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First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund Evaluation

Final Report, July 2018



ERS

30 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4ND

T: 0117 927 3401
F: 0117 929 4189
E: bristol@ers.org.uk
www.ers.org.uk

Photos (from top): 1. Worcester Cathedral stained glass (Credit: Acanthus Clews Architects); 2. Durham Cathedral scaffolding installation (Credit: Tom Banks); 3. Clifton Cathedral interior (Credit: Phil Boorman).

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The following report has been written and prepared by Fran Haswell-Walls (FHaswell-walls@ers.org.uk), Amy Hale (Ahale@ers.org.uk), Grace Simpson (Gsimpson@ers.org.uk) and Kate Vittle (KVittle@ers.org.uk) of ERS (www.ers.org.uk) for The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

In December 2017, ERS Ltd was appointed by The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England to evaluate the First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund. The Fund was set up to support urgent repair work at listed Anglican and Catholic cathedrals in England to keep them weatherproof, safe and open to the public, and to prevent further deterioration to the buildings. Further, this aimed to ensure that cathedrals would be in an appropriate condition to host First World War commemoration events.

The first round of funding was announced in 2014 and totalled £20 million, with a further £20 million announced in March 2016. The £40 million Fund was administered by the Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division (CCB, also known as ChurchCare) of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS). An independent Expert Panel, the chair of which was appointed by the Secretary of State, assessed grant applications and allocated the funding. It funded repairs to 57 Anglican and Catholic cathedrals across England.

Overall, the Fund was successful in achieving its aims and met a funding need that could not be met elsewhere. It was seen as successful for many in safeguarding their existing activity, while also sparking greater interest from the public in the heritage of the buildings. ***"If the Fund hadn't come up in the way that it did and when it did, it would have resulted in temporary closures of cathedrals while they attempted to raise the money - and I'm not sure where that money would have come from."***

Evaluation aims and methodology

Broadly, evaluation findings are based on quantitative and qualitative data gathered through 89 semi-structured telephone consultations with a mix of grant team members, Expert Panel members, cathedral representatives and architects or surveyors. Aims included assessing:

- To what extent the grants have met the Fund's original objectives and criteria;
- The extent to which the grant programme has met the identified long-term maintenance and repair needs of Anglican and Catholic cathedrals in England;
- The wider economic impact of the funding;
- The wider community benefits of the funding; and
- Lessons learned in terms of grant processes, to inform future delivery.

Outcomes of the Repairs

Repair works were wide-ranging in scope. Many of the repairs related to external masonry but projects also covered roof repairs and replacement; guttering and rainwater disposal; heating, sound, electrical or lighting infrastructure; window repairs; and drainage and damp remediation.

Notably the ability of the Fund to support infrastructure work in addition to repairs to historic fabric was particularly appreciated, as it can be very difficult for cathedrals to obtain funding for such "unglamorous" but essential work. These can be equally important in keeping a building safe and open: ***"it is not often there is a funder that will offer money for unexciting things that are very necessary; and people don't understand how costly things are"***.

In the vast majority of cases, the grant-funded repairs meant that the issue went from demanding urgent attention to merely requiring routine maintenance once repair projects were complete. Respondents were, on the whole, very positive about the effectiveness of the repairs, stating that they had achieved exactly what they had set out to. All respondents stated that the outcomes represented value for money and were commensurate with the level of investment. ***“It was a real game changer – it gave people a bit of mental space to not wake up terrified their bell tower is falling down”.***

When asked what would have happened in the absence of the fund, the majority of respondents stated repairs would not have gone ahead. It was suggested this would have resulted in: inefficient and costly ‘patch-up’ repairs; significant building deterioration; and health and safety concerns for the public. ***“Channelling this amount of money into repairs has been an enormous boost to cathedrals.”***

Findings suggest the Fund met its intended aims of addressing urgent repairs in order to keep buildings wind-proof, weather-tight, safe and open to the public, and to prevent further deterioration.

Wider Outcomes of the Fund

The key outcomes of the Fund were considered to be the repair works which enabled the cathedrals to remain safe and open and to safeguard their existing activities, such as civic and cultural events, social outreach and religious worship, as was the aim of the Fund. In some cases, respondents found it difficult to define wider outcomes beyond this.

Benefits to the community were mostly considered to be implicit through the continued running of the cathedral and it was difficult to directly attribute additional community engagement to the funded works. However, in some cases the repair works enabled cathedrals to hold additional community events. **This has included First World War commemorations.**

The projects supported a wide variety of jobs and apprentices in traditional building skills, most notably stonemasonry. ***“The whole scheme has brought on professional development at all levels from architect to stone mason.”***

Another key outcome was the development of the cathedrals’ capacity and skills in relation to delivering large-scale repair projects. In some cases, it was also felt that the work had expanded the cathedral’s ambition and expectations around conservation, particularly for Catholic cathedrals. ***“The whole process has improved our communication and ability to work together.”***

A number of cathedrals were able to leverage further funds as a result of receiving the grant/s for their project/s. This is expected to continue as a positive benefit into the future, though this would require further verification in future years. ***“When other donors see that investment has been made, it encourages them to do so and it is easier to draw in funding. It is harder to get people to invest in a building if they’re uncertain about its future.”***

Fund Processes

Respondents were clear about the benefits of selecting CCB to administer the fund. These included efficient running costs (initially 0.1% (£20,000) of the initial £20 million and then 0.5% (£100,000) for the 2nd round of funding); familiarity of CCB with Anglican cathedrals; and their ability to lever in support from the Expert Panel quickly due to their existing contacts.

The Expert Panel were active in the assessment of applications and award decisions. This included meeting five times over the timescale of the Fund. It is estimated that this amounted to an in-kind contribution of £100,000. Risks were largely mitigated through the voluntary role of the Expert Panel.

This included ensuring that funding was directed towards appropriate repairs and that it was spent within the timescales by having procedures to redirect underspend to other eligible work. A robust risk framework and mitigation measures from the outset would have been beneficial in responding to unforeseen risks beyond the allocation of funding i.e. contractor issues and so forth.

Grantee Experiences of the Fund

Respondents were asked to score on a scale of 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied) their satisfaction with various aspects of the Fund. These were: the application process; timescales of the Fund; communication with the funding body; payment of grant instalments and progress reporting.

Overall respondents were most satisfied with the communication and support from the funding body. Prompt communication from CCB was praised by respondents and many found their existing relationship with CCB hugely beneficial, along with their expertise.

The application and progress reporting processes were also viewed positively by respondents, with most stating these were straightforward and commensurate with the nature of the project. Therefore, striking the right balance between providing due diligence whilst not being overly burdensome. The evaluation of the Fund would have benefitted from more rigorous progress reporting mechanisms from the outset; however, this would have required an increased administration budget to direct appropriate resource towards this.

The timescales of the Fund scored the lowest of all of the categories and were generally considered tight by respondents. This was commonly considered a major delivery challenge, although some felt it provided the impetus for efficient delivery. Many experienced difficulties in delivering within the government financial year due to the need to tender for contracts and seek permissions which could feasibly take up much of the allotted time. In this sense, 'oven-ready' projects were seen to be favoured.

Project delivery

Key challenges around project delivery related to timescales as outlined above. For some the tendering process became more problematic due to the fact that experienced contractors were in high demand. It was noted that such large injections of funding create a 'boom-and-bust' pattern in the sector. In contrast, in a few cases, contractors went into administration during a project and a cathedral had to appoint an alternative contractor, significantly delaying the works and resulting in mounting costs e.g. for scaffolding. Unforeseen complications were a relatively common occurrence, whereby the full scale of deterioration wasn't known until the repair works had begun, uncovering hidden or high-level problems.

Effective and thorough planning was seen to be the key way to mitigate potential issues, alongside effective communication and ensuring that experienced contractors were hired to carry out the work.

Overspend and Underspend

Marginal underspends were relatively common and either resulted in surplus funding being reallocated with the agreement of the Expert Panel to eligible work elsewhere within the cathedral, or else being returned centrally and reallocated by the Panel. Underspend was most common where cathedrals received the full amount of funding requested. This was more likely to happen in the earlier stages of the Fund where competition for funding was less fierce. As funding rounds progressed, grantees became more adept at forecasting costs, meaning that variations in spend were less likely.

For projects that were overspent, cathedrals were sometimes able to obtain extra 'extension' funding from reallocation within the Fund, or to leverage funds from elsewhere. Overspend was most often due to additional urgently necessary repair works being uncovered in the course of a project.

Overall, the fund has made a notable contribution in keeping cathedrals across England safe and open and improving the overall building condition. In addition, a range of wider outcomes were evident which further contribute to cathedrals' fulfilment of their important civic role.

1. INTRODUCTION

In December 2017, ERS Ltd was appointed by The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England to evaluate the First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund, which supported repairs to 57 Anglican and Catholic cathedrals across England. The £40 million Fund was administered by the Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division (also known as ChurchCare), of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS). The first round of funding was announced in 2014 and totalled £20 million, with a further £20 million announced in March 2016.

The Church of England has 42 cathedrals in England, 39 of which are Grade 1 listed, and two of which - Canterbury and Durham - are in World Heritage Sites. There are 19 Catholic cathedrals in England. Two of these are currently unlisted as they are comparatively modern buildings and not yet eligible for listing. These two were thus not eligible for the grant scheme which was restricted to listed cathedrals.

The fund provided grants to 41 of the 42 Anglican cathedrals and 16 of the 17 eligible Catholic cathedrals. There were 5 funding rounds in total for repairs classified as urgent. Cathedrals could be awarded grants in multiple rounds.

Evaluation Aims & Methodology

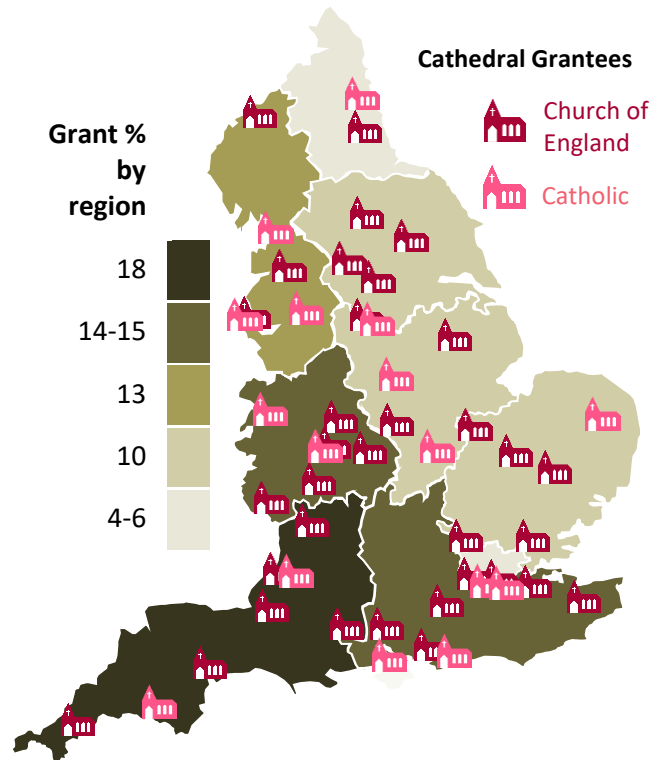
Broadly, the aims of this evaluation included assessment of:

- To what extent the grants have met the fund's original objectives and criteria;
- The extent to which the grant programme has met the identified long-term maintenance and repair needs of Anglican and Catholic cathedrals in England;
- The wider economic impact of the funding;
- The wider community benefits of the funding; and
- Lessons learned in terms of grant processes, to inform future delivery.

