



The Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields

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St Martin-in-the-Fields celebrates Topping Out 8.00am Friday 7 September 2007



Revd Nicholas Holtam, Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields will bless the re-gilding of the church's weathervane at today's symbolic Topping Out ceremony. The weathervane is located at the top of the spire and is the church's tallest point standing 192ft above Trafalgar Square - higher than Nelson's Column. The ceremony marks the final stages of The Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields.

St Martin's reopens for services on Sunday 30th September. The crypt, which houses the award-winning café, shop and brass-rubbing centre, will reopen the day after, on Monday 1st October, with the completion of the whole-site Renewal scheduled for spring 2008.

St Martin-in-the-Fields Development Trust

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

Chairman: Ian Henderson CBE Advisors: Lady Bischoff, The Earl of Cork and Orrery, Mrs Gilly Drummond DL,
The Earl of Home CVO CBE, The Archbishop of Hong Kong, The Bishop of London, Sir Neville Marriner CBE, Lady Marriner, Lady Panufnik,
John Robinson, The Lord Stevenson of Coddanham, Rear Admiral Charles Style CBE, David Tang OBE, Rabbi Mark Winer
Registered Charity Number 110406

The Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields

The precincts of James Gibbs's Church, which was consecrated for worship in 1726, is a complex mix of buildings which also include John Nash's North Range, formerly a school and now home to The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields, the round-the-clock care organisation for homeless people, and underground crypts and vaults. Eric Parry Architects have created a master plan to unify the whole site and create a series of uplifting spaces flexible enough to accommodate the church's wide range of activities now and in the future.

The regeneration of existing buildings and the immediate precincts around the Church includes:

- complete restoration of James Gibbs's 18th century church
- entirely new underground facilities housing
- extended amenities for The Connection, which benefits over 7,000 homeless individuals a year
- a new Bishop Ho Ming Wah Chinese Community Centre
- a new Church Hall
- a new rehearsal space for choirs and musicians
- a new Pavilion entrance on Church Path, giving public access to the foyer and crypt below
- a re-design of the award-winning Café in the Crypt
- an enlarged and relocated Shop in the Crypt - newly sited in the foyer and accessed through the Pavilion entrance
- new, contemporary living and work accommodation for clergy and church staff

The total cost of the Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields is £36million. £32m has already been raised, including £15.35m from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A public appeal will be launched on 1st October. Donations can be made via St Martin's website: www.smitf.org/campaign or telephone 020 7766 1169, email campaign@smitf.org.

Revd Nicholas Holtam, Vicar of St Martin's, leading the Topping Out ceremony said:

"This is a high point in this inspiring project. We have come a long way since the ground-breaking ceremony in February 2006. It will be wonderful to be back in St Martin's on 30th September and we very much look forward to completion of the Renewal of St Martin's early in 2008. The architects, builders and everyone working on this project are to be congratulated. With 90% of the funds raised, we just need everyone who cares about St Martin's to stretch a bit further for successful close of the most important voluntary sector project in London this decade".

Speaking about the building project, Geoff Hunt, St Martin-in-the-Fields' Project Manager for building contractor Costain, said:

"The Topping Out and Blessing of the weathervane today will mark the final stage of the refurbishment to the church spire with the re-gilding of the weathervane. This is the last

major operation at the very top of the spire. It is also a suitable opportunity for us to say 'thank-you' to the workforce for their sterling efforts so far".

Ends

For further information and images, please contact Kate Wright-Morris,
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Notes to Editors:

**The Revd Nicholas Holtam is available for interview
Images from St Martin's spire are also available (c Mike Doherty, Photographer)**

Key Dates in the Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields:

- January 2006: building work began
- 7 September '07: Topping Out ceremony
- 30 September '07: the church re-opens
- 1 October '07: the crypt re-opens with launch of the public appeal to raise a proportion of the funds still required
- 4 October '07: first evening concert by candlelight in the transformed church
- 2008: The Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields completed

Since the 13th century, St Martin-in-the-Fields has been at the heart of varied and changing communities. Today St Martin's attracts over 700,000 visitors a year and serves an extraordinarily diverse range of people. These include the congregation, vulnerable and homeless people, users of the Bishop Ho Ming Wah Chinese Community Centre, concert and café goers and tourists. Reaching beyond its Anglican congregation, St Martin's is a place in which all people of faith can meet and pray.

The Heritage Lottery Fund enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about Britain's diverse heritage. From supporting its great museums and historic buildings to local parks and beauty spots, or recording and celebrating traditions, customs and history, HLF grants open up the nation's heritage for everyone to enjoy. It has supported more than 26,000 projects, allocating £4billion across the UK. www.hlf.org.uk.

