

# SPAB Faith in Maintenance

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## Annual Review 2008

### Introduction

In the summer of 2007, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £645,000 to run its Faith in Maintenance (FiM) training project for churchwardens and their equivalents in other faiths throughout England and Wales. The project focuses on the issue of maintenance – the routine work needed to keep the fabric of historic buildings in good condition – and encourages people to clean their gutters, check their drains and repair slipped slates and tiles.

Over the course of the five-year project, the project team expect to train around 6,000 volunteers and visit a wide variety of faith buildings. Most importantly, the Faith in Maintenance courses are free for volunteers to attend and places are available to any volunteer with responsibility for the care of an historic place of worship.

### Project Team

The Project Director is Sara Crofts, an architect and SPAB scholar. She is assisted by Kate Minnis, the Project Administrator, who is based at Spital Square. David John was appointed to the post of FiM Technical Advisor in April 2007 and answers the technical helpline in the FiM office on Fridays.

### Course Programme

The course programme was devised at the beginning of 2007 and has not been modified this year apart from minor changes to the content of the individual lectures. All the sessions are led by Sara Crofts with the exception of *'The pattern of ecclesiastical building'*. This presentation is given by a local architect or historian suggested by the host organisation. The speaker is provided with a brief although there is plenty of scope to respond to the particular local conditions.



We also engage a local architect or surveyor to assist with the practical session in the afternoon and to form part of the 'panel' for the discussion session. This assistant is usually an SPAB Scholar or Fellow or sometimes a member of the Guardians Committee or one of the SPAB's lecturers.

## Summary of Courses

Having started the project with the aim of attracting a target attendance of around 40-50 people at each training course we have now reviewed this decision and concluded that 35 delegates per course is a more appropriate number.



Although it would be good to reach as many volunteers as possible, we realised that the smaller courses where there has only been around 25 participants allowed greater interaction between the participants and the course leaders and resulted in a higher quality learning experience. In particular, the smaller number of participants provided the opportunity for everyone to have their questions answered. It also meant that the panel session in the afternoon tended to generate a more inclusive discussion. This was not always possible to achieve successfully with a large course of 50-60 volunteers.

In general, the take-up of places has ranged from 12 volunteers at Tunley to 50 at Barton-le-Clay and Berkswell this year. It can be seen that there is usually a higher number of attendees at courses hosted by Anglican dioceses in comparison to those hosted by Nonconformist churches and other smaller faith groups. This is not surprising given the larger number of Anglican parish churches and therefore churchwardens in any given geographical area. In 2008, we held 16 courses on weekdays and 11 on Saturdays in response to the preference expressed by the host organisation. Interestingly, the average attendance on both Saturdays and weekdays is 32, which suggests that this is not a critical factor in relation to levels of attendance.

A summary of the courses held in 2008 is set out in the table below. This shows that the project team ran 27 Faith in Maintenance courses in total with 872 volunteers taking part. We were also invited to present lectures or workshops at three events run by other heritage organisations (these are shown in *italics*). The table also shows that three courses were cancelled in 2008. The dioceses of Bangor and Bradford cancelled their courses because of local logistical difficulties, which was disappointing but unavoidable.



Unfortunately, the course we planned to hold at the Manchester Jewish Museum in July had to be cancelled because of the low number of bookings. Although the FiM team undertook an intensive marketing and publicity campaign (press releases, posters, newspaper adverts, mail shots and personal invitations) with the assistance of Dr Sharman Kadish, Director of Jewish Heritage UK, we were unable to generate sufficient interest. We were forced to conclude that the Jewish community in Manchester did not appear to be engaged with its built heritage even though there is a real concern about the condition of some of the local synagogues and related buildings.