The evidence and findings presented are primarily based on quantitative and qualitative data gathered through 89 semi-structured telephone consultations, comprising:

- 2 out of the 2 Grant Team members;
- 13 out of the 14 Expert Panel members;
- 42 out of the 55 cathedral representatives;
- 31 out of 36 architects or surveyors (representing multiple projects and multiple cathedrals);
- 1 additional contractor in lieu of a cathedral representative or architect.

Figure 1: Map of Cathedral Grantees



We aimed to interview the relevant architect and representative from all 57 cathedrals awarded funding and successfully consulted with 74 individuals (during 70 interviews) in connection to a total of 130 repair projects (142 awards). This means we had some representation from 54 of the 57 cathedrals that received grants.

Based on the responses above, we have achieved an appropriate confidence level to ensure that findings can be considered robust.

In addition to the telephone consultations we further conducted:

- A face-to-face meeting with 2 representatives of DCMS;
- Follow-up e-mail consultations with 17 grantee respondents where repair project completion timescales extended 1-3 months beyond the initial telephone interview date;
- Site visits to 6 cathedrals.

In order to see first-hand some examples of the work carried out, the team took the opportunity to visit a small number of cathedrals alongside project management meetings. These visits were over and above the core methodology therefore did not seek to represent the programme as a whole. These visits have informed indicative ‘thematic snapshots’ shared throughout the report which investigated emerging themes in more depth.

Cathedral representative and architect / surveyor responses are henceforth grouped as “grantee respondents” except where otherwise specified, and the grouping “stakeholder respondents” refers to the combined grant team, Expert Panel, and funder responses.

Limitations and Clarifications

Relevant limitations and methodological decisions associated with this research are outlined below:

- Qualitative interview data has been analysed by theme. All individual interviews have been given the same weighting within the analysis of themes regardless of the number of individual respondents per cathedral or number of repair projects per cathedral.
- Where consultees were speaking in relation to multiple repair projects (representatives had been involved with between one and 12 repair projects) we have attempted – as far as possible - to isolate distinctions attributable to each individual repair project (e.g. outcomes).

Report Structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2. Fund Context
- Chapter 3. Fund Processes
- Chapter 4. Grantee Experiences of the Fund
- Chapter 5. Project Delivery
- Chapter 6. Outcomes and Impacts
- Chapter 7. Conclusions
- Appendices

This report is further accompanied by a Visual Summary Annex and Project Summary Annex.

2. CONTEXT

To provide an overview of the initial context this Chapter provides a summary of key research relating to cathedrals' repair needs and the funding sources available to them, as well as respondent perceptions of the rationale for funding.

Cathedrals Overview

The primary role of cathedrals is missional, with cathedrals retaining importance for those who attend as part of their worship. In addition to this, the wider economic and social benefits are well-documented. A number of recent research and policy documents emphasise the varied and important civic role of cathedrals, from providing outreach to vulnerable communities, developing volunteers' skills, providing a space for quiet reflection, to hosting shared commemorations or celebrations at times of national significance.

The timeline below summarises recent research and policy documents which contribute to the body of evidence signifying cathedrals' contribution to the civic life of England. Selected top-line figures from the reports are summarised in Appendix 1 for reference.

- 2009: Fabric Survey (English Heritage)
- 2012: Spiritual Capital: The Present and Future of English Cathedrals (Theos)¹
- 2014: The Economic and Social Impact of England's Cathedrals (Ecorys)²
- 2016: Cathedral Statistics (Church of England)³
- 2016: Culture White Paper (DCMS)⁴
- 2017: Taylor Review, Sustainability of English Churches & Cathedrals (DCMS)⁵
- 2018: Cathedrals Working Group report (Church of England, June 2018)⁶.

Rationale for Investment and Cathedral Funds Overview

Due to the architectural significance, scale and age of the buildings, cathedrals are costly to maintain, requiring specialist skills and extensive funds to enable conservation restoration and repair of their historic, complex and often tall/high fabric.

This is echoed in wider research, with English Heritage's Fabric Survey (2009) identifying £100 million of repair as being necessary in the 10 years up to 2019. Regular day-to-day maintenance was recommended to stem future costly or emergency repairs and to prevent further deterioration. Further, a 2014 report on behalf of the Association of English Cathedrals stated there would be a huge shortfall for cathedral repairs over the following 5-year period⁷. Moreover, these sentiments are

¹ Spiritual Capital: The Present and Future of English Cathedrals (Theos, 2012)

² The Economic and Social Impacts of England's Cathedrals (Ecorys, 2014)

³ The Church of England Research and Statistics: Cathedral Statistics (Church of England, 2016)

⁴ Culture White Paper (DCMS, 2016). Accessed at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510798/DCMS_The_Culture_White_Paper_3_.pdf

⁵ English Churches and Cathedrals Sustainability Review (DCMS, 2016). Available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509933/ChurchTaskForce.pdf

⁶ Cathedrals Working Group report, (Church of England 2018). Available at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/our-cathedrals/cathedrals-working-group>

⁷ The Economic and Social Impacts of England's Cathedrals (Ecorys, 2014)

echoed in DCMS' recent Taylor Review⁸, which advocates a more strategic approach to ensure that large investments made to date are protected by timely maintenance.

A total of £1.74bn was invested in repairs to Church of England church and cathedral buildings between 1999 and 2016 (approx. £102m per year). An increase was seen between 2014 and 2016, with total annual funding for repair and maintenance averaging £190 million per year, including an average of £115 million of public funding (see footnote for breakdown)⁹. These figures cover both cathedral and churches: there are approximately 12,000 listed Church of England churches in England.

The Government's First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund was first announced by the Chancellor in the March 2014 Budget, at the same time as the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund was made available to churches and other places of worship, but not to cathedrals. The objectives of the First World War Fund were to carry out repair works to the fabric of the listed Anglican and Catholic cathedral churches in England to ensure they are watertight, safe and open to the public. The criteria for repairs were to prevent further deterioration of building fabric and were specifically intended to ensure that these important historic buildings are in an appropriate condition to host events to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. The 2016 Culture White Paper from DCMS advised that the Government provide additional funding (£20 million in 2016/17 and 2017/18) to extend the First World War Centenary Cathedral Repair Fund and establish a review to examine how church buildings and cathedrals can become more financially sustainable. Following this an additional £20 million was announced in the March 2016 budget¹⁰.

The Taylor Review suggests that Church of England churches and cathedrals reached an improved state of repair due to investment across the period outlined above, though a continued shortfall in funding is also acknowledged. The Review recommends that, following the end of the First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund, upkeep of cathedrals ought to be given further consideration as a matter of national importance. The Church of England Cathedrals Working Group Draft Report for Consultation (2018)¹¹ further states that **"The NCIs [National Church Institutions] and AEC [Association of English Cathedrals] should work jointly on an approach to Government and large philanthropic organisations with the aim of establishing a significant, possibly endowment based, cathedral fabric fund for the UK"**.

⁸ The Taylor Review: Sustainability of English Churches and Cathedrals (DCMS, 2017)

⁹ "Total of £190m includes £75m raised by congregations, the Listed Places of Worship Scheme, capped at £42m per year, the Roof Repairs Fund (average £27.5m per year for 2 years), the First World War Centenary Cathedrals Fund (average £20m per year for 2 years) and the Grants for Places of Worship scheme at £25m per year. Of the £75m raised by congregations 64% is from direct giving, gift aid and fundraising, 12% from grants, 5% from legacies, and 19% from investments, fees and trading. It should be noted that the 12% grant funding figure may include some double counting of grant funding from public funds."

Excerpt taken from P.12 of The Taylor Review: Sustainability of English Churches and Cathedrals (DCMS, 2017). Accessed at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/669667/Taylor_Review_Final.pdf

¹⁰ Culture White Paper (DCMS, 2016). Accessed at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510798/DCMS_The_Culture_White_Paper_3_.pdf

¹¹ Cathedrals Working Group report, (Church of England 2018). Available at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/our-cathedrals/cathedrals-working-group>

Respondent Perceptions of Government Drivers

This next section presents analysis of qualitative themes emerging from respondent interviews around the rationale for the fund, and how well this was understood.

Grant Team and Stakeholder consultees were asked to outline, from their perspective, the government and strategic drivers for the Fund. First and foremost, the perception is that the Fund responded to an urgent need for repairs to keep cathedrals safe and open (waterproof and weathertight) in order to continue to perform their **“crucial civic role”**.

There is a strong sense from respondents that this type of funding was not available elsewhere, amidst an overall reduction in grant aid following the closure of English Heritage’s (now Historic England’s) Grants for Cathedrals scheme in 2009. No repair funding had been available to Catholic cathedrals since that time. The Cathedral Fabric Repair Fund (2010-2013), a partnership between the Wolfson Foundation, the Pilgrim Trust and the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England (CFCE) which intended to cover some of the gap left by the closure of the English Heritage scheme, was available only to Church of England cathedrals. Alternative heritage sector funders were perceived by consultees to have different current priorities; therefore, a fund specific to cathedrals, and which dealt with urgent yet **“unglamorous”** repairs was well-received. Some of the respondents noted their gratitude to those that had successfully lobbied for the funding, including members of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England (CFCE) and some cathedral representatives.

There is a consensus that the Fund was relatively sudden, with a push to get the **“money out of the door quickly”**. In terms of the framing of the Fund around the First World War commemorations, perceptions were mixed. Some respondents stating this link was clear and timely, and others commented that this link was somewhat tenuous. This links directly to the original rationale. In terms of motivations for applying, the First World War commemorations objective resonated with only two respondents. However, one respondent felt that safeguarding this important heritage could be viewed as a fitting memorial to those who died in the World Wars. One stakeholder consultee commented that this was less of a focus across subsequent funding rounds, following allocation of the initial £20m in grants.

Responses indicate the perception that the national scale of the Fund and ability to reach **“the whole country”** due to the geographical distribution of cathedrals was another strategic benefit.

Stakeholder consultees agreed that the objectives of the Fund were well-understood from the cathedrals’ perspective and perceived positively within the wider sector. Grantee responses also echo this perception.

3. FUND PROCESSES

This chapter provides an overview of Fund processes and respondent perceptions of their effectiveness and efficiency.

Eligibility Criteria

The applications for grant assistance were assessed by an Expert Panel against the grant objectives, using a set of eligibility /assessment criteria including the:

- Urgency of the work;
- Contribution of the project to keeping the cathedral safe and open;
- Financial need of the cathedral;
- Impact the funding would have on the building's repair and maintenance programme going forward.

Eligible repair works needed to be identified by an architect or surveyor responsible for the cathedral; in the case of Anglican cathedrals this would usually be through the Quinquennial Inspection Report¹². Alternatively, works may have been recommended by the architect or surveyor in a statement of need.

