

Church Grants Programme, 2026-30 Guidance Notes

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Cloudesley's Church Object

The charity's Church Object requires church grants to be used "towards the upkeep, repair and redevelopment of the fabric and facilities of any of the churches of the Church of England in the London Borough of Islington and the maintenance or development of the public acts of worship and other work of the church in those churches." Churches are defined as including "all buildings, structures, gardens, paths and grounds within the curtilage of the principal place of worship and any other premises in the London Borough of Islington which are the responsibility of the incumbent and/or the Parochial Church Council of that church and used for worship or other work of the church (save for vicarages and other residential buildings)." "Church of England church" includes the churches within the parish system and other premises which have been authorised under church legislation. In case of doubt, the charity will seek the advice of the Church of England authorities. All of our grants must fit this criteria.

Church Grants Programme 2026-30

The Church Grants Programme for 2026-30 consists of the following funds:

- Main Church Grants Fund – up to £65,000

For the Main Grants Fund, Cloudesley operates two funding rounds in the Spring and Autumn of each year. It is expected that churches will usually only submit one application per round. In the case of a major emergency (for example, if the church needs to be closed for health and safety reasons), Cloudesley may be willing to consider an application outside the normal funding rounds. This should be discussed with the charity's office as soon as possible.

- Urgent repair grants – up to £10,000

Small urgent repair grants are intended to deal with urgent and unforeseen repairs quickly, resulting in an immediate improvement to the fabric of the church building. An urgent repair grant can be applied for at any point in the year.

- Top-up grants

Top-up grants can be up to a value of 10% of the overall project costs and no more than £10,000.

Main Church Grants Fund

Eligibility

To be considered for funding, applications must both fall within the Church Object, as specified above, **and** fit at least one of the funding areas listed below.

Funding Areas	Usual grant amount
Major works and buildings projects	£20,000 - £65,000
Preventative works, simple repairs, and facilities	£5,000 - £40,000
Project development and feasibility studies	
Developing church capacity to deal with church buildings issues	

Prioritisation

In a competitive round, we will prioritise applications that:

1. address problems that could result in deterioration or disruption if not addressed; or
2. involve the upkeep and repair of the fabric of the building

Funding Areas – In Detail

1. Major works and buildings projects – £20,000 - £65,000

Major works and buildings projects would cover work such as:

- Substantial fabric repairs including stonework, drainage and roof works
- Heating - repairs and installation
- Organ repairs
- Reordering projects
- Major access works
- Boundary walls, paths, and other repairs within the curtilage addressing safety issues
- Net zero carbon and environmental works, including insulation, solar panels, and LED lighting

If you are planning major works or a substantial buildings project, please contact the charity's staff team at an early stage for a discussion. Although Cloudesley will not usually make a grant of more than £65,000 to a church in one funding round, you might be able to apply to us for another grant in a later funding round. In order to access multiple grants for the same project, you will need to show that you have made efforts to find funding from other sources, and provide a fundraising plan. There may be limits on the number of grants for a specific project and the frequency that grants will be agreed, so please do get in touch to discuss this.

As well as the general information required from applicant churches, we will usually need you to:

- Demonstrate that appropriate professional advice has been taken or will be taken before the works are taken forward
- Show that there is a clear timetable for the works, with milestones, in place, for major works/projects

2. Preventative works, simple repairs and facilities – usual grant amount £5,000 - £40,000

Cloudesley will consider funding for:

- preventative works and/or simple repairs, including those identified through the Quinquennial Inspection (QI) process or other periodic inspections as well as those identified at other times.
- Works to facilities such as kitchens and toilets, and related equipment
- AV equipment
- Lower cost repairs of boundary walls, paths, and other repairs within the curtilage addressing safety issues
- Seating for main worship space
- Redecoration and flooring
- Lower cost access and net zero carbon projects

3. Project development and feasibility studies – usual grant amount £5,000 - £40,000

Cloudesley will consider funding for studies, surveys, professional advice, reports, architect's fees and other items necessary for project development and/or feasibility studies. Project development and feasibility costs will only be funded where the expected project or works that this relates to is expected to be mainly in scope of Cloudesley's Church Object.

4. Developing church capacity to deal with church buildings issues – usual grant amount £5,000 - £40,000

Cloudesley will consider funding a variety of items that will help a church develop its ability to manage its own affairs in relation to the fabric of the church building. Amongst other things, this might include consultancy fees which are within the scope of Cloudesley's Church Object. Please speak to the charity's staff for advice.

As well as the general information required from applicant churches, we will usually need you to:

- Where appropriate, provide job descriptions and contracts
- Make clear how this work will lead to longer term improvements in the capacity of the church to deal with church buildings issues

Multi-church applications

Background

Cloudesley can support applications from groups of eligible Islington churches for projects that fit within our usual Church Object. Below is some guidance to support churches which are interested in working together to submit a joint application. Trustees will adopt a flexible approach to this guidance, taking into consideration the details of the funding request.

