

SPAB Faith in Maintenance

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Annual Review 2009

Introduction

In the summer of 2006, 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 volunteers 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 5,000 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 anyone with responsibility for the care of an historic place of worship.

Project Team

The project has two fulltime members of staff. 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 is the Technical Advisor 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 alterations 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 particular local traditions and issues. We also engage a local architect, building surveyor or craftsperson to assist with the practical exercise 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.

One noteworthy change has been to implement a more formal structure to the practical exercise. Previously, delegates were asked to work in small groups to carry out a inspection of the host building but we became concerned that a minority of participants were not making the best use of this opportunity. As a result we decided to split the delegates into two groups, led by Sara Crofts and her assistant, and conduct a guided inspection of the building. Whilst this has reduced the potential for self-directed learning by the delegates it has provided an opportunity to reinforce the messages taught during the morning sessions in a more formal and effective manner.

Summary of Courses

A summary of the courses held in 2009 is set out in the table below (*Table 2*). This shows that the project team ran 31 Faith in Maintenance training courses which were attended by 1008 volunteers. We were also invited to lecture at two events run by other heritage organisations which allowed us to reach a further 50 individuals (these events are shown in italics). Table 1 shows a breakdown of the host denominations in 2009 and a map showing the geographical spread of all the Faith in Maintenance courses held to date can be accessed via the FiM website at www.spabfim.org.uk/pages/highlights.html.

Table 1: Details of 2009 course hosts

Host Denomination or Group	Number of FiM Courses held
Church of England	22
Church in Wales	3
URC/Methodist	1
Roman Catholic	1
Jewish Community	1
Nondenominational	2
TCCT Volunteers	1
TOTALS	31

Having started the project with the aim of attracting a target attendance of around 40-50 people to each training course we reviewed this decision in 2008 and concluded that aiming to attract around 35 delegates per course is a more appropriate number. The average attendance this year has turned out to be a little lower at around 33 delegates. If we look at the courses for Anglican dioceses separately, the average attendance rises to 35 delegates. For the remaining six courses for non-Anglican groups there was an average attendance of 21. This may reflect the greater difficulties of publicising these events to potential delegates and the simple fact that the non-Anglican denominations have fewer volunteers in any given geographical area. As with previous years it seems that the choice of a weekday or a weekend day has very little effect on attendance figures. This year the average weekday attendance was 32 and the average weekend attendance was 34.



The table also shows that one course was cancelled in 2009. This was the course arranged for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham, which did not go ahead due to a very low number of bookings.

Table 2: Details of 2009 course dates and venues

Date	Attendance	Venue	Diocese/Faith Group/Host
<i>23rd – 24th March</i>		<i>Mechelen, Belgium</i>	<i>'Heritage Care Through Active Citizenship' Conference</i>
Sat 18 th April	34	Slimbridge St John the Evangelist	Diocese of Gloucester
Sat 25 th April	30	Kirk Braddan St Brendan, Douglas, Isle of Man	Diocese of Sodor & Man
Sat 9 th May	39	Wellesbourne St Peter	Diocese of Coventry
Tues 12 th May	44	Dewsbury Minster	Diocese of Wakefield
Sat 16 th May	35	Ely St Mary	Diocese of Ely
Thu 21 st May	28	Aston All Saints (Sheffield)	Heritage Inspired
Thu 4 th June	34	Whitland St Mary	Diocese of St Davids
Sat 6 th June	41	Charlton Kings Holy Apostles	Diocese of Gloucester
Thurs 11 th June	25	North Creake St Mary	Diocese of Norwich
Weds 17 th June	46	Sheriff Hutton St Helen and the Holy Cross	Diocese of York
Sat 20 th June	34	Shepshed St Botolph	Diocese of Leicester
Weds 24 th June	37	Higham Ferrers St Mary the Virgin	Diocese of Peterborough
Sat 27 th June	38	Aston-juxta-Birmingham SS Peter and Paul	Diocese of Birmingham
Weds 1 st July	36	Risca St Mary (Newport)	Diocese of Monmouth
Fri 3 rd July	37	Merton Village Hall and All Saints' Church	Diocese of Exeter
Sat 11 th July	15	Paddington Green St Mary	Diocese of London
Weds 15 th July	35	Betchworth St Michael	Dioceses of Southwark and Guildford
Sat 25 th July	45	Jesmond St George, Newcastle	Dioceses of Newcastle and Durham
Thu 30 th July	28	Swansea St James	Diocese of Swansea & Brecon
Fri 14 th August	20	Downside Abbey	The Benedictine Monastic Community of St Gregory the Great
Thu 3 rd September	24	Llanvaches Tabernacle	URC National Synod of Wales
<i>Weds 9th September</i>		<i>Oxford St Michael at the North Gate</i>	<i>"The Early Modern Parish Church and the Religious Landscape" Lecture Series (Oxford Brookes & UEA)</i>
Sat 12 th September	34	Stafford St Mary	Diocese of Lichfield
Sat 19 th September	31	Brackley St Peter	Diocese of Peterborough
Sat 26 th September		Birmingham St Chad CANCELLED	Archdiocese of Birmingham
Sat 3 rd October	51	Wingerworth All Saints	Diocese of Derby
Tues 6 th October	44	West Chilton St Mary	Diocese of Chichester
Thu 8 th October	20	Elham Village Hall and Elham St Mary the Virgin	Diocese of Canterbury
Sat 10 th October	24	Hildenborough St John	Diocese of Rochester
Sun 18 th October	18	New West End Synagogue, London	Jewish Heritage UK
Tues 20 th October	46	Whaplode St Mary	Diocese of Lincoln
Weds 21 st October	12	Cambridge All Saints	The Churches Conservation Trust
Tues 27 th October	23	Leeds St John	The Churches Conservation Trust