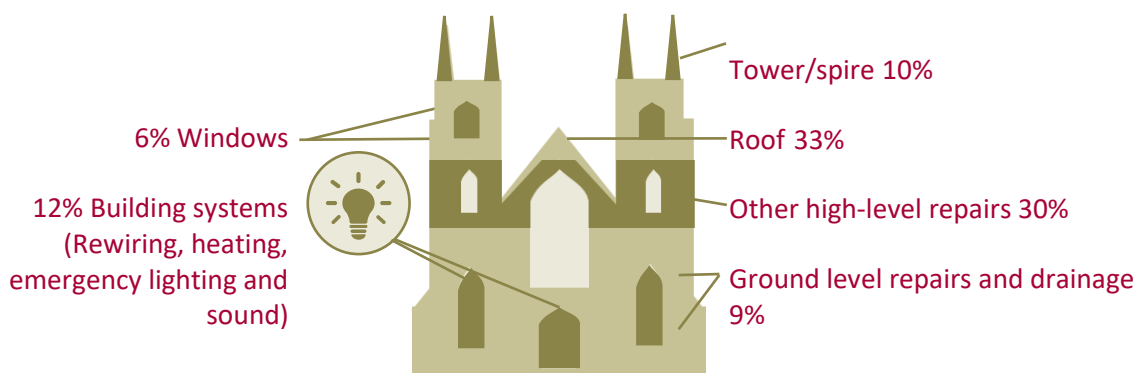
Grant Awards

The minimum application was set at £10,000 and there was no upper limit. The smallest single award made was £10,628 and the largest £870,000.

The first phase of the funding ran to the end of March 2016 and supported 77 projects at 55 cathedrals. The second phase ran from July 2016 until March 2018 and supported 63 projects at 45 cathedrals. Both phases of the programme funding were fully allocated.

In total, 144 grants were awarded to 57 Anglican and Catholic cathedrals and the Fund has supported 130 separate repair projects, with some cathedrals receiving more than one grant.

Figure 2: Awards by Repair Type



¹² Quinquennial Inspections are required to be carried out every five years by Church of England cathedral architects under the Care of Cathedrals Measure.

Fund Administration

As noted, the Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England (henceforth, "CCB") was selected to administer the Fund of behalf of DCMS. CCB was considered to represent a cost-effective solution and its experience with existing grant payment mechanisms (the Fund was built on an existing approvals process for the Cathedral Fabric Repair Fund for Anglican Cathedrals referred to above), contacts and expertise. For the first round of grant awards, administration costs were 0.1% (£20,000) of the initial £20 million. This was not considered sustainable and was increased to 0.5% (£100,000) for the 2nd round of funding.

Whilst clearly cost effective, the resource allocated to administration was low. For most of the duration of the fund, two CCB team members administered it alongside their existing roles dealing with cathedral buildings matters. Two additional staff members also contributed part of their time during the setting-up of the scheme and the first year of operation. Stakeholder consultees praised the efficiency of this process, largely considered to be as a result of knowledge and **"personal commitment"** of the team. Stakeholder respondents further acknowledged that administration was at times a **"strain"** and that additional capacity would be sought if the Fund were to continue.

"In retrospect it would have been far better to have had more comprehensive administrative support. It was too light on admin which was a risk for the government but was mitigated by personal commitment."

Anglican cathedrals were familiar with CCB and had existing relationships due to experience dealing with the team for consent to changes to cathedral buildings under the "Ecclesiastical Exemption" – the equivalent of Listed Building Consent for certain Christian denominations.

Catholic cathedrals had not previously had dealings with CCB as the Catholic Church in England and Wales has its own procedures for operating the Ecclesiastical Exemption agreed with the DCMS and administered by Historic Churches Committees. A representative of the Catholic equivalent of CCB was therefore part of the Expert Panel.

CCB was able to lever in support to the Expert Panel efficiently and quickly due to their existing contacts and knowledge of the sector; this was also considered a key positive.

Management and Governance

The Expert Panel was active in the assessment of applications and award decisions. This included meeting five times over the timescale of the Fund i.e. five grant allocation meetings in London, associated paperwork, plus group email consultations (three or four times for each of the five grant rounds) on matters such as agreeing changes to projects and re-allocation of underspend.

There were 14 members of the Expert Panel with representation from a range of sector and sector-adjacent perspectives. The full membership of the Expert Panel is provided in Appendix 2.

The time committed by the Expert Panel was contributed in-kind. Attempting to place a monetary value on the support levered-in is a somewhat crude estimate however indicative of the Panels' contribution. Some members of the Expert Panel did not consider it appropriate to provide an estimated day rate for their contribution as they were participating on a voluntary basis and did not perceive there to be a financial equivalent.

Expert Panel consultees estimated they contributed between 5-50 days as part of their role. Where approximate day rates were provided, by eight members, we are able to estimate an in-kind

contribution of £77,425 of the Expert Panel's time. There are a remaining six members of the Expert Panel. Assuming a similar average (time contributed and day rates), we could reasonably estimate an additional in-kind contribution of £21,675. This brings the total suggested in-kind equivalent to almost £100,000. Although this is not a precise figure, the message is that the contribution made on a voluntary basis by the Panel members was significant, and it would have been costly to secure similar levels of expertise in the absence of the Panel.

Risks and Mitigating Measures

The processes put in place across the Fund are largely considered to have mitigated the key identified risks, with no major risks considered to have come to fruition to date.

One identified risk was the **allocation of funds**. This was considered from a number of angles: distribution of funds towards 'inappropriate' repairs; a risk that funding did not go to where it was most needed, and/or that particular cathedrals would gain disproportionate amounts of the funding. A number of factors are considered to have mitigated this including: straightforward and transparent eligibility criteria; the expertise of the CCB team and Expert Panel; and, a fair and robust grant assessment process (discussed in more detail in chapter four).

Another risk was **achieving spend within the timescale**. Lessons learned around this include having a clear plan in place from the outset regarding how to manage underspend and delays in spending in order to flag any issues in a timely way. Particularly in light of one instance of external scrutiny faced by the fund, one stakeholder commented that, in hindsight, more regular reporting and ownership and accountability through grant agreements would have been beneficial. However it is recognised that this would have required significantly higher resource directed towards administration both centrally and from the grant recipients.

Linked with this, one perceived risk was underestimating the **cost of repairs**. In some cases, costs did escalate once the full extent of the repairs were realised. However, the expertise of the panel appears to have pre-empted this in some cases i.e. through scrutiny of whether cathedrals could realistically carry out the repairs for the specified amount of money. One stakeholder shared that one criterion was that *"we wouldn't put cathedrals at risk of going into debt and I think we succeeded."*

One stakeholder mentioned an *"obvious"* risk that there has been no formal inspection of works undertaken. This was considered to have been mitigated by the fact that all works were under the supervision of a professional architect and surveyor who certified the work in compliance with the rules of their professional body. In addition works required advance permission, for the Church of England cathedrals from the cathedral's Fabric Advisory Committee or the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England, or from the Catholic equivalent. Assessment or verification of the quality of repairs may be a consideration for any future fund of a similar nature.

Overall risks were mitigated largely via the expertise of the Expert Panel and specialist supervision at a cathedral level. Formal review processes were however limited.

Fund Timescales and Spend

The overall timescales of the Fund (considering the application window, timescale for spend and delivery) were considered tight. When respondents were queried regarding challenges, the timescale was referred to most often at both a programme and project-level. Stakeholder consultees felt this had posed a number of challenges, detailed below. Conversely, one respondent saw the tight

timescales as a positive, and considered this to have provided a sense of urgency and a “push” to get the work done. It is also worth noting that a relatively short fund timescale might be considered a prerequisite for works designated as ‘urgent’.

From the perspective of stakeholder consultees, some significant challenges caused by the Fund timescales included:

- **Volume of simultaneous projects problematic:** this was considered to have affected local markets, and increased costs / reduced availability for certain materials or equipment such as scaffolding.
- **Implications for spend:** the link to the government financial year (ending 31 March) was not considered manageable. At times for projects it was *“a struggle to spend money”* within the timescale, particularly as permissions processes can take up to six months;
- **Weather:** Stakeholder consultees emphasised the impact of the winter weather conditions on timescales, particularly in claiming for outdoor repair projects;
- **Christian calendar of events:** the concentration of events within the Christmas and Easter periods was also felt to contribute to difficulties in relation to project timetabling because of their proximity to the end of the government financial year;
- Cathedrals that did not receive the full amount applied for had to **seek remaining funding from other sources**. In a minority of cases, this had diverted funds from the cathedral’s reserves and therefore affected their overall financial position.

Underspend and Overspend

From interview responses it was perceived that projects were less likely to receive the full amount of funding they applied for in later stages of the Fund, due to increased competition. Some of the strategies from those receiving a reduced amount of funding were to: change the scale and scope of the project; split it into phases; use their own reserves to pay for the work; or leverage in other funding. However, for two projects the reduced funding ended up being an appropriate amount for the project.

Marginal underspends on projects appeared relatively common, particularly for those who received the full amount of funding applied for. This was sometimes as a result of tenders coming in lower than estimated or finding that contingency funds did not become necessary. Two respondents noted that they were permitted to allocate the funds to other approved eligible work elsewhere in the cathedral (i.e. after getting approval for reallocation from the Expert Panel), whereas others did not claim up to the full award amount.

For those that overspent, they were sometimes able to obtain extra ‘extension’ funding (in one known case this was reallocated underspend from another project) or leverage funds from elsewhere. This was most often due to uncovering additional work once the project was underway. One respondent noted that *“there were savings from phase two so this was added to phase three”*. Having a multi-round programme appears to have aided reallocation in some respects.

Management of underspend by CCB was supervised by the Expert Panel who agreed to any reallocations either to other eligible work at the same cathedrals or to existing work resulting in overspend at other cathedrals.

As funding rounds progressed, grantees became more adept at forecasting costs, meaning that variations in spend were less likely.

Overall, the fund was efficiently managed within the constraints applied by timescales and the administration budget. A proactive approach to risk management and progress reporting from the outset would have been beneficial.

4. GRANTEE EXPERIENCES OF THE FUND

This Chapter considers grantee perceptions of Fund processes.

Grantee Perceptions of Fund Processes

Figure 3 below presents collated grantee responses in relation to a number of areas such as the application process, timescales, and support received, where “5” is very satisfied and “1” is “not at all satisfied”. Respondents were also asked to provide qualitative explanation and this informs the commentary below.

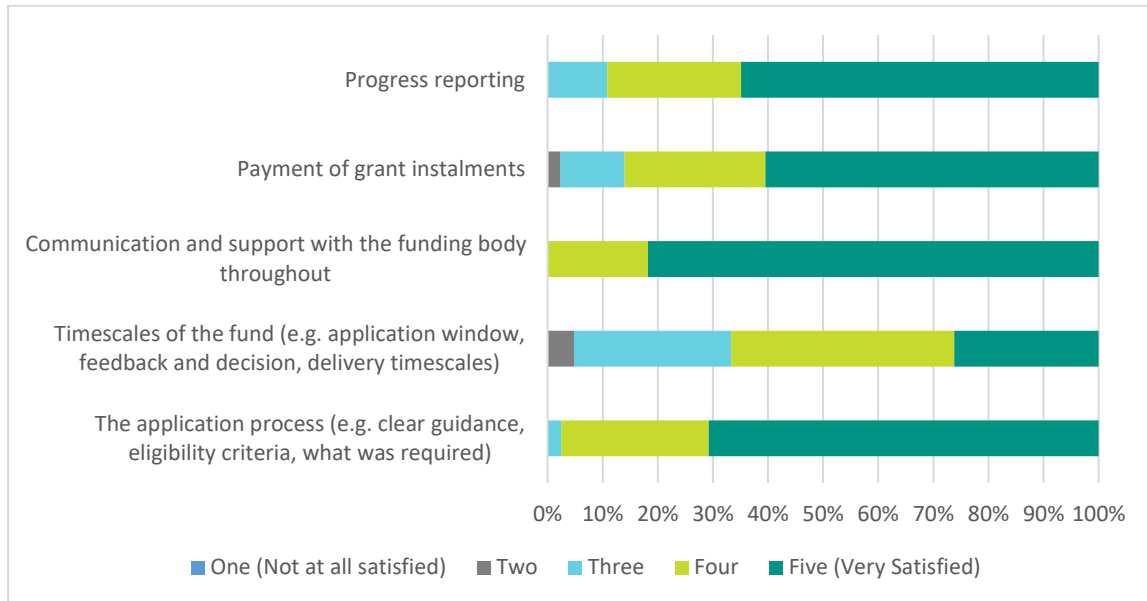


Figure 3: Q7 - Satisfaction with fund processes (% responding one 1-5 scale)

Application process

As evidenced from the scaled responses, respondents were generally happy with the application process, with one noting that it was **“very streamlined and very expertly guided by CCB”**. The majority (60%) of respondents stated that the process was straightforward or clear. One person remarked that the process was ‘commensurate with the nature of the project’ and this was reflected in other responses. For some, there had been perceived issues early on around terminology and understanding what was required but it was felt that this improved in later stages. A suggestion by three respondents was that broadening the remit of the projects would have been helpful to enable efficiencies in delivering whole, as opposed to parts, of repair projects.

