



## Guidance Notes

### **Walsoken, Renovation Project Group**

#### **Governance & Structure**

##### **Introduction**

This guidance note is designed to help and assist the PCC of Walsoken as they seek to establish a Renovation Project Group to support the ongoing sustainability of the church. The fabric committee has been working the Church Building Support Officers, Samuel Pedlar and Holly Robinson, to develop plans for a repair and improvement project. An event was held in December 2025, the goal of which was to raise awareness for the project and to hopefully gather members of the community into a Project Renovation Group.

A survey was run at the event to collect data and attempt to support the development of the project and to record details of those who may be interested in getting involved. The survey had 56 responses with 17 people wanting to get involved. The idea would be to now contact these respondents inviting them to a follow up meeting to officially form the group. The group will then be tasked with working with the PCC to carry out several tasks including:

- The recruitment of a new architect for this project
- The preparation and implementation of a fundraising plan including further community events
- Working with the Diocese support officers on a National Lottery Heritage Fund bid

It is suggested that the Fabric Committee is subsumed into the project for the duration of the project. The project renovation group is supposed to be a task and finish group, (i.e. established to accomplish a NLHF repairs), however if the members wish they may later form into a more permanent friends' group.

The summary of the survey is available.

##### **Terms of Reference and Sub-committee model explanation**

The Renovation Project Group will be formed as a sub-committee of the PCC. Why a sub-committee?

- It is the simplest group to establish and operate.
- The Project Group becomes a sub-committee of the PCC and so any financial information must be incorporated into the PCC's accounts.
- The PCC treasurer should be one of the signatories of the account, and therefore the PCC has direct responsibility and control over the Group's funds.
- The Project Group can organise events and have its own membership list.
- The Project Group will report to the PCC.
- The Group will be included under the Charity status of the PCC.
- There will be tax-efficient donations and subscriptions through Gift Aid.
- No separate constitution is required, just a Terms of Reference.
- The Group's events and personnel may be covered by the PCC's insurance.

The group should be formalised following a PCC resolution (which has taken place), and a community engagement (which has successfully taken place). The group will be governed by a Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference explains in summary that:

- Project group operates as a sub-committee of the PCC under PCC authority.
- Open membership: minimum 5 members, including at least two PCC members.
- Officers: Chair appointed by PCC, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary proposed by Renovation Project Group and confirmed at APCM.
- Annual appointment of members and officers at the APCM.

### **Core Duties**

- Support PCC in planning, funding, and renovation of church building, churchyard, and associated structures.
- Assist PCC with:
  - Fundraising events
  - Recruit a new architect to plan this project
  - Grant and faculty applications
  - Specialist liaison
- Future tasks:
  - Repairs to church fabric and urgent works flagged in Quinquennial Inspection.
  - General upkeep and maintenance (including contractor visits).
  - Possible support for internal reordering projects (kitchen, lighting, heating, AV, etc.).
- Work with PCC to develop a long-term vision for the church and its heritage.

### **Financial Management**

- Renovation Project Group funds held as a restricted fund within PCC account.
- PCC approves all signatories; Renovation Project Group cannot incur debt.
- Treasurer liaises with PCC Treasurer for Gift Aid recovery.
- PCC responsible for contracts and faculty permissions.
- Renovation Project Group provide periodic financial reports to PCC.

### **Meetings & Reporting**

- Minimum three meetings per year; quorum = 4 members (including 2 officers).
- Annual meeting before end of March to:
  - Review activities and finances.
  - Propose members and officers for next year.
- Secretary submits annual report and financial summary to PCC Secretary 12 days before APCM.

### **Winding Up**

PCC can dissolve Renovation Project Group sub-committee with three months' notice, after consulting Archdeacon and Bishop.

This document is important because it lays down the relationship between the Renovation Project Group and the PCC. It enables the Renovation Project Group to operate as a legitimate organisation recognisable to all parties with defined responsibilities and a clear relationship with the PCC. The example linked above can of course be edited to better fit the needs of your group.

