

John Betjeman Award 2019

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) invites entries for its annual Award given in honour of Sir John Betjeman: writer, architectural historian, conservation campaigner and a member of the SPAB's Committee from 1954-1977.

Closing date: 26 February 2019



The Award

The Award is given to celebrate excellence in the conservation and repair of places of worship of any faith in England and Wales. It recognises and rewards the highest standards of conservation craftsmanship and the winning project is publicised as an example to others of good practice. The Award takes the form of a scroll featuring a specially commissioned print by John Piper of the interior of Inglesham Church, a building much loved by Sir John Betjeman. The Award will be presented at an SPAB event in 2019.

Eligibility

The Award is made for the repair or conservation of the fabric, fittings or furnishings of churches, chapels or other faith buildings in England or Wales (and in the Isle of Man) which remain in use for worship. However, cathedrals of any denomination are not eligible. It is not essential that the building is listed as being of architectural or historic interest. The age or architectural significance of the building is less important than the quality of the repair.

Conditions

The Award is given to the faith building. It celebrates both the place and the community that cares for it, and the project and the people involved in organising and carrying out the work.

The Award is given for specific repair to, or conservation of, a single element of the building, rather than a general programme of works. Repair work of any scale is eligible, but it must be to the fabric of the building (e.g. roof, tower, wall, floor, window) or to a significant item of fixed internal fitting or furnishing (e.g. screen, monument, pulpit). Work to enlarge or extend a place of worship, to rearrange its internal space, or to alter or adapt its fittings or furnishings is not eligible. The work must have received any necessary approval (e.g. Faculty or equivalent permission / listed building consent) and have been completed within the previous 18 months.



T: Guild Chapel of Holy Cross, Stratford
B: Leigh Old Chancel - both images SPAB

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“Places of worship are... the history of English art displayed in living form...”
John Betjeman



Judging criteria

The judges will be looking for work carried out in the last 18 months which best represents the careful approach to conservation which so moved John Betjeman, being beautiful and inspiring, but also firmly based on, and exemplifying, the principles of **conservative repair** advocated by the SPAB since 1877. Entrants might find it helpful to refer to **The SPAB Approach** booklet and other information at <https://www.spab.org.uk/campaigning/spab-approach>

The judges will be looking to see:

- A statement of need, setting out a reasoned argument for carrying out the repair or conservation.
- An explanation of how problems were analysed and how the work carried out responded to them (e.g. what options were considered; what methods were chosen and why).
- The appropriateness and honesty of the solutions adopted, including how the work was designed and detailed, and how materials were selected and used.
- The extent to which the loss of original fabric was avoided or minimised during the work, and how.
- The quality of the craftsmanship and materials used.
- How work in progress was monitored and what records were made of the project.
- How far the work respected and protected the history and integrity of the building.

The judges will also be interested to know what steps were taken to engage the wider community with the project and to share the outcomes of the work e.g. through publicity, events, training, educational activity or other public engagement.

Enter now

Use the entry form to tell us about your project. Please give a brief description of the project and the work carried out, and include photographs (12 minimum, 24 maximum) showing the project **before, during and after the work**.

The form should be signed by the incumbent or church warden for Anglican buildings, by the priest for Roman Catholic buildings, by the minister or an elder for Non-Conformist buildings, or by their equivalent in other faiths.

A panel of expert judges will assess the entries. They may ask for more detailed information, such as copies of professional reports or drawings, to help them select a shortlist. They may also wish to visit shortlisted buildings, along with a representative of the entrant and others who were involved in the project. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. The SPAB will publicise competition entries and outcomes. Winner(s) and short-listed entrants may be asked to submit (without fee) an article of up to 1500 words for the SPAB Magazine.

To enter please complete the attached entry form and return it by post to The SPAB, Spital Square, London, E1 6DY or by email with attachments to education@spab.org.uk (or by file transfer). **The closing date is 26 February 2019.**