It is expected that most of the Church Grants budget will continue to be allocated to support individual church applications in the usual way. The upper limit for any multi-church applications will be £100,000, although the actual grant amount considered will depend on the project. At the same time as being part of a multi-church application, a church may wish to submit its own application through a funding round. The specific circumstances will be taken into consideration at the time.

Guidance for churches

- i. Any multi-church applications received will need to fall within the current funding areas
- ii. There is a two-stage process for multi-church applications, as follows:
 - a. Applicant churches must first contact the charity's Grants Manager for a discussion. If the project is deemed a fit for the programme, you will then be invited to submit a full application.
 - b. Applications should be submitted online in the Spring or Autumn funding round in the usual way.
- iii. Salaries for project-focused staff employed or engaged under fixed-term contracts will be considered for funding. Salaries for permanent staff members will not usually be eligible, but depending on the circumstances, we may consider funding for additional hours for an existing, suitably qualified part-time staff member for work on a specific project
- iv. The general information required to support applications will usually be needed from all churches involved, e.g. if an application is made on behalf of three churches, we will need evidence that all three PCCs approve the application. The level of financial information required should be discussed with the Grants Manager before the application is made and will depend on the circumstances
- v. The application should include a clear explanation of the proposed project delivery, including decision-making arrangements, details of the management of any posts for which funding is sought and the allocation of resources
- vi. It is expected that there will be a written agreement/memorandum of understanding between the churches about the proposed project and a copy of this should be submitted with the application. The Grants Manager will be able to give guidance on this, if required

- vii. The application should identify a lead church which, if funding is agreed, will be responsible for signing the grant agreement and receiving payment of the grant.

Application process

If you would like to discuss a funding proposal, please [contact](#) the Grants Manager.

All applications should be made using the online [application form here](#). We can help you to complete the form so please do contact us for support if you need it. A copy of the application questions is available [here](#). Please complete all relevant questions on the application form and supply the requested supporting information and documents by the deadline.

What happens next

The application will be assessed by the staff team, who may request further information or may need to set up a visit to the church to discuss the application further. A report will then be prepared for consideration by the Grants Committee. Once Cloudesley's Trustees have made a decision about funding, you will be notified within seven days.

Additional documents

You will need to attach the following to the application:

Quotes/estimates

If the amount requested for any single item or works is:

- a. over £15,000, applicants are expected to provide copies of written quotations/estimates from two different firms
- b. less than £15,000, applicants are expected to provide a quotation/estimate from the proposed contractor.

The £15,000 threshold includes VAT and all stages of a project that you expect a contractor to undertake. For instance, if you are seeking funding for a contractor to undertake a lighting design for under £15k, but the lighting installation would need to be undertaken by the same contractor and would cost over £15k, a tender process should be undertaken prior to commissioning the design. If there is difficulty in complying with the quote requirements, please contact the Cloudesley staff team before submitting your application.

PCC minutes indicating support for the project

We want to see that there is clear support within the church for the grant application. The application must include PCC minutes or correspondence evidencing that both the planned work/project and the Cloudesley grant application have been discussed and agreed by the PCC.

Accounts

Cloudesley will assess financial viability using the church's most recent accounts. Applicants are expected to provide a copy of the most recent annual report and audited accounts. For the Spring Round, if you have not finalised your accounts by the application deadline, please submit your draft accounts, with an explanation about when these are expected to be signed

off. If they have not been provided by the time a funding decision is made, any grant offer will be conditional on the final accounts being submitted showing substantially the same financial position.

What we look for

When assessing projects, we will look at the following:

1. **Eligibility** – that the proposed work/project aligns with the Church Object and fits one of the funding areas listed above. If you are unsure if your project is a fit, please contact us for guidance.
2. **The financial position of the church** - we will assess financial viability using the church's most recent accounts.
3. **Reserves** - we will look at the church's reserves policy, the level of reserves that the church holds and the reasons for holding these. If the reserves level indicates that the church might be able to fund the work itself whilst still maintaining an appropriate level of reserves, the application may be turned down on this basis.
4. **Other sources of funding** – we will expect that some of the funding for the project will be coming either from the church's own resources or from other sources. We would usually expect this contribution to be proportionate to the size of the project.
5. **Financial planning for the project** – we will look to see that appropriate planning is in place for the funding proposal.
6. **The need for the work** – churches need to demonstrate that there is a clear need for the proposed work/project. This could be an explanation of potential further damage if a repair does not take place, evidence of local support for the project or a copy of the relevant parts of a Quinquennial Inspection report.
7. **Consultation** – that, where there are other major stakeholders relevant to the project/works (for example, the Diocese, local authority, or building users), they have been consulted and that any concerns/interests have been addressed.
8. **Faculty and/or planning permission** – that the required permissions have been applied for, or else details have been provided of when this will be done.
9. **Management of the project/works** – that it has been properly planned and will be undertaken efficiently by appropriately qualified personnel.
10. **Timeline** - that there is a realistic indication of when the work is expected to start and how long it is expected to take.