Architects were not asked this question specifically but they were asked about their experience of the application process separately. Their responses reflected those outlined above by cathedral representatives with one stating:

“For us trying to do these quickly it was relatively easy; meaning we didn’t have to charge large quantities of money to bid for the funding, which is important for the cathedrals. On balance it was a well-defined process which was followed to the letter and not demanding.”

Commenting on the application requirements, it was generally considered that the Fund struck a balance between due diligence whilst not being an overly-burdensome process i.e. **“proportionate”**.

Timescales

Timescales scored worst in the scaled responses; the comments highlight particular concerns relating to tight and strict delivery timescales. Cathedral representatives felt that the requirement to spend the funding within the financial year was very difficult given the lengthy process associated with tendering for contracts, working around the cathedral timetable and also trying to avoid roof repairs over the winter months. One respondent noted that **“the Fund should take account of this as it is very stressful on timings.”** However, others felt that **“timescales were understandable due to (the annual nature of) government funding”**.

Where respondents talked about the communication relating to timescales this was generally very positive: **“It was an excellent service relating to timescales, clear and timely”**.

Application timescales weren't such a concern although it was noted that the third round was a surprise to many. It was also reflected that the short lead-in time favoured 'oven-ready projects' i.e. those already scoped and costed ahead of the Fund's announcement.

Communications and support from the funding body

Respondents were very satisfied with communications and support from the funding body, with no one rating it below 4 (satisfied) and 80% of respondents saying they were very satisfied. This is reflected in the comments, with the joint most common theme being that communications were very good. Anne Locke and Becky Clark were named a number of times specifically as providing excellent support, with one respondent noting that **“Anne and (the) team have been fantastic with queries.”**

Some of the respondents found it helpful that they had existing working relationships with the funding body and merited the success of the Fund partly to its understanding of **“constraints and ecclesiastical conditions.”**

Where response times to queries were mentioned this was usually positive although one respondent noted an instance where this had been slow in the early stages of the Fund.

Payment of grant instalments

Payment of grant instalments scored second lowest in the list and it is clear from the comments that the key issue relates to the problems with cashflow associated with payments in arrears. This is usual for public sector and much private sector grant funding. For some cathedrals this created serious issues whereas others not experiencing the problem directly recognised the likelihood that this would represent a potential risk for other cathedrals with less available resource. One of the respondents told us that they had to take out a bridging loan through one of the trusts that supports them to overcome this issue. Some respondents explained that this improved as time went on with a shift to smaller monthly claims which made the process more manageable - the frequency of claims was decided by cathedrals suggesting that their financial processes may have been subject to a learning curve as funding rounds progressed.

Despite issues with cashflow, most felt the process ran fairly smoothly, particularly in later stages and six respondents noted that payments were prompt.

Progress reporting

The most common theme relating to progress reporting was that it was relatively easy and low burden. One respondent noted that reporting had been proportionate stating that **“it hasn't been over**

demanding in terms of evidence, we've not been asked for really granular detail about things that sometimes you are asked to provide."

Generally, it was felt that this relatively light-touch and flexible approach was beneficial to grantees as reporting did not detract from the main task of the repairs. However, a small number felt that a little more guidance about what was expected and when would have been useful, feeling the process was perhaps too light-touch. Seven respondents out of 45 stated that they weren't required to provide progress reports for at least one of their projects, sometimes because the timescales were so short that only a final report was produced. It is also possible there may have been confusion over whether or not the architect or cathedral representative provided the reports.

"No-one has proactively asked for progress reporting despite this being in the contract. I am unsure of what is required."

This links to one comment from a stakeholder consultee that it would have been beneficial to ***"think about evaluation at the start rather than the end. The baseline is not really there to assess the impact"***.

As an outcome of the above, a series of 130 project summaries covering all the grant-aided work was commissioned from ERS as part of the evaluation to ensure that a consistent representation of project works and outcomes is available. Having a clear template, drawn up with evaluation in mind, provided to projects at the start, would have clarified expectations and supported effective evaluation and/or redirection of this resource towards further analysis and primary research activities.

Phases of Funding

When asked about their experiences of the different phases, half of respondents noted that there weren't any discernible or significant changes. Notable changes related mainly to the process becoming smoother as cathedral staff, architects and the funder became more familiar with them. An architect remarked that ***"it became more straightforward second time."***

There were mixed responses regarding feedback; some respondents didn't recall receiving any feedback due to their application being successful, whereas four remember receiving useful informal feedback.

"The first grant was rushed but we were better geared up for subsequent grants. It was clear why the first grant was rejected as it didn't fit the criteria. Feedback was provided and it was useful and sufficient. We appointed our architect as a result."

Application Stage

Lack of alternative available funding was a key motivation for cathedrals applying to the Fund. This related to lack of public grants for cathedral repair work, limited accessible financial reserves within cathedrals and lack of ability to fundraise and secure matched funding for 'boring' repair work.

Around a quarter of respondents expressed that that the Fund represented a 'good fit' for the kind of work they wanted to do, which was straightforward fabric repairs to make the cathedral welcoming and safe. One respondent noted that it is ***"not often there is a funder that will offer money for unexciting things that are very necessary and people don't understand how costly things are."***

A number of respondents mentioned that issues were longstanding and part of a backlog of repair needs.

“The work has been highlighted as urgent in Quinquennial Inspections¹³ (QIs) for a long time and it is really hard to fundraise for stonework. This fund helped to get fundamental basic repairs and we didn’t have to get match funding which is a really good element of the fund”.

Echoing the view of many grant recipients, one of the stakeholder respondents mentioned that the targeted and specific nature of the Fund was of benefit to cathedrals, as opposed to needing to bid for more ‘general’ funds which have different priorities, use different language and have different requirements, and within which cathedrals would be competing with a much wider pool of applicants for support.

Quality and Volume of Applications

The initial volume of applications received in round one was in line with expectations i.e. the team and panel were aware of the widespread need for repairs. One stakeholder commented that they ***“knew it would be oversubscribed”***. Overall, the Fund was over-subscribed by almost 50% (i.e. around £60m of grant-funding applied for). However, the over-subscription was felt to be easily managed due to the relatively small number of cathedrals.

Initially, Catholic cathedrals were less experienced compared to Anglican cathedrals in making grant applications. After the closure of the English Heritage Grants for Cathedrals scheme in 2009, Catholic cathedrals were not eligible for the Cathedral Fabric Repair Fund supported by The Wolfson Foundation and The Pilgrim Trust and administered by CCB 2010-2013. In addition, because of the Catholic interpretation of the concept of sacred space, Catholic cathedrals are less likely to be able to secure HLF funding via HLF Heritage Grants due to the challenge of meeting HLF’s current requirements for wider community engagement. Not all Catholic cathedrals had an appointed conservation architect as is required by law under the Anglican system. However, during the course of the grant scheme those Catholic cathedrals which lacked this kind of expertise appointed appropriately qualified architects and the quality of Catholic applications reportedly improved immeasurably.

One stakeholder consultee mentioned the Fund was ***“slow to start”*** due to a lack of preparation time. Having said this, applications were received from all Church of England cathedrals with the exception of one. Initially, Catholic cathedrals didn’t come forward in great numbers, so a member of the CCB team made direct contact. Visits were also made to Catholic cathedrals to ensure that they were not disadvantaged by criteria likely to be much more familiar for Anglican cathedral applicants. The Expert Panel also took a proactive role in encouraging applications from Catholic cathedrals.

As noted, the application process was considered to have been easier for those cathedrals with ***“oven-ready”*** projects; these tended to be Anglican. One stakeholder commented that Catholic cathedrals are not ***“as geared up for cyclical repairs”*** and ***“are less likely to have paid staff in place”***. Initially, therefore, the quality of applications coming from some Catholic cathedral applicants was considered relatively poor. Positively, the overall quality of applicants improved through the rounds, which was taken to be a result of the Fund and panel providing support and clear feedback. Capacity-building and increased ability to apply for grant funding is an additional positive outcome for a number of Catholic cathedrals, according to stakeholder consultees.

¹³ *Quinquennial Inspections are required to be carried out every 5 years by Church of England cathedral architects*

One conclusion was that cathedrals in deprived areas may also need more support during the application process, as they have fewer resources with which to make a detailed case for funding.

Illustrative Quotes:

- ***“The Fund had a significant impact on the ability for Catholic cathedrals to think about repair needs.”***
- ***“As the rounds continued (applications) became exceptionally good - particularly Anglican. They were thinking more cohesively about how money could be spent wisely.”***
- ***“(Some) able to articulate a clear strategy for maintenance work, strategy for how and why, backed up by expert opinion.”***
- ***“The increase in quality from Catholic cathedrals between rounds 1-4 was admirable”.***

Assessment Process

Assessment of grant applications was a two-stage process. CCB reviewed full applications and produced a ‘top-sheet’ summary, which was shared with the Expert Panel together with all the papers in advance of each panel meeting. The Expert Panel then discussed each application in turn, rated on a grid against grant criteria and assessed by urgency, need, and financial situation of the cathedral. There were approximately 50 to 60 applications to discuss each time.

There was a consensus this system was “very efficient”, with a particular strength being the range of experience within the panel, which was felt to mitigate bias. One Panel member mentioned that there were “too many people around” the table, however feedback has been very positive overall.

Fair and efficient assessment of applications was ensured through the following measures:

- A two-stage assessment process;
- A representative panel (by denomination and discipline) with internal and external perspectives plus relevant knowledge and experience;
- Chair of panel was independently appointed by the Secretary of State;
- A register of member’s interests was kept and they could not contribute to decision-making in those instances (only discussion);
- Representatives of funding bodies were on the panel, in part, to avoid duplication.

Chapter Summary

- Overall responses demonstrate that grantees were generally positive about the fund processes and structure, and that processes are considered to have improved over time.
- That the fund was specifically targeted towards cathedrals has been well-received.
- Communications from the funding body were seen as particularly well managed and many reflected on the various benefits of this positive working relationship.
- The application process was seen as relatively straightforward and proportionate, and applications increased in quality and quantity as the funding rounds progressed.
- A key concern related to the timescales for delivery, i.e. primarily spending the funding within the financial year, though the constraints posed by the winter weather were also noted as having had impact on particular projects.
- The grant payment processes proved difficult for some in terms of managing their cashflow (due to payments in arrears and large amounts of spend being concentrated into

a relatively short period), with some cathedrals reporting use of reserves and diversion of funds from other projects, but this improved in later phases due to projects restructuring the frequency/number of grant instalments.

