

Reimagining St Mary's: Heritage, Music and Community for the Gwent Levels

Project Brief: Architect and Lead Consultant

Led by St Mary's Church, Marshfield

Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund



1. Project Background

St Mary's Church, Marshfield is a Grade II* listed Anglican church of exceptional heritage significance, located within the Gwent Levels in South East Wales. The church is notable for containing one of only three surviving full-immersion baptistries of this kind, dating from 1909, and remains a highly distinctive historic and cultural asset within a rural context.

The building has served as a place of worship, music-making, and community life for centuries. However, its fabric is now at risk due to long-standing maintenance challenges, water ingress, and deteriorating stonework, roofing, and services. St Mary's has been identified as a heritage-at-risk asset, requiring urgent intervention to secure its future.

The project is being developed by the Mountain and Marsh Ministry Area, with strong trustee leadership and an established record of community engagement, music programming, and partnerships across Marshfield and the wider Gwent Levels.

2. Project Summary

This National Lottery Heritage Fund-supported project will deliver a comprehensive programme of urgent conservation, accessibility improvements, and community-focused adaptation to secure the long-term future of St Mary's Church as a living heritage, music, and community venue.

The project places a strong emphasis on:

- Urgent repair and conservation of historic fabric
- Restoring and interpreting the unique full-immersion baptistry
- Improving physical access and flexibility for wider community use
- Sustaining and expanding music, bell-ringing, and cultural activity
- Embedding environmental sustainability and net zero principles
- Deepening engagement with local residents, schools, care settings, and volunteers

The anticipated total Delivery Phase value is approximately £1.3 million, with funding expected from the National Lottery Heritage Fund alongside a significant programme of partnership and match funding.

3. Development Phase Scope

The Development Phase (anticipated 2026–2027) includes:

- Completion and coordination of RIBA Stages 1–3 outputs in relation to the Development phase (for net-zero improvements and immersion baptistry)
- Oversight of urgent capital works undertaken during the Development Phase
- Integration of sustainability and environmental performance measures
- Business planning and organisational sustainability development
- Engagement and activity planning, including volunteer-led delivery models
- Development of a fully costed Delivery Phase programme
- Preparation and submission of the National Lottery Heritage Fund Round Two application

4. Purpose of This Commission

St Mary's Church seeks to appoint an Conservation Architect to coordinate and deliver all architectural aspects of the Development Phase and Delivery Phase of the project. It is noted that the confirmation of appointment for the Delivery phase will only be given upon successful application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the Delivery Phase.

The purpose of the commission is to provide integrated lead architectural services, including the development, production and coordination of design team information, describing and delivering a considered scheme. This should initially ensure that the Development Phase work meets National Lottery Heritage Fund requirements and positions the project for a strong and deliverable Round Two submission.

The role will involve coordinating design information from other consultants, and providing a clear and lead point of reference for design decision making, with particular reference to the heritage considerations of the Church building.

5. Project Objectives

The Conservation Architect will support the project in:

- Securing the long-term future of St Mary's Church as a heritage-at-risk asset
- Contributing to the delivery of a robust, fundable Delivery Phase proposal
- Contributing to the development of an operationally and financially sustainable future model
- Designing to strengthen community access, participation, and inclusion
- Embedding environmental sustainability and net zero principles
- Providing clear and sound advice at the outset about: the design/development potential; the need for various statutory consents; the need to engage the services of other professional consultants and specialists.
- Inputting into project programming and likely time scales
- Developing and producing design schemes which are considered to be viable in terms of 'build ability' and in relation to statutory guidelines, planning structures and building legislation.
- Seeking Statutory Consents and 'Building Regulations Approval' at the appropriate stages to the project including the provision of supporting information.
- Advising upon the health and safety matters and have sensible regard for the end users of our schemes.
- Developing the design and producing construction drawings, specifications and schedules etc as reasonably required to enable the building contractor to complete the construction to a satisfactory standard.
- Paying attention to environmental and sustainable issues and to highlight opportunities for energy saving technologies into our design specification.
- Administering the building contract, including inspections of the work in terms of quality, progress and costs at times appropriate to the progress of the construction.
- Working closely with building contractors in a spirit of helpfulness and cooperation, guiding, advising and assisting them as and when necessary in achieving satisfactory results.
- Providing a 'watching brief' over matters relating to quality during the course of the building contract, including architectural certification, and during the defects period, to the conclusion and final signing off of the works.