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### **Why the Project Group is being formed**

Typically, a Project Group may be formed for several reasons:

- To help towards the cost of the preservation of the fabric of the church.
- To help with the cost of repairs.
- To contribute towards the insurance of the building.
- To help towards the cost of the replacement of major items, for example heating systems, rewiring of circuits, or organs.
- To help with the maintenance cost of ornaments and furnishings.
- To raise funds for the above purposes.
- To help with the maintenance costs and upkeep of the churchyard.
- Where appropriate, for members to give their personal services for the promotion of the above purposes.

In the case of All Saints, it has been formed primarily in response to the need for repairs and improvements to the church which were flagged up in the Quinquennial Inspection Report.

The Renovation Project Group by its very existence will allow the church to be supported through this project and allow the church to be a more sustainable organisation. This is very important long-term especially as the church will need to rely on grants for these repairs and improvements to occur. The main and most likely funder may be the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) sets out investment principles that guide all funding decisions. These principles focus on:

1. Inclusion – Projects must involve a wide range of people, not just the core congregation.
  - Renovation Project Group membership is open to all, regardless of faith, creating a broad base of support and engagement.
  - Through events, volunteering, and heritage activities, Renovation Project Group help the parish meet NLHF's goal of making heritage accessible and relevant to everyone.
2. Environmental Responsibility – Projects should consider sustainability and climate impact.
  - The Renovation Project Group can champion environmentally responsible solutions during repairs (e.g., lead recycling, insulation, rainwater management) and support NLHF's net-zero carbon guidance.
  - They can help the parish adopt greener practices, such as improved ventilation and energy-efficient heating.
3. Community and Economic Impact – NLHF wants heritage to benefit local communities and economies.
  - The Renovation Project Group will organise fundraising events, heritage open days, and educational activities, boosting local engagement and tourism.
  - By improving facilities (accessible WC, kitchenette, heating), the church becomes a venue for wider community use, supporting social cohesion and local economy.
4. Sustainability and Resilience – NLHF prioritises projects that secure the long-term future of heritage assets.
  - The Renovation Project Group provide a governance structure and volunteer capacity beyond the PCC's limited resources, ensuring ongoing fundraising and maintenance after capital works.
  - This demonstrates resilience and sustainability—key NLHF criteria for funding.

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The Renovation Project Group is the vehicle for delivering NLHF priorities:

- People: Volunteers gain skills in governance, fundraising, and heritage care.
- Heritage: Repairs safeguard a Grade I listed building of national significance.
- Communities: Improved facilities and engagement activities make the church a hub for local life.

This project will need not only the vision and input of locals but also hands on support and involvement, not just as an academic exercise but also attendance at events, fundraising, form filling, communication skills etc.

### **Who should join the Renovation Project Group and why?**

The church PCC would like to partner with the community to complete this project and work with community members to develop the activities. Who should join the Renovation Project Group?

- People who want to see the building there for future generations.
- People who want to have the church available for family occasions like weddings, baptisms or funerals, even though they don't attend the church.
- People who are happy to support the upkeep of a historic and/or beautiful building.
- People who see the village church as part of the rural scene and wish to see its continued use and existence.
- Visitors to the church enjoying the beauty, history or architectural interest who want to keep in touch.
- People who have family ties in the parish or have used the church in some way, but who themselves have now moved away. It is natural and right that the church family should be able to join any Project Group Scheme.

However, it should be clearly recognised that the first responsibility of the church family is to maintain the mission and ministry of the church, and that the church running costs should have the first call on their giving.

It would also be hoped that the PCC and Renovation Project Group may work together to further advertise themselves, and their need for support following the official formation of the group.

### **The Membership of the Renovation Project Group**

Typically, the Renovation Project Group may be made up of the following members, role descriptions have been drafted for each role.

The roles are summarised and listed below.

- Chair
- Lay Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Fundraising officer
- Bid writer
- Renovation Project Group Committee Members
- PCC Liaison

The number of people on the Renovation Project Group can vary and should be set by the PCC and group. The Terms of Reference has defined only the minimum number for the group to be quorate.