- Progress reporting was 'light-touch' which was viewed as a positive for some but lacking some guidance for others. This has also had significant implications on monitoring and evaluation i.e. this led to a lack of consistently presented and uniform data with which to form the basis for reporting progress and outcomes.

5. PROJECT DELIVERY

We posed a number of questions to grantee respondents relating to their experience of project delivery. This chapter outlines delivery challenges and best practice.

The cathedral representatives we consulted with were mostly senior staff involved with administration, estate management, operations and development/fundraising. In most cases the representative oversaw or managed the project, in a small number of cases the architect managed the project.

Firstly, stakeholder consultees suggested that grantees' experience of delivery may have differed in the following ways based on particular characteristics:

- **Geography:** suppliers considered to be less concentrated in the North.
- **Size:** larger cathedrals were considered to experience fewer cash flow problems.
- **Anglican or Catholic cathedrals:** Catholic cathedrals were less used to working with a conservation architect. In addition, being all 19th century or 20th century buildings, Catholic cathedrals were likely to undertake different types of repair due to the type of build.
- **Size of grant:** larger grants considered harder to deliver and carry more inherent risk.
- **Type of Repair:** electrical repairs were a 'new territory'.

The grantee interviews confirm some of the issues above particularly that larger cathedrals were less likely to struggle with issues relating to cashflow. The differences between the Anglican and Catholic cathedrals were also reflected in the responses, with some Catholic cathedrals feeling that their projects were less likely to be 'ready to go', although neither denomination knew about the Fund in advance. Geographical differences relating to suppliers was not a prominent feature of the interviews.

Some distinctions in challenges raised most often by stakeholder versus grantee respondents suggests that there were some challenges observable at a programme-level which may have been less obvious (or considered to be 'par for the course') at a project-level. These will be discussed in more detail within the following section, though this particularly relates to challenges experienced around suppliers and contractors; considered, at a programme-level, to be due to projects running simultaneously.

Delivery Challenges

As is highlighted elsewhere, the responses reflected the huge challenge of delivering the projects within the funding timescales. For some, the time taken to gain permissions compounded issues with delivery. Some found that the intensive nature of the Fund **"impacted on the availability of skilled people and conservators"**, often resulting in delays on projects. A couple of responses highlighted a concern that this was creating a potential **"boom and bust"** cycle for these contractors.

A relatively common challenge was the need to manage major building work alongside an active timetable of services and events. Where repair work was taking place inside the cathedral this created greater issues than high-level roof repairs. **"Matching the programme of the project to the cathedral's diary was a challenge because you're working on a continually active building."**

While respondents generally expressed their gratitude for the funding, there were some instances where the need to raise funding to fund the shortfall created difficulties with cashflow.

“We felt that we could not give up the opportunity of passing up the money but didn’t have the rest of the money (£600k). This has left us with cash flow problems and impacted on our sustainability, having increased borrowings to fill the gap.”

Several respondents experienced problems with contractors, for example keeping them to time, having to reappoint part-way through the programme.

Thematic Snapshot 1: Contractors and Suppliers

The majority of projects had very positive experiences with their contractors, with works completed as initially set out. For a minority, there were a number of challenges, detailed below.

The ‘boom and bust’ nature of heritage building contractors was highlighted by a number of stakeholder interviewees during our consultations. This was considered in relation to the tight timescales of the fund meaning that a number of projects were running simultaneously. At a programme-level, it was observable that this had led to particular concentrations in demand for particular skills or materials, and within particular regions. Stakeholder accounts detailed this had led to an increase in prices e.g. higher prices for scaffolding, and may have increased risks across the portfolio of projects (if fewer contractors were carrying out multiple repairs) as well as potentially having decreased overall value for money compared to a more gentle demand over a longer period (which would also be more sustainable for contractors). Further, stakeholders felt that contractor challenges were exacerbated due to the simultaneous running of the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund alongside the First World War Centenary Repairs Fund.

At a project-level, these issues were not always perceived in the same way, due to an on the ground perspective meaning that the effect of wider demand was not always apparent. However, at a delivery-level, some of the cathedrals had direct experience of contractors going into administration during their funded projects or the withdrawal of tenders due to changing prices. Some of these challenges are only coming to the fore now as projects extend beyond their initial timescales. While experienced in a minority of cases, the impact was significant and so worth consideration in further detail.

As an example, in one of the cathedrals, the main contractor left the site in March 2018 with the project initially due to complete the following month. It had become clear that the contractor had not been paying the sub-contractors and the numbers of workers on site had been dwindling. The cold weather over the winter had contributed to the issue as it had significantly impeded progress. This situation has left the cathedral unable to access the site and has left local labourers suddenly without work. The cathedral is confident it can secure another contractor; however, they are unlikely to secure the same price and the costs are escalating as the scaffolding remains up beyond the initial timescales. The cathedral explained that this is not an unprecedented experience in the heritage and wider construction sector; they have been through this process before.

Whilst adjustments to overall timescales, or reduction in the cyclical nature of future funding could mitigate some of these risks as well as increasing overall value for money of repair works, it would be beneficial to also consider including formal mitigation measures such as use of a bond, or default clauses in the work contract, subject to the nature and scale of the work.

With regard to scaffolding, stakeholder consultees expressed concern that the consequences of any delays and/or price increases (or a combination of the two) are likely to be significant, considering that scaffolding constitutes a high proportion of total project costs. Having said this, where scaffolding was mentioned by consultees this was in relation to savings due to use of scaffolding to undertake additional repairs alongside grant delivery. Where respondents mentioned unforeseen increased costs this was most often due to unforeseen complications or a lack of time to accurately scope works prior to application (as detailed below).

Unforeseen complications were another key issue in a number of projects. This often related to a lack of understanding of the scale of deterioration before the work started and the subsequent impacts on costs or timings. A number of respondents mentioned it would be useful to have more time to explore the projects and design tenders and to be able to properly estimate costs before the repair work.

“We found unexpected issues along the way that couldn’t have been predicted – in spite of having surveys done. This had implications on costs and timing of the programme.”

A number of people mentioned problems with staff capacity or insufficient internal resource, again due to the intensive nature of the fund, which caused stress and difficulties. Other challenges included sourcing materials and working through the winter (mentioned by five and six cathedrals, respectively).

Delivery Best Practice

The initial set up and planning of these projects is felt to be key, with clear requirements from the outset and ensuring contingency time is factored in. Three interviewees mentioned the importance of identifying risks before the projects commence.

Most of the respondents highlighted the importance of clear and frequent communication with the team and the importance of strong relationships. A skilled and reliable project manager and someone who keeps a close eye on the project was also felt to be important. Three interviewees mentioned the importance of cathedral staff maintaining a critical eye on the proposal and project.

Many interviewees mentioned the importance of a good team and advisors, with experience and the right skills, importantly a good architect that works closely with the cathedral team.

Respondents also touched upon the importance of employing excellent and experienced contractors. Two mentioned the usefulness of specialists in helping save costs by using bespoke methods.

Illustrative Quotes:

- ***“Being very organised and planning well in advance, including identifying any risk factors beforehand.”***
- ***“Communication is key to any project. Ensure you have proper communication between the project manager, architect and the cathedral representatives. Most projects will fail without effective communication.”***
- ***“Need to be critical – think about what we are doing and why we are doing it.”***

Change Over Time

The vast majority of projects ran more or less as expected. For a large number of projects minor changes were made; for most this was in part due to uncovering unforeseen complications with the works as the projects progressed, for example:

- A large number of projects experienced delays for a range of reasons including the weather scuppering plans for stonework, contractors not delivering on time and necessary changes to the project design;
- A few cathedrals underspent on projects, some needed additional funding and others managed to reallocate funds to other areas.

Chapter Summary

- The key challenge for projects was the timeframe for delivering the project. Whilst a challenge in and of itself, timescales also compounded other issues, such as unforeseen issues with repair works, and challenges of delivering projects over the winter, for example.
- The majority of projects have completed successfully and ran as expected.
- For a small minority of projects, contractor challenges have been experienced, with significant implications for timescales, repair status, overall cost and even financial standing of the cathedral.
- Good planning and communication between all parties was seen as crucial for effective project delivery.

6. OUTCOMES OF THE REPAIRS

This Chapter focuses on the effectiveness of the works in addressing the repair needs. It considers the changes to the status of the repair area before and after, any other work undertaken as a result of the funding, and what would have happened without the funding.

“Channelling this amount of money into repairs has been an enormous boost to cathedrals.”

Performance criteria (i.e. intended outcomes) were clearly defined and well-understood. First and foremost, the Fund set out to administer grants to cathedrals to facilitate repair work which would keep cathedrals safe and open. These outcomes are considered easy to measure.

Stakeholder consultees were asked to consider the key achievements of the Fund. Primarily, that **urgent repairs have been carried out to keep cathedrals safe and open** is considered to be the headline achievement. This suggests that the Fund has broadly achieved what it set out to.

Repair Status Before and After

The completion status of the projects successfully consulted with and who responded to the question were as follows: 20 complete; 21 some projects completed; and two no projects yet completed. Of the 21 who said only some works were complete, there were 14 expecting to finish within one month; three within three months; two within nine months and two had unknown completion dates. There were four projects that were cited as being delayed, hence why the work was not fully complete.

Cathedral representatives and architects were asked about the repair status of the grant-assisted project area before and after the repair works took place. It is worth noting that 17 of the cathedral representatives gave slightly different answers for one or more of the projects. They were slightly less likely to say that the projects were urgent to begin with, with just over a quarter of projects listed as category b and c. This may be linked to architects' familiarity with the Quinquennial classifications of repair needs.

The figure below shows architect responses to this question and accounts for 134 awards across 53 cathedrals. In three instances the cathedral representative responses have been used where a cathedral architect was not interviewed.

At the time of application, most architect respondents (84%) considered repairs to be urgent and requiring immediate attention with some citing falling masonry and collapsing structures as reasons for this classification. The majority of the remaining projects were designated by architect respondents as urgent, requiring attention within 12 months (8%) or 18-24 months (6%) and only one individual said a project was a desired improvement or required attention within the next five years.

The overall consensus after the repairs have been completed using the grant funding is that the areas subject to the repairs will henceforth require only routine maintenance (82%). Some projects would prefer further funding to make desirable improvements and a small minority still require work within either the next 12 months, 18-24 months or five years. However, it is noted that this would change the nature of the funding, which was made available specifically for urgent repairs. Further, a minority of respondents indicated the repair area would require attention shortly after project completion (within 12 months). This is highly dependent on the repair and material type involved and the associated maintenance cycle e.g. asphalt repairs undertaken in one instance were considered to have

fully addressed the initial need, however it is difficult to achieve the same longevity with this type of repair work compared to some other roofing materials.

