



BENEFACT
TRUST



Building Grants

Guidance for Applicants
2026

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BUILDING GRANTS

Programme aim

Benefact Trust's Building Grants programme aims to help protect, enhance and sustain Christian buildings in the UK and Ireland. Grants are available for capital works that meet one or more of the following programme priorities:

- Essential building repair
- Congregational growth
- Accessibility
- Community use and impact
- Carbon reduction and net zero
- Heritage stewardship

Grants are also available for churches to install roof alarms to help prevent metal theft. These grants are for up to 50% of the cost of the alarm (up to a maximum of £3,000).

Who can apply

Building Grants is open to applications from Christian charities, churches and representative bodies (e.g. dioceses and denominational bodies) based in the UK and Ireland, with the following restrictions:

- Applicant organisations must be registered as charities in the UK or Ireland (unless the organisation applying has 'excepted' status, which is restricted to specific churches - see [Excepted charities - GOV.UK](#)). Charities should have an annual turnover of at least £25,000 (gross income for the most recent financial year) and at least one full year of accounts available on the charity regulator's website.
- Churches, cathedrals and other Christian denominational bodies should belong to one of the National Ecumenical Instruments (Churches Together in England (CTE), Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS), Churches Together in Wales (Cytun) or the Irish Council of Churches), or in the case of local or independent churches, to appropriate local ecumenical / 'churches together' type groups.
- Certain Christian charities, including educational institutions and hospices, will only be eligible for capital funding relating to the repair or construction of chapels.

What we can fund

Applications can be made for capital works relating to individual buildings or sites located in the UK or Ireland, including:

- Churches (and church halls) and cathedrals in regular use as a place of Christian worship
- Buildings that are owned or leased by Christian charities and have the primary purpose of delivering public benefit in line with the charity's purpose.

The works proposed in your application should be aligned with one or more of our programme priorities:

- Essential building repair
- Congregational growth
- Accessibility
- Community use and impact
- Carbon reduction and net zero
- Heritage stewardship

The guidance below provides detailed information about our **eligible costs** (the types of costs we can fund and should be included in your application) and our **exclusions** (the types of costs we don't fund and shouldn't be included in your application):

Eligible costs

- Essential building repairs to secure the fabric or structure of a building.
- New facilities and other building works to facilitate congregational and community use, church growth or address social challenges (e.g. extensions, reordering, new kitchens and toilets).
- Accessibility improvements (e.g. ramps, handrails, lifts, hearing loops, accessible toilets and basic AV equipment to aid accessibility – i.e. hearing loops, microphones, speakers and screens that will remain in situ at the church building).
- Energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures (e.g. insulation, LED lighting, renewable heating, solar PV systems and battery storage) recommended by an eco-audit or other professional or denominational advice.
- Conservation, restoration or repair of historic building fabric or building features (e.g. stained glass, wall paintings, carvings, clocks, tower bells and historic organs).
- Chapels in schools and hospices.
- A reasonable amount of essential equipment to fit out new spaces and facilities, provided it will remain in situ at the building.
- Installation of roof alarms to help churches reduce the risk of metal theft (the proposed alarm system must be approved by the church's insurer, and the church must commit to maintaining the alarm for at least five years).



Exclusions

- Routine maintenance (e.g. inspections, gutter clearance and minor repairs), works that have already been undertaken and works normally eligible for cover under insurance.
- Works to offices, residences and other buildings not in use for worship or other charitable public use.
- Purely aesthetic enhancements (e.g. interior decoration) that are not linked to a repair project or necessary for health & safety or accessibility.
- External works not part of the building (e.g. landscaping, gardens, play areas and car parks) that are not necessary for health & safety or accessibility.
- Installation of new non-renewable heating systems (e.g. oil and gas boilers) (unless there is a clear case for their suitability).
- The purchase of new organs, other musical instruments, portable PA systems and vehicles.

Grant size

We know that funding for building costs is a priority for many of our applicants across the UK and Ireland. Our approach is to help as many organisations as possible. To ensure that we are fair and consistent, we consider your total eligible project costs and use set rates to calculate your grant, rather than asking you to apply for a certain amount. We also apply a deprivation uplift (of between 20% and 100%) to grants for projects that are being delivered in deprived areas. We make this calculation internally and include it in your grant.

Please see below some typical grant amounts for different project sizes:

| Total eligible project costs | Typical grant amount |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| £2,000-£5,000* | £1,000 + any deprivation uplift |
| £5,001-£10,000 | £1,500 + any deprivation uplift |
| £10,001-£20,000 | £2,000 + any deprivation uplift |
| £50,000 | £5,000 + any deprivation uplift |
| £100,000 | £10,000 + any deprivation uplift |
| £250,000 | £25,000 + any deprivation uplift |
| £500,000 | £50,000 + any deprivation uplift |
| £1,000,000 | £75,000 + any deprivation uplift |
| £1,500,000 | £90,000 + any deprivation uplift |

*Please note the minimum project size is £2,000.

For example:

- Your basic grant amount is **£10,000**, and your area receives a **20% deprivation uplift**. Your grant amount increases to **£12,000**.
- Your basic grant amount is **£50,000**, and your area receives a **100% deprivation uplift**. Your grant amount increases to **£100,000**.

Large projects (over £1m): Grants will normally be a maximum of £100,000-£150,000.

Organ projects: Due to the high cost of organ repairs, and the number of applications we receive, grants for this type of work are capped at £20,000.

Roof alarms: Grants are for up to 50% of the cost of the alarm, up to a maximum of £3,000.

When to apply

The Building Grants programme is open for applications throughout the year. There are no deadlines. Once an organisation has received a grant under the Building Grants programme, (formerly known as Building Improvement Grants) another application cannot be made to the same programme for a period of two years. However, if you receive a Roof Alarm grant, you may apply to Building Grants again at any time.

You can receive funding under more than one of the Trust's grant programmes at the same time, with the only exception being Building Grants and Methodist Grants (you cannot receive capital funding from both of these programmes for the same building project).

Due to the high volume of applications received, applicants are required to have secured at least 30% of their eligible project costs from other funding sources before making an application. This can be made up of reserves, grants from other funders or other funding sources (e.g. congregational/community fundraising, legacies, loans). Please note that we may require a higher percentage of secured funding in some cases. You will be asked to confirm your secured funding sources and tell us about your other fundraising plans in your application form.

In the case of building projects, we know that more work is sometimes required than was originally included in an application. However, we do not provide additional funding once we have issued a Building Grant, so we would encourage you to undertake all possible research/investigation/surveys prior to preparing your budget and applying to Benefact Trust.



How to apply

Applications are made through the [Apply](#) section of our website where you can use our eligibility checker and find a link to our online application system. When you submit your application form, you will receive an email acknowledging receipt of your application.

Once submitted, your application will be assessed by a Grants Officer and considered at the next available decision meeting. Decision time depends on the size of the grant we are considering awarding. Please see our [FAQs](#) for further information.

If you are awarded a grant

Our standard [Grant Terms & Conditions](#) apply to all grants made by the Trust. Some grants will have reporting requirements, including a final report for all grants over £10k and annual progress reports for multi-year grants.

Further information

If you would like further information about the Trust and its grant-making, please visit our [website](#), and you may find it helpful to read our [FAQs](#). If you have a specific question about your application or how to use our online portal, please contact us at info@benefacttrust.co.uk.