

Renewal and Reconciliation: The Codrington Reparations Project

EXTERNAL FAQS

What is the project about?

The Renewal and Reconciliation: The Codrington Reparations Project is being announced in partnership with The Codrington Trust (CT) and USPG. The project aims to take reparative action in response to USPG's shameful links to slavery on the Codrington Estate, Barbados.

At present (Sept 2023) USPG has committed to a programme of work in partnership with Codrington Trust, in Barbados, in response to proposals that the Trust has advanced. USPG has pledged 18M Barbadian Dollars (BDS) (£7M GBP) - to be spent in Barbados over the next 10-15 years to support this work.

Both CT and USPG look forward to the start of this project which will be launching in Spring 2024, in the UK. The work will include four key areas: historic research & education, community engagement & infrastructure, burial places & memorialisation, and family research. Further details of the launch will be made available in due course.

What is USPG's link to Codrington and slavery?

In 1712, SPG was bequeathed Codrington - two adjacent estates totalling 700 acres along with a population of enslaved African men, women, and children. From then until 1838 SPG owned and ran the estates through local managers. (U)SPG's stewardship of the Codrington Estate ended in 1983, when it was passed onto the Codrington Trust.

During the period between 1712 to 1838, enslaved persons were routinely subjected to physical abuse and severe punishment, as part of the everyday management of the plantation. At any one time there were between 190 and 440 such persons working in the fields or other occupations as part of the industrial process of sugar production from which SPG realised profits. These profits supported its activities as a mission agency within Barbados and beyond. It is likely that between 600 and 1,200 individuals lived and died as enslaved persons.

Please visit our [history page](#) for more details.

Why is this work being undertaken now?

USPG has been engaging in a process of understanding its own responsibility as a colonial actor more fully through an intentional exploration of its archives, and in dialogue with the CPWI (The Church in the Province of the West Indies). USPG were owners of two slave plantations in the 1700s. Between 1710 and 1838, USPG benefitted from the labour of enslaved persons on the Codrington Estate.

USPG continues to engage in dialogue around issues of justice across the global church. USPG believes this is a unique opportunity to own up to historic truths and use this moment to support renewal and reconciliation for all parties involved.

USPG is being intentional in listening and acknowledges that now more than ever is the time to act. USPG recognises the impact of its history and the effect it has had; it accepts and understand the generational trauma this has caused over the years and unreservedly apologise for this.

Whilst emancipation finally came in 1838, the legacies of the enslaved are extensive and continue to cause harm today to individuals and communities. USPG recognises this and sees this work as a contribution to the wider work of reparative action.

How will this project be delivered?

The project will be delivered in partnership with The Codrington Trust and USPG over the next 10-15 years. Further updates on the project will be announced periodically.

How much is being committed from USPG?

USPG has pledged 18M Barbadian Dollars (BDS) - equivalent to £7M - to be spent in Barbados over the next 10-15 years to support this work.

When will it start?

Project scoping and preparation is now being undertaken with the expectation that the project will begin in Spring 2024.

What can I do to support?

PRAY: Please do keep this work, the project team, and the communities at Codrington in your prayers – your support is invaluable to this work.

ACT: Funds have already been set aside for this project. However, USPG is keen to support churches across Britain and Ireland who wish to actively engage with this history. Please contact the supporter care team on info@uspg.org.uk or 020 7921 2200.

GIVE: You may also want to support some of the other work and projects USPG is doing in partnership with churches and communities [here](#).

How are the Barbadian community being engaged?

It is the intention of The Codrington Trust and USPG that the Barbadian community will be engaged as an integral part of this journey and will help inform on the work. CT and USPG are working in partnership in continuous collaboration and will listen with descendants of the enslaved to decide on appropriate action for this project to ensure that those who will be directly impacted are consulted.

There are lots of conversations around reparative justice currently, is this the most appropriate way forward?

Both USPG and CT see this project as an opportunity to carry out reparative justice and remain committed to the delivery of this in partnership with The Codrington Trust.

How can I receive updates of the project?

Keep updated via our website here <https://www.uspg.org.uk/our-partners/renewal-and-reconciliation/>

You can also follow us on social media @USPGglobal and @codringtoncollege

What are the next stages of the project? Who will decide how the funds will be spent?

The Codrington Trust will be leading this project and the allocation of funds in partnership with USPG. The community of Codrington and descendants of the enslaved will be a part of the process. It

is too early in the process to say exactly how funds will be allocated or how the project will take shape. However, the work will be overseen by a steering committee, composed of a small number of Trustees nominated by the Codrington Trust and USPG, supported by a number of independent members with significant expertise in the area.

ADDITIONAL USPG SPECIFIC FAQS

A lot of money has been pledged, why so much and will USPG still be funding other projects around the world?

No amount of funding could ever repair the loss and damage and effect this has had on the legacy of the enslaved. The amount we have pledged has been directly proposed from Codrington to carry out this work. A project manager will be appointed and will manage the budget and costs accordingly.

The funding for the work at Codrington and within the Caribbean will be drawn from USPG sources of income including its reserves.

USPG will continue to fund projects around the world to rethink mission, re-energise church and champion justice. USPG will honour all its commitments and will continue to share financial resources with a wide range of partner churches. All funds specifically raised for the work of partner churches will continue to go to programmes run by those churches.

We will provide periodic updates on how the project is progressing and look forward to the launch in Spring 2024.

USPG has apologised – why is this not enough?

It is important for USPG to acknowledge and accept its history, apologising for the wrongdoings of the past and commit to this reparative action. An apology without committed action is not reparative justice.

What would be USPG's hopes for the project?

We are coming into this process with open hearts and minds – this is not about “us” as we are being guided by Codrington Trust and its community. USPG would like to support their flourishing and growth in the ways that they recommend to us.

From our initial conversations with The Codrington Trust there is a hope there will be the development of a sustainable and stable portfolio of initiatives, projects and programs for the Trust which successfully underwrites its service to God and its communities in Barbados, the Church in the Province of the West Indies and across the globe.

It is expected that the work will cover the following:

- Community Engagement and Infrastructure
- Historical Research & Education
- Burial Places & Memorialisation
- Family Research

I understand that at the point of emancipation, all slaveholders were 'compensated', was USPG compensated and what happened to that money?

Alongside all slaveholders, USPG received financial compensation from the British Government. It received the sum of £8,823.

In 1835, SPG established an Education Fund which totalled £171,777. The majority of which was invested spent in the Caribbean. This money was used from 1835 to 1850 to pay the salaries of clergy, catechists, and schoolmasters and to build churches and schools.

Whilst this was clearly a substantial sum of money, decisions relating to how the money was spent were not made by the those who had been recently emancipated, but by SPG and other actors in the context of colonial occupation by the British. The improvements in infrastructure and provision were part of a programme of ongoing Christianisation. Assessments will vary, but this programme of activities should be seen as, at best, a way to support and improve the situation rather than as reparatory in nature.