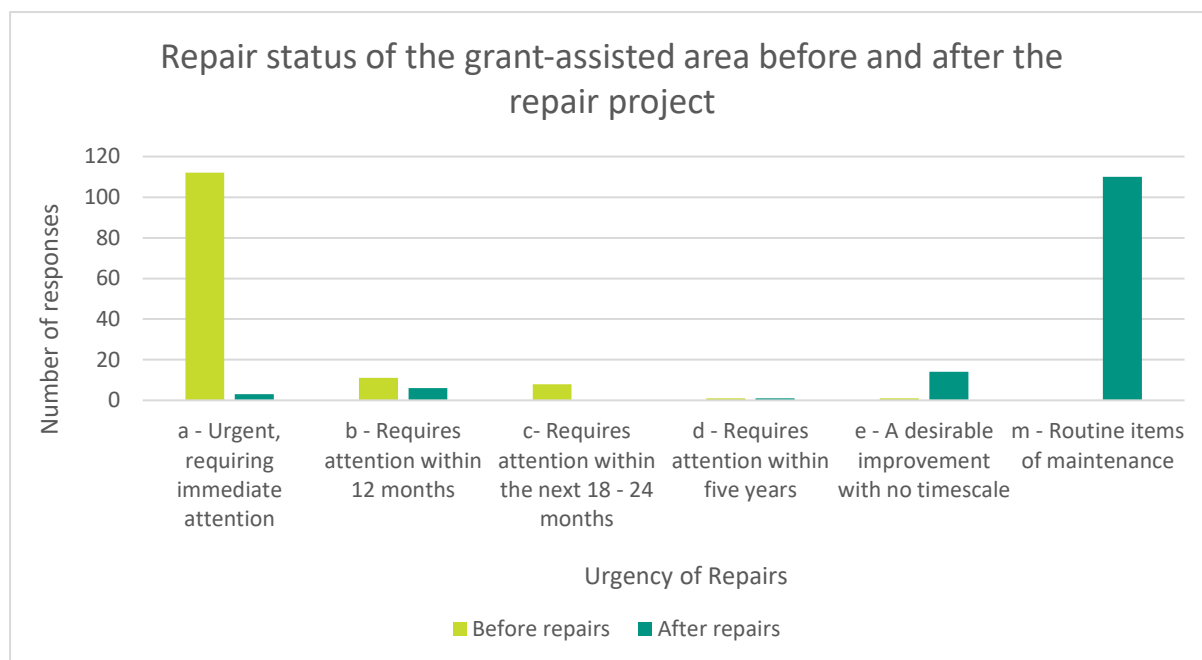


Figure 4: What was the repair status of the of the grant-assisted project area(s) before and after the work?

The majority of respondents stated the works were very effective, the reason often being that they resolved the repair issues and achieved exactly what they had intended within the funding and timescales. The improved health and safety of the cathedrals was another notable reason why the works were felt to be a success.

One interviewee noted that ***“they managed to restore the front of the cathedral to its former glory while keeping the cathedral structurally sound”***.

All respondents stated the outcomes were value for money and commensurate with the level of investment. They achieved what was required from the funding with over one third saying that securing good tenders as the reason for this, in addition to good project management.

The above suggests that funds were awarded in line with the eligibility criteria and need and have largely fulfilled the stated aims. This is true for all repair types, including non-traditional repairs as well as electrical / heating improvements. A thematic snapshot focussing on the range and types of repair needs is provided overleaf:

Thematic Snapshot 2: Repair Types

The fund addressed a wide variety of repair needs within English cathedrals, including, for example: roof repairs; guttering and rainwater disposal; heating, sound or lighting systems; and stonework and masonry.

In most cases there was a clear distinction between the types of repairs (i.e. materials involved, associated techniques) required at Catholic cathedrals compared to Anglican due to the age of the building. Compared to a medieval Anglican cathedral, Catholic cathedrals are either 19th or 20th century and only now reaching the point where major repairs to roofs and high level stonework are becoming urgently necessary. Buildings of the post-war era which tended to be built somewhat experimentally have reached that same point in a much shorter time span. Hence the fabric needs of Catholic cathedrals - as well as the fabric needs of some of the smaller and later Anglican cathedrals - now represent a pressing need which was not the case when public funding for cathedral repairs was first introduced in 1990. Therefore, that the fund has supported both Anglican and Catholic cathedrals to address urgent fabric needs is well-received.

In addition, the fund can be considered to have broken relatively “new ground” in the repair types eligible for funding. For example, as Catholic cathedrals encounter their first 75-100 year major repair requirement cycle, the unique issues raised by the innovative design and use of materials (and how this affects repair techniques) as well as the impact of investment in this type of repair will provide important information for use of other secular 20th Century buildings. Indeed, one cathedral was able to leverage additional funding as part of their repair work to conduct research into concrete wear, which has been made available to other 20th Century buildings.

Moreover, the repairs to heating, lighting, and sound systems can be considered somewhat “untested” territory. Grantee responses indicate it is very difficult for cathedrals to obtain funding for more “unglamorous” but essential repair and upgrade work. Thus, this fund has been seen as particularly significant, not only in helping to preserve the fabric of cathedrals in England, but importantly in helping cathedrals to improve their basic building services. As much as more traditional forms of repair, such infrastructure can be essential to keeping cathedral buildings safe and open to the public.

In one such example, Clifton Cathedral received funding to improve the lighting, electrics and replace the heating system. New wiring and surface-mounted containment were installed for the electrics and low energy and high-quality light fittings were installed that improve the lighting levels and the architectural quality of the Cathedral. The improved lighting also allows the art work and monuments in the building to be better displayed and has spurred the cathedral to develop more public information about these pieces. Upgraded external lighting ensures that the building is a safer to access for those who visit and worship there, particularly in winter months. The more efficient heating and lighting is not only better for the environment but will also help the cathedral to save money on energy bills for years to come. Overall, the upgrades have greatly increased the comfort and safety of the cathedral and should help encourage more visitors to this unusual building. The cathedral team is also considering how to use the building in new ways, such as hosting exhibitions to engage the local community.



Furthermore, without urgent lighting repairs one cathedral would have been forced to close due to being unable to fulfil insurance requirements, so the significance of repair types such as this should not be under-estimated or considered simply 'nice-to-have'. If unchecked, such issues can also represent significant health and safety risks.

Additional Repair Works Undertaken

The majority of respondents stated there were **additional repairs** undertaken as a result of this grant. Many discovered further issues within their cathedrals when they commenced work, hence the urgency in many cases to progress with the extra repairs. The use of existing scaffolding to conduct said repairs, where applicable, saved cathedrals between £30,000 and £400,000 each, meaning they could focus their underspend or reserves on the essential repairs required. As an example, one cathedral's savings on scaffolding meant that additional repair project costs went down by 22%. There are also examples of underspend being used to repair additional sections of the cathedral which were not originally specified in the grant application.

There are some examples of a catalysing effect, for example, cathedrals feeling able and/or motivated to undertake or plan further repairs that would not otherwise have been carried out.

“One cathedral was faced with an enormous issue of replacing its copper roof. The cathedral had been shying away from dealing with it but they are now thinking about raising the money.”

Over two-thirds of the respondents had other non-First World War grant-funded projects underway at the same time. This was almost evenly split, with half of them receiving funding from organisations such as Heritage Lottery Fund, DCMS¹⁴, and The Getty Foundation; and the other half securing funds from private donors, fundraising or investment returns. These projects interacted with the First World War projects to differing degrees, with some being completely distinct and others creating synergies and enabling a 'more complete renovation' than they had expected to be able to do. In some cases, this created challenges around project management.

¹⁴ This was a one-off grant made for restoration of a war grave, in connection to The First World War Commemoration.

Outstanding Repairs

All participating cathedrals still have outstanding repairs and as many suggest it is a costly undertaking to maintain working historic buildings. Further quantification of the costings and timescales of those repairs considered to be the most urgent is needed, but was not within the scope of this report. Those respondents who referred to costings estimated their repair needs range from discrete projects costing around £100K to potential long-term repair liabilities of up to £50 million, with many running into the millions. The figure is very broad and we present this with the caveat that some cathedrals were relating costs for another urgent, defined and costed project, and others were responding in relation to the cathedral's overall need and a much more extended timescale. In many cases the figure represented a list of repairs which would ideally be carried out, rather than something the respondent felt could feasibly be funded through current reserves or fundraising. The timescales are varied dependent on the cathedral with some respondents advising they have a rolling plan of between 10 – 30 years, and some stating additional repairs were planned imminently.

The report of the Cathedrals Working Group (Church of England, 2018) recommends CCB works with the Cathedral Architects Association to carry out a calculation of the known backlog on cathedral repairs, including rough estimated costings, so that there is a better idea of the quantum involved, including the liabilities faced by sector, and the ability of individual cathedrals to raise resources against their known needs, in order to obtain a broader understanding of where the most significant liabilities and threats to long-term viability may lie.

Counterfactual

"If the Fund hadn't come up in the way that it did and when it did, it would have resulted in temporary closures of cathedrals while they attempted to raise the money - and I'm not sure where that money would have come from. This isn't a bloody stump threat: 'give us what we want or we'll close', there were real insurance issues in some cases and situations that were a threat to public health."

In the absence of the Fund, the majority of respondents stated they would not have gone ahead with the repairs as they would not have had sufficient funds in their cathedral reserves. When asked to consider what would have happened and what action they would have taken in the absence of the funding, respondents most often stated:

- They would have attempted to 'patch-up' necessary repairs, which would have proven more costly in the long-term;
- There would have been significant health and safety concerns for the public;
- The cathedral would have been in a significantly worse state of repair;
- They would have struggled to raise funds for essential works through other means;
- In some cases, that the cathedral would have closed or partially closed.

The Fund is considered to have met a need that could not have been met elsewhere.

Chapter Summary:

- The vast majority of projects have gone from requiring urgent repairs to grant-funded areas being effectively repaired, with only routine items of maintenance required. These repair outcomes are applicable regardless of repair type, geography, denomination and so on i.e. these are uniformly felt. One distinction was that cathedral representatives were slightly less likely to state repairs were urgent initially compared to architects. This may be linked to architects' familiarity with the Quinquennial classifications of repair needs.
- The most important outcomes for the projects were that the cathedrals were safe and open and the fund was felt to have been hugely effective in delivering this. It was felt that this was the prerequisite to delivering wider benefits to the community.
- All cathedrals had outstanding repair works and many of these are significant and require substantial funding.
- Respondents felt that without the Fund the repair works would not have gone ahead or they would have taken significant time to fundraise.

7. WIDER OUTCOMES OF THE FUND

This section considers the broader outcomes of the funding above and beyond the main aim of repairing the fabric of the cathedrals. Various outcomes are considered including impacts on visitors, the wider community and the economy and skills. Some respondents found it difficult to consider wider outcomes of the fund, particularly due to cathedrals' continued emphasis on achieving such outcomes as part of their wider operation, rather than as a requirement of the fund. It is useful to reiterate that the primary purpose of the fund was repair, and the focus on this aspect has been appreciated by grantees.

This Chapter sets out analysis of the wider outcomes of the Fund i.e. beyond the core stated aims to keep cathedrals safe and open. Consideration of wider outcomes is two-fold, namely: to what extent has the existing role and activities of cathedrals been *safeguarded*, and to what extent has the Fund enabled *new or additional* activity?

Figure 5: Existing Activities Safeguarded



Wider Value of Cathedrals

To put findings in context, it is useful to understand perceptions of the existing role of cathedrals in addition to missional aspects. Respondents were asked to explain, from their perspective, the *value* of cathedrals. A wide range of responses were provided across themes as broad as community, heritage, educational and tourism value.

Respondents detailed a range of activities which were already carried out by the cathedral(s) in question, though when asked specifically to relate wider outcomes *as a result of the repair* it is clear that these have increased in a number of cases. The top ten most mentioned wider outcomes of the funding cited by those involved in the projects included:

- Improved building condition (39);
- More First World War commemorations (24);
- Increased tourist visits (21);
- Freed-up resource for other projects (19);
- Leveraged additional funds (18);
- More community events (17);
- Improved project management (14);
- Increased skills development (13);
- Increased publicity for the cathedral (9);
- Increased community interest (7).

