



Dear Churchwarden (and those who look after your Church Buildings),

As usual I have compiled below some information that I hope you will find useful as you look after your church buildings.

End of Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

Many of you will have seen the announcement last week about the end of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and the creation of the Places of Worship Renewal Fund.

Ministerial statements about the new fund were made in the [House of Commons](#) and in the [Lords](#). The statements confirm that the scheme is guaranteed for 4 years at £23m per year, starting from 1 April 2026. The new fund will be delivered by Historic England. The central Church Buildings Team are now working closely with Historic England and the DCMS to help shape the operation of the new Fund. We are aware of the need for clarity on what this means for church buildings, and those who care for them, and I will keep you updated as soon as there is news to share.

For the coming weeks it remains important for churches still with VAT to claim from the current scheme to do so, as the scheme will close on 31 March or **when all of the funds are allocated**, whichever is soonest. By 28 January, just over £15.6m had been spent of the £23 million budget with a further £3.4 million value of claims in progress.

On 22 January 2026, DCMS published its *Evaluation of the Listed Places of Worship Scheme - Final Report*. Generally, this is very positive about the Scheme; its overall conclusion is that 'in most cases the grant is contributing directly to securing more repair and maintenance to listed places of worship.'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-listed-places-of-worship-scheme-final-report/evaluation-of-the-listed-places-of-worship-scheme-final-report#executive-summary>

Energy Footprint Tool (EFT)

The Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) opened for data entry on Monday 12th January and I would like to thank everyone who has managed to enter their data already. We currently have had data entered for 21% of our church buildings. If anyone has problems accessing the EFT on the Parish Returns Website, please let me know and I will do my best to help. I appreciate that in many parishes it is the Treasurer who enters this data and I would be grateful if you could remind them to do this whilst they are completing the 2025 accounts.

Diocesan Church Building Grants

We have currently received a new allocation of Quick Wins Grant funds and have £100k to award over the next 3 years in grants for small projects that help parishes reduce their carbon output. We are awaiting to hear what our allocation of the next round of Minor Repairs & Improvement Grant funds will be for the next 3 years.

In order to simplify things, we have now combined all Diocesan Church Building Grants into a single application form and applications will be funded from the most relevant fund for the project. The new forms and guidance notes will be available on the diocesan website in the next few days.

Disability Project Grants

The Disability Project has now closed applications for both the large and small grants. Any applications that are currently being considered will be discussed at the January or February grant panel meetings and the outcome will be communicated with the parish.

Love your Yew week

This year's [Love your Yew Week](#) will run from 9 - 15 February. A collaboration between conservation charity Caring for God's Acre and the Ancient Yew Group, this year they are asking custodians of ancient and veteran yews to clear beneath the canopy of their trees. Find out how to take part in [Love your Yew Week](#).

Church Building Training 2026

With a number of issues of thefts from church buildings over recent years, I would encourage you to attend the zoom session on Monday 9th March which is being delivered in conjunction with Ecclesiastical Insurance.

The Church Building Training Programme for 2026 is shown below

Date	Time	Venue	Event	Booking Link
Mon 9 th March	6.30-8.00pm	Zoom	Church Insurance & Security -EIG	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My0xMDQ/t
Tues 17 th March	6.00 - 7.30pm	Cuthbert House	Achieving Net Zero in your Church Building	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My0xMDE/t
Mon 20 th April	6.00 – 7.30pm	Cuthbert House	Faculty Workshop – New Online System	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My0xMDI/t
May	TBC	TBC	Undertaking Church Building Projects	TBC
Saturday 6 th June	10.00am-4.15pm	Cuthbert House	Diocesan Heating Day	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My0xMDY/t
June	TBC	TBC	Faculty Workshop – New Online System	TBC
Tuesday 23 rd June	6.30 – 8.30pm	Zoom	Health & Safety and Fire Risk Management - EIG	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My0xMDU/t
Thurs 9 th July	6.00 – 8.00pm	Cuthbert House	Grant Workshop	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My05OQ/t
July	1.30pm	Cuthbert House	New Churchwardens Training	Please see information from Archdeacons nearer the time
July	6.30pm	Zoom		
September	TBC	TBC	Annual Maintenance Schedule	TBC
October	TBC	TBC	Faculty Workshop – New Online System	TBC

If you have any other suggestions that you feel would be useful in your roles looking after your buildings then please let me know. I try to host sessions around the diocese, so if you are willing to host a session then please let me know.

Updated DAC Heating Guidance

The DAC has recently updated its Heating Guidance which includes details of how to apply for a faculty to replace your heating system. In particular it explains the term “Due regard” and what this means in terms of any heating applications. This guidance comes into place now and it is expected that all new applications for heating will follow this guidance. Copies of the documents can be found on the diocesan website.

National grants for conservation of historic interiors

2025 was an excellent year for the Cathedral & Church Buildings Department’s conservation grants programme, where we awarded over £555,031 in grants to 177 projects in 37 dioceses. We will be continuing this into 2026. Below is a quick overview of the types of grants available to parishes:

- Groundwork and conservation reports: grants towards the works needed to analyse the root causes of deterioration before any treatment can take place
- Fabric repairs associated with conservation: grants towards fabric repairs that are necessary before treatment can begin (e.g. fixing a broken gutter before wall paintings / monument conservation) – parishes can contact the Conservation Grants team for more details conservationgrants@churchofengland.org
- Conservation: grants towards the treatment of historic interiors and churchyard structures

Further information can be found on our website [Conservation Grants | The Church of England](#)

Health and wellbeing strategy

Historic England has published its new Wellbeing and Heritage Strategy 2025-2030 alongside a new report which reveals local historic places are vital for mental health. The new [Wellbeing and Heritage Strategy](#) sets out how Historic England wants to work in partnership with local authorities, the health and social care sector and local people to use heritage to build happier and healthier communities across the country. To see what has already been done see: [Wellbeing and Heritage Impact Report 2022-2025](#).

Finally, if you need any support regarding work on your buildings, please get in touch with me and I will do my best to find you the information that you require.

Kind regards
Martin

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