



Diocese of Leicester

# archdeacons' visitation news

## Dear Churchwardens



Welcome to this year's Visitation News. Whether you are a new Churchwarden or someone who has been fulfilling this role for some years, we are thankful for each and every one of you and the service you provide to your church communities.

The diocesan landscape continues to develop in many ways, as we articulate through our diocesan strategy, how we aim to see the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God in Leicester and Leicestershire through our three key questions and five strategic priorities. As Churchwardens, you play a crucial part in helping us bring that vision to fruition at a local level.

Last year, we spoke of the historical lens of stewardship and what is most important to pass to succeeding generations. Over the previous 12 months, we have seen renewed hope in this respect, as our work with schools has given children and young people a greater voice in shaping the future of our worshipping communities.

We have also seen a deepening response to our calling to care for creation, with over one hundred churches now registered as Eco Churches, supporting the biodiversity of their churchyards, engaging in outdoor worship, and reducing their carbon footprint.

As a person of faith, who seeks to underpin the hopes and aspirations of your worshipping community, you play a vital role in supporting church council members and those in ministry to respond to these calls.

This is also true of your part in ensuring our worshipping communities are safe places for even the most vulnerable in our communities. I am sure you are all aware that the focus on safeguarding of all God's people remains paramount and is an important expression of Christ's call to love one another as He loves us. Thank you for all you do in being vigilant in this regard and encouraging good practice.

Your place as Churchwarden is more than ever a gift to the church you serve, not only in ensuring good order and practice, but also

in bringing stability and security during a time of reflection and debate in the church at a national level.

At the same time, we know that the sense of ongoing change, whether in the diocese or in the national Church, can be challenging. So, to support you in your duties, the Archdeacons will be holding the **Churchwardens' and Officers' training day on 21st September at Leicester Forest East**. More details will follow in due course, but please do put the date in your diary. This session has proved invaluable to new and longstanding wardens alike, and we look forward to seeing you there.

As we gather with you at the visitation services this year, we would love to hear of the work and activities that are happening in your area, so that we can encourage you, support you in prayer, and share the stories of God at work more widely.

We are enormously grateful for all you do in your ministry as Churchwardens, and we look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

With kind wishes.



**The Venerable Richard Worsfold**  
Archdeacon of Leicester  
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## A Diverse Brief



Andy Brockbank

What brings together staff contracts, safeguarding policies, the Church Representation Rules, property deeds, Synod standing orders and the keys of several closed church buildings? There may be several answers to this question, but one of them is 'my desk'.

As Director of Operations and Governance for the DBF,

my role covers all of these and one or two more things. Some of it happens behind the scenes and may be of relatively little interest to Churchwardens and other local church officers. But I'm also regularly contacted by our clergy and parishes in connection with the above and more.

This can include support for church officers around governance issues: where to find and interpret the rules that govern PCCs. It may be about property matters around church/village halls or what to do with old PCC records (Answer: send them to the County Records Office in Wigston!) or it could be an HR query about a parish employee. I also take queries from clergy about matters relating to their terms of service. Most recently, this has been about jury service.

Perhaps my most niche role is in relation to closed church buildings, where, working with colleagues in the Church Buildings Team and the Archdeacons, I work to find a new use for the handful of buildings that are no longer needed for worship.

Some of my work, of course, involves supporting diocesan governance and I support a range of committees as well as Diocesan Synod and the Bishop's Council. A large piece of work over the last 18 months has been about implementing a new governance structure for the diocese. And I work alongside the Safeguarding Team helping to ensure that our churches are places where people are able to grow in faith in a safe environment.

A former incumbent in the diocese used to refer to me as the Director of Randomness. Thankfully, it's not quite as chaotic as that, but if you have a query that you don't know who to go to with, it could well end up on my desk.

### **Andy Brockbank**

Director of Operations and Governance



## Insights from being an Assistant Archdeacon

During 2023 and 2024, the **Revs Richard Trethewey, Kim Ford** and **Christopher Johnson** have been acting as Assistant Archdeacons, fulfilling some different aspects of the Archdeacon's role in order to support the ministry of the wider diocese. They share some of the insights they've gained below.

It has been interesting for each of us to see the life of the diocese from a new perspective. As parish clergy, each in very different contexts, we know the hard work and faithfulness that so many volunteers offer to serve the life of God's church and nothing from our secondments would convince us otherwise! What has been really helpful for us to see has been how the systems within 'The Diocese' work at close quarters and to gain a greater understanding of the various moving parts within it, particularly in terms of why it can sometimes be difficult to provide a quick answer. Those in central roles are working incredibly hard and the same people are sometimes fulfilling more than one role as part of their job. We've seen firsthand the love and the care that the Archdeacons have for those under their care, to help them through challenging situations.

We've seen the more difficult side of parish life where relationships have become strained or a problem hasn't been given the priority it should have been. One thing we're really aware of, both as parish clergy and as Assistant Archdeacons, is how the landscape is forever shifting in terms of governance and compliance. This is a noted issue from national to local level but one that we all need to be attentive to in the future as the less-formal solutions can't always be relied upon in the way that they once were. All sorts of strange things crop up in this role but it's rare that a parish will be the first to ask a question – though we've enjoyed the challenge when they are!

**Finally, we reaffirm the importance of taking each opportunity to say it. So, 'thank you for all you do!'**





# Enhance your church's fundraising efforts

Whether you're raising funds for new facilities, building repairs, youth worker recruitment, or daily running costs, the Ecclesiastical Fundraising Hub provides resources to aid your church's growth in fundraising. This practical hub is organised into user-friendly steps, each offering information, guidance and tools, regardless of your fundraising experience.

Explore a wealth of articles, blogs and supporting documents on various topics such as digital fundraising, capital projects, understanding the grants process and forming fundraising teams. Access a free searchable list of church funders providing grants, along with tailored fundraising support for