Wider outcomes are described below, divided into Economy & Skills and Community Events & Engagement.

Economy & Skills

“Scaffolding and cost of materials rocketed. That does lower value for money.”

As previously mentioned, stakeholder consultee responses indicated pressure on local supply chains (availability, cost) as a result of multiple repair projects being conducted simultaneously. For example, a shortage of scaffolding in the North-East of England. To explore this issue further, architects were asked whether local contractors (defined as within 30 miles) were used for repairs and whether any shortages of skills and/or availability of materials occurred.

Most respondents talked about a mixture of local and non-local contractors being used, with slightly more referring to local contractors compared to non-local. However, this cannot be taken as evidence of a higher instance of local contractors due to the qualitative nature of the data collection.

Where non-local contractors were used this was often due to the need to secure the best value and quality contractors who were often based further afield. Many felt that there is not a skills shortage nationally as long as you are familiar with the contractors and understand who is best-placed to deliver.

There was no strong theme from grantee respondents that material shortages were a significant issue. They were mentioned eight times, relating to a mixture of stone, scaffolding and slates.

Skills and Training

“The whole scheme has brought on professional development at all levels from architect to stone mason.”

Figure 6: Skills Supported



Traditional Skills

Architect respondents were asked to what extent specialist knowledge, skills and labour in traditional building techniques were supported as a result of the projects.

In response, 12 different skills areas were mentioned, the most common of which were stone masonry and leadwork. The next most common were carpentry, concrete repairs, metal and copper work. Other areas included glazing and glass conservation, as well as archaeology and specialist research

into conservation of old buildings. A number of respondents noted that the contractors used were always specialist contractors in traditional building techniques due to the nature of the work. Approximately a third of respondents mentioned that the projects supported training or apprentices directly.

Apprentices and Jobs

28 apprenticeships and 188 jobs were attributed to the funded works. However, these figures are based on architect estimates (contractors were not consulted directly within the scope of the evaluation). Not all architects consulted had this information – particularly where external contractors were used - therefore figures are likely to underestimate the number of jobs in total.

Thematic Snapshot 3: Economy & Skills

“Somewhere between 15 and 20 students on City and Guilds course have carved bosses under the choir roof. This was a fantastic opportunity in terms of passing on new skills. They were hugely enthusiastic. They carved them in a covered workshop adjacent to the cathedral which was a huge attraction to visitors, it is nice to encourage a bit more of that.”

The projects have supported a great number of apprentices in traditional skills, helping them to develop professionally and widen their portfolio. At Gloucester Cathedral four trainee stone masons worked on repairs to the masonry of the Lady Chapel and three trainee stone masons worked on repairs to the roofs of the Nave and the former Abbot’s Chapel, principally working on restoring the south western pinnacle of the nave west front. Both projects included setting out and stone carving. Two of the trainees gained Cathedral Workshop Fellowship Foundation Degrees through working on the projects, which is a programme in partnership with the University of Gloucestershire and nine Cathedrals which helps to standardise and promote the training of stonemason apprentices in English Cathedrals. One of the trainees, James, was also Highly Commended in the Duke of Gloucester Award for Excellence in Stonemasonry.

At another cathedral, one respondent provided an example of collaborations between the cathedral and education providers in offering training programmes in traditional building techniques. Another mentioned that the apprentice at the cathedral they worked with had been in the local news and would go on to be a ***“really good mason.”***

Cathedrals’ Capacity and Skills

“The whole process has improved our communication and ability to work together.”

Fourteen respondents mentioned improved project management processes and 13 mentioned increased skills development as a result of undertaking the repair projects in question. Where mentioned, skills gained were incredibly varied. These range from, for example: restructuring of teams to better facilitate management of contractors or repair works; implementation of improved delivery processes e.g. coordinating and scheduling works in a busy environment; improved skills for communicating internally and with the public about the cathedral building; increased skills around project management; increased knowledge of the building needs and the maintenance cycle, as well as a ‘refresh’ of the skills of the wider cathedral team. A minority of respondents also mentioned improvements to fundraising strategy and/or financial management.

“It got cathedrals to think about maintenance and got communities to think about cathedrals.”

Alongside the 19 instances where respondents described reallocation of funds to other projects as a result of the grant awards, and the 18 cathedrals who stated they had been able to leverage additional funds as a result, there is evidence that in some cases the Fund may have improved, to some extent, the ability of cathedrals to run more effectively as well as their financial situation.

Thematic Snapshot 4: Funds Leveraged and Fundraising

“There was a fantastic leverage effect - several cathedrals have used this to leverage further funds e.g. one cathedral had received £25k.... When the local sources see the government put money in, this conduces others to put money in.”

Twelve out of eighteen of those who said the projects helped them leverage additional funds specified amounts (although a few are estimates); this totals £5,370,100 known funding leveraged. Where data is available, it suggests that funding leveraged for additional repairs and activities following on from the First World War funded repairs is likely to be a slightly longer-term outcome. In the limited cases where it has been possible to obtain further data, a catalysing effect is apparent, with donors seeming more likely to invest in a building which they can see is in good condition, has already received investment, and has generated some momentum around repairs. As one interviewee said “When other donors see that investment has been made, it encourages them to do so and it is easier to draw in funding. It is harder to get people to invest in a building if they’re uncertain about its future.”

The full extent of funding leveraged would require further follow-up investigation at a point further down the line.

In relation to fundraising more broadly, the significant and consistent injection of funding into Catholic Cathedrals was welcomed and seems to have resulted in a sharper focus on conservation and fundraising for many. This is the first time that this level of funding has been made available to Catholic Cathedrals and for some has resulted in changing attitudes and increased confidence and capability to apply for funding in the future.

Throughout the process the quality of applications from Catholic Cathedrals improved, stronger links were made with Cathedral Architects and cathedrals were able to undertake repairs that had been outstanding for many years. One cathedral saw the funding as a ‘lifesaver’ which will kick-start the investment needed to re-order the Cathedral to accommodate a growing congregation.

Community Events and Engagement

The stated community outcomes predominantly fall into the following broad categories:

- **More community events**, including First World War commemorations (24) and wider events or services (17);
- **Increased tourism visits** (21);
- **Profile and awareness raising**, i.e. increased publicity (9) and interest (7).

First World War Commemorations

We asked stakeholder consultees whether the Fund had enabled any First World War commemorations events which would not have otherwise happened. There was a feeling that some cathedrals would have been unable to participate in the commemoration at all in cases where the repair needs threatened closure, some would have carried out events in the absence of the funding, but the Fund may have improved the events e.g. some **“would have held events but with buckets on the floor”**.

As mentioned above, 24 grantee respondents mentioned having held First World War commemoration events which may not have gone ahead to the same extent in the absence of the funding. We must be clear that the majority of respondents had already scheduled First World War commemorations as part of their programme of activity prior to grant awards, so in most cases the repairs did not largely affect ‘what grantees were doing anyway’.

Safeguarding Existing Community Activities

Additional / new activities were somewhat limited within the responses, primarily **due to the extent of community activities which cathedrals already undertake. Importantly, the repairs have safeguarded existing such activities**. These activities were broad and included engagement with school age children in formal education activities, informal volunteering, providing meals for homeless communities and hosting various events such as music festivals, for example.

Improved Environment for Visitors

In addition to having maintained cathedral buildings, some cathedrals also mentioned that repairs had improved the building for visitors or enabled existing activities to be enhanced. This extends to a safer environment, improved lighting and sound capabilities for events or architectural interpretation, and a warmer, more comfortable environment. These types of benefits were very specific to the repair type and to the cathedral, and therefore not generalisable, yet no less significant. For example, the installation of a sound system at one cathedral for safety purposes also allowed congregation members with mobility issues to access audio recordings of services they would otherwise not be able to attend, therefore increasing accessibility and allowing vulnerable community members’ access to worship.

Some cathedrals reported having had increased tourism or visitor numbers, including an increase in visitors to particular services or events compared to those ordinarily achieved.

Additional Outcomes

Research into concrete wear undertaken by one cathedral has been made available to other 20th Century buildings.

Further, in addition to improved fabric of the cathedral, there are examples of repairs having safeguarded historically significant collections within cathedrals against damage, allowing these to continue to be stored safely.

Improved morale within the cathedrals was alluded to a number of times, with interviewees stating that the work gave them **“confidence”**, an **“uplift in spirit”** and **“breathing space”** as a result of having secured funding to undertake the repairs.

“It was a real game changer - it gave people a bit of mental space to not wake up terrified their bell tower is falling down.”

There were also limited wider outcomes for other consultee groups e.g. some members of the Expert Panel expressed that they enjoyed being involved with the process. One mentioned it was an important intelligence-gathering exercise around cathedrals’ needs and financial standing.

Legacy and Future Priorities

“Securing the long-term future of the most valuable buildings in the nation.”

The legacy of the Fund is considered to be that cathedrals are safe and open, and historic buildings have been safeguarded for future use and enjoyment and able to continue to perform their civic role.

All those who received the First World War Centenary Repairs Fund Grant were extremely grateful and wished to express their thanks to all those involved. The overwhelming opinion is they all sincerely hope the government will choose to continue to support cathedrals in the coming years as these funds are considered vital for maintaining the collective heritage and are extremely difficult to secure from other sources.

The overall consensus from respondents is that the cathedrals’ future plans include a vast amount of conservation and development of cathedral buildings including: masonry and infrastructure; replacing heating and lighting systems; and bell tower and organ repairs. Other major future plans/needs include: becoming sustainable; increasing income streams; increasing the number of worshippers; increasing skills; and focusing on delivering missional activities.

When asked about the future challenges and opportunities cathedrals face, respondents highlighted a number of factors, such as:

- Funding: irregular funding creates critical problems for cathedrals and there is ***“a desperate need for money from the state for cathedrals each year.”***
- Lack of expertise at some Anglican cathedrals to undertake large-scale projects was highlighted in the Church of England’s Cathedrals Working Group report 2018. A pilot support panel for Church of England cathedrals, coordinated by the Association of English Cathedrals (AEC, the association representing the interests of English Anglican Cathedrals), has been set up in an attempt to address this need.

This Fund has arrived at the crucial moment for many cathedrals that may have faced closure, but despite buildings being in a better overall condition as a result of this fund, many cathedrals remain concerned for their future. Whilst cathedrals are considered to be in a better position compared to parish churches to be able to raise necessary funds (according to the perspective of stakeholder consultees and recent research such as the Taylor Review), they all face significant outstanding repair needs. Cathedral Chapters will always require funds for preventative maintenance and cyclical repair to maintain the nationally significant buildings within their stewardship and the mission they lead in each Diocese. Regular maintenance and prevention will alleviate more rapid deterioration, protect the value for money of existing investments in repairs and reduce costs of major works subsequently.

There is a consensus amongst respondents of all types that continued funding is needed to address ongoing fabric needs, and that the irregularity of funding causes critical problems. ***“There is a***

desperate need for money from the state for cathedrals each year – it’s probably £5m a year. That would be sufficient, but it is obvious that there is a need.”

Most respondents who mentioned what form a future fund might take recommended sustained, annual funding. There is agreement that cathedrals and funders should “***strategically plan for investment over a longer period of time***” (and that cathedrals should think in a similar way with regards to maintenance planning to extend the lifetime of repairs and to prevent future problems).

It is considered that this will have benefits in terms of maintaining a sustainable market, rather than peaks and troughs of demand, which would ultimately deliver greater value for money due to steady cost of materials.

