

SMALL GRANTS FUND – FOR THE CHURCHES OF THE EAST MIDLANDS BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Maintenance of our Church buildings is a constant challenge. Many of our churches can be negligent of basic repair work because of the prohibitive cost involved. The EMBA Trust Board established a Capital Projects Fund a few years ago from which low interest or interest free loans can be negotiated. But it was felt that, in line with other Associations, the establishment of a small grants fund from the proceeds of closed churches could be a valuable tool to assist churches and encourage them to deal with essential fabric issues before they become too serious. Maintenance of the fabric of our church buildings is the often neglected aspect of church mission.

An initial £100,000 should be used to start this fund, to be topped up from a tithe of those proceeds of closed buildings and sale of property that come into the Association from time to time.

The maximum size of any grant would be £5,000, and the amount offered **would normally** be no more than 50% of the actual costs of the essential maintenance work for which proper estimates have been supplied.

Applications would be welcomed from any church in Membership or in Trust with the EMBA. A church may only apply a maximum of once every five years. **The request must be authorised by either a Church Meeting OR the deacons (leaders) of the local church.**

Grants will only be made for expenditure incurred in the maintenance or development of church buildings or manses. They will not be available for revenue, salary, or administrative costs.

The application can be approved:

- **Normally by a decision of the East Midland Baptist Trust Company.**
- **If urgent a decision of a Regional Minister and a director (preferably the Chairperson) of the East Midland Baptist Trust Company between meetings.**

It will be their judgement as to whether the application meets the criteria for a grant; whether all or part of the money requested should be awarded; whether sufficient funds are available to make an award or whether the request would need to be deferred to a later meeting.

Criteria for awarding a grant:

1. The church is in good standing with the Association.
2. The church is contributing appropriately to Home Mission.
3. The church has a clear mission focus and is seeking to share the Good News of Christ with their community.
4. A clear need for the work to be carried out must be established
5. The church is giving sacrificially to the work of ministry, mission and making gifts to the building needs.

Proper estimates or invoices will need to be supplied in the first instance. Where a church building or manse is listed, grants will only be awarded if appropriate consents have been obtained. All churches which are awarded a grant will need to provide evidence that the money has been spent in accordance with their original application.

Grants will need to be repaid if, within ten years, the church closes or leaves the Association.

A grant may be awarded to a church as well as a loan from other funds available within the East Midland Baptist Association or East Midland Baptist Trust Company.

A simple application form is available alongside a one page set of criteria for potential applicants. This information can be obtained through the website.