Table 1: Details of 2008 course dates and venues

Date	No	Venue	Diocese/Faith Group/Host
2 <sup>nd</sup> April	40	Bolton All Souls	The Churches Conservation Trust
5 <sup>th</sup> April	50	Berkswell St John the Baptist	Coventry Diocese
18 <sup>th</sup> April	27	Boniface Centre, Crediton	Exeter Diocese
19 <sup>th</sup> April	18	Tamerton Foliot St Mary (Plymouth)	Exeter Diocese
24 <sup>th</sup> April	41	Corfe Mullen St Nicholas	Salisbury Diocese
26 <sup>th</sup> April	45	Coychurch St Crallo (Bridgend)	Llandaff Diocese
10 <sup>th</sup> May	33	Richmond St Matthias (Greater London)	Southwark Diocese
14 <sup>th</sup> May	24	Terling Parish Church (Chelmsford)	Friends of Essex Churches Trust
17 <sup>th</sup> May	23	London St John Bethnal Green	London Diocese
29 <sup>th</sup> May	36	Guildford Holy Trinity & St Mary	Guildford Diocese
5 <sup>th</sup> June		<i>Guild of Vergers Conference, St Albans</i>	<i>Guild of Vergers</i>
7 <sup>th</sup> June		Bangor - CANCELLED	Bangor Diocese
12 <sup>th</sup> June	44	Barnwell St Andrew (Oundle)	Peterborough
17 <sup>th</sup> June		Kadugli House, Keighley - CANCELLED	Bradford Diocese
25 <sup>th</sup> June	48	Macclesfield St Michael & All Angels	Chester Diocese
28 <sup>th</sup> June	30	Leicester St Margaret	Diocese of Leicester
8 <sup>th</sup> July	33	Bradfield Combust All Saints	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocese
13 <sup>th</sup> July		Manchester Jewish Museum - CANCELLED	Jewish Heritage UK
23 <sup>rd</sup> July	17	Grimsby St James	St James Centre, Grimsby
5 <sup>th</sup> Aug	48	Bracon Ash Village Hall	Norwich Diocese
27 <sup>th</sup> Aug		<i>Norwich St Laurence</i>	<i>"The Early Modern Parish Church and the Religious Landscape" Lecture Series ~ Oxford Brookes University and UEA</i>
6 <sup>th</sup> Sept	23	Brockley St Peter (Greater London)	Southwark Diocese
9 <sup>th</sup> Sept	35	Chitterne Village Hall	Salisbury Diocese
13 <sup>th</sup> Sept	25	Harrow on the Hill St Mary	London Diocese
17 <sup>th</sup> Sept	12	Tunley URC Church (Wrightington)	Tunley URC Church
27 <sup>th</sup> Sept	22	Garforth St Mary	Ripon & Leeds Diocese
1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	28	Waterloo Old Christ Church (Liverpool)	TCCT & Friends of Old Christ Church
4 <sup>th</sup> Oct	50	Barton-le-Clay St Nicholas	St Albans Diocese
7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	36	Felpham St Mary (Bognor Regis)	Chichester Diocese
15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	30	Lostwithiel St Bartholomew	Truro Diocese
25 <sup>th</sup> Oct	35	Meopham St John	Rochester Diocese
4 <sup>th</sup> Nov	19	Alexander House, Bristol	RC Diocese of Clifton
26 <sup>th</sup> Nov		<i>CTA AGM &amp; Convention 2008, Swanwick</i>	<i>Churches Tourism Association</i>



## Course Planning Strategy

In terms of planning courses for 2009 and beyond, we will continue to work with the Anglican dioceses in England and Wales and will concentrate in particular on trying to secure dates in those dioceses that have yet to take part. For the majority of the dioceses in this category we have already obtained their agreement to hold a course in principle so this should be relatively straightforward.



At the beginning of 2008, we had been hopeful that the 'churches together' networks would provide a useful and effective way of communicating with local faith groups but we were disappointed by the response received in 2008. We had been very optimistic that the contact we made with *Churches Together in Leicester City Centre* would help bring a diverse audience to the course at Leicester St Margaret. In the end, the course was attended by 28 Anglican volunteers and 2 Methodists. It is also worth noting that although we contacted the County Ecumenical Development Officer several times to ask for assistance this was not forthcoming.

