

FRIENDS of KENT CHURCHES

Calling all Clergy in the Rochester Diocese

Sooner or later your church will find itself with a restoration project which may seem daunting.

Friends of Kent Churches is part of a network of Trusts across most of the Counties of England who raise funds to support our marvellous Parish Churches. As you know only too well, looking after an old, historic building is no joke. FKC is one of the oldest of the County Trusts, we began soon after the second World War when the churches of Kent had suffered from five years of neglect and the effects of bombs and damage inflicted by the Battle of Britain, fought overhead.

Grants are made based on the following criteria:

- All Christian denominations and all ages of churches and chapels of either architectural merit or historic importance and being used for services
- Anywhere in Kent and those parts of South East London which were in Kent before 1965. This includes Beckenham, Bromley, Sidcup, Bexley, and Erith, and happens to equate to the C of E dioceses of Rochester and Canterbury
- All works to maintain the fabric, windows, floors, and monuments

Grants are not given for:

- Reordering, new extensions, toilets or kitchens
- Heating, redecorating or rewiring
- Bells, clocks or organs.

Our first grants were made in 1951 and the biggest one was £25.00. Since then we have made well over 1000 grants totalling £1,500,000. In 2007 we offered grants totalling £149,000 to 28 churches. In 2008 our budget is just over £150,000. We aren't complacent because we know that the pounds we can give you today are only a drop in the ocean of the money you will need to raise.

We are a society of Members, and we are always looking to encourage people to join the Friends. Your church should already be a member and receive details of our activities. You can be a member as an individual, we run interesting visits to churches all over the County during the summer, and there are lectures in the winter. Some of our income comes from subscriptions, occasionally we receive a welcome legacy, but most of our money comes from the sponsored Bike Ride which takes place in September each year and has proved such a lasting success. If your church is not involved with this, I would encourage you to participate. As well as being a good way of visiting other parishes, we raise in the region of £130,000 each year, half of which is passed back to churches immediately and the other half is available in the form of grants.

We do hope that some of you will consider joining our society, we think you would enjoy finding out about the lovely buildings which we are so lucky to see in every village and town.

With best wishes, Jennifer Raikes, Chairman July 2008

www.friendsofkentchurches.co.uk