

# Heritage & Buildings Newsletter

No. 5 – Spring 2015



From **Ian Simpson**

**Heritage Support Officer for the Diocese of Liverpool**



**Cover photograph:** St. Michael-in-the-Hamlet, Liverpool, locally known as the “Cast Iron Church”, celebrates its bicentenary this year. In addition to the frame of the building, the windows (including all the tracery) and door surrounds are of cast iron. This internationally-important Grade I Listed church has benefitted from major grant-funded repairs in recent years but more are needed to complete its restoration. **Above:** detail of one of St. Michael-in-the-Hamlet’s stained glass windows.

**Rear Cover:** St. Mark, North Road, St. Helens (1883, by the local architect James Gandy. Currently Unlisted). A fine church which makes a notable contribution to the St. Helens townscape. St. Mark’s was largely paid for by Lt. Col. David Gamble who had taken over the family chemical business which would go on to form half of what we know today as Procter & Gamble. The church contains several excellent stained glass windows dedicated to the memory of Gamble family members.

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If you would like any news items from your church, or an event you are organising, including in future issues of my [Heritage & Buildings Newsletter](#), please let me know. The deadline for inclusion in Issue #6 (Summer 2015) is Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>.

Author’s Note: this Newsletter consists entirely of my own personal thoughts, reflections and opinions from my work as Heritage Support Officer. It is NOT an official publication of either the Diocese of Liverpool or English Heritage and is not to be taken as such. References to third party publications or websites are for information only and no liability is accepted for the content of these or for the results of any action taken in reliance upon them.

Ian Simpson MBA CBIFM, February 2015



## Welcome!

At the beginning of December 2014, the Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne announced a £15 million fund for urgent repairs to the roofs and rainwater goods of Listed places of worship. The rather tight eight-week application period (with Christmas in the middle!) proved to be something of a challenge, but by the January 30<sup>th</sup> deadline, sixteen Liverpool Diocese churches submitted their applications.

They were good applications, too. I saw almost all of them and I can honestly say that, if I were awarding the grants myself, they would be successful applications. Alas, I am not, and shortly after the deadline we were informed that the Fund had received 1,900 applications. By my calculations this means that six out of every seven churches which applied will unfortunately be unsuccessful.

In truth, to repair every church roof in the land would probably cost £150 million, and if you add in all the other major repairs that are needed – stonework, dry rot, window repairs, rewiring, plasterwork, redecoration, etc., etc., – a sum of around £500 million wouldn't be a bad starting figure.

To you or me that is an enormous sum of money, but on a national scale over the course of a five-year Parliament it works out at £1.62 per head per year. That's the price of half a pint of beer per person to secure the future of 14,500 of the nation's treasures (which they must be, or they wouldn't have been Listed!) and to safeguard the benefits they bring to our communities. Every penny of that money would create employment and support jobs in the traditional skills sector of the construction industry. There's a thought for whoever wins the General Election.

Before then, on March 24<sup>th</sup> we shall know the results of the LPW Roof Scheme grant applications. Good luck to all who applied, well done for making the deadline and thank you for all your hard work!

As ever, if I can help you with grant applications or any Heritage-related matter - do not hesitate to contact me by email [ian.simpson@liverpool.anglican.org](mailto:ian.simpson@liverpool.anglican.org) or by phone (0151 705 2127). The postal address is Diocese of Liverpool, St. James House, 20 St. James Road, Liverpool L1 7BY.

## News

The unauthorised felling of two yew trees by **St. James' URC**, Woolton, made the regional TV news just before Christmas. The church believed it had been given verbal permission to carry out the work, requested on the grounds that "the trees were growing towards the building"; Liverpool City Council denies this.



One of the two yew trees was damaged beyond any hope whilst the other could survive but given its sorry state now will probably have to be felled. The moral of the story is, "verbal permission is not worth the paper on which it is written"! Remember that all trees within a Conservation Area (such as Woolton Village) are deemed to be covered by Tree Protection Orders, and that in all cases an Anglican church wishing to fell a tree or trees must first seek Faculty permission to do so.