As publicising the non-Anglican courses requires a considerable additional effort in terms of compiling mailing lists of potential delegates and preparing publicity materials we have had to think very carefully about the number of non-Anglican courses we will tackle in 2009 and beyond. We have a list of potential ideas and contacts to explore but have estimated that a three-month lead-in period is the minimum required to generate enough bookings for such events. The experience of trying to secure a reasonable number of participants for the courses at Waterloo, Tunley, Grimsby and the Manchester Jewish Museum this year has proved that this aspect of delivering the project is extremely time-consuming.

For this reason, we feel that it might be unrealistic to attempt to deliver more than three or four non-Anglican or multifaith courses in any one course season. In terms of the 2009 course season, we have therefore agreed to run a multifaith course for *Heritage Inspired* at Todwick St Peter & St Paul in May and are discussing the possibility of running a course in partnership with the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service.

In addition, we hope to run a course for Nonconformist volunteers in the Bradford area with the assistance of Ian Serjeant, Conservation Officer for The Methodist Church. We also intend to make a further attempt at engaging with the Jewish community. With the help of Dr Kadish, we will start by contacting synagogues and congregations in the London area to gauge the potential levels of interest. If we receive an encouraging response, we will carry on with planning a course in the city in 2009.



## Courses for Young People

As part of the FiM project, we are aiming to provide educational opportunities for young people in the 18-25 age group with a target of approximately ten events over the life of the project. In the first year, we organised two workshop events, one linked to Heritage Open Days and one linked to the Big Draw Campaign.

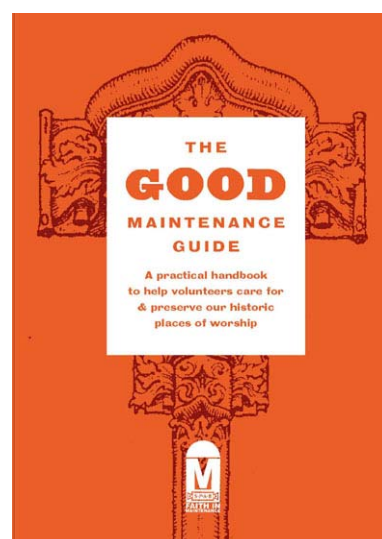


Unfortunately, both events had to be cancelled at short notice due to insufficient numbers of bookings. Having recognised that the 18-25 age group can be difficult to reach the project steering group decided that a new approach was needed. Dr Sharon Goddard put forward the idea of getting involved with the new Construction and the Built Environment Diploma and arranged a meeting with the North Norfolk Diploma Consortium, CITB Construction-Skills, the National Heritage Training Group and Norfolk County Council. We are hopeful that this might lead to training opportunities for pupils in the 14-16 age group linked to the diploma curriculum in 2009 and beyond. If successful, there may also be some potential to extend this offer throughout East Anglia and maybe to other areas of the country.

We have also had discussions with The Churches Conservation Trust about getting involved with their events for young people based on the Cathedral Camps model. Working with other organisations is likely to be a more successful approach than working on our own, as the SPAB does not have much experience of providing events for young people.

## Support Systems

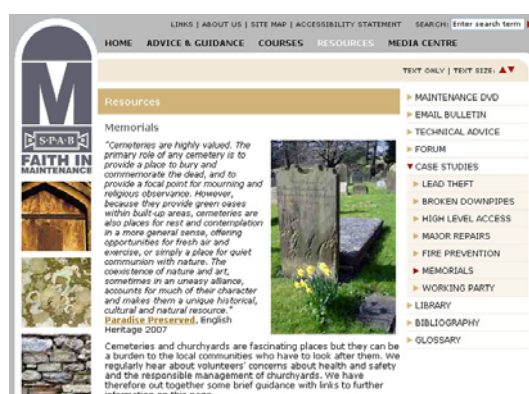
**Handbook:** The 'beta' version handbook was fully revised in the early part of 2008 and reprinted with illustrations in time for the first of the 2008 courses. The text was substantially enhanced and expanded to include additional references and signposts to further sources of information. The maintenance checklist was also improved and a second 'quick reference' version of the checklist was added at the back of the publication. With the help of our designer, Sara Chapman of *The letter g*, the handbook was 'rebranded' as *The Good Maintenance Guide*. The new A5 format with its plastic cover is intended to be easy to use and hardwearing and it is hoped that it will become a valuable asset to volunteers. A number of handbooks were sent to contacts in various faith organisations in order to publicise the work of FiM and we are extremely pleased that English Heritage is also promoting *The Good Maintenance Guide* through its *Inspired!* website ([www.english-heritage.org.uk/inspired/server/show/nav.19416](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/inspired/server/show/nav.19416)).



