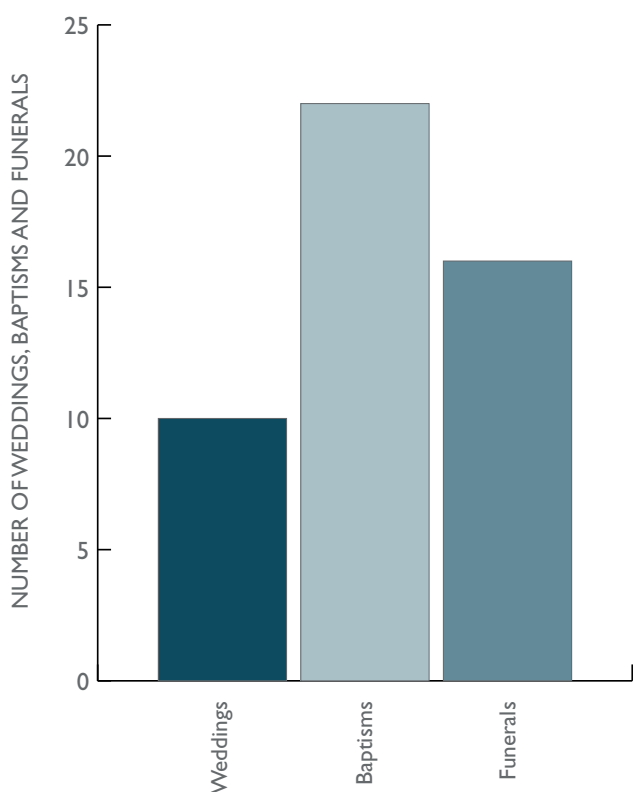
<sup>247</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>248</sup> Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015

Major Parish Churches often accommodate large congregations at Easter and, particularly, Christmas. Beverley Minster, for example, welcomes over 2,500 congregants at Christmas<sup>249</sup> and St Germans Priory reports that its congregation is not only growing generally, but that it doubles at Christmas.<sup>250</sup> Hexham Abbey is required to spread their Christmas services over more than one day to accommodate all worshippers.<sup>251</sup>

There is a strong feeling among many Major Parish Church representatives that building their congregations should be a priority as it will lead to the future sustainability of their churches. Representatives of Grimsby Minster;<sup>252</sup> Toxteth, St James in the City;<sup>253</sup> and Wymondham Abbey<sup>254</sup> all cited congregation building as key to future sustainability.

Major Parish Churches are also often guardians of ancient liturgical traditions. For example, 74% of Major Parish Churches maintain the Anglican choral tradition in some form, while 70% have bell ringers, who play both liturgical and cultural roles.<sup>255</sup>



The average number of baptisms, weddings and funerals per annum carried out at the Major Parish Churches that featured in the 12 in-depth case studies case studies.



**Fotheringhay St Mary and All Saints**

*‘Community support, a growing congregation and the openness to use the building for worship and complementary uses will help to secure its future’*

(Fotheringhay, St Mary and All Saints case study)

249 Beverley Minster case study  
 250 St Germans Priory case study  
 251 Hexham Abbey in-depth case study  
 252 Grimsby Minster case study  
 253 Toxteth, St James’ case study  
 254 Wymondham Abbey case study  
 255 Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

### 3.6.3 Mission and Community Uses

Major Parish Churches, like all Church of England parish churches, also provide a range of public services as part of their mission. Major Parish Churches' websites indicate a high number of complementary uses outside of worship including poverty initiatives youth groups (71%), room hire (45%), tours (31%) and initiatives to tackle poverty (22%).<sup>256</sup>

A representative of Sunderland Minster said that *'the most significant things we are doing are mission and community engagement, which don't cost us anything like as much [as repairs] but are our key priorities and our raison d'être. The building and its status give us an iconic venue, but for a living worshipping community there is much more to it than that.'*<sup>257</sup>

Missional activities include, but are not limited to;<sup>258</sup>

- Concerts
- Work with homeless people
- Work with people with alcohol or drug dependency
- Art exhibitions
- Café
- Dinners
- Post office
- Youth and children's services, including leisure and cultural services
- Festivals
- Foodbanks
- Unemployment services
- Engagement initiatives for asylum seekers

In total, 59% of Major Parish Churches are used by social groups such as the University of the Third Age (U3A), Mothers' Union, scouts, brownies and local health services, or used for lunchtime and evening concerts, organ recitals, dance and drama classes.<sup>259</sup>

Major Parish Churches are also used by people as places of solace. The frequency of such occurrences is very difficult to measure. Brighton, St Mary's PCC has, however, observed that the church building provides a calming place for people in distress, including those under the influence of drugs and alcohol, and is also often the first place ex-prisoners come following their release.<sup>260</sup>

Major Parish Churches offer little information on their mission or charitable objectives online, however, with only 29% publicising their activities.<sup>261</sup> A lack of publicity may explain the ostensibly low number of Major Parish Churches engaged in poverty or homelessness initiatives, which are advertised by only 22% of Major Parish Church websites.<sup>262</sup>

*"The excellent acoustics at Malmesbury Abbey enables a variety of music concerts to take place. Its size also allows for other large events, such as a February half-term skate park in the church, which utilises the whole building."*

Malmesbury Abbey case study

### 3.6.4 Civic Responsibilities

58% of Major Parish Churches taking part in the in-depth surveys have civic responsibilities. Civic responsibilities can include, but are not limited to;

- Mayoral ceremonies
- High Sheriff ceremonies
- Funerals of notable local people
- Services associated with schools and universities

Many Major Parish Churches describe themselves as being the generally-accepted civic church for their town, village or geographical area. Halifax Minster, for example, is described as the civic church of Calderdale.<sup>263</sup> Tiverton, St Peter is described as Tiverton's civic church;<sup>264</sup> and Waltham Abbey is thought of having 'civic church status'.<sup>265</sup>

As part of its civic duties, Nottingham, St Mary hosted the funeral of the Nottingham Forest football club manager Brian Clough in 2004 and was the site of collective, gathered grief during the aftermath of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997. It is also the 'university church' for the University of Nottingham.<sup>266</sup> For reasons such as these St Mary's PCC feels that it has a civic responsibility that extends beyond its parish and across the whole city.<sup>267</sup>

