DEVON HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

APPLICATION BY A CHURCH OR CHAPEL FOR ASSISTANCE

NOTES FOR APPLICANTS

The Application Process

Application forms may be downloaded from our website. www.devonhistoricchurches.co.uk When we receive your completed application form it is sent to one of the Devon Historic Churches Trust's local volunteer Assessors, who will arrange to the church or chapel. The Assessor will invite you to send him or her an e-copy of the PCC's most recent accounts, faculty or any other documents that would be helpful. Please do not send us hard copies of documents. The meeting with the Assessor will provide an opportunity for you to explain and discuss your intended work. Following the site meeting with you, the Assessor will report to the Trustees at their next meeting. Trustee meetings take place at quarterly intervals. The closing date for receipt of application forms online, or as a hard copy, will usually be two weeks before the date of the meeting when Trustees will make a decision. However, we advise that you submit your application form at least two weeks before the closing date to allow our volunteer Assessors time to arrange a visit to your church and complete his or her report. From this it will be seen that there may be a delay of at least a month between a first approach to the trust and a letter notifying the applicant of a decision. We regret it is not possible to avoid this and understand that you might have started a small urgent or emergency repair project. However, the Trustees do not award a grant for completed works.

What the Trust can help fund

Churches can be 'historic' for a number of reasons, and the Trust certainly does not confine itself to the rich legacy of our mediaeval past. Many of the fine churches of the Victorian area, and even later, qualify. At the other end of the scale, a church built in the last half century would be unlikely to be able to be described as historic.

We tend to direct our funds to the historic fabric, so that we do not normally assist the installation of plumbing, sound amplification and lighting, nor the work which public buildings perceive to be necessary to conform with ever changing legal requirements for safety or disability access. There are other organisations which specialise in this. Where it can be shown that heating or re-wiring benefit the fabric we may be able to help.

Since we are better at 'fabric' than at 'furnishings', we have for instance assisted with the towers, and even the historic frames in which bells are hung, but not with work to the bells themselves, and the same logic might be applied to other items often found within a church. As a rule, we do not assist with monuments.

The Trust is non-denominational, and welcomes applications on that basis.

The level of support

The Trust has limited funds each year, and tends to spread its support widely. We estimate that there are some seven hundred and fifty buildings in Devon which might be eligible for consideration for grant aid. For this reason, the level of grants awarded needs to be modest and range from £500 - £6,000, with the majority falling in the lower half of this range. The current guidelines for Assessors allow for some flexibility in their recommendation to the Trustees.,

Further Advice

The Trust is not able to offer advice in a formal way, but many of its Assessors and Trustees have a depth of experience gained over a number of years which is offered at the assessment meetings on the basis that it is no substitute for professional advice. The Trust and its Assessors accept no responsibility arising from it. There are many sources of advice about building restoration and fund raising, and a convenient directory to most of them can be found on the Web at www.buildingconservation.com and www.exeter.anglican.org and www.churchcare.co.uk

Please complete paper copies of the grant application form in black lettering.