

## **CLAS CIRCULAR 2025/04 (03 March)**

### **Disclaimer**

**CLAS is not qualified to advise on the legal and technical problems of members and does not undertake to do so. Though we take every care to provide a service of high quality, neither CLAS, the Secretary nor the Governors undertakes any liability for any error or omission in the information supplied.**

It would be very helpful if members could let us know of anything that appears to indicate developments of policy or practice on the part of Government or other matters of general concern that should be pursued.

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## PROPERTY & PLANNING

### VERY IMPORTANT: Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme user survey

For information **and possibly for action**

Harlow Consulting has [published a questionnaire](#) aimed at those responsible for looking after listed places of worship. The user survey is being conducted on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, as part of an evaluation of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

Harlow Consulting explains:

“The questionnaire will ask you some basic information about your place of worship, its finances and its condition, then about whether your place of worship has benefited from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. It may make it easier to complete the questionnaire if you have relevant information available. For example, we will ask for an approximate idea of recent expenditure on your building and about your experience (if applicable) of the scheme.

If you have this information to hand, we would expect it to take around 15-20 minutes to complete all the questions.

Please note that, as far as possible, we will only ask you questions that we think are relevant to you. If your place of worship has benefited from the scheme, we will ask more about how and what impacts it has had. If your place of worship hasn't benefited, we'd like to understand more about why it hasn't. For this reason, question numbers may not follow in direct sequence. In all cases, we will ask around twenty-five questions, of which the majority are short answer, multi-choice or rating-scale questions. We have also included some free text responses, so that you can tell us any additional things you think we should know about the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

You will be able to 'save' and return to the survey, should you need to do so. The survey will be open for completion until the end of 25 March, so please ensure you submit your response by then.

If you have any questions about this research please contact Jose Seisdedos at DCMS [jose.seisdedos@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:jose.seisdedos@dcms.gov.uk) (opens in new window) or Dr James Legard at Harlow Consulting, [jlegard@harlowconsulting.co.uk](mailto:jlegard@harlowconsulting.co.uk) (opens in new window).”

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To help respondents plan their answers, the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance (HRBA – of which CLAS is a member) has extracted the questions into this helpful [pdf of Survey Questions](#).

In addition, it has the following comments on the survey, which we quote with permission:

#### **“Filling in the survey**

The front page of the survey suggests that it will take about 15-20 minutes to complete. We think this is probably broadly correct, if you have gathered certain pieces of information in advance (see below).

Note that you can leave the survey when part-completed and go back to it (though you need to follow instructions after you press ‘save’). Questions can be skipped if you cannot answer them.

You cannot print out your answers, and we suspect you cannot save a copy after you press submit.

There are a small number of open-text questions. As far as we can tell, there is no word-count limit to these (but we’d suggest keeping answers fairly brisk and to the point).

We know that those carrying out the evaluation are keen to talk to people on the ground, so the final question (question 33) asks whether you would be prepared to be contacted (if you answer ‘yes’, it asks for your contact details).

#### **Preparation in advance**

1. The only numerical information you will need to gather is for questions 10 and 11, namely:
  - your best estimate of what it would cost to address all of the place of worship’s repair needs
  - in a typical year how much your place of worship can afford to spend (without special fundraising efforts) on repair, maintenance and restoration works
2. You’ll be asked about the condition of your place of worship and what parts of it you would like to repair (questions 8 and 9, 13, 14 and 30).
3. There are questions about how you’ve used the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, and how easy you found it (questions 15-19, 21, 22, 23).
4. There is an open-text question about maintenance and repairs and the Scheme (question 31). You could use this reply to give an overview of your own maintenance and repair issues, and how the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme fits in, and whether other support would be helpful – worth considering this carefully. Make sure to answer from your own experience, rather than generalising. As always, bear in mind that government is facing constraints on its expenditure.

5. There is a very rich and important multiple-choice question about the benefits of repairing your place of worship (question 20), and a closely related open-text question about what is most important or valuable about your place of worship and the activities it supports (question 32). We suggest you give both of these some careful thought.”

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**CLAS has made numerous submissions to DCMS and HM Treasury about the LPWGS over the past 20 years or so. On this occasion, however, there is no provision for any kind of corporate response – it is very much down to those responsible for individual listed places of worship to share their individual experiences with the consultants.**

***We would urge as many people as possible to respond.* The timescale for responses is very short: the closing date is TUESDAY 25 MARCH.**

[Source: DCMS and HRBA, 3 March]

### **Historic England emergency planning training needs analysis**

**For information and possibly for action**

Historic England has issued the following statement:

“The Emergency Planning team at Historic England invites organisations and professionals to complete this [training needs analysis survey](#). By taking part in this survey, you can influence what further training and guidance we will provide to those who play a role in emergency preparedness, response and recovery within our historic environment and the heritage sector. This could, for example, benefit -

- Employed staff or volunteers directly involved in artefact salvage operations following a museum or archive fire.
- Heritage specialists involved in flood or fire prevention and recovery at historic buildings.
- Historic property managers responsible for planning for security threats (e.g. terrorism) at their property.
- Category 1 and category 2 responders managing the recovery of a flood event that has impacted a listed building or scheduled monument.

Your feedback will help Historic England to ensure that our historic environment is better prepared to respond to and recover from emergencies.

You can find out more about the emergency planning, fire, flood and heritage crime guidance and advice provided by Historic England, as well as its current training offer and Emergency Planning Training Centre, by following the links below:

- [Emergency Planning, Fire Advice and Emergency Planning training](#)
- [Flooding and Older Homes](#)
- [Flooding and Historic Buildings](#)
- [Heritage Crime](#)

**This survey will close on Friday 28 March at 23:59.”**

[Source: Historic England, 3 March]