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Opening minds and church doors for children and families – Allchurches Trust grant gives vital funding boost to learning programme

An Allchurches Trust grant will give a vital funding boost to an innovative scheme by [The Churches Conservation Trust \(CCT\)](#) that has engaged more than 13,500 children and young people in learning activities in their local church.

Allchurches has provided £52,125 to match-fund ongoing support from the Department for Education as part of the Heritage Schools Partnership. The grant will help the three full-time Heritage Learning Officers to continue their valuable work, opening minds and church doors through learning and fun.

From crafts to conservation and Shakespeare to star gazing, the Heritage Learning Officers have helped to increase family visitor numbers from 5% to 17% of all those people who visited a CCT gateway church in 2017.

Since 2012, CCT - the national charity protecting historic churches at risk - has run a highly successful Heritage Schools Programme across England in partnership with Historic England, and funded by Department for Education.

The Heritage Schools Partnership was awarded the Europa Nostra prize for Cultural Heritage (Education, Training and Awareness-raising category) in 2016, which is Europe's most prestigious and respected award for heritage.

Sir Philip Mawer, Chairman of Allchurches Trust, said: "Allchurches Trust is pleased to be able to support the valuable work of the Churches Conservation Trust's Heritage Learning Officers.

"We recognise the unique role they play in providing stimulating and creative learning opportunities for children and families at CCT churches, helping them to appreciate their significance to local heritage and as historic places of worship. We trust that our grant will help in the process of securing the future of these roles for many years to come."

Peter Aiers, CEO, CCT says: "Our collection of churches is of exceptional artistic, historical and architectural merit which provides excellent opportunities for exploring core subjects such as history, geography, art, maths and science.

"We are very grateful to Allchurches Trust for match-funding our grant for the learning programme, which allows us to continue our work and enable a wider range of children and young people to creatively explore their local historic church as an inspiring place for learning outside of the classroom."

Ends

Notes to editors:

- 1.) Allchurches Trust is one of the UK's largest grant-making charities.
- 2.) In 2017, Allchurches Trust gave £15.6 million to churches, charities and communities.
- 3.) Established in 1972, Allchurches Trust funds come from our ownership of Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, which was founded in 1887.

- 4.) Our grants further our charitable objectives of promoting the Christian faith and other charitable causes. We welcome applications from all parts of the UK and Ireland, particularly from areas of social and economic deprivation.
- 5.) We fund projects that tackle homelessness, poverty and social exclusion, enabling individuals and communities to thrive. We also support the repair, restoration and wider community use of churches and cathedrals of all denominations.

Follow Allchurches Trust on Twitter, Facebook or visit our website www.allchurchestrust.co.uk for more information.

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About The Churches Conservation Trust:

The Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) is the national heritage charity saving historic churches. It protects and helps secure new uses for 353 buildings, which attract almost 2 million visitors a year. The charity's collection includes irreplaceable architecture, archaeology and art from 1,000 years of English history.

The organisation, founded in 1969, is the operator of the third largest heritage estate in charitable ownership in the UK and it has an international award-winning reputation in heritage conservation and regeneration. All churches in its care are listed, mostly Grade I and II*, and some are Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Without the care of The Churches Conservation Trust, the buildings they look after might have disappeared entirely. Instead, they are enjoyed as social, tourism, educational and cultural resources, kept open, in use, and living once again in the heart of communities. For more information see www.visitchurches.org.uk/

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