<sup>256</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>257</sup> Sunderland Minster online survey response

<sup>258</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>259</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>260</sup> Brighton, St Mary's case study

<sup>261</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>262</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>263</sup> Halifax Minster case study

<sup>264</sup> Tiverton, St Peter's case study

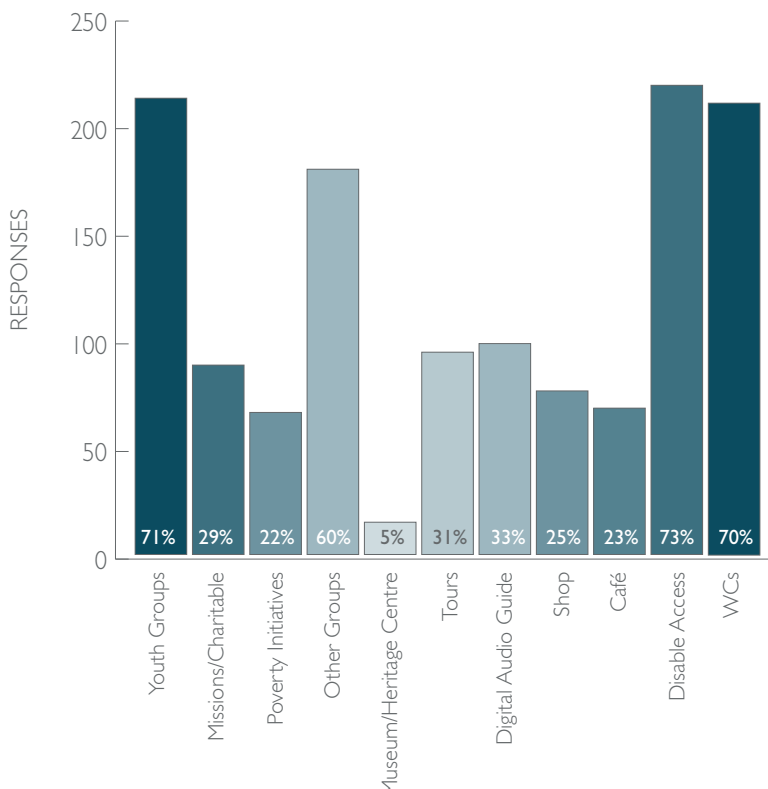
<sup>265</sup> Waltham Abbey case study

<sup>266</sup> Nottingham, St Mary's in-depth case study

<sup>267</sup> Nottingham, St Mary's in-depth case study

Some civic responsibilities have regional reach. The incumbent of Dorchester Abbey is often invited to host or is expected to attend events associated with offices such as the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire. This places both the Abbey and its incumbent at the centre of public life in the county of Oxfordshire.<sup>268</sup>

Other Major Parish Churches, however, do not consider civic duties beyond their geographical parish to be part of their role. This is in urban areas where there is more than one church. Neither Brighton, St Mary<sup>269</sup> nor Bow Common, St Paul,<sup>270</sup> for example, hold civic responsibilities for their cities, but continue to carry out local/parish duties.



Services and facilities provided by the Major Parish Churches. Based on the information provided on their own websites.

<sup>268</sup> Dorchester Abbey in-depth case study

<sup>269</sup> Brighton, St Mary's in-depth case study

<sup>270</sup> Bow Common, St Paul's in-depth case study



### Christchurch Priory

Christchurch Priory welcomes c.100,000 visitors a year. It is open every day and is staffed largely by volunteers who offer visitors tours and printed interpretation. The St Michael's Loft museum houses and interprets various artefacts. There are plans to establish a visitor centre in the adjacent building, which already houses the café and shop.

The aim of this will be to put Christchurch Priory and its scheduled ruins in the context of the local area. It is considered important to the future of the church to help people to understand the history and significance of the Priory.

## 3.7 WELCOMING VISITORS

According to the National Churches Trust survey, the top five things that would encourage people to visit churches are:

- A friendly welcome
- Toilets
- Café or refreshments
- Comfortable seating
- Useful visitor information<sup>271</sup>

80% of the 12 Major Parish Churches subject to in-depth case studies are regularly open to visitors outside scheduled worship, with 64% actively publicising their opening hours on their websites.<sup>272</sup>

Major Parish Churches are often significant visitor destinations, welcoming tourists from all over the world: Beverley Minster's visitors' book shows that it was visited by people from 44 different countries in 2015.<sup>273</sup> The average number of annual visitors to Major Parish Churches is 23,200.<sup>274</sup> By comparison, the average number of annual visitors to each of the Church of England's 42 cathedrals is 238,000.<sup>275</sup> The range between the Major Parish Church that attracts the greatest and the one that attracts the least number of visitors is, however, substantial. Congleton, St Peter attracts 1000-2000 per year; Stratford-upon-Avon, Holy Trinity welcomes 250,000 visitors every year, due to its being the burial place of William Shakespeare;<sup>276</sup> and Bath Abbey attracts the greatest number of visitors of any Major Parish Church, welcoming 400,000 annually, at least partly as a result of its proximity to the Roman Baths and as part of a World heritage Site. As is the case for all Major Parish churches, there is scope to increase this number further. Bath's Roman Baths, by comparison, was placed 13th in VisitBritain's 2015 survey of the UK's paid visitor attractions with over 1 million visitors,<sup>277</sup> over double the number received by the Abbey.

Many Major Parish Churches deploy volunteers as welcomers or stewards to greet and provide information to visitors.<sup>278</sup> Beverley Minster, has over 100 volunteers who work as welcomers and shop staff;<sup>279</sup> Leeds Minster has a team, who support the verger, on site whenever the church is open;<sup>280</sup> Christchurch Priory has around 200 volunteers, who act as stewards, tour guides, shop assistants and café attendants;<sup>281</sup> Bath Abbey always has welcomers on the Abbey door, drawn from its volunteer base and complemented by paid staff.<sup>282</sup>

Some Major Parish Churches also take part in the national Heritage Open Days event, with representatives of Doncaster Minster;<sup>283</sup> Brighton, St Mary's;<sup>284</sup> Croydon Minster;<sup>285</sup> and Northampton, Holy Sepulchre<sup>286</sup> all citing their participation.