**Calendar:** We have continued to distribute the laminated A3-sized maintenance calendar to delegates and have received very positive feedback in response. Volunteers appreciate the handy visual reminder of some of the most important maintenance tasks they need to tackle.

The *Good Maintenance Guide* and calendar are available to purchase via the SPAB's online bookshop.

**Website:** The FiM website went live in time for the launch of the courses in May 2007 and runs on a content management system, which allows the project staff to easily update and amend pages when necessary. We have continued to add information and guidance to the website over the last year and it now mirrors the advice in *The Good Maintenance Guide*. The website is a particularly good resource as it is possible to include many more images on the webpages than in the handbook. The ability to provide direct links to additional sources of information also allows people to access specialist guidance on other websites very easily.



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In addition, the dates and venues for upcoming courses are readily accessible from the home page or through the events calendar. We have also added the option of reserving a place on a course online and hope that this will make the booking process easier for potential delegates. A further innovation was the introduction of an online forum to act as a discussion board for maintenance issues. Although this had not been widely used by visitors to the website, it is a useful place to publish news and other items of interest.

The website statistics for the last eighteen months are given below. The statistics show that the number of visits in the final six months of 2008 was almost 64% higher than in the first six months after the website went live. There was also a 75% increase in the number of unique visitors in the same period.

*Table 2: Website statistics*

Six month period	Visits	Unique Visitors	Total Page Views	Average Page Views
01 July 2007 to 31 December 2007	3,403	2,479	14,604	4.29
01 January 2008 to 30 June 2008	4,154	2,955	19,160	4.61
01 July 2008 to 31 December 2008	5,567	4,357	18,848	3.39

**Monthly Email Bulletin:** We introduced a monthly email bulletin service in January 2008 and have promoted this service during the training courses and on the home page of the FiM website. The subject of the first bulletin was electrical inspections and was sent to 53 subscribers. The number of subscribers has now grown to 179 and topics covered this year have included storm damage and the insides of towers; cast iron rainwater goods; roofs; timber treatment; ground levels, air bricks and plant growth; lightning conductors and the outside of towers; working at height; damp; windows; doors; and fire safety. The bulletins are also posted on the FiM website and contain news items and links to sources of advice including any relevant pages on the main SPAB website.

**Technical Helpline:** The technical helpline was launched in May 2007 and the number of calls has increased steadily ever since. The scope and nature of the enquiries is considerable but most centre on issues of conservative repair. Damp, repointing, repairs to windows and general maintenance feature frequently and in addition, around 50% of callers seek help identifying suitable contractors or professionals. Most enquiries are straightforward and can be answered during the initial telephone call but further advice is sometimes provided by email or letter.

We had hoped to move over to an electronic technical enquiries database in 2008 rather than using a paper based filing system but this proved to be more difficult than first imagined. We now hope to start using the new technical enquiries database in early 2009.



**Maintenance DVD:** In order to spread the message about the need for regular maintenance to as many volunteers as possible and to generate support for the FiM project we put together a proposal to produce a training DVD and secured financial support from The Dulverton Trust and The Pilgrim Trust.

As with the courses, the DVD focuses on the idea of preventative maintenance and will hopefully help volunteers understand why buildings decay and how the problems caused by broken gutters and leaking roofs can be avoided.

The DVD features David Lodge, retired builder and former SPAB chairman, as 'the expert' providing advice and helpful tips to Daphne Foulsham, our enthusiastic 'volunteer'. The DVD also features SPAB scholar Tim Ratcliffe explaining the role of the architect and the benefits that have a good relationship with your professional advisor can bring.