Some very good news from **Ecclesiastical Insurance**: from March 1<sup>st</sup> the claim limits for metal theft on its Parishguard policies are being increased. Specifically where a Roof Alarm system is fitted and SmartWater applied the maximum amount covered will now be £25,000 (up from £10,000). Where no alarm is fitted the maximum claim will be £7,500 (up from £5,000). This makes the cost of a Roof Alarm system (generally between £4,000 and £7,000) look like an eminently sensible investment! There will also be a facility to purchase "top-up" cover if an even greater level of cover is required.

Ecclesiastical has subsequently announced that the increased metal theft cover limits will automatically apply to Hallguard policies at no extra cost from March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Don't forget - if you have any news you'd like to share with us, send it in to me - by email, post or Twitter ([@HeritageTiger](https://twitter.com/HeritageTiger)) - by May 28<sup>th</sup>!

## Maintenance Training Days for 2015

Our next Maintenance Training Day will be held at ST. MARY'S, WATERLOO PARK on Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. The cost is £15.00 per head with any "profits" going to support the work of the host church. To book, send a cheque, payable to BOSTON FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, for £15.00 to me at St. James' House. There will be, as ever, a maximum of 20 places on the course.

If you can't make it on April 14<sup>th</sup> then the other dates for this year are: Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July and Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October. We need venues for these courses, preferably one each in Wigan, Warrington / Widnes and Southport / West Lancs., so please feel free to volunteer your church!

The days start at 10.00am. We aim to finish no later than about 3.30pm and lunch is included as are printed training materials to take home and cherish. All sessions are advertised in this Newsletter, in the Diocesan Bulletin, on the Diocesan website and at <http://www.tigerconnect.eu/maintenance.html>.

## Applying for Grant Funding: **Ten Top Tips**

I am currently working on a comprehensive guidance document for use by churches applying for grant funding. Truth be told, I'd hoped to have had it ready by now, but that hasn't happened – it will be available via the Diocesan web site once it's finished and approved.

In the meantime, here are my Top Ten Tips – things you need to bear in mind as you complete your application forms, together with a few DOs and DON'Ts. This article is geared towards churches applying for funding for a building repair or improvement project but the basic principles are applicable to all projects.

**1. Only apply to relevant funders!** This should really go without saying, but you need to check BEFORE you start an application that the funder to which you are applying will support the project for which you need the money.

The Church Urban Fund, for example, will not fund building projects, even in deprived areas (it targets its funding to a specific range of anti-poverty initiatives). Some funders will only support Listed churches (e.g. the HLF Repair Grants programme) whilst others will accept applications regardless of Listing status. Applying to a funder which won't support your type of project is just a waste of time.

**2. Read the Application Guidance.** Without exception, every grant-making body has, either on its website or in printed form, guidance notes explaining how to fill in the form and what documentation you need to include to support the application. They are all different, so (for example) if you have just completed an application to the National Churches Trust don't assume that the guidelines for applying to the Garfield Weston Foundation are the same. They aren't! If you make mistakes which are obviously the result of not having read the guidance, your application is more likely to fail.

**2½. Read the Application Guidance again!** Seriously, make absolutely sure you know what is asked of you. I can't stress enough how important this is.

**3. Be aware of the Deadline.** Most grant funders have a deadline for applications – make sure you know when yours is. Plan the application process, give yourself time to work up a good application and don't leave it till the last minute – a rushed application is guaranteed to be a poor one.

The HLF Repair Grants scheme has deadlines every three months and it is always better to submit a good application in three months' time than to submit a half-baked one now.

**4. Use a photocopied blank form to draft your application.** Some bodies expect you to complete a paper application form. Where this is the case, take a photocopy before you write on the original, and use this copy to draft your application. Make any changes, crossings-out, etc., on the copy and only complete the original form once you have got everything right. Treat the grant application form as though it was the application form for your dream job and you won't go far wrong.

**5. Give EVIDENCE that there is a real need for your project.** Quote reports from specialist advisers and consultants. Include good quality photographs of the defects and problems your project sets out to rectify.



