

# Minor Repairs and Improvement Grants – Diocese of Leicester

## Notes for Applicants

### **Background**

In their funding allocations for the 2023-25 triennium, the Church Commissioners agreed to provide a fund of just over £6m for grants towards small-scale repairs and improvements to local churches. The *Minor Repairs & Improvements* (MR&I) fund has been devolved to dioceses to distribute and the Diocese of Leicester has secured up to £148,500 to distribute during 2024-2025 which will be released in tranches over two years and all of the money must be allocated and all funded works completed by 31 December 2025.

The idea behind the fund is to build on a government funded pilot scheme which took place in a number of dioceses following a government review of the sustainability of English churches and cathedrals called the Taylor Review. Grant recipients were very positive about this pilot scheme and felt that it had helped to make minor repair work happen faster than would otherwise have been the case., thus preventing further damage to historic fabric and preventing costs from spiralling. This is the 'stitch in time' principle. This new grant scheme builds on the pilot with the aim of enabling urgent minor repairs to be undertaken before costs rise.

Any PCC can make an application provided they have a project that meets the eligibility criteria set out in the accompanying document.

### **Meetings of the Grant awarding panel**

Application forms are available from [ChurchBuildings@LeicesterCofE.org](mailto:ChurchBuildings@LeicesterCofE.org) and should be received no later than 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

The panel will meet every 8 weeks, whether in person or online, to discuss and review applications received.

A simple scoring system will be used, factoring in the urgency of the works and the deprivation ranking of the parish concerned, along with other pertinent information relating to the works and context of the parish presented in the application.

A written decision will be given as soon as practicable following the meeting.

Successful applicants will then receive information regarding the process for accepting and drawing down the grant.

### **Additional Terms of reference and policy**

Grants will be awarded for eligible works only according to the criteria set out in the separate Eligibility Criteria document.

Grants will only be awarded subject to availability of funds in each tranche of funding.

Repeat or further applications will not normally be considered unless funds permit later in the funding cycle and priority will be given to first time applicants.

Where funds are restricted in any funding period but a clear case is made in a non-time-critical situation, the panel may reserve the right to consider an application in the next funding window.

The maximum grant awarded is normally related to the ranking on the CUF deprivation index, but not usually more than £5k. The panel has discretion to vary this if need can be demonstrated by an applicant from a parish in the 20% most-deprived parishes. *There are 12382 parishes nationally so to be in the top 20% the overall deprivation score for the parish needs to be under 2476. The level of deprivation of a parish can be found using the Church Urban Fund Look Up Tool ([CUF Look Up Tool - CUF](#)).*

There is a presumption that grants will not normally be awarded retrospectively. However, each application will be assessed according to its own merits and the Panel has the right to determine this on a case-by-case basis.

Before any grant monies are paid over, evidence of relevant permission for the work in question must be provided e.g. a copy of a faculty, Archdeacon's Written Notice ('List B'), etc.

The decision of the Panel in relation to any application is final.

The Panel consists of:

The Archdeacon of Leicester (or a nominated representative, currently the Revd Christopher Johnson, Vice-Chair of the DAC).

A Trustee of the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF): David Beeson

A nominee of the Chair of the DBF: Simon Britton

Michael Taylor, a trustee of Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust

The panel is assisted by the Church Buildings Team.