<sup>271</sup> National Churches Trust ComRes poll on Church Buildings, 2016

<sup>272</sup> 12 in-depth case studies

<sup>273</sup> Beverley Minster case study

<sup>274</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>275</sup> Church Buildings Council, Cathedral Statistics, 2014 (published August 2015) [www.churchofengland.org/media/2279215/2014cathedralstatistics.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/media/2279215/2014cathedralstatistics.pdf)

<sup>276</sup> Stratford-upon-Avon, Holy Trinity case study

<sup>277</sup> [www.visitbritain.org/annual-survey-visits-visitor-attractions](http://www.visitbritain.org/annual-survey-visits-visitor-attractions)

<sup>278</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>279</sup> Beverley Minster case study

<sup>280</sup> Leeds Minster case study

<sup>281</sup> Christchurch Priory case study

<sup>282</sup> Bath Abbey case study

<sup>283</sup> Doncaster Minster case study

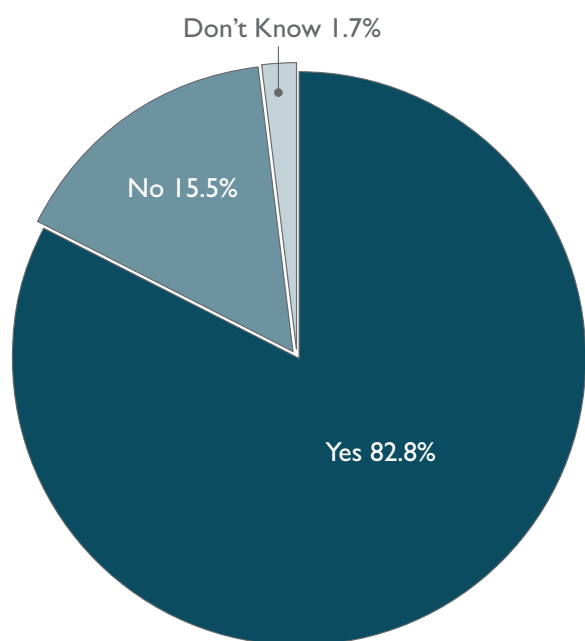
<sup>284</sup> Brighton, St Mary's in-depth case study

<sup>285</sup> Croydon Minster case study

<sup>286</sup> Northampton, Holy Sepulchre case study

### 3.7.1 Interpretation

The vast majority (90%) of Major Parish Churches featured in the 12 in-depth case studies support visitors to understand what makes the church building and its history special.<sup>287</sup> A third of all Major Parish Churches offer tours and have digital or audio guides available to visitors. Four Major Parish Churches publicise a smartphone app for visitors while others have podcasts or Google 360 views. Only 5% have a heritage centre or interpretation space but the majority offer guidebooks and many provide online interpretation.<sup>288</sup> Notable examples of Major Parish Church visitor centres include Hexham Abbey's 'Big Story' centre (completed in 2014 with assistance of HLF funding)<sup>289</sup> and Dorchester Abbey's Cloister Gallery, which was longlisted for the Gulbenkian Prize in 2006.



Major Parish Church representatives were asked whether they gathered visitors' opinions about their church

Some activities at Major Parish Churches have been initiated by the need for funding from the HLF, which requires that any holder of a GPOW, Our Heritage or Heritage Grant to engage in activities to deliver outcomes for people and communities.<sup>290</sup> Activities can include, but are not limited to: providing onsite interpretation; developing a website; and researching and publishing a guidebook.<sup>291</sup> At least five Major Parish Churches that have received HLF funding assert a direct connection between the interpretation they offer and HLF funding requirements.<sup>292</sup> While this often presents a welcome opportunity for Major Parish Churches to increase engagement with visitors, it can also occasionally be challenging to manage.

Nottingham, St Mary's PCC found the emphasis on activities to be especially time consuming.<sup>293</sup> Conversely, the provision of interpretation can be seen to support a PCC's core work. The PCC of Bath Abbey considers it important to help people to understand the church and what its history is about, partly because it presents an opportunity for evangelism.<sup>294</sup> The representative of Bury St Edmunds, St Mary's suggested that helping visitors to understand the church building was a mechanism for pointing people toward the Christian faith.<sup>295</sup>

Dorchester Abbey, Leeds Minster, Croydon Minster, and Hexham Abbey all have paid education officers who facilitate either schools' learning programmes or public workshops and tours, or both.<sup>296</sup> Many Major Parish Churches utilise their volunteer bases to offer guided tours of the church as well as information delivered in a more informal way.<sup>297</sup> Half of the the in-depth case studies identified a lack of visitor interest and inadequate interpretation and information as an issue in need of attention.<sup>298</sup>

*"The Abbey has two overlapping tasks: serving the local community as the parish church of Hexham, and, with the size and significant historic features of the building, offering a vast number of visitors a place of pilgrimage and education."*

(Hexham Abbey case study)

<sup>287</sup> 12 in-depth case studies

<sup>288</sup> Dataset of 300 Major Parish Churches

<sup>289</sup> Hexham Abbey in-depth case study

<sup>290</sup> Heritage Grant application guidance, available from [www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/heritage-grants](http://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/heritage-grants)

<sup>291</sup> Grants for Places of Worship application guidance, available from [www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/grants-places-worship-england](http://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/grants-places-worship-england)

<sup>292</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>293</sup> Nottingham, St Mary's case study