Course Planning Strategy

Church of England and the Church in Wales

In terms of planning courses for the remaining two years of the project, 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 in the project (Bath & Wells, Blackburn, Bradford, Hereford, Oxford, St Asaph, Southwell & Nottingham and Winchester). 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 a relatively straightforward goal to achieve.

The Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church (URC)

To date we have arranged four dedicated courses for Methodist/URC volunteers in Braintree, Tunley, Tondy and Llanvaches (*image below*). The average number of delegates at these courses (17) is lower than the overall average simply because there are less churches in each area and therefore fewer volunteers.



We currently have three courses planned for URC/Methodist audiences in 2010 and in future years we will continue to target areas with large numbers of Nonconformist churches and chapels such as Wales, Cornwall, Staffordshire and Yorkshire. We will also make use of the contacts we have made through the Chapels Society (as Sara Crofts is currently the Honorary Secretary). In addition, we will continue our policy of offering places on courses hosted by Anglican dioceses to Methodist and URC volunteers where possible.

Baptist Church

Having discussed the FiM project with Steve Wing of the Baptist Union Corporation, we agreed that there are insufficient numbers of Baptist churches in any given geographical area to support a dedicated FiM course, with the possible exception of Greater London where we are pursuing the possibility of a course through the London Baptist Property Board.

Instead, we have agreed that the Baptist Union Corporation will circulate relevant course dates to their members and we will accommodate their volunteers at nondenominational courses and courses hosted by Anglican dioceses where possible. As a result, the numbers of volunteers from Baptist churches attending FiM courses have been modest, although we are pleased to say that those who have participated have found the FiM training to be very useful indeed.

Roman Catholic Church

We have attended a number of events run by the Roman Catholic Church including the Historic Churches Committees Conferences in 2008 and 2009 and have also been in contact with a range of key personnel at local and national level.

Despite making considerable efforts to promote the FiM project to the various Catholic dioceses we are meeting with only limited success in terms of generating course dates.

However it is worth noting that the course hosted by the Diocese of Clifton in November 2008 and the course held at Downside Abbey in 2009 were both very well received. A small number of volunteers from Catholic churches have also attended courses held at Anglican venues and a second course for the Diocese of Clifton is scheduled for 2010. Sadly, the course planned for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham in 2009 was cancelled due to a very low take up of places. We will continue to pursue opportunities with our contacts in the Roman Catholic Church in the hope that we may increase their participation in the project in the future.

Jewish Community

We were extremely pleased to welcome 18 delegates from the Jewish Community to a course held at the New West End Synagogue in London in October. Delegates came from a wide geographical area including Glasgow, Liverpool, Exeter, Coventry and Brighton as well as London itself.



Dr Sharman Kadish, Director of Jewish Heritage UK, was instrumental in helping to promote the course and we believe that its success was largely due to her personal contact with synagogue volunteers through her English Heritage Buildings at Risk work.

Running a successful course for the Jewish Community has been a significant achievement as there is a real and genuine concern about the condition of some of the most important listed synagogues and related buildings. Despite the excellent work of Jewish Heritage UK, there is still a widespread lack of interest in the care of historic synagogues.