7. Budget and Fees

The indicative maximum fee available for this commission is £18,350 (exclusive of VAT), drawn from Development Phase funds.

Fees must demonstrate clear value for money and be proportionate to the scope and strategic importance of the role. Fee proposals should clearly identify assumptions, deliverables, and payment stages.

8. Required Outputs

It is noted that faculty consent has already been granted by the Church in Wales for all works forming part of the project, other than the proposals to reinstate the baptistry and wider sustainable improvements to the scheme. Full details of the consented works are provided as part of the tender.

The Conservation Architect will be responsible for:

Work Stage	Scope of Services
2	Concept Design
	Implementation of the Design Brief and preparation of additional data
	Identification, co-ordination and implementation of advanced surveys and investigations
	Preparation of Concept Designs including outline proposals for reinstating the baptistry
	Providing heritage advice and facilitating the undertaking of a sustainability assessment by others advising on suitable, sustainable strategies for heating and powering the Church
	Feed into discussions regarding the procurement route and construction strategy for the project
	Advise on other consultants required to be engaged for the project
	Facilitate the updating of the cost plan
3	Developed Design
	Develop the agreed concept designs, including coordination of structural and building services systems, in relation to the baptistry proposals and sustainability improvements
	Prepare developed design drawings, outline specifications, supporting statements and Heritage Impact Assessments for the required alterations for the Client approval in relation to the baptistry and sustainability improvements
	Coordinate and submit applications for statutory consents ,such as detailed planning permission and faculty consent, in relation to alterations arising from works to the baptistry and sustainability improvements.
	Input into the project cost plan
	Development and review of the construction strategy
	Community consultation and presentation
4	Technical Design
	Separately prepare schedule of consented repair works for tender in advance of wider project works
	Facilitate the tendering of consented repair works in advance of wider project works.
	Prepare technical design(s) and specifications, sufficient to co-ordinate components and elements of the project and information for statutory standards and construction safety.
	Undertake the associated Building regulations submission
	Input into the updating of the cost plan.
	Prepare detailed information for construction.
	Prepare further information for construction required under the building contract. Review of information provided by specialists.
	Prepare and/or collate tender documentation in sufficient detail to enable at least three or tenders to be obtained for the project, including addressing the construction strategy.

4	Technical Design
	Identify and evaluate potential contractors and/or specialists for the project in conjunction with the Client and Project Manager
	Assist Church in making stage 2 application for Heritage Lottery Funding
5	Construction
	Separately drawing-up and administering the terms of the building contract for the advanced repair works between the and the chosen contractor, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regularly inspecting the quality and progress of the work on site, and formally certifying monthly payments due to the contractor from yourselves.• Providing a formal certificate confirming when the works are finished and 'Practically Complete'
	Administration of the building contract to Practical Completion
	Issuing of information to the contractor
	Provision to the contractor of further information as reasonably required and resolution of design queries.
	Regular inspection of the quality and progress of the work on site, and formal certification of monthly payments due to the contractor from the Client
	Providing a formal certification confirming when the works are finished and 'Practically Complete'
6	Handover and Close Out
	Administration of the building contract after Practical Completion and making final inspections
	Assisting building user during initial occupation period.

9. Skills and Experience

Applicants should demonstrate:

- Proven experience managing National Lottery Heritage Fund and comparable heritage development projects
- Conservation Architect accreditation
- Strong strategic, lead design consultant skills
- Experience of the administration of traditional building contracts
- Understanding of historic places of worship and heritage-at-risk contexts
- Ability to work collaboratively with trustees, volunteers, and professional teams
- Familiarity with governance, cashflow management, and funder requirements

10. Submission Requirements

Submissions should include:

- A single PDF (maximum 10 pages plus CVs)
- Proposed methodology and approach
- Relevant case studies
- Fee proposal and payment schedule
- Confirmation of availability and insurances
- Two references for comparable work

11. Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be assessed on the following basis:

Quality (80%)

- Understanding of the brief and proposed methodology (30%)
- Relevant experience and track record, including the approach to lessons learned from previous projects to ensure improved outcomes (30%)
- Approach and suitability to working with the Church to deliver the Church's sustainability objectives (20%)

Price (20%)

12. Application Process

Submissions should be sent to: Revd Ross Maidment (rossmaidment@cinw.org.uk)

Deadline: 13th February Interviews (if required): 18th February

Clarification questions should be submitted in writing. Responses will be shared with all tenderers.