2026 Funding Rounds

During 2026, the Spring and Autumn rounds of the Main Church Grants Fund will be as follows:

	Spring Round	Autumn Round
Launch	Mon 2 March 2026	Mon 10 August 2026
Application deadline	Mon 27 April 2026	Mon 5 October 2026
Assessment period		
Grants Committee	Tue 9 June 2026	Tue 17 November 2026
Board meeting	Wed 24 June 2026	Wed 9 December 2026
Notification	29 Jun, with full offer details to be sent by 6 July	Notification and full offer details to be sent by 14 Dec

Urgent Repair Grants - up to £10,000

These are intended to deal with urgent and unforeseen repairs quickly resulting in an immediate improvement to the fabric of the church building(s). They can be used to enable works which will:

- Address urgent health & safety issues, and/or
- Prevent further damage to the church or property within the church if not addressed as a matter of urgency, and/or
- Result in an immediate and essential repair thereby allowing for the continuation of services.

Other Information

Urgent Repair Grants can be applied for at any point during the year.

In most instances, once all the necessary information has been received by Cloudesley, the church will be notified of the decision within two weeks.

Part funding from other sources will be looked on favourably, although it is not essential for these applications.

Unless the circumstances are exceptional, grants of under £2,000 will not be agreed.

Each eligible church can receive only one Urgent Repair Grant in any 12-month period and the church must spend the grant within six months.

To apply, churches should contact the Charity's Director by [email](#) including the following details:

- A short description of the works involved
- The expected outcome of the works
- An explanation of why the works are needed, along with supporting evidence (for example, a surveyor's report and/or photos), and you cannot wait to apply through one of the main funding rounds
- An explanation as to why the works or project cannot be funded wholly or partly by the PCC or from other sources. Reference should be made to the last set of audited accounts and the current position regarding the PCC's unrestricted funds.

Top-up grants

These additional top-up grants are intended to deal with unforeseen budget shortfalls arising before a project starts, caused by a rise in costs since the time of your application to Cloudesley. To be applicable:

- The project/works should not have commenced or been commissioned
- The increase in cost must be due to a rise in materials or labour costs since the time of application
- The increase in cost cannot be due to additional works not originally applied for
- Top-up grants can be up to a value of 10% of the overall project costs and no more than £10,000.

Other Information

Top-up grants can be applied for at any point during the year. In most instances, once all the necessary information has been received by Cloudesley, the church will be notified of the decision within two weeks.

Unless the circumstances are exceptional, grants of under £2,000 will not be agreed.

Each eligible church can receive only one Top-up Grant in any 12-month period.

To apply, churches should contact the Charity's Director by [email](#) including the following details:

- Details of the previous Cloudesley grant to which a top-up is needed, i.e., amount agreed, purpose of grant and date agreed
- A short description of the works involved
- An explanation of why the works costs have increased, along with supporting evidence (for example, a revised invoice)
- The date when the current cost quotes expire
- When the works are expected to be completed
- An explanation as to why the top-up amount cannot be funded wholly or partly by the PCC or from other sources. Reference should be made to the last set of audited accounts and the current position regarding the PCC's unrestricted funds.

Other Information

Funding Exclusions

During the 2026-30 Grants Programme, funding will not be provided for:

- The repayment of loans
- Stipends for clergy and salary costs for other members of the ministry team
- Housing
- Vicarages and other residential buildings
- Improvements to churchyards and gardens
- Utility bills and cleaning
- Projects or work already completed, underway or contractually committed before a grant decision is reached
- Laptops
- Hymn books, Bibles and other equipment for worship

Living Wage Funder

Cloudesley is proud to be a [Living Wage Funder](#). This means that Cloudesley:

- is itself a Living Wage Employer
- encourages grantees to pay the Living Wage (London rate) to posts which the Charity fully funds
- encourages grantees generally to become Living Wage Employers.

The charity recognises both that (i) the nature of the funding which it can provide means that it will rarely make Church Grants to cover funded posts and (ii) that churches benefit from the generous support of volunteers to whom the Living Wage scheme is not applicable. However, if you are considering applying for a fully funded post or would like more information about the Living Wage scheme please do contact us and/or see the Living Wage [website](#).

Contact

Please contact the Charity if you have any queries about the Church Grants programme or if you would like to discuss an application.

Cloudesley welcomes feedback on its processes and communications. Any comments/suggestions made will be reviewed, and the Charity's grant-making processes may be altered as a result.

Website: www.cloudesley.org.uk

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