However, the course at the New West End Synagogue was highly commended and we hope to capitalise on the momentum this event has generated by holding a second course (possibly in Birmingham) in 2010.

Other non-Christian faiths

We are currently considering an approach to the East Midlands Council of Gurdwaras. We are aware that the Gurdwara Guru Teg Bahadur Ji in Lenton, Nottingham has set up a heritage trail and has recently received a RGPoW grant from English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. In addition, the Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara has recently opened a National Sikh Heritage Centre and Holocaust Museum in Derby. Given that there is an existing interest in Sikh heritage in the East Midlands region, we hope that we may be able to generate interest in the FiM project. Although our previous approaches to the Anglo-Sikh Heritage Trail staff have not met with success we may also approach them again.

Nondenominational events

We held six nondenominational events during 2008 and 2009. Three of these were held at churches belonging to the Churches Conservation Trust and the remaining three were hosted by Heritage Inspired, the Friends of Essex Churches Trust and the St James Centre in Grimsby.

At the beginning of 2008 we had been hopeful that the various 'churches together' and interfaith networks would provide a useful and effective way of communicating with a variety of faith groups but we have been disappointed by the response to the numerous enquiries we have made. We will however continue to cultivate contacts in relevant organisations in the hope that this may bear fruit in future years.

One promising potential opportunity might be the North West Multi Faith Tourism Association which has recently appointed a full time Development Officer. We are currently in discussion with them and hope to hold a nondenominational course in the region in 2010. We are also considering holding a further two nondenominational events in 2010. One of these will be hosted by Heritage Inspired, which has links with a wide variety of faith groups in South Yorkshire including the Sheffield Islamic Centre, and the second may be run in partnership with the Churches Trust for Cumbria.

Courses for Young People

As part of the FiM project, we are aiming to provide educational opportunities for young people in the 13-25 age group with a target of approximately ten events over the life of the project. Having recognised that the 13-25 age group can be difficult to reach we decided to seek advice from Dr Sharon Goddard who put forward the idea of getting involved with schools and colleges offering the new Construction and the Built Environment Diploma (CBE).

We started working with the North Norfolk Diploma Consortium, CITB Construction-Skills, the National Heritage Training Group and Norfolk County Council in 2008 in the hope that this would lead to FiM providing training opportunities for pupils in the 14-16 age group in 2009. Sadly, the diploma consortia in Norfolk were not able to take our offer forward and this work did not progress as we had hoped this year.

As we believe that the CBE Diploma is still a worthwhile avenue to pursue we sought further help from Dr Goddard towards the end of 2009. Through her contacts at the Department for Children, Schools and Families she was able to put us in touch with diploma consortia in several other parts of the country.



We were able to initiate discussions with staff from a number of schools and colleges in December and as result we have confirmed four dates for 'workshops' for young people to be held in the early part of 2010. We expect to agree further dates in due course.



Also on a positive note, we ran a successful seminar for 12 young people at Cambridge All Saints in July. This event was facilitated by the Churches Conservation Trust as part of their work with the Cathedral Camps project run by CSV. Although we met with the CSV staff in charge of the Cathedral Camps project in 2007 to discuss the possibility of working with them to run some training events for young people they did not wish to pursue the idea at that time. We now hope that our success this year might be repeated at other Cathedral Camp venues in 2010 and 2011.

As we anticipated, working in partnership with other organisations is proving to be a more successful approach than working on our own.

It is worth noting that working with young people is a new departure for the SPAB and has required a sustained effort in order to make positive progress. However, despite earlier disappointments in this area we are now optimistic that we may reach our target by the end of the project.

Support Systems

Handbook: We continue to hand out copies of *The Good Maintenance Guide* freely to course delegates and we also give copies to faith organisations and other heritage bodies as way of promoting the FiM project and spreading the maintenance message to a wider audience. English Heritage continues to promote *The Good Maintenance Guide* through its *Inspired!* website (www.english-heritage.org.uk/inspired/server/show/nav.19416) and the handbook is warmly recommended in the IHBC Technical Bibliography, which can be found on the IHBC website at www.ihbc.org.uk/tech_panel/.



Calendar: We continue to distribute the laminated A3-sized maintenance calendar freely to course 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.

Technical Helpline: We started using the new technical enquiries database rather than a paper based recording system in early 2009 and all of this year's enquiries have been logged electronically as a result. The scope and nature of the enquiries continues to be very broad but the majority tend to centre on issues of conservative repair. Common topics are damp, repointing and the question of how to find 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 also trialled an email based advice system (advice@spabfim.org.uk) as a way of expanding the means by which volunteers can access advice in 2009. This has been a useful addition to the helpline service although it has not received a high volume of enquiries. There have only been four enquiries sent directly to the advice@spabfim.org.uk email address so far although a number of others do come into the office via other means. The enquiries concerned church heating, moss on roofs, rainwater goods and general conservation policy.