In order to represent a variety of different types of faith building and to make sure that we looked at an assortment of building sizes, styles and construction materials we used two film crews and visited places of worship in Essex, Oxfordshire, Sussex, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Cheshire and South Wales. Once the editing is complete in early 2009 we plan to replicate around 30,000 copies of the DVD, which will then be distributed to volunteers throughout England and Wales in early 2009.



For the Anglican dioceses, this will be achieved by working with the Diocesan Advisory Committees who will give the DVDs to their churchwardens as part of the annual 'Visitation' exercise for example. In addition, English Heritage has agreed to issue copies of the DVD with its grant offers. Copies will also be sent to the other denominations and faith groups in due course.

## Assessment and Review

We issue all delegates attending FiM courses with a sheet that contains a pre-course questionnaire and a course feedback form. The forms were returned by 82% of our participants and their contents will be analysed by Dr Sharon Goddard as part of the external evaluation of the FiM project. In general, feedback on the courses has continued to be overwhelmingly positive with most volunteers finding that the course programme and supporting materials meet their needs. In the few cases where people have not felt that they got what they wanted from the course this has tended to be because they had unrealistic expectations of what would be provided. Examples included participants who had hoped for more information on finding funding, legal issues and competitive tendering. One or two also noted their belief that the government should take on the care of historic places of worship.

We have been particularly pleased to receive numerous emails and letters from volunteers who wanted to share their enthusiasm for our work. These are some of the comments that we received this year:

*"I thought the day at Berkswell was very helpful, partly for telling us new things, but also in renewing our resolve to get out there with binoculars and strong gloves to do the things we already knew we ought to do but haven't made time for!"*

*"The enthusiasm of Sara Crofts was palpable and inspiring, her expertise undoubted. What might have been a 'dry as dust' excursion into lurking decay was a revelation and a most enjoyable day."*

*"Everything about it was thoroughly helpful and satisfactory. We especially appreciated the excellent Handbook which you provided as a full record of the tuition and a reliable reference source for the future."*

*"Thank you for a fascinating day on this course. Invaluable to me as a new churchwarden."*



*"I'd just like to record my appreciation of the above course. I do think it is amazing to have a training day like that offered free of charge. Although I knew a good deal, it was very useful in plugging gaps and in the information on help available."*

*"Just to say that I duly attended the course on Saturday and it was brilliant. I very much wish I had come across a course such as this when I first became churchwarden!"*

## Steering Group and Volunteers

The project continues to be guided and supported by its dedicated Steering Group. The fifteen members with their variety of backgrounds in faith and heritage organisations is chaired by David Lodge, a SPAB Guardian, and met twice in 2008. The Group has provided invaluable advice to the project team and has helped with issues such as making contacts with non-Anglican faith groups and publicity amongst other matters.



In addition to the Steering Group, we have been able to call upon a number of volunteers who have given their time to the FiM project. Their contribution has included lecturing on FiM courses, advising on the content of the course handbook and helping with the running of FiM courses.

We were especially pleased to have the assistance of the Friends of Essex Churches Trust and the Friends of Old Christ Church at Terling and Waterloo respectively.

Further support was provided by GutterClear and Forrester Access who assisted with the filming of the Faith in Maintenance DVD.

## Publicity

We have continued to work hard to publicise the Faith in Maintenance project in 2008. Our primary tool is the Faith in Maintenance website, which provides details of all upcoming courses but we also make use of a tri-fold information leaflet, which contains information about the project and the courses and is sent out by Cadw, English Heritage and the National Churches Trust as part of their grants process. With the help of our designer, *The letter g*, we have devised a new generic poster that can be customised with the dates of individual courses and will be used from 2009 onwards. In addition, we have commissioned a pair of exhibition banners and matching posters that can be used to publicise the project at various events. A record of some of the publicity generated in 2009 follows:

- The Friends of Essex Churches Trust website ([www.foect.org.uk](http://www.foect.org.uk)) carried publicity for the FiM course at Terling Parish Church.
- Articles about FiM appeared in three editions of the *Building Faith in our Future Bulletin* in 2008 (February, July and December).
- Articles promoting FiM and its work were published in *Heritage Link Update* No 131 and No 141.
- Items about FiM appeared in the *Methodist Church E-news Bulletin* in February and August.
- The *Bolton All Souls* website ([www.allsoulsbolton.org.uk](http://www.allsoulsbolton.org.uk)) carried publicity for the FiM course in April.
- *The Bolton News* published an article about FiM entitled "Take Good Care of the Past" on 23 February 2008.



