

## TO HELP PRESERVE YOUR CHURCH

Representatives of the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Episcopalian Church met some time ago to consider problems which affect all who are concerned with the maintenance of church buildings. Training for priesthood or ministry provides little expertise in building construction or repair, yet in practically every church, old or recent, problems arise for which we have to take responsibility.

The group decided that a website covering the whole field of church buildings and church maintenance would be the most up-to-date and effective way of providing information and help for those in charge of churches. The necessary financial support was provided by the churches themselves and Historic Scotland.

On 20<sup>th</sup> November the website [www.maintainyourchurch.org.uk](http://www.maintainyourchurch.org.uk) was officially launched in the impressive setting of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century St Patrick's Church off the Cowgate in Edinburgh. About 80 representatives of the churches, Historic Scotland, and other interested bodies were welcome by a Catholic representative, Monsignor John McIntyre, after which the group chairman, John Gerrard of the Episcopalian Church, and a speaker from Historic Scotland explained the background to this venture. A large screen projection provided illustrations of the aims and nature of the website given by Professor John Hume and Andrew Nicholl of the Scottish Catholic Archives, who were instrumental in deciding the contents and final design of the site.

On the website the Learning modules contain articles for study on particular aspects – for instance roof problems - and there is a full Glossary. The Toolkit modules provide answers to problems generally experienced in maintaining a church and information about the architectural features found in Scottish Churches. The Resources modules provide additional guidance in the downloadable materials, as well as opportunity to participate in dialogue with others involved in maintaining churches.