*Include photographic evidence: no-one could disagree that this dry rot is serious!*

To support claims that your project will benefit a deprived area, quote statistics from your local Council or from the Church Urban Fund. Always include details of any consultation you have carried out.

**6. Give DETAIL, not generalisations!** Grant funders want to know what is unique about your project and why they should invest their limited funds with you rather than another applicant. So, make it easier for them to decide.

"The historic stained glass windows need repairing". Great, there are 2,000 other churches with the same problem.

"The four stained glass windows, designed by the noted artist Henry Holiday (1839-1927) and depicting the four Evangelists were installed between 1885 and 1889 in memory of the Rector's grandparents. Pevsner (1969) cited these windows as a particularly fine example of the artist's work. In recent years the ferramenta have become rusted and brittle, and the gradual softening of the lead comes has resulted in a distinct outward bow. The window depicting St. John also has two holes resulting from a pellet gun attack several years ago". Much better.

Some funders – including the HLF – give "word limits" for some sections of the application form. If, for example, a limit of 200 words is specified they don't expect you to hit that number exactly, but a detailed 150-word answer will be viewed much better than a generalised 20-word one.

**7. Write the Summary LAST!** The Summary is the most important part of your application – if it's no good it may be the only section that gets read.

Use it to draw together all the elements of your application into a compelling explanation of why the assessors should read on. Make the assessors want to find out more about your proposed project. Make them want to support you!

**8. Apply to several funders.** Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Most grant funders have a maximum percentage of any project that they will fund, and they are always pleased to see evidence that applicants are making the effort to secure funding from as many sources as possible.

**9. Don't cut-and-paste between applications.** Many of the people who assess grant applications have been doing it for years and – just like teachers marking homework – they can spot lazy shortcuts. Each application you make is worth the same level of attention in terms of showing how your project meets the funder's desired outcomes; as these vary from funder to funder you should tailor each response accordingly. An answer – even to a seemingly identical question – which meets one funder's requirements may well not meet those of another.

**10. If at first you don't succeed...** try again. And again if necessary. Most grant awarding bodies receive between two and four times as many applications as their limited funds allow them to support and this means that some good applications have to be turned down. You may have to wait six, twelve or even 24 months before reapplying.

Some funders will give feedback as to why your initial application wasn't successful (the HLF for example); others – such as the Garfield Weston Foundation – will not. If you are fortunate enough to get such feedback, make sure you take action upon it when you reapply!

I cannot guarantee that following the advice given above will result in every application you make being successful – how I wish I could do that! – but following the above advice should mean that your applications convey a serious and professional image of your project and of the people running it, and that in itself can make a real difference to your chances of success.

Good luck with all your applications – and remember that I am here to offer advice and assistance with grant applications (although I haven't got the time to write individual applications) so do get in touch if you think my input would help.



## The Heritage At Risk Register

In October 2014 English Heritage published the latest edition of its Heritage At Risk Register. This details – as the name suggests – the heritage buildings most at risk of loss through further deterioration in their condition, through neglect or through inappropriate or insensitive development. In general the Register only lists Grade I and Grade II\* Listed buildings and monuments which are at risk, but in the case of Places of Worship Grade II buildings are also included.

In order to be designated “At Risk” a building must be inspected by an English Heritage architect and found to be suffering from one or more of the following to such an extent that either the building could become unusable or that the building (or a significant part of it) could be lost:

- Roof in bad condition;
- Rainwater goods in bad condition;
- High-level stonework in bad or dangerous condition;
- Structural problems including subsidence and rot.

There are 805 Church of England churches on the Register (out of 12,405 Listed churches that’s about 6.5%) of which twelve are in the Diocese of Liverpool.

It is important to note that the inclusion of a church on the Register is emphatically not a criticism of those responsible for looking after it, but it does flag up the fact that the building has reached a point where it is now in need of extra special care and attention and probably a programme of major repairs if it is to have a future.