- In February, a link to the FiM website was published on the home page of the *Ecclesiological Society* website ([www.ecclsoc.org](http://www.ecclsoc.org)).
- Sara Crofts was interviewed on *BBC Radio Manchester* by Mike Shaft on Sunday 16 March 2008 in connection with the FiM course at Bolton All Souls.
- The May edition of *Rochester Link* contained an article about the FiM course at Meopham.
- All the 2008 FiM course dates were listed in the events section of the *IHBC Yearbook 2008*.
- An article about FiM written by Sara Crofts was published in *Newsletter 38* of The Chapels Society (May 2008).
- The FiM course at the Manchester Jewish Museum was publicised on the website of the *International Survey of Jewish Monuments* ([www.isjm.org](http://www.isjm.org)).
- The FiM project was referred to in several articles published in *Context* No 105 (July 2008) by the IHBC.
- In November, Sara Crofts was interviewed about FiM by several local BBC radio stations including Nottingham, Tees, Newcastle, Leicester, Wiltshire, Guernsey, Coventry & Warwickshire, Shropshire and Leeds.
- *Historic Churches* published an article on caring for church fabric written by Sara Crofts in their annual special report (December 2008).
- SPAB's *Cornerstone* magazine featured a report on the filming of the FiM DVD in December 2008.



## Financial Review

The costs of the project after its first two full years of operation have been kept well within the budget agreed at the outset with the Heritage Lottery Fund. We have been pleased to find that the decision to make the courses free for users has not had a significant effect on the budget, while encouraging more people to take advantage of the training provided. This has been made possible through the efforts of the various host organisations and other dedicated volunteers. Two major items of expenditure in the year were the revised course handbook, *The Good Maintenance Guide*, and the project DVD. We were awarded grants of £25,000 each from The Dulverton Trust and The Pilgrim Trust to cover the production costs of the DVD and are very grateful to them for their support.

The Heritage Lottery Fund grant covers three quarters of the project costs, with the balance of funding coming from English Heritage, several other grant making bodies and the SPAB's own reserves. As this other grant funding will run out after 2009, we will be embarking on a major fundraising exercise in 2009 with the aim of minimising the funding shortfall at a time when there are many other calls on the SPAB's internal resources.

## Review of Objectives

We are pleased to report that we have successfully met all of our objectives in this second year of the project. Our objectives and our progress towards meeting them are summarised below:

- To deliver a maintenance training course appropriate to the needs of volunteers who care for historic buildings used as places of worship in England and Wales.

*We have devised and are continuing to deliver a maintenance training course that is meeting the needs of volunteers. The course has been refined in the light of feedback from delegates and continues to be updated as legislation and good practice develops.*

- To devise an effective support system in order to provide readily and freely accessible information across the range of media to assist volunteers in the enduring care of the fabric of places of worship and their contents.

*We are continuing to update and improve the Faith in Maintenance website and have added new features such as the online booking form and maintenance forum. Course delegates are provided with a copy of the Good Maintenance Guide and the maintenance calendar when they attend a course. After the course, they have the opportunity to obtain advice from David John through the technical helpline and they can also sign up for the monthly email bulletin service. We have also produced a DVD, which can be used as a training tool alongside material available from the website.*

- To reach as many and as diverse a range of volunteers as possible.