<sup>294</sup> Bath Abbey case study

<sup>295</sup> Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

<sup>296</sup> 50 case studies

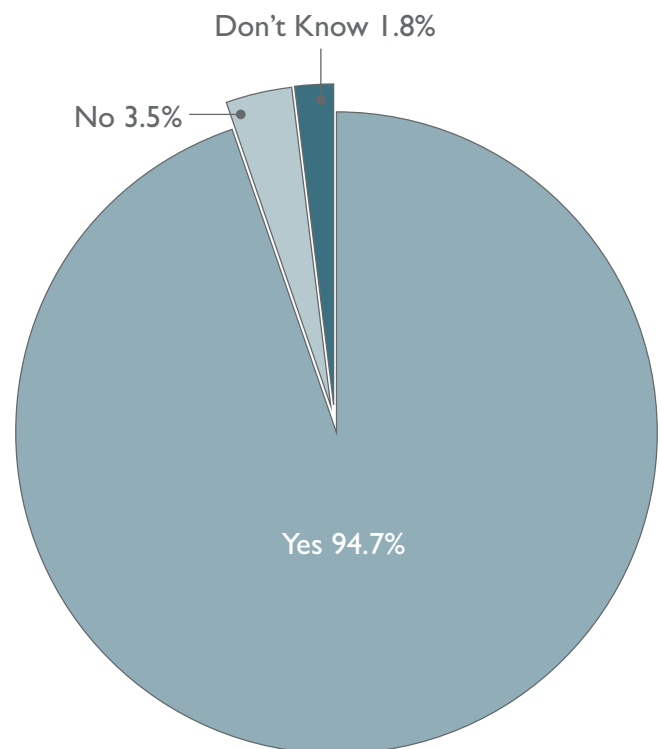
<sup>297</sup> 50 case studies

<sup>298</sup> 12 in-depth case studies

### 3.7.2 Gathering Visitors' Opinions and Online Engagement

Over 80% of representatives in the in-depth case studies gather visitors' opinions about their Major Parish Church. Of the 50 Major Parish Churches surveyed online, the majority use a visitors' book. When discussing comments left in visitors' books, most churches reported that comments usually offer general approval.<sup>299</sup> Shrewsbury Abbey's representative, for example, stated that the most common comment left in the visitors' book is *'the church is awesome'*.<sup>300</sup>

Use of Facebook, websites, Twitter and Trip Advisor was referenced by 22 churches who took part in the online survey.<sup>301</sup> A limited number of Major Parish Church PCCs are, however, actively engaged in the use of social media.<sup>302</sup> Ludlow, St Laurence is at the forefront of social media users among Major Parish Churches. Its representative said that St Laurence's Trip Advisor page has over 500 reviews; its Facebook page is primarily focused on a local audience but its Twitter page has 1,200 followers and reaches an international audience and an Instagram account is likely to be launched soon.<sup>303</sup> Other Major Parish Churches with active social media accounts are, Dorchester Abbey, whose representatives value the 'right to reply' that social media provides<sup>304</sup> and Beverley Minster, which, at the time of writing is ranked Beverley's #1 place to visit on Trip Advisor. Beverley, St Mary is, at the time of writing, ranked #4.



Major Parish Church representatives were asked whether they help visitors to understand the heritage significance of their church building

299 50 case studies

300 Shrewsbury Abbey case study

301 Online survey of 63 Major Parish Church respondents

302 50 case studies

303 Ludlow, St Laurence case study

304 Dorchester Abbey in-depth case study



### 3.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR SUSTAINING THE FUTURE

*“We love the heritage and the building, but for the church to be sustainable, it must have a living, growing community. It can’t just be a piece of heritage.”*

Tildewell, St Mary case study

During the course of this survey a multitude of suggestions relating to the future sustainability of Major Parish Churches were offered by diocesan representatives and architects. It is not within the scope of this survey to make recommendations; however, the suggestions provide a great insight into current thinking about Major Parish Church sustainability. A summary of the opinions offered appears below, beginning with three direct quotes:

*Hands-on advice on increasing revenue should be provided and that building adaptations are needed.*<sup>305</sup>

*The present model of the management and governance structures of Major Parish Churches are complex, diverse and in some cases, inefficient. There are effectively 300 Major Parish Churches operating in 300 unique ways, albeit with some commonalities and characteristics.*<sup>306</sup>

*A degree of national oversight is required to ensure quality of management of these highly significant buildings. Overall, there should be a general shift in opinion with regard to the use of parish churches, with a greater focus on wider community uses rather than on their ecclesiastical function/role. Linked to this is the need for a new major funding source on par with cathedrals.*<sup>307</sup>

Other suggestions range from removing the costs of the building from the congregation and letting the whole community take responsibility, to a model similar to the National Trust in which a national body takes on maintenance and management, supported by a network of loyal visitors.<sup>308</sup>

*“If Major Parish Churches are genuinely believed to be some of the most significant buildings in the country religiously, culturally, architecturally, archaeologically - which they are - they need to be part of a system which can manage them as such. Currently for many Major Parish Churches - not all - this is not so because of finances, lack of human resources and lack of understanding. The Church of England needs to be clear about what the role of Major Parish Church actually is.”*

Fundraising and Development Manager, online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

Many believed that resources specifically for Major Parish Churches should be developed due to their specific issues and opportunities. These differences should also be celebrated on a national level. One respondent states that *‘The C of E needs to be clear about what the role of Major Parish Churches actually is and be committed to learning more.’*<sup>309</sup>

A popular idea was to form a network of Major Parish Churches nationally, which would allow them to be considered collectively. A national working party of interested stakeholders was suggested by one archdeacon in order to come up with a plan.<sup>310</sup>

Another pointed out that the management of church buildings should be included in the clergy training curriculum for those going to Major Parish Churches so that they could be resourced to learn how to thrive in mission and ministry there.”<sup>311</sup>

305 Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

306 Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

307 Online survey of conservation architects at Purcell

308 Online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

309 Fundraising and Development Manager

310 Archdeacon, online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

311 Archdeacon, online survey of DAC secretaries, support officers and archdeacons

# 4

## Summary of Findings

Major Parish Churches are not simply large and significant church buildings; they manifest a combination of material, historic, spiritual and cultural demands, resources, challenges and opportunities. Their management is a complex undertaking often borne by volunteers, time-pressured incumbents and, if affordable, a limited number of paid staff. Their continued existence is a testament to those who are called to care for them.

The points set out across the following pages are a summary of the findings of the Major Parish Churches survey. They are not exhaustive. Findings have been broken down into the complementary categories of:

- Research
- Characteristics
- Challenges
- Perceptions
- Factors influencing sustainability
- Opportunities to increase sustainability

### NEXT STEPS

The findings contained within this report and the case studies will be of use to both those responsible for the management and care of individual Major Parish Churches and those working with them strategically, at local, regional and national levels. All stakeholders have a responsibility to ensure these significant buildings continue to serve the spiritual and pastoral needs of their parishes and continue to make a vital contribution to national and local heritage. This research provides a robust evidence base from which to stimulate debate about the potential future for Major Parish Churches.

