

Garrett's Charity Annual Report December 2025

For presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting, Heighington 27th April 2026

Garrett's Charity Number: 1053847

Background

Garrett's Charity dates back to around 1620 when Thomas Garrett a local man left money and land in his will for the founding of a boys' school in the private chapel he had owned in Heighington, which has late Norman origins. The buildings we know as the Heritage Rooms today were built in 1865 as a major refurbishment and expansion of the premises. The funds to build the school rooms came from the former Thomas Garrett Apprenticing Charity and the former Sir Edward Clarke's Charity which both had educational purposes in their objects. The new schoolrooms housed the village boys' school until 1976. Both the chapel and Heritage Rooms continue to be owned by Garrett's Charity. It is unusual for a functioning community chapel to be under independent charity ownership, which makes this building in the heart of our community both distinctive and special. The premises are grade II listed (No. 1360209). The charity maintains The Thomas Garrett Heritage Rooms and St Thomas' Chapel of Ease for the benefit of the community. It promotes both education and inclusion through use of the premises.

Whilst the charity is very old, the current governing document was registered with the Charity Commission in 1995 and slightly amended in 2020. The 2020 amendment was to allow for co-option of two additional local residents onto the local Trustee board to give a potential complement of nine. The Lincoln Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd is the Custodian Trustee of the charity.

During 2025 further work on revising the governing document to more accurately reflect the current use of the Heritage Rooms as a community building has been ongoing. This does not affect the operation of the Chapel.

Principal charity address

Garrett's Charity c/o 9 Washingborough Road, Heighington, Lincoln LN4 1QW

Trustees serving during 2025

In 2025 David Trafford was co-opted as a Trustee (June), Chris Sprigg joined as the second PCC nominated Trustee (June) and the new incumbent Yüce Kabakçı joined the board in July. There was therefore a full complement of Trustees from July as follows: D E Chantler (Chairman), C J Dunning (Secretary), N J Eyre (Treasurer), G J Chard, N J Briscoe, C R Oxby, Y Kabakçı, C D Sprigg and D J Trafford.

Finances

The charity's main routine source of income is from hire of the Heritage Rooms to community groups which in 2025 amounted to £7,100. This was slightly lower than the previous year and can be attributed to the fact that the Car Boot sale scheduled for June and the Arts & Crafts Exhibition planned for October did not go ahead this year. The Friends of the Garrett's Charity manage the bookings on a day-to-day basis on behalf of Garrett's Charity. The activities undertaken there include glass making, felt work, needlework, art groups, woodcarving, coffee mornings, drama, dance, willow weaving, Tai-Chi, and a community choir. These activities reflect the educational emphasis of the original benefaction.

Donations from the local community have included one-off gifts, sponsorship of roof slates as part of an appeal, regular giving and a cash collection box at Anderson's butchers. The charity is registered with HMRC for Gift Aid and has also registered on digital giving platform: crowdfunder.co.uk. Legacy giving is encouraged. The 100 Club (a monthly prize draw) again proved successful in 2025.

Other fundraising initiatives operating during 2025 included aluminium recycling and the Smarties© Challenge (where participants are invited to fill empty tubes with loose change.) Unfortunately the scheme ended in December as the scrap merchant is no longer accepting cans.

Finances: Roof Appeal

The Quinquennial Report undertaken in 2023 highlighted the poor condition of the roof. Following granting of Listed Building Consent in December 2024 considerable effort was made to raise funds. We have been blessed with significant donations, support from local businesses and support from local grant funders. In September 2025 the Chapel of Ease was reroofed and the internal ceilings insulated, which was a significant milestone. The challenge for 2026 is to move on to undertake similar work on the Heritage Rooms. The cost is estimated to be in the region of £120,000. In addition to grant funding we are hopeful that the local community will rally together to secure the future of this valuable distinctive historic asset at the heart of the village.

In 2025 as part of our roof appeal the charity was successful in applying for grants from local funders as follows:

Michael Cornish Foundation (Lincoln) £5,000
BNA CIO (Lincoln) £10,000
Washingborough with Heighington PCC £12,000
Heighington Parish Council £1,000
Lincolnshire Churches Trust £4,000
North Kesteven District Council £3,000

We express our sincere thanks to those grant funders, individuals and numerous local businesses for their generosity during 2025.

Work on the chapel roof was eligible for a refund of VAT through the Government Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. This has returned £11,680 to the charity, which may now be deployed towards subsequent phases of the roof project.

The Annual Accounts are attached to this report. Overall income in 2025 was £87,276 and expenditure was £87,354.

The modest capital funds of the charity are invested in CCLA COIF Charities Ordinary Investment Fund which provides valuable income and an emergency reserve for the charity.

The Annual Accounts to 31st December 2025 were examined by Nicholas Oakes. We are grateful for his help.

The Trustees are grateful to the Friends of the Garrett's Charity for their support and particular thanks go to the Friends Management Committee for their dedication.

Current Trustees:

D E Chantler (Chairman)	C R Oxby
C J Dunning (Secretary)	Y Kabakçi
G J Chard	C D Sprigg
N J Briscoe	D J Trafford

Declaration

The Trustees declare that this report was approved at a meeting of the Trustees on 10th February 2026.