

The work of the Friends

The Friends of Friendless Churches was founded in 1957 to secure the preservation of places of worship threatened by total demolition, unseemly conversion and ruin. We now own 36 churches and two private chapels, half in England, half in Wales. Many are remotely sited, with medieval fabric and important fixtures and fittings. Each building has its own beauty, history and unique atmosphere. We conserve them for their history and beauty, and as places of quiet contemplation for local people and visitors to enjoy.

Sadly however a significant number of important historic churches are still made redundant each year and for many of these, where no suitable use can be found, we can be all that prevents demolition. The need for us to take more into care is as pressing as ever, yet we also face major repair campaigns at a number of our existing vestings.

What a legacy can achieve

While donations and subscriptions are useful in keeping us afloat, a legacy to the Friends helps us look to the future. It allows us to contemplate a capital base sufficient both to repair our own buildings, and to take on more when they come under threat.

As we are a small charity and no officer in England is paid, bequests go a long way. Legacies to a registered charity can also be a valuable way of reducing inheritance-tax liability on your estate.

If you haven't made a will, please consider doing so and including the Friends. If you have it is a simple matter to add a codicil.

How do I make a Will?

We suggest that you choose a solicitor to write your Will. The **Law Society** (Tel: 0870 606 6575) can provide a list of local firms.

What are the different types of legacy?

A **pecuniary legacy** is a fixed sum of money that tends to decrease in value over time because of inflation. For example, a legacy of £10,000 written into a Will in 1990 would now be worth, in real terms, £5,800. However, it is possible to index-link a pecuniary legacy to ensure that the legacy maintains its intended value

A **residuary legacy** is the gift of the remainder of your estate (or a percentage of the remainder) after all other gifts to friends and family have been distributed and all outgoings have been dealt with. This is much more useful to the Friends of Friendless Churches because the growing value of your assets protects your gift against inflation.



How do I amend my Will?

A codicil is an addition to a Will that states any changes you wish to make and is easily made by a solicitor. Adding a codicil to your existing Will may be a simple way for you to leave a legacy to the Friends of Friendless Churches. However, if this is one of several changes it may be advisable to make a new Will. The new Will should start with a clause stating that it revokes all previous Wills and codicils.

The following sample wording can be used if you would like to leave a legacy to the Friends of Friendless Churches.

For a **pecuniary legacy**:

'I bequeath free of tax to the Friends of Friendless Churches ("the Friends") of St Ann's Vestry Hall, 2 Church Entry, London EC4V 5HB (registered charity number 1113097), the sum of £_____ to be used by the Trustees of the Friends at their discretion, and I declare that the receipt of their Treasurer or other proper officer shall be a full and sufficient discharge.'

For a **residuary legacy**:

'Subject to the payment of my debts, funeral and testamentary expenses, I bequeath the whole/ [insert percentage value] of my estate not otherwise disposed of by this my Will to the Friends of Friendless Churches ("the Friends") of St Ann's Vestry Hall, 2 Church Entry, London EC4V 5HB (registered charity number 1113097), to be used by the Trustees of the Friends at their discretion, and I declare that the receipt of their Treasurer or other proper officer shall be a full and sufficient discharge.'

Friendless Churches in Need



Woodwalton St Andrew, Cambs. Closed in the 1960's and suffering from years of vandalism and neglect this church was rescued and repaired by the Friends and is now much used by the local community for events, suppers and meetings. English Heritage grant aid to cure the chronic instability is most unlikely and the Friends face repair costs of £300,000 or more.



Boveney St Mary, Bucks Important for its 14th century timber-framed tower which we repaired in 2005 at a cost of £250,000. English Heritage gave us 70% grant aid but the remainder was much more difficult to find. A legacy at the right time makes all the difference.



Llanfigael, Anglesey. In Wales the Friends benefit from generous grants given by Cadw and the Church in Wales but there is still work to be done where they cannot help.

Your Legacy can make a real difference




Without the intervention of the Friends of Friendless Churches, which now owns it, the important medieval church of St Mary, Mundon in Essex would have been lost.



Help us to preserve beautiful churches in perpetuity.

For information about our work please contact the Honorary Director at:
St Ann's Vestry Hall, 2 Church Entry
London EC4V 5HB.

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office@friendsoffriendlesschurches.org.uk


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