#### 4.1 RESEARCH: GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE AND AREAS OF FURTHER INVESTIGATION

- a There is a rich evidence base of quantitative and qualitative data, held by parishes, dioceses and national organisations, such as the Church Buildings Council, Church Heritage Record, and Historic England
- b Research on Major Parish Churches has enabled the identification of gaps in knowledge and areas for further research
- c Continuing research into new systems of governance of these buildings could inform new approaches to improving sustainability
- d Further research could consider;
  - i. The role of the clergy in their day-to-day management
  - i. The impact of skilled volunteer involvement compared with less-skilled or unskilled volunteers managing them
  - ii. The role and impact of professional staff
  - iii. The impact of CMPs on their management and condition
  - iv. The impact of Heritage Lottery Fund requirements on project planning and delivery, especially what levels of engagement can reasonably be expected in proportion to their resources rather than the size of the grants being sought
  - v. The existence and efficacy of diocesan support and the impact of diocesan expectations or targets such as parish share
  - vi. The impact of Historic England's and amenity societies' statutory roles on repair and adaptation projects
  - vii. The role and efficacy of the Greater Churches Network
  - viii. The role and efficacy of the Church Buildings Council
  - ix. Relationships between Major Parish Churches and other parish churches, cathedrals and local organisations
  - x. Direct comparisons between the way Major Parish Churches are managed in rural, suburban and urban locations, with further comparisons of the churches in each category.

#### 4.2 CHARACTERISTICS: DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF MAJOR PARISH CHURCHES

- a Major Parish Churches are both what they are materially and what they are perceived to be culturally and spiritually. A Major Parish Church can be many things to many people, including those who manage them
- b These churches are important repositories of the material, cultural and spiritual history of the nation
- c Major Parish Churches are or house some of the finest examples of architecture and art in England
- d Whatever their scale or relative significance, all Major Parish Churches play a significant role in community life
- e These churches are, or have the potential to be, important and prominent destinations for pilgrims and tourists

### 4.3 CHALLENGES: DEMANDS AND ISSUES FACED BY MAJOR PARISH CHURCHES

- a No challenge facing these churches can be considered in isolation; rather, challenges should be addressed holistically
- b There is no panacea for the challenges faced by Major Parish Churches
- c Major Parish Churches are large buildings that often include a substantial amount of historic fabric, which can be costly and time-consuming to repair and maintain
- d There is a large disparity between the income of these churches and the demands upon them to fulfil their mission and ministry, and care for their church buildings
- e Reliance on one-off grants and legacies creates uncertainty and reduces the ability to plan for the future effectively
- f Many Major Parish Churches do not have the necessary infrastructure, such as lavatories and effective heating systems, to sustain some complementary uses
- g The significance of these buildings, and the need to safeguard them from harmful change, can be a barrier to delivering any change at all
- h Many Major Parish Churches do not have the necessary financial resources to employ sufficient staff to relieve often substantial pressure on volunteers
- i PCC members are dedicated volunteers who are usually untrained in historic building management and the immediate responsibilities are often focussed on a very small number of people
- j Many PCCs are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit volunteers, especially skilled volunteers
- k All incumbents face considerable pressures on their time, which can impact upon the management of Major Parish Churches
- l Those Major Parish Churches that operate like cathedrals cannot simply increase their income if they are to remain sustainable. A national initiative is required to support these churches
- m Many of these buildings are constrained by a lack of funds and/or a lack strategic approaches to fundraising. Many operate at an annual deficit whilst trying to meet continual financial demands, such as paying parish share and insurance

### 4.4 PERCEPTIONS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXPECTATIONS OF MAJOR PARISH CHURCHES

- a Views about these churches' impact upon mission and ministry are divided but very few of their representatives consider their church buildings to be a hindrance or a burden
- b Major Parish Churches are recognised primarily for their core role as places of worship, but are also acknowledged to be embodiments of history and heritage, and servants of the community
- c Major Parish churches are well-loved by the general public. This is reflected in attendance figures for acts of worship, especially Christmas services, as well as annual visitor figures
- d These churches are regarded as being nationally important heritage assets, and are officially recognised as such through the listing system
- e Not all members of the community are fully aware of how Major Parish Churches are funded and managed
- f The Church of England is beginning to recognise the distinction between a Major Parish Church and any other parish church
- g There is a general perception within the membership of the Church of England and wider communities that some Major Parish Churches are equivalent to cathedrals, with access to the resources of cathedrals
- h Some PCCs feel burdened by a perceived expectation that they should deliver the same standard of visitor experience as many cathedrals
- i Although many Major Parish Churches have positive working relationships with Historic England and the national amenity societies, some believe these organisations to be wilfully obstructive

#### 4.5 SUSTAINABILITY: FACTORS INFLUENCING FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY

- a Sustaining or growing congregations will enable these churches to continue delivering their core mission and ministry
- b If a Major Parish Church cannot sustain its congregation, its viability as a church could be called into question. This will also lead to uncertainty about the future of the church building
- c Managing the expectations of PCCs, volunteers, congregations, employees, visitors and third party organisations is crucial to managing Major Parish Churches
- d The majority of Major Parish Church buildings are well cared for. The associated repair costs, however, vary. The ability of PCCs to pay for repairs themselves or attract sufficient funds from other sources has a direct impact upon condition
- e The efficacy of building maintenance is often dependent upon resources, both financial and people
- f The Heritage Lottery Fund, along with a range of other organisations and Trusts, offers financial support to Major Parish Churches. This support is allocated on a competitive basis, so is not guaranteed. Central government, through the Roof Repair Fund, made £55 million available for all parish churches for roof and rainwater disposal system repairs since 2015 (the scheme launched in 2014). This was a one-off competitive grant scheme, which has now ended and was massively over-subscribed. Central government also offers VAT re-imbusement on capital works through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme
- g These buildings may be caught in the dilemma of needing funding for repairs that is well over the limit set for the Heritage Lottery Fund's dedicated GPOW scheme (£250k) but not having the resources to put together an application that will meet the more stringent engagement criteria for the open schemes to which cathedrals commonly apply
- h A variety of new models of governance are being tested by Major Parish Churches. The long-term sustainability or effectiveness of these models is unclear and further research is needed

