

Churches Conservation Trust - Wiltshire Wards

The Churches Conservation Trust was established by the 1968 Pastoral Measure: Ecclesiastical, Church of England law which is also approved by Parliament, and they celebrated their 40th birthday in 2009.

For over 40 years, they have played a unique role in national life. Without us, over 340 irreplaceable historic buildings might have disappeared entirely. Instead many have once again become the focus of active community life.

The organisation started life as the Redundant Churches Fund, a unique partnership between Church, State and the Charity sector, which came about because of the tireless campaigning of passionate church enthusiasts in the 1960s.

Most notable amongst these was Ivor Bulmer-Thomas who not only founded the Trust but also set up its sister charity '[Friends of Friendless Churches](#)', which to this day continues to save churches outside the remit of CCT such as those in Wales.

The 1960s were difficult days for historic churches. Many were falling into disrepair and some were threatened with demolition at a time when historic buildings were sometimes seen as an impediment to progress.

No mechanism or organisation existed for caring for churches where parishes felt they could no longer afford to keep going. If it hadn't been for the commitment of local communities and national campaigners such as Ivor, many of the historic churches we know and love today might have been lost.

The first church saved by CCT was [St Peter's, Edlington](#) in the coalfields of South Yorkshire. The church had had its roof and windows removed in an attempt to turn it into a ruin. It was a Grade I Medieval church in a disadvantaged area with few other historic or community buildings. It is now a highly valued community and arts building, regularly used by local schools and colleges.

For more information about the [Churches Trust](#) and what they do please visit their website.

Currently there are 21 Churches in the county of Wiltshire that are in the care of the Church Trust.

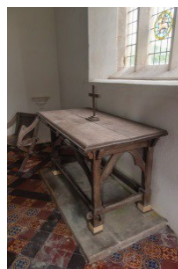
The information in this document is mainly sourced for the website of the Churches Conservation Trust above.

Berwick Bassett - St. Nicholas



The low pinnacle and weather vane topped tower and attractive porch of this tiny church can be glimpsed through the trees as you pass by. The church is tucked away near a farmyard and is not far from historical Avebury and the old Ridgeway track. A delightful spot to stop and rest whilst walking along the Ridge. The church is open daily.

The church is essentially 14th century in origin, although the font suggests an earlier structure. The interior is light and simple, furnished with box pews. Its nave is Mediaeval, as is the chancel, though later rebuilt with brick retaining the old window openings. The low tower has been raised by the addition of a Victorian spire and weather-vane



The church also contains several surviving memorial plaques as well as an ornately carved Chancel Rood Screen of the 15th century. There is also a Victorian altar table and lecturn.