

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.

Imber - St. Giles



This lovely 13th-century church stands in rolling downland deep inside the military training area of Salisbury Plain. It is all that remains of the ghost village of Imber (now just abandoned houses), which was evacuated for military training purposes in 1943.

St Giles' Church is a Grade I listed building. It was declared redundant on 1 November, 2002 and was vested in the Trust on 14 September, 2005.

The church was built of dressed limestone, replacing a church which had stood on the site since the 12th century. The distinctive 14th-century tower has five pinnacles. The interior, divested of its fittings, allows you to appreciate the architecture and atmosphere of this unique church, as well as the remains of Medieval wall paintings of a rare depiction of the Seven Deadly Sins and a set of 17th-century bell ringing changes painted on the north wall of the tower. Outside the sloping churchyard contains fine 17th-and 18th-century tomb chests. This church is only open occasionally to visitors.