When a church is included on the Register, English Heritage will write to the Incumbent and to the Diocesan Advisory Committee to inform them. The Register is published annually and can be searched via the English Heritage website (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>).

Completion of an approved programme of repairs will lead to the church being removed from the Heritage At Risk Register and well over 100 churches which were included in 2012 had been taken off by 2014. One of the stated aims of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Repair Grants for Places of Worship programme is to bring churches off the Register and a designation of "At Risk" represents an official acknowledgement of the urgency of the required repairs, the single most important criterion used in assessing grant applications.

Almost all of the Liverpool Diocese churches on the Register have either had some work done already (but more work is needed in most cases) or are in the process of working up schemes for Heritage Lottery Fund-assisted repairs. There is, sadly, one exception which refused (rather rudely) my offer of assistance and which seems reluctant to engage with the Register's aims.

Whilst nationally around 6.5% of Listed churches are considered "At Risk" something like a further 20% are believed to be in danger of deteriorating to such an extent that they would qualify for inclusion on the Register. Many of these churches have applied for Roof Repair Fund grants and the successful ones will benefit from repairs which should reverse their vulnerable status.

I've said this before, and I will no doubt say it again many times, but the single most important thing you can do to stop your church becoming "At Risk" of developing catastrophic structural problems is to ensure that its rainwater goods are in good working order: intact, properly attached to the building, free of leaks and free of blockages. Attending to any defects or damage to the roof in a timely manner is also critically important to the health of the building.

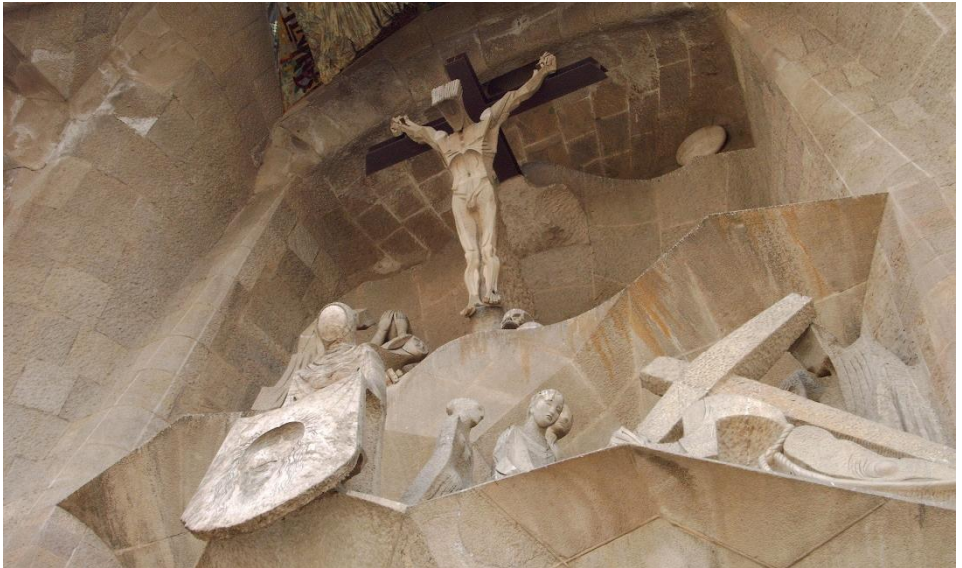
There are many resources available to help you care for your church building, but if you want a hands-on demonstration of how to look for faults and what to look for, why not consider booking a place on one of my Maintenance Training Days (see p. 5)? Alternatively if you want some specific advice or you are concerned that your church might be deteriorating towards "Vulnerable" or "At Risk" status then please do not hesitate to contact me.

## La Sagrada Familia: Wonder of the Modern World

Europe has had an interesting and turbulent history which has shaped all the great churches we're looking at in this series. However the Expiatory Basilica of the Holy Family – La Sagrada Família to give it its Catalan name – differs from the others in one important respect. Yes, it has seen war (two World Wars and the Spanish Civil War), it has had a serious fire and it has even been threatened by a high-speed railway tunnel less than a metre from its foundations; the unusual thing is that it has survived all these adventures and it isn't even complete yet. In fact, at the current rate of progress, it is not expected to be finished until 2029 at the earliest so if you want to see a major church building project, you have got plenty of time to get yourself over to Barcelona!