A fuller analysis of the telephone enquiries received in 2009 will be prepared in due course and will include a number of case studies looking at specific enquiries in detail.

Website: The FiM website was launched in time for the first training course in May 2007 and runs on a content management system, which allows the project staff to easily update and amend pages as necessary.



The website is an excellent resource as it is possible to include many more images on the webpages than in the course handbook. The ability to provide direct links to additional sources of information elsewhere on the internet is also very valuable as it also allows people to access specialist guidance from other heritage organisations very easily.

In recognition of the value of the website we have made updating the existing advice and adding new information a priority in the last year. It is also worth noting that the introduction of the online booking system has proved to be very popular.

A substantial number of delegates now book online, which is simpler for them, reduces the administrative burden for project staff and increases the likelihood that delegates will complete the ethnic monitoring questions. It also encourages volunteers to look at other areas of the website and many have signed up for the e-bulletin as a result.

A summary of the visitor statistics for the website is given below (Table 3). The statistics show that there has been a steady increase in the number of visitors to the website up until the summer of 2009. The figures for the last 6 months of 2009 are a little lower but this may reflect the fact that the course season ends in October and therefore the website is not as heavily promoted during the winter months.

Table 3: Website statistics

Six month period	Visits	Unique Visitors	Total Page Views	Ave. Page Views	Ave. Time on Site
01 July 2007 to 31 December 2007	3,403	2,479	14,604	4.29	3:32
01 January 2008 to 30 June 2008	4,154	2,955	19,160	4.61	3:43
01 July 2008 to 31 December 2008	5,567	4,357	18,848	3.39	2:49
01 January 2009 to 30 June 2009	8,938	7,020	31,798	3.56	2:54
01 July 2009 to 31 December 2009	7,794	6,352	24,120	3.09	2:17

Monthly Email Bulletin: We introduced a monthly e-bulletin service in January 2008 and have promoted this resource at all our training courses and on the home page of the FiM website. The number of subscribers has grown from 179 at the end of 2008 to 336 at the end of 2009. Topics covered in e-bulletins this year have included frost/snow damage, floors, record keeping, cleaning, bells and clocks, security, bats, church tourism, condensation, fire safety equipment, rainwater goods, and the care of monuments. Many of the e-bulletins also contained short news items and links to sources of advice including relevant pages on the main SPAB website. An archive of the previous 12 e-bulletins is kept on the FiM website.

Maintenance DVD: The editing of the DVD, which was filmed in the latter part of 2008, was completed in early 2009 and 30,000 copies were subsequently produced. The first batches of the DVD were distributed to volunteers throughout England and Wales in March 2009 as follows:

- 16,740 copies of the DVD were sent to the Anglican dioceses in England and Wales to be distributed as part of the annual 'Archdeacons Visitation' exercise.
- 450 copies were distributed to 6 of the Roman Catholic dioceses in England and Wales.
- 650 copies were distributed to 6 of the United Reformed Church synods in England and Wales.
- 500 copies were sent to the Methodist Church to be distributed to district property secretaries.
- 500 copies were sent to the Baptist Union Corporation to be sent to listed Baptist churches.
- 300 copies were sent to Jewish Heritage UK to be distributed to listed synagogues.
- 2,100 copies were sent to English Heritage to be distributed to RGPoW grantees.
- 500 copies were sent to the National Churches Trust to be distributed to grantees.



A further 1,000 copies have been sent to a variety of organisations including some of the HLF regional offices and individual places of worship (including a number of Friends Meeting Houses) or distributed at other events. The remaining 7,000 copies of the DVD will be distributed over the final two years of the project. We will also offer boxes of the DVDs to the remaining URC synods and Roman Catholic dioceses as part of a publicity campaign in 2010.

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 responses are collated into spreadsheets and forwarded to Dr Sharon Goddard, our evaluation consultant, for analysis. This analysis is documented in the External Evaluation report.

In addition, we have been delighted to receive numerous emails and letters from volunteers who have attended our courses and wished to share their enthusiasm for our work. These are just a few of the unsolicited comments that we received this year:

“I would just like to thank you for a very informative course, which you put across in such a way that we were unaware of the passage of time. It was great not having to make notes so that we could concentrate fully on what was being said. The handbook is a great resource and so too the website which we have looked at today. Thank you for giving us the encouragement and the know how of what we need to do. Thanks to you, I am now better informed to do my job as churchwarden and our church building hopefully will benefit.”



