



SPAB John Betjeman Award: Ireland

Notes for entrants

An annual award given to celebrate excellence in the conservation and repair of places of worship of any faith in Ireland, named in honour of Sir John Betjeman: writer, architectural historian, conservation campaigner and a member of the SPAB's Committee from 1954-1977.

ABOUT THE AWARD



The award is made for the repair or conservation of the fabric, fittings or furnishings of faith buildings, such as churches, chapels, meeting houses, synagogues, mosques or temples. It is made to the faith building rather than to any individual, and so celebrates both the place and the community that cares for it, and the project and everyone involved in organising and carrying out the work.

Eligibility

The award is open to all faith buildings in Ireland which remain in active use for worship. However, cathedrals of any denomination are not eligible. It is not essential that the building is designated - its age or architectural significance is less important than the quality of the repair. Buildings in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland are eligible.

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, seating). Work to enlarge or extend a place of worship, to rearrange its internal space, to alter or adapt its fittings or furnishings, or to install new elements is not eligible. The work must have received any relevant statutory consents and/or Section 5 / Section 57 Declaration as appropriate and have been completed in 2020 or 2021.

Timetable

Submission of entries for the award:

Opens: 1 October 2021

Closes: 28 March 2022 at 5pm

Entries received outside the submission period will not be considered.

The award will be presented at the SPAB Awards event in November 2022.

Judging

The award will be judged by a specialist panel in spring 2022, on the basis of visits to shortlisted buildings. The judges will be looking for work that 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. Before submitting, entrants might find it helpful to refer to The SPAB Approach document available 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

Projects can be entered by a member of the congregation or a lead professional, but the entry should be endorsed 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. Please use the entry form to tell us about the building / project, with reference to the judging criteria. Entrants are asked to provide photographs (before, during, after) and the judges may ask for more detailed information, such as copies of specialist reports or drawings, to help them select a shortlist.

Note: If you are unable to use the online entry form or would prefer to enter on paper or in another form, please get in touch with us to discuss your requirements.