
Endangered churches

SIR – There are 16,000 parish churches across England (“Churches in crisis as a quarter of parishes are without wardens”, report, March 19). For historic reasons the majority of these are in rural areas.

Four thousand churches have regular congregations of less than two, while 800 churches have regular congregations of less than 10.

Parish church buildings are an important part of our national heritage and local identity, but it is clear that in the coming years fewer of them are going to be used for regular weekly worship. Collectively the Government, the Church and local communities are going to have to work out different ways of maintaining church buildings and putting them to the best use.

We will need to find ways of encouraging more volunteers to help maintain their local church building and churchyards if we are to retain this priceless part of English history and heritage.

Sir Tony Baldry

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