

PRESS RELEASE

A UK offer to assist with restoration of broken stained glass windows in Christ Church Cathedral has been re-confirmed. Dr Anna Crighton Chair of the Canterbury Earthquake Heritage Buildings Fund Trust said that with the restoration of the cathedral closer to reality she has been contacted by Phillida Shaw, representing The Worshipful Company of Glaziers and Painters of Glass, London, to confirm that their offer to assist with restoration of the numerous memorial stained glass windows in the cathedral still stands. Most of the broken windows were removed in April 2012 and put into storage.

Crighton said she envisages the offer would entail providing support to local stained glass restoration expert Graham Stewart and that part of the proposal could be to help establish a permanent stained glass workshop and training centre in Christchurch with assistance from accredited UK conservators and craftsmen seconded to work here. Stewart is totally supportive of the scheme. He said that ‘the Provincial Chambers stained glass represents years of work alone and the Rose window from the cathedral is a major conservation project in itself that again would take years’.

Crighton said she was delighted to receive the proposal which she describes as an offer hard to refuse. The Bishop has referred consistently to the many treasures within the Cathedral, but it should be remembered that inherent in its fabric there are also heritage treasures such as the stained glass windows. “With the assistance of the extra skilled artisans and apprentices years can be cut from the restoration time and costs greatly reduced” she said. Shaw visited Christchurch in April 2012 to offer assistance for stained glass restoration for the Christ Church Cathedral but the offer was turned down. On this occasion Crighton is hopeful that the proposal will be welcomed.

“This is an opportunity for international co-operation on a project which could invite not only local, national and international funding, but additional grants from public and commercial organisations and from charities”.

The UK expertise we can call on in the UK includes stained glass conservators who have advised on, visited and co-ordinated similar projects e.g. Mumbai, India (restoration of Victorian stained glass in public buildings); Uppsala, Sweden (Canterbury Cathedral stained glass studios (England) currently advising Uppsala cathedral on establishment of a conservation studio); Croatia (establishment of workshop to restore bomb damaged stained glass windows) City of London (restoration and costing work for IRA bomb damaged stained glass).

Contact: Dr Anna Crighton 021 184 4689 or 03 366 2557

Chair: Canterbury Earthquake Heritage Buildings Fund Trust
anna.crighton@xtra.co.nz

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