Chapter Summary:

- Grantees appreciated the focus of the grant on essential repair works and this remains the primary outcome of the fund. However, there are some observable wider outcomes.
- Some respondents found it difficult to consider wider outcomes beyond the improvement to the building but projects were felt to be significant in enabling the cathedral to undertake its everyday business i.e. in most cases, repairs have enabled cathedrals to continue to do what they were doing anyway, which includes a range of community engagement activity.
- The projects supported a wide variety of jobs and apprentices in traditional building skills, most notably stone masonry.
- Many of the projects improved cathedrals’ capacity and skills. This was in a broad range of areas and therefore difficult to generalise.
- A number of cathedrals were able to leverage further funds as a result of receiving the grant/s for their project/s. This is expected to be a potential longer-term outcome, though this would require further investigation.
- In some cases, the repair works enabled the cathedrals to hold additional community events or enhance existing activity.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Cathedrals are significant actors at a local and national level across in England in terms of missional, economic and wider community benefits. Combined with a clear and sustained need for urgent repairs, there was a **strong rationale for a fund of this nature**. There was also a **clear demand for the funding amongst both Anglican and Catholic cathedrals**, with applications increasing in volume throughout the funding rounds.

The Fund was **successful in achieving its aims and met a funding need that could not be met elsewhere**.

Those areas of the cathedrals covered by grant-aided projects had been **clearly changed from needing urgent repair to needing routine maintenance only**. This outcome is observed regardless of geography, denomination, repair type, cathedral type, and other distinguishing factors.

Further, the fund had been **unique and valuable in being able to support “non-traditional” repairs**, including building services such as electrical systems, safety systems, lighting and heating. These repair types were not covered by typical conservation grants, but were as important as repairing roofs and masonry as deficiencies could result in a cathedral being closed. In addition, modern systems could save the cathedral money and enable greater comfort for users of the building.

In addition, the **provision of funding for repairs to the more modern 19th and 20th century Catholic cathedrals** has provided valuable learning and come at a timely moment as many Catholic cathedrals approached their first major renovation - often an untested area.

Feedback in relation to fund processes has been positive overall, in terms of the experience, knowledge, and commitment of the fund administrators as well as the Expert Panel, whose in-kind contribution represents a significant benefit.

The **main concern expressed about the fund (at both a programme and project-level) were the short timescales for application and spending**. At a programme-level, the Expert Panel observed that this pressure, along with the church roofs fund running to the same timescale, may have contributed to shortages of traditional skills and materials experienced at some churches and cathedrals and the over-extension of contractors in some areas. At a project-level, this was most likely to manifest as a cashflow issue, or as delays caused by delivery across winter months and/or Christmas and Easter periods and the challenges of conducting repairs amidst a busy working schedule.

Both stakeholder and grantees felt this pressure might be mitigated by a **sustained, annual fund which could support urgent repairs at churches and cathedrals**. It was considered that this more strategic approach would also aid planning of the repair and maintenance cycle, as well as safeguarding value for money and longevity of existing investment to date.

Overall, the programme model appears to be appropriate for the distribution of this type of grant within the constraints applied by the timescale and allocated administration budget. The representative Expert Panel was instrumental in ensuring appropriate and fair assessment of applications and distribution of funding, and crucially using their expertise to mitigate programme

risks. Considering the low administration budget, additional resource towards administration and, in particular, a clear process for progress reporting from the outset would have been beneficial in order that fund progress and outcomes were captured, monitored and evaluated to an appropriate level and in a consistent format. Additionally, processes around managing underspend as well as contractor issues could have been better defined at the outset, with a proactive approach to managing risk beyond the voluntary role of the Panel.

In all cases, **grantees mentioned outstanding repair needs within the wider cathedral (beyond the grant-aided repair area)**. These were significant and ongoing, and, in most cases, outside of the scope of cathedral's current financial reserves without future injection of donor or grant funding.

Wider outcomes have been positive, particularly around skills and capacity to undertake additional or future work.

Grantee Experiences of the Fund:

- Overall, responses demonstrate that grantees were generally positive about the Fund processes and structure, and processes are considered to have improved over time.
- That the fund was specifically targeted towards cathedrals has been well-received.
- Communications from the funding body were seen as particularly well managed and many reflected on the various benefits of this positive working relationship.
- The application process was seen as relatively straightforward and proportionate, and applications increased in quality and quantity as the funding rounds progressed.
- A key concern related to the timescales for delivery, i.e. primarily spending the funding within the financial year, though the constraints posed by the winter weather were also noted as having had impact on particular projects.
- The grant payment processes proved difficult for some in terms of managing their cashflow (due to payments in arrears) but this improved in later phases due to projects restructuring the frequency/number of grant instalments.
- Progress reporting was 'light-touch' which was viewed as a positive for some but lacking some guidance for others. This has also had significant implications on monitoring and evaluation i.e. this led to a lack of consistently presented and uniform data with which to form the basis for reporting progress and outcomes.

Project Delivery:

- The key challenge for projects was the timeframe for delivering the project. Whilst a challenge in and of itself, timescales also compounded other issues, such as unforeseen issues with repair works, and challenges of delivering projects over the winter, for example.
- The majority of projects have completed successfully and ran as expected.

- For a minority of projects, significant contractor challenges have been experienced, with significant implications for timescales, repair status, overall cost and even financial standing of the cathedral.
- Good planning and communication between all parties was seen as crucial for effective project delivery.

Outcomes of the repairs:

- The vast majority of projects have gone from requiring urgent repairs being effectively repaired, with only routine items of maintenance required. These repair outcomes are applicable regardless of repair type, geography, denomination and so on i.e. these are uniformly felt. One distinction was that cathedral representatives were slightly less likely to state repairs were urgent initially compared to architects.
- The most important outcomes for the projects were that the cathedrals were safe and open and the fund was felt to have been hugely effective in delivering this. It was felt that this was the prerequisite to delivering wider benefits to the community.
- All cathedrals had outstanding repair works and many of these are significant and require substantial funding.
- Respondents felt that without the Fund the repair works would not have gone ahead or they would have taken significant time to fundraise.

Wider Outcomes:

- Grantees appreciated the focus of the grant on essential repair works and this remains the primary outcome of the fund. However, there are some observable wider outcomes.
- Some respondents found it difficult to consider wider outcomes beyond the improvement to the building but projects were felt to be significant in enabling the cathedral to undertake its everyday business i.e. in most cases, repairs have enabled cathedrals to continue to do what they were doing anyway, which includes a range of community engagement activity.
- The projects supported a wide variety of jobs and apprentices in traditional building skills, most notably stone masonry.
- Many of the projects improved cathedrals' capacity and skills. This was in a broad range of areas from communication to project management.
- A number of cathedrals were able to leverage further funds as a result of receiving the grant/s for their project/s. This is expected to be a potential longer-term outcome, though this would require further investigation.
- In some cases, the repair works enabled the cathedrals to hold additional community events or enhance existing activity.

The fund has made a notable contribution in keeping cathedrals across England safe and open and improving the overall building condition. In addition, a range of wider outcomes were evident which further contribute to cathedrals' fulfilment of their important civic role.

APPENDIX 1: WIDER CATHEDRALS RESEARCH AND POLICY

2012: *Spiritual Capital: The Present and Future of English Cathedrals* (Theos, 2012)¹⁵:

- Estimated that over 27% of the English adult population had visited a cathedral within the last 12 months.
- Between 1.5 and 3 million people who might be called ‘spiritually unreceptive’ visited a cathedral each year.¹The report showed cathedrals appeal to visitors from across the religious and non-religious spectrum.

2014: *The Economic and Social Impacts of England’s Cathedrals* (Ecorys, 2014)¹⁶:

- Over 11 million people visited cathedrals in England. This included tourists, worshippers, and school children engaged. Visitors were drawn to cathedrals for a range of reasons, including 53% citing this as their main purpose for the visit; 39% referred to the architecture and works of art; whilst 21% posited it was for a moment of reflection.
- Cathedrals contributed £220 million annually to the national economy. £125 million of this was direct visitor-spend.
- Estimated 7,380 were employed as a result of cathedrals and 14, 760 people were volunteering at cathedrals.
- Estimated a £220 million net additional contribution generated in local spending per annum (this includes direct, visitor-related and multiplier effects) as a result of cathedrals.

2016: *Church of England Cathedral Statistics*¹⁷, in 2016:

- 37,000 people per week (82% adults and 18% children aged under 16) were reported attending cathedral services in 2016.
- Over 1.2 million people were reported at 5,900 public / civic events held in cathedrals in 2016.
- 9 million people visited cathedrals in 2016, with just under half (47%) of these paying / donating for entry.

2017: *Taylor Review English Churches & Cathedrals Sustainability Review*¹⁸:

The Government announced a review to examine how church buildings and cathedrals in England could become more financially sustainable. A Task Force was subsequently set up with the role of exploring models for financing maintenance and repairs, and reporting to the Secretary of State for Culture and the Chancellor in April 2017¹⁹.

2018: *Cathedrals Working Group report*²⁰

¹⁵ *Spiritual Capital: The Present and Future of English Cathedrals* (Theos, 2012)

¹⁶ *The Economic and Social Impacts of England’s Cathedrals* (Ecorys, 2014)

¹⁷ *The Church of England Research and Statistics: Cathedral Statistics* (2016)

¹⁸ *The Taylor Review: Sustainability of English Churches and Cathedrals* (2017)

¹⁹ DCMS (March 2016) *English Churches and Cathedrals Sustainability Review*. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509933/ChurchTaskForce.pdf

²⁰ *Cathedrals Working Group report*, (Church of England 2018). Available at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/our-cathedrals/cathedrals-working-group>

The Cathedrals Working Group (CWG) was set up by the Church of England in 2017, charged with reviewing aspects of Church of England cathedral management and governance and producing recommendations for the Archbishops on the implications of these responsibilities with regards to the current Cathedrals Measure.

The report reviewed and provided recommendations on six themes:

- Mission and Ecclesiology
- Governance
- Leadership and Management
- Finance
- Buildings
- Safeguarding

Its main buildings-based findings are:

- Endorsement of the work of the CFCE/FACs and no changes proposed to the Care of Cathedrals Measure.
- Recognition that major buildings projects constitute the largest episodic financial risk that cathedrals face: a wide range of recommendations are made to ensure that cathedrals embarking on major building projects they have access to people with relevant skills and experience of managing them.
- It is also recognised that a greater overall risk is posed by the lack of availability of long-term funding for ongoing maintenance and repair liabilities.
- Recommends that the National Church Institutions and Association of English Cathedrals (AEC) should work jointly on an approach to government and large philanthropic organisations with the aim of establishing a significant, possibly endowment-based cathedral fabric fund for the UK, alongside a funding strategy for parish churches.
- Also recommends that CCB works with the Cathedral Architects Association to carry out a calculation of the known backlog on cathedral repairs, including rough estimated costings, so that there is a better idea of the quantum involved, including the liabilities faced by sector, and the ability of individual cathedrals to raise resources against their known needs.

APPENDIX 2: EXPERT PANEL MEMBERSHIP

Table 1: Expert Panel Membership
Name
Sir Paul Ruddock (Chair)
Sophie Andreae
Sir Paul Britton
Becky Clark
Sara Crofts
Peter Draper
Janet Gough OBE
Veryan Heal
Canon Julian Limentani
Ian Morrison
Georgina Nayler
Jennie Page CBE
Paul Ramsbottom
Ian Stainburn