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### **Further support**

The Project Group may also wish to set up a subscription tier in which people who are not on the committee may be able to either volunteer on an ad-hoc basis or give money to the group via regular giving. Those who volunteer may normally be giving 'in-kind' donations, and as such there should be no barriers for supporting the group in whatever ways a person can/would like to.

All Renovation Project Group schemes will need to have funds available to run the administrative business. These will include publicity, postage, maintenance of the website etc. Money for fundraising events such as advertising, booking fees or expenses for speakers may also be needed. It will also be raising sums for its main objects - funding for specific projects - to pass on to the PCC as necessary. The kind of subscription and cost need to be decided. For subscription models, there are a variety of options to choose from. These may include for example:

- No fixed fee, but suggested amounts with encouragement to complete a Gift Aid Declaration (suggested as you start out).
- £15, £25, £35 Other amount £ ...
- An amount which will include the cost of mailings to members of correspondence and/or the cost of a newsletter.
- An amount which will cover costs of membership and a percentage for funds, make this a realistic figure. Do not "undersell" the Renovation Project Group.

Once again, the kind of membership will determine the level of subscription. If members are drawn locally a lower subscription is possible with fundraising used for building up the reserves to pass on to the Parochial Church Council to use on the building and for special projects.

If the membership attracts people from a wide area because it attracts visitors, then the subscriptions may need to include correspondence and literature costs and a donation for funds. These members are likely to support the Renovation Project Group through annual donations rather than working for fundraising events locally.

Remember the group's role is to support the upkeep and care of the church building. So, whatever way you feel is best to support the church building and draw community interest – I suggest exploring those opportunities. It may be that the Renovation Project Group will try different models and experiment as they develop, this is to be encouraged.

### **The actions of the group**

Once the group is formed their first actions will be:

#### 1. Formal Setup and Governance

- Agree Terms of Reference with the PCC (already drafted and adapted).
- Confirm officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary) and committee members.

#### 2. Communication and Engagement

- Launch the Project Group publicly:
  - Announce at services, parish newsletter, social media, and local press.
  - Explain purpose: *"Caring for our Grade I listed church for future generations."*
  - Plan an upcoming fundraising event and fundraising schedule
  - Work with the Church Building Support Officers to advertise for and appoint a new architect
- Membership drive:
  - Emphasise inclusivity: open to all, regardless of faith.
  - Recruit new members according to requirements of the group

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### 3. Planning events and fundraising

Start planning events (heritage talks, open days) to meet NLHF inclusion and skills outcomes. Organise a launch event taking note of the feedback from the community consultation. Try to keep your church building open during the day and promote the event as widely as possible. Promotion might include the church newsletter, flyers, posters, the local press, other local community groups and influencers, church and community websites, social media, and via the diocesan communications team.

Make sure you have an application form ready, and this can be accessed and returned online. The Renovation Project Group annual programme of events should appeal to your community and can include concerts and theatre, exhibition and heritage talks, open gardens, café and social events, fairs and festival celebrations, quizzes, games and family events. Make sure not to cut across your church's normal fundraising activities, or to compete directly with other community organisations in smaller communities' partnership is always best. So why not...

- Organise a launch event (coffee morning or heritage talk) to recruit members and raise initial funds.
- Create a Renovation Project Group page on the parish website with:
  - Membership details.
  - Repair priorities.
  - Donation options (Gift Aid enabled).

### 4. Grant Preparation

- Set fundraising targets
- Identify funding streams:
  - NLHF as primary target.
  - Listed Places of Worship VAT refund scheme.
  - Local trusts, charities, and community fundraising.
- Appoint a Bid Writer (or sub-group) to begin NLHF Expression of Interest:
  - Emphasise Renovation Project Group role in delivering NLHF investment principles (inclusion, sustainability, community benefit).
  - Meet with CBSO's (Holly and Samuel) and members of PCC to plan.
- Set fundraising timeline

### 5. Risk and Compliance

- Agree financial processes with PCC:
  - Restricted fund within PCC account.
  - Treasurer liaises with PCC Treasurer for Gift Aid.

### 6. Other actions:

- Work with the PCC on Outstanding actions – this may include helping with the appointment of a new architect

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