“Can I just say this was a really helpful and interesting day and I am sure in the years to come will hugely benefit any building I may find myself in.”

“Please convey my personal thanks to Sara Crofts for a very helpful and informative day last week. Neither my colleague nor I expected so much useful information to come our way. Sara’s enthusiasm for the maintenance of our churches shone through, and was actually very motivating too.”

“I thought it was first class and a real eye opener; churches would save a lot of money if more people attended this.”

“Please pass on my thanks to Sara Crofts for her excellent course yesterday. Inspired by the course, I checked today the gullies to our soakaways and removed a great deal of silt that stopped them working properly.”

"I wanted to thank you at SPAB and especially Sara for the excellent, entertaining, and down to earth day that you laid on for us at West Chilmington. I had concerns that this was going to go over my head but came away with some clear messages and practical checklists that will greatly help me both in my role as warden of my own parish church as well as in my half-time employment running the office and liaising with the wardens of my neighbouring (larger and more historic) parish. I do hope you continue to run these and shall enthusiastically recommend these to colleagues in our deanery when we next meet."

Steering Group and Volunteers

The project continues to be guided by its dedicated Steering Group. The fifteen members with their variety of backgrounds in faith and heritage organisations are chaired by David Lodge, a SPAB Guardian, and met twice in 2009. In addition, individual members provide guidance throughout the year and have proved to be a highly effective support network in terms of sharing and discussing ideas. The project team has been extremely grateful for their invaluable assistance with issues such as making contact with non-Anglican faith groups and general publicity amongst other matters. The dedication of Dr Sharman Kadish has been particularly appreciated as the success of the course at the New West End Synagogue was largely due to her efforts to promote the project to the Jewish Community.

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, publicising the project and helping with the running of FiM courses.

Publicity

We have continued to work hard to publicise the Faith in Maintenance project in 2009. 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, A4 printed fliers with an FAQ section on the reverse, a customisable poster designed by *The Letter g* and our exhibition banners. A record of some of the publicity generated in 2009 follows:

- The FiM training courses received a mention with a link to the project website in Trevor Cooper's email bulletin for the *Ecclesiological Society* on 8th February 2009.
- The FiM project was mentioned in the first issue of *POW-WOW*, the newsletter of Places of Worship @ Heritage Link (March 2009).
- There was a cover story and three page feature about FiM in *Maintenance & Equipment News for Churches and Schools* (Spring 2009 Volume 51 Number 1).
- Positive coverage of the FiM project appeared in *Building Faith 2009*, the Annual Report issued by Gloucester DAC including publicity for the courses at Slimbridge and Charlton Kings.
- A news story about the DVD was published in the *Methodist Recorder* on 2nd April 2009.
- An article featuring David Lodge discussing the Faith in Maintenance DVD featured in an issue of the Maldon Standard in April 2009.
- The FiM project is promoted on the *GutterClear* website and was also publicised in the 2009 *GutterClear* information leaflet (www.gutterclear.org/gutterclear%20links%20page.html).
- A favourable review of the course held at Aston was published in the *Churches Together in Rotherham Newsletter* dated June 2009.
- The Faith in Maintenance project features on the website of the Churches Trust for Cumbria (www.ctfc.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30&Itemid=35)
- The Faith in Maintenance DVD is given a positive mention on the blog of Annette Reed, Vicar of Little and Great Paxton with Diddington in an entry dated 17th June 2009. (paxtonvic.wordpress.com/2009/06/17/faith-in-maintenance/)
- A report on the Faith in Maintenance course held at Downside Abbey was added to the Downside Abbey website in August 2009 (www.downside.co.uk/Abbey/news/mission.html).