#### 4.6 OPPORTUNITIES: FOR MAJOR PARISH CHURCHES TO INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY

- a With one or two exceptions Major Parish Churches operate within the parish system. There is an opportunity, following further research, to explore different models of governance and a need to evaluate those models that have already been adopted
- b Dioceses and the Church of England nationally to consider strategic clergy staffing of some Major Parish Churches on a cathedral model
- c Diocesan Support Officers provide invaluable advice and support. A dedicated Major Parish Churches Support Officer should be considered
- d Development of collective communications strategy, with particular emphasis on why and how they manage these nationally significant heritage assets for the benefit of all, what facilities are on offer and what the charges are for external bodies
- e Development of business planning strategies for Major Parish Churches that better utilise their roles as tourist destinations, cultural centres and community facilities
- f Consideration of a national, comprehensive strategy for the repair and maintenance of Major Parish Churches potentially, as part of a wider maintenance scheme
- g The creation of a forum for sharing best practice
- h Partnership-working, with universities and other churches, to explore different ways of increasing sustainability or with business partners willing to offer pro bono expertise on management issues such as HR, health and safety or communications
- i Proactive work with Historic England and the national amenity societies to enable desirable change to the church buildings

# Appendices

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APPENDIX I: 50 CASE STUDIES

- Croydon, St John The Baptist (Croydon Minster)
- Shrewsbury, Holy Cross (Shrewsbury Abbey)
- Doncaster, St George (Doncaster Minster)
- Malmesbury, St Mary, St Adehelm, St Peter and St Paul (Malmesbury Abbey)
- Brighton, St Mary's Kemp Town
- Grimsby, St James (Grimsby Minster)
- Toxteth, St James in the City
- Bow Common, St Paul
- Hexham, The Priory and Parish Church of St Andrew (Hexham Abbey)
- Dorchester, SS Peter and Paul (Dorchester Abbey)
- Fotheringhay, St Mary and All Saints
- Pershore, Holy Cross, (Pershore Abbey)
- Kingston Upon Hull, Holy Trinity
- Hartlepool, St Hilda
- Nottingham, St Mary The Virgin
- Christchurch, The Priory Church (Christchurch Priory)
- Stratford-Upon-Avon, Holy Trinity
- Tiverton, St Peter
- Stow-In-Lindsey, Minster Church of St Mary
- Wymondham, St Mary and St Thomas of Canterbury (Wymondham Abbey)
- Ludlow, St Laurence
- Selby, St Mary and St Germain (Selby Abbey)
- Bath, The Abbey Church of St Peter and St Paul (Bath Abbey)
- Minster-In-Sheppey, St Mary and St Sexburga (Minster Abbey)
- The Abbey Church of Waltham Holy Cross and St Lawrence (Waltham Abbey)
- Congleton, St Peter
- Guildford, Holy Trinity
- Shoreditch, St Leonard
- Portsmouth (Portsea), St Mary
- Blandford Forum, SS Peter and Paul
- Bradford on Avon, Holy Trinity
- Rotherham, All Saints (Rotherham Minster)
- Bodmin, St Petroc
- Halifax, St John The Baptist (Halifax Minster)
- Beverley, St John and St Martin (Beverley Minster)
- Beverley, St Mary
- Howden, St Peter and Paul (Howden Minster)
- Lancaster, Priory Church of St Mary (Lancaster Priory)
- The Priory Church of St Mary and St Michael (Cartmel Priory)
- Nantwich, St Mary
- Tideswell, St John The Baptist
- Highnam, Holy Innocents
- Boston, St Botolph
- Northampton, Holy Sepulchre
- Hadleigh, St Marys
- Bury St Edmunds, St Mary
- The Ancient Priory and Parish Church of St Germans, (St Germans Priory)
- The Minster and Parish Church of Saint Peter-at-Leeds (Leeds Minster)
- Grantham, Church of St Wulfram
- Birmingham, Sparkbrook St Agatha
- The Minster Church of St Nicholas (Great Yarmouth Minster)

## APPENDIX J: 12 CASE STUDIES

- Brighton, St Mary's Kemp Town
- Toxteth, St James in the City
- Bow Common, St Paul
- Hexham, The Priory and Parish Church of St Andrew (Hexham Abbey)
- Dorchester, SS Peter And Paul (Dorchester Abbey)
- Nottingham, St Mary the Virgin
- Stow-In-Lindsey, Minster Church of St Mary
- Beverley Minster and Beverley, St Mary
- Ancient Priory and Parish Church of St Germans, (St Germans Priory)
- The Minster And Parish Church of Saint Peter-At-Leeds (Leeds Minster)
- Birmingham, Sparkbrook, St Agatha
- The Minster Church of St Nicholas (Great Yarmouth Minster)

## Appendix A: Acronyms

CBC	Church Buildings Council
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
DAC	Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches
EPP	Extra Parochial Place (of Worship)
FAC	Fabric Advisory Committee
GCN	Greater Churches Network
GPOW	Grants for Places of Worship (HLF)
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
LPOW RRF	Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund
PCC	Parochial Church Council
QI	Quinquennial Inspection
RGPOW	Repair Grants for Places of Worship (Historic England/HLF)
SPAB	Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings



## Appendix B: Glossary

### AVERAGE SUNDAY ATTENDANCE

The average number of attenders at Sunday church services typically calculated over a four week period in October.

### AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

The average number of attenders at church services throughout the week typically calculated over a four week period in October.

### CLERGY DEFINITIONS

**Incumbent** - the priest who is in charge of church life in a particular benefice. Depending on the parish his/her title may be Vicar or Rector. The incumbent is generally a Stipendiary post e.g. they are paid to undertake the office of Incumbent and usually provided with accommodation in the parish

**Non-Stipendiary Ministry** - ministers ordained deacon or priest who serve as honorary curates whilst continuing full-time secular employment.

**Local Non-Stipendiary Ministry** (sometimes called Ordained Local Ministry or OLM) - Scheme whereby ministers are ordained deacon or priest, with a view to working only in a clearly defined area, e.g. their own parish or deanery.

**Priest-in-charge** - a priest who is responsible for a parish where for pastoral reasons the diocesan bishop does not wish to grant the freehold and thus make the priest an incumbent. (generally, but not always, a Stipendiary post)

**House for Duty** - House for Duty is normally defined as 'Sunday duty plus x days per week'. The priest gains a house to live in rent free with the diocese or parish paying Council Tax, Water Rates and being responsible for the maintenance of the property.

**Curate** - a deacon or priest appointed to assist the incumbent or take charge of a parish temporarily during a vacancy or while the incumbent is incapacitated.