*You have to go some distance from the church to get it all in one photograph! This 2011 view clearly shows the construction cranes dwarfing even this huge building.*



*A detail from the Passion Facade, showing Christ carrying his Cross upwards towards Calvary, and His Crucifixion.*

The name of Antoni Gaudí is inextricably linked with the city of Barcelona where he designed many buildings in the style known as Catalan Modernism which he perfected. Gaudí's inspiration came from nature: the trunk of a tree was as strong and robust a structure as could be found anywhere, he reasoned, and so it should be replicated in architecture. The human skeleton likewise served to inspire him, as did the world of mathematics and geometry.

Construction of La Sagrada Família was already under way by the time the 31 year old Gaudí became involved in the project in 1883 following the resignation of the Architectural Director, Francisco del Vilar. A man of profound Catholic faith, Gaudí scrapped the original design for a standard "me-too" Gothic Revival church in favour of something much more unique and ambitious. This was to take much longer to build than the original (though not even Gaudí thought it would take 150 years!) and, when challenged about this the great man reportedly replied, "my Client is not in a hurry".



*My 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday trip to Spain in 2011 would not have been complete without a couple of visits to this great church, including some night-time photography of the floodlit structure.*

Gaudí's plan envisaged no fewer than 18 spires. The tallest one, in honour of Jesus Christ, will be 170m (561ft) high – this is 1m less than Montjuïc Hill, the highest point of Barcelona, as the architect refused to build any higher than God had done. The next highest spires will be four in honour of the Evangelists, then one for the Blessed Virgin Mary and finally twelve – four on each Facade – for the Twelve Apostles.

The three Facades are (or will be) the Nativity Facade, the Passion Facade and the Glory Facade. The Nativity Facade was completed in 1935, the Passion Facade in 1976 under Josep Maria Subirachs and the Glory Facade which will depict Christ's Resurrection and Ascension is under construction.

Gaudí died in 1926 having devoted the last 11 years of his life exclusively to this project. Killed by a tram, he was initially mistaken for a beggar due to his characteristically unkempt appearance and dress. The mistake was quickly rectified and he was buried in La Sagrada Família.



Construction halted in 1935 with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and did not resume properly until 1954. The current Architectural Director is Lluís Bonet i Armengol whose introduction of computer-aided design techniques has considerably accelerated the construction process.



*One of the great things about a visit to La Sagrada Família is the opportunity to see at first hand the skill and craftsmanship being employed in its construction.*

Construction of the church received a boost in 1992 when the Barcelona Olympics resulted both in an influx of donations and a much higher profile for the church internationally. In 2010 La Sagrada Família was consecrated by Pope Benedict; in the same year the first of eight organs was installed.

2011 saw a setback to the project after a fire was started by an arsonist. Not only was the Sacristy badly damaged but some of Gaudí's original drawings and designs were lost.

A further threat to the church – interestingly one which brings my interest in railways into conflict with my love of churches – emerged in 2011 with the construction of a railway tunnel for AVE high speed trains which comes within a metre of its foundations. Special technology was deployed within the tunnel to dampen vibrations and service through the tunnel commenced in 2013 without any reported damage to Gaudí's masterpiece.

La Sagrada Família is now a UNESCO-listed World Heritage Site which receives 2.5 million visitors every year. All the money raised by admission fees is invested in the construction, so a visit is not just a chance to see one of the world's greatest buildings but also to make a contribution to the building work.

If [Heritage & Building Newsletter](#) is still going in 2029, I will visit Barcelona and report back on the completed church. It's a fair bet I will go back well before then though!

## Just For Fun!

You may well have guessed by now that the Magic Square in [H&BN](#) No. 4 was in fact at La Sagrada Família, Barcelona! This month's teaser is, where – and it is much closer to home than Barcelona – will you find these glorious grotesques?



