

## CONSERVATION STRATEGIC PROGRAMME 2015-18

### Context

In 2009 the Churches Conservation Trust published a report on its long-term repair liability to inform the 2009-15 strategic plan. The strategic response aimed at addressing this shortfall was ambitious, and whilst we have made progress in the last 4 years, significant funds still remain to be raised. The Conservation Strategy 15-18 needs to address the implications of the ongoing shortfall.

We have an international reputation for good quality repair and conservation work and our reputation for creative and quality adaptation projects is growing through its regeneration work. However, the days of spending a large proportion of decreasing core grant solely on conservation projects is no longer tenable. Where we can we aim to provide financially sustainable churches so that reliance on Trust income to repair and maintain the collection is minimised – sustainable conservation. This may be through new use, for example our major project programme, or through local fundraising by Friends groups and supporters.

We need to prioritise the nature of the work we fund from the core, use our limited grant to attract significant external funds wherever possible, and use the repair projects we are doing as part of managing the estate to deliver on other important Trust initiatives.

### Vision

To save any listed church that in our opinion would add to our collection of important historic churches, whilst enhancing our reputation for high quality conservation work and using the programme of work to our estate to deliver creative solutions for our learning, interpretation, tourism, volunteering and income generation plans.

### Aims:

#### 1. Inspire People:

**Engage a wide audience, in particular local communities and volunteers, in the importance of conservation as a way of valuing the historic environment and instilling a sense of responsibility for it.**

### Objectives

- (i) Provide learning opportunities during repair and conservation projects for people to acquire knowledge on caring for and managing historic churches and for developing traditional building knowledge and skills
- (ii) Promote the Trust's repair and conservation work at every opportunity, showcasing interesting repair and conservation projects and needs to donors and partners, and providing information on costs and funding needs for each repair project to involve visitors by observation.
- (iii) Provide church specific information for volunteers and supporters on maintenance and repair needs, including costs and timeframes, encouraging volunteers and supporters to raise funds to support this area of work.
- (iv) Provide on site a level of interpretation of the work being undertaken, commensurate with the contract value, to include the type of work, its cost and an 'ask' for financial support **for each repair and adaptation project.**

For small projects this may simply be a one panel explanation, for larger projects this may include a local PR campaign

- (v) Support the Bulmer-Thomas Fellowship scheme by providing appealing programmes of conservation topics and projects

## 2. Protect Our History:

**Ensure the estate is managed in a way that minimises loss of historic fabric so that we pass to our successors that which we value today, spending £15.5m on repairs to our churches for essential work in the next 3 years.**

Objectives:

- (i) Clearly define our priorities (and the criteria that govern them) for repair and conservation work, for both internal and external understanding, managing this programme of work according to these and other Trust wide priorities, irrespective of regional boundaries. Publish the priorities on the website by **June 2015**
- (ii) Repair new acquisitions in a timely way to minimise their future liability and ensure they can be opened to the public, generating independent income, as soon as possible, and within **12 months** of the date of vesting
- (iii) Raise and spend **£15.5m** on essential repairs to our estate as identified in the repair liability report 2014.
- (iv) Begin to build an endowment, the interest on which will contribute towards the cost of repairing and conserving the estate in the longer term, the period **2015-18** to be used to develop plans for launching a major endowment campaign 2019, the Trust's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The monetary value of the endowment target and timeframe for the appeal to be detailed in the 2018-2021 Income Generation strategic programme
- (v) Identify external funding sources, whenever possible, for repair and conservation needs, creating holistic projects so we can deliver on other important Trust strategic programmes and optimise the level of non-grant monies obtained
- (vi) Ensure that all churches are effectively and properly maintained to prevent the causes of decay, and thereby reduce costs, by inspecting regularly and executing work promptly. All churches to have minimum **twice-yearly** cyclical inspection visits.
- (vii) Deliver **2** Peer Review panel (sub-committee of Conservation Committee) visits each year to repair or adaptation projects in progress

### **3. Create Value:**

**Maintain high standards of design, materials and workmanship in repairs, and in all adaptations and new work, using environmentally sustainable solutions, and invest in traditional building skills to support employment, appreciation, and through this, the survival of these skills.**

#### **Objectives**

- (i) Develop a comprehensive estate management tool to provide efficient property management of the collection and to record actions, thus providing transparency for the decisions we make
- (ii) Invest 2% of the annual repair budget in traditional building skills activities each year, equating to £20k invested for every £1m spent on repair and adaptation projects, including major programmes. Develop partnerships with heritage skills educational organisations.
- (iii) Obtain value for money in all repair and conservation work, by this we mean that we obtain the desired quality of work at the best possible price.

#### **KPIs**

KPI: £15.5m raised towards repairs: £5m a year

KPI: 10% reduction in long-term repair liability

KPI: 75% of volunteer teams/Friends meeting annual running costs and contributing to core

KPI: 2% of expenditure on existing estate to be devoted to traditional building skills development

Sarah Robinson  
May 2014/KPIs added December 2014