*Although the majority of courses held to date have been hosted by Anglican dioceses, we have made progress with regard to making contacts in other faith groups. We are pleased to have the support and assistance of the Methodist Church and the Baptist Union of Great Britain and have welcomed delegates from the Methodist, United Reformed, Unitarian and Baptist Churches to our courses.*

*We also ran our first course for a Roman Catholic Diocese (Clifton) in 2008 and hope to reach other catholic dioceses in future years. Although we were disappointed that the course at the Manchester Jewish Museum had to be cancelled, we will continue to explore opportunities to work with the Jewish community. We are also planning to run at least one multi-faith course in 2009 and will be investigating the possibilities of working with the Black Environment Network and the Anglo Sikh Heritage Trail.*

*The new Faith in Maintenance DVD will be a key tool in terms of reaching new audiences. We will be exploring ways of distributing the DVD to Nonconformist and non-Christian faith groups during 2009.*

- To raise awareness generally of the need for places of worship to receive regular and basic routine maintenance in order to save historic fabric and money.

*FiM has received a considerable amount of publicity in 2008 including articles in printed media, articles on websites and radio interviews. We have also been working with English Heritage (the Inspired! campaign) and with the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division of the Church of England to consider how best to promote the wider message of the need for regular maintenance. The SPAB's annual National Maintenance Week campaign provided a further platform to raise awareness of the importance of good maintenance practices.*

- To encourage greater understanding of the history and interest of historic places of worship and their importance and value to the sense of national identity and to their local and wider communities.

*The first two sessions in the course programme are focused on the history and interest of historic places of worship in the local area. There is a particular emphasis on the issue of why places of worship are important and why they should be*

*preserved. Information about church buildings and how to research places of worship can be found on the FiM website with numerous links to other sources of information such as Church Plans On-line and the Victoria County History project etc. This material can also be found in The Good Maintenance Guide.*

- To enhance the skills, expertise and personal development of volunteers and thereby to increase their interest in, and enjoyment of, their duties and tasks and improve the quality of their volunteering experience.

*The course is designed to enhance the practical skills and understanding of volunteers regardless of whether they have a technical background or not and the responses given in the feedback forms consistently show that participants are more confident in their ability to look after their places of worship after attending a FiM course. Volunteers continue to report a greater enthusiasm for the practical tasks necessary to keep buildings in a good state of repair and a desire to implement a maintenance plan.*

- To promote the philosophy espoused by the Society with its emphasis on daily care, conservative repair and the use of traditional materials.

*When William Morris founded the SPAB in 1877, he wrote that we should attempt “to stave off decay by daily care”. This is the core message of the SPAB and features in all the guidance material produced by Faith in Maintenance. As part of the work of Faith in Maintenance, we also promote the use of traditional materials and the philosophy of conservative repair as set out in the SPAB’s Manifesto and Principles. We ensure that all the architects, surveyors and contractors who share their knowledge as part of the training courses are committed to the SPAB’s philosophy of conservation.*

## Conclusion

The Faith in Maintenance project is an excellent opportunity for the SPAB to support the work of volunteers. Through our training courses, website, technical helpline, printed materials and DVD we can provide the sensible and practical advice that volunteers need to help them look after their historic places of worship better. We are heartened by the positive feedback that we have received this year and will continue to improve our offer with a view to reaching as wide and diverse a group of volunteers as possible in the coming years.

We are greatly encouraged by other initiatives being put forward by like-minded organisations such as GutterClear, the Inspired! campaign and the Churchcare website. Taken together with an increased emphasis on maintenance planning as part of the grant schemes operated by English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund these measures can only strengthen the message that preventative maintenance is both important and necessary. We have seen considerable evidence that volunteers are enthusiastic about their heritage and are keen and able to look after their buildings with a little practical help from projects like Faith in Maintenance. With this in mind, we will continue to work hard to ensure that they continue to receive the support and recognition they deserve.

*Sara Crofts*

**Faith in Maintenance Project Director**

*“Take proper care of your monuments and you will not need to restore them. A few sheets of lead put in time upon the roof, a few dead leaves and sticks swept in time out of a water course, will save both roof and wall from ruin. Watch an old building with an anxious care; guard it as best you may, and at any cost, from every influence of dilapidation.”*

John Ruskin (speaking of Rouen Cathedral in 1859)