- English Heritage's *Conservation Bulletin* (Issue 61 Summer 2009) featured an article written by Sara Crofts about maintenance and the Faith in Maintenance project.
- The IHBC Yearbook and website listed the 2009 course dates in the events and training section.
- Dame Jenny Abramsky referred to the Faith in Maintenance project in her speech given at the meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Churches and Chapels on 13th July 2009.
- Various aspects of the Faith in Maintenance project including the course at Wellesbourne, the e-bulletin service and National Maintenance Week featured in the May and September issues of *The Gatekeeper*, the newsletter of the Diocese of Coventry's Divine Inspiration project. (www.divineinspiration.org.uk/ambassadors.php)
- Reviews of the course held at the New West End Synagogue in Bayswater, London appeared in the *Jewish Tribune* on 22nd October 2009 and on the front page of the *Jewish Telegraph* (Liverpool) and *Jewish Telegraph* (Glasgow) on 30th October 2009.
- A copy of the PowerPoint presentation and an abstract of the paper given by Sara Crofts at the *Heritage Care through Active Citizenship* conference in Mechelen feature on the conference website (www.heritageorganisations.eu/?p=319).
- The Faith in Maintenance training courses held at Waterloo Old Christ Church and Bolton All Souls are highlighted in the Churches Conservation Trust's *Annual Review 2008-2009* under the heading of 'Sustaining Jobs and Skills'.
- Faith in Maintenance features on the website of the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society as part of their 'Look Before You Leak' section at www.uahs.org.uk/resources/section.php?section=9.
- The *Faithworks* website featured an article about the FiM project during National Maintenance Week 2009 (www.faithworks.info/Event.asp?id=8978).
- A summary of the course at the New West End Synagogue featured in the news section of the *Jewish Heritage UK* website along with a selection of photographs taken on the day (www.jewish-heritage-uk.org/news/text/news.htm).
- Articles about FiM appeared in both editions of the *Building Faith in our Future* e-bulletin issued by the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division in 2009 (May and December).

Financial Review

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. The cost of the project after its first three full years of operation remain within the budget agreed at the outset with the Heritage Lottery Fund and we expect that the project will be completed at less than the anticipated cost.

Evidence continues to show that the decision to make the courses free for volunteers has not had a significant effect on the budget, while encouraging more people to take advantage of the training provided. This is largely due to the generosity of the various host organisations which provide venues and also refreshments on many occasions.

A full review of the budget was carried out in November and December which led to a few minor alterations between budget headings to take account of unforeseen costs such as rises in utility bills and business rates. We also noted that we are likely to exceed the project budget for travel costs and subsistence but are confident that this can be covered by transferring funds from other areas of the project where an under spend is predicted. We were also pleased to secure a further £50,000 grant from English Heritage to be claimed in 2010 and 2011 which relieves the uncertainty caused by the reduction in the SPAB's core funding as a result of the financial downturn.



Review of Objectives

We are pleased to report that we have successfully met all of our objectives in this third 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. New information and links to other sources of advice are added on a regular basis. 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 e-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 good 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 Church, the United Reformed Church, the Roman Catholic Church, Unitarian and Baptist Churches to our courses. This year's course for the Jewish Community has also provided a welcome opportunity to reach a new audience.

We also welcome the opportunity to take part in events arranged by other organisations such as the lecture series produced by Oxford Brookes University and the University of East Anglia as this provides access to a group of people who might not otherwise be aware of the Faith in Maintenance project.

As we can only run a finite number of training courses throughout the country the website, handbook and DVD have proved to be extremely useful tools in terms of reaching additional audiences. Copies of the handbook and DVD have been sent to a number of Quaker Meetings and also to individual places of worship such as the Coptic Orthodox Church in Stevenage. Furthermore, analysis of the e-bulletin subscribers shows that it is reaching a variety of faith groups including an encouraging number of Nonconformist communities and also a few non-Christian groups as well as secular heritage bodies.

- 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 2009 including articles in printed media and articles on websites. 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. We took part in a 'maintenance summit' organised by English Heritage and have shared our knowledge and experience with a number of organisations in the sector. Our commissioned article on the topic of maintenance in the summer edition of English Heritage's Conservation Bulletin was circulated to around 14,000 individuals. We are also developing a good working relationship with GutterClear and also with the National Churches Trust and the Churches Conservation Trust. In addition, 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. In the coming year we will continue to build on our past success and will also start to consider in earnest the question of how the project can be sustained once our funding ceases at the end of 2011. We intend to enter into discussions with like-minded organisations and also to commission a consultant to research other possibilities for us. We are only too aware of how important our work is to the volunteers who look after the country's ecclesiastical heritage and will endeavour to ensure that they continue to receive support and advice once the current project is complete.

We will also be increasing our advocacy work in 2010. In particular we will be supporting the Places of Worship at Risk work being undertaken by English Heritage in 2010 and we will also look for opportunities to promote the benefits of preventative maintenance to Government after the coming election. We will also continue to work with the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division of the Church of England to reform the Quinquennial Inspection system for the greater benefit of Parochial Church Councils and their inspecting architects and surveyors.

Sara Crofts

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