**Lay Minister** - general name given to an individual who undertakes pastoral work or leads worship but has not been ordained. Will usually have been given some training. Many are volunteers but the title is also used for people who work in parishes that are not ordained but are employed e.g. Youth Workers.

**Lay Reader** (also called Reader) - readers are lay people who have been selected, trained and licensed by the Bishop of a diocese to preach, teach and lead worship in a pastoral context. There are more than 10,000 active Readers in the Church of England. Most are licensed to a parish but some are chaplains in prisons, hospitals, hospices or schools, a few are in charge of parishes. Readers give their services to the Church so do not receive payment.

**Interregnum** – the period of time before a new parish priest is appointed to fill a vacancy. During this period the parish is the responsibility of the churchwardens.

### CATHEDRAL

The principal church of a diocese, managed by a Dean and Chapter, generally including three full time residential priests funded by the Church Commissioners. The site includes the historic 'seat' or 'cathedra' of the diocesan bishop.

### EXTRA PAROCHIAL PLACE

An Extra-Parochial Place of Worship is a building in which the congregation meets for worship but is not part of any geographical ecclesiastical parish and has no duties or rights within that parish. Those duties belong to the parish church of that parish in which the EPP stands. Such an arrangement allows for flexible mission and outreach work or other specialist functions unencumbered by pastoral responsibilities.

### FESTIVAL CHURCHES

A festival or celebration church is a rural church building that is not used for weekly worship, but is still a local icon and community asset. It is valued and required by the community and for the Festivals of the Church and for Rites of Passage.

<http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/open-sustainable/association-of-festival-churches>

### GREATER CHURCHES NETWORK

An informal association or support group of 55 non-cathedral churches which, by virtue of their great age, size, historical, architectural, or ecclesiastical importance, display many of the characteristics of a cathedral. Most churches in the group also fulfil a role which is additional to that of a normal parish church. A member of the Greater Churches Network is a Greater Churches. These churches share common features including the requirements to offer facilities to a large number of visitors, host special services, offer community access and fund the specialist maintenance and repair of these large buildings. They are generally Grade I listed. <http://greaterchurches.org/>

### HERITAGE ASSET

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance, because of its heritage interest. Designated heritage assets include listed buildings and scheduled monuments.

### INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION/INDICES OF DEPRIVATION

The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a UK government qualitative study of deprived areas in English local councils. The figures used within this study relate to those available in 2015 (the 2010 statistics) and cover seven aspects of deprivation - income, employment, health deprivation and disability, education skills and training, barriers to housing and services, crime and living environment.

#### INTEREST/SIGNIFICANCE

The historic, community, artistic and architectural and archaeological value of a place to this and future generations because of its heritage interest/significance. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting, which is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced.

#### MAJOR PARISH CHURCH

A Major Parish Church is a Church of England place of worship that has all or some of the following characteristics: physically large (over 1000m<sup>2</sup> footprint); grade I or II\* listed; with significant heritage value; open to visitors daily; make a civic, cultural and economic contribution to their communities.

#### MINSTER

Historically, the word comes from the same root as 'monastery' and denoted a settlement of clergy living a communal life endowed by a charter, with a ministry to the wider area. Minsters declined in importance as the parish system was introduced from the 11th century. Historic Minsters today are generally derived from Anglo-Saxon foundations but can be any large or significant church. The modern honorific designation of minster can be bestowed on existing parish churches for a variety of reasons, but generally the honorific title acknowledges the additional civic responsibilities of the church.

#### PARISH SHARE

Parish Share, or the Common Fund, is paid by parishes to their diocese as a contribution to the costs of ministry and mission in the diocese and, since 1998, pension contributions. The way the contributions are calculated varies from diocese to diocese.

#### PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)

A parochial church council (PCC) is the executive committee of a Church of England parish and consists of clergy, elected member and representatives of the laity. PCCs are excepted charities and are governed by Church of England legislation including the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules, amended 2011. A traditional PCC generally consists of member roles including a PCC secretary, treasurer and two churchwardens. A PCC will have a mandatory standing committee that makes decisions on behalf of the PCC but may also have a number of sub-committees that provide advice to the PCC but, ultimately, all decisions rest with the PCC.

#### SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT

A scheduled monument is an historic building or site that is included in the Schedule of Monuments kept by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The regime is set out in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (1).

#### USUAL SUNDAY ATTENDANCE

The usual number of individual attendees at Sunday church services.

## Appendix C: Further Reading

Report of the Church Buildings Review Group, September 2015  
[https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2383717/church\\_buildings\\_review\\_report\\_2015.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2383717/church_buildings_review_report_2015.pdf)

Statistics for Mission, Research and Statistics Department, Archbishop's Council, 2014  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2432327/2014statisticsformission.pdf>

ChurchCare, National Church Buildings Fabric Survey, 2013  
<http://www.churchcare.co.uk/about-us/campaigns/news/529-national-church-buildings-fabric-survey>

National Churches Trust ComRes poll on Church Buildings, 2016  
<http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/sites/default/files/ComRes%20Opinion%20Poll%20leaflet.pdf>

Blessings or Burdens? Listed Places of Worship and their Role in Communities  
<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/blessings-or-burdens-summary.pdf>

Strategic Action Plan for Historic Places of Worship in Wales, 2015  
<http://cadw.gov.wales/docs/cadw/publications/historicenvironment/29012016CadwHistoricPlacesOfWorship-en.pdf>

Drastic reform is the only way to save England's churches, Apollo, April 2016 – Matthew Cooper  
<http://www.apollo-magazine.com/drastic-reform-is-the-only-way-to-save-englands-churches/>

Historic England's, Heritage at Risk register  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/>

Financial Overview 2004-13, A summary of the finances of the Church of England  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1886486/financialoverview.pdf>

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, Historic England, 2008  
<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf/>

Church Growth Research Programme, From Anecdote to Evidence, 2014  
<http://www.churchgrowthresearch.org.uk/UserFiles/File/Reports/FromAnecdoteToEvidenceI.0.pdf>

CTA and Cathedrals Plus, Cathedrals and Parish Churches in Relation – or not! 2011  
[http://cvta.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/cathedrals\\_and\\_parishchurches.pdf](http://cvta.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/cathedrals_and_parishchurches.pdf)

Urban Minsters Conference 2011, A Theological Reflection, Jim Francis

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD, 2010)  
<http://www2.cuf.org.uk/poverty-lookup-tool>

Church Heritage Record  
<https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/churches>

The Future of Minsters; an address to the First Urban Minsters Conference, Halifax, Michael Sadgrove, Dean of Durham, September 2011

Cathedrals, Greater Churches and the Growth of the Church. Canon John Holmes and Ben Kautzer October 2013  
[http://community.dur.ac.uk/churchgrowth.research/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Publication\\_edition\\_Strand\\_3a.pdf](http://community.dur.ac.uk/churchgrowth.research/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Publication_edition_Strand_3a.pdf)

## Appendix D: Acknowledgments

The project partners are indebted to everyone who has taken part in this research. A range of church representatives, diocesan representatives, heritage professionals and heritage organisations have contributed to this study or were interviewed as part of the research, which was carried out in 2016. In addition to the project partners named below, we would like to thank everyone for sharing their honest experiences and opinions. A particular thanks goes to the Church Buildings Council for their statistical analysis of the data, and to the church representatives involved in the filming, telephone interviews and in-depth case studies:

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Hull Community Theatre

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## Appendix E: Project Partners

### Project Partners

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Adam Tyson, Heritage Lottery Fund  
Revd Jeremy Fletcher, Greater Churches Network  
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### Report Team

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### Film Production

Steven Hatton, Electric Egg  
Neil Baker, Electric Egg

The full version of the 'Sustaining Major Parish Churches'  
film can be found here:

<https://vimeo.com/183370054>

The short version of the 'Sustaining Major Parish Churches'  
film can be found here:

<https://vimeo.com/184544621>

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Diana Evans [diana.evans@historicengland.org.uk](mailto:diana.evans@historicengland.org.uk)

An electronic copy of the Sustaining Major Parish Churches report and case studies can be found here:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/current-research/threats/heritage-in-changing-society/major-parish-churches/>



## Appendix F: National Amenity Societies

Ancient Monuments Society Council for British Archaeology

The Garden History Society

The Georgian Group

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

The Twentieth Century Society

The Victorian Society

## Appendix G: Heritage Lottery Fund Grants

NAME	PROJECT COST	GRANT AWARDED	PROJECT FOCUS
Doncaster Minster, Church of St George	£ 3,900	£ 3,900	Restoration of reredos and public engagement
London, Bow Common, St Paul	£ 100,623	£ 70,500	Repairs to roof and rainwater goods
	£ 442,163	£ 256,200	Repairs to roof and rainwater goods
Hexham Priory Church of St Andrews (Hexham Abbey)	£ 55,612	£ 32,000	restoration and interpretation of stone effigies
	£ 71,700	£ 50,000	New visitor and education centre
	£ 3,243,645	£ 1,975,800	restoration and new facilities
Dorchester Abbey, Church of St Peter & St Paul	£ 59,801	£ 42,700	Conservation and restoration of wall paintings
Pershore Abbey	£ 116,657	£ 88,500	Roof repair
Hull, Holy Trinity	£ 89,552	£ 50,000	Promotion of church through volunteering programme and new interpretation
	£ 274,975	£ 216,800	Works to nave roof
Nottingham, Church of St Mary	£ 322,012	£ 239,600	Repair project
Wyomondham Abbey, Church of St Mary and St Thomas of Canterbury	£ 2,870,911	£ 1,744,900	conservation and improvements in access and interpretation
Selby Abbey, Church of St Mary and St Germain	£ 5,887,014	£ 402,470	Repair and development programme
	£ 515,223	£ 306,000	Phase 2 - Focuses on Latham Chapel and western bays of North Choir
Bath Abbey, Church of St Peter and St Paul	£ 709,779	£ 500,000	cleaning and conservation of the internal fabric
	£ 29,766	£ 22,200	Oral history project
	£ 20,114,277	£ 11,114,300	conservation and interpretation
Guildford, Holy Trinity	£ 504,446	£ 250,000	urgent repairs
Shoreditch, Church of St Leonard	£ 1,255,689	£ 941,800	Repairs to church, churchyard and surrounding buildings
Blandford Forum, St Peter & Paul	£ 398,843	£ 250,000	Cupola repair
Bradford-On-Avon, Holy Trinity	£ 322,202	£ 32,200	Organ repair
Beverley Parish Church of St Mary	£ 82,100	£ 82,100	Pinnacle repair
Lancaster Priory And Parish Church of St Mary	£ 831,411	£ 398,900	Organ repair
Nantwich, Church of St Mary	£ 128,167	£ 115,350	Tower restoration
Birmingham, Church of St Agatha (Sparkbrooke)	£ 746,651	£ 672,000	Repair and improvements to heating, electrical and lighting systems
Grantham, Church of St Wulfram	£ 62,500	£ 25,000	Improvements to interpretation

## Appendix H: Greater Churches Network Churches

All Saints' Church, Hertford

All Saints Church, Kingston upon Thames

Bath Abbey

Beverley Minster

Bolton Abbey

Bridlington Priory

Church of St Mary the Great, Cambridge

Christchurch Priory

Christ Church, Spitalfields

Great Yarmouth Minster

St George's Minster, Doncaster

Halifax Minster

Grimsby Minster

Hexham Abbey

Holy Trinity Church, Coventry

Holy Trinity Church, Hull

Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

King's Lynn Minster

Kendal Parish Church

Lancaster Priory

Leeds Minster

Malvern Priory

Romsey Abbey

Rotherham Minster

St Botolph with St Christopher, Boston

St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

Church of St John the Evangelist, Edinburgh

St Laurence's Church, Ludlow

St Martin in the Bull Ring, Birmingham

St Martin-in-the-Fields, London

St Mary's Church, Nottingham

St Mary's Church, Nantwich

St Mary Magdalene, Newark-on-Trent

St Mary Magdalene, Taunton

St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol

Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick

St Wulfram's Church, Grantham

St Peter Mancroft, Norwich

St Peter's Church, Harrogate

Selby Abbey

Sherborne Abbey

Shrewsbury Abbey

Sunderland Minster

Tewkesbury Abbey

Waltham Abbey Church

Wimborne Minster

St Peter's Collegiate Church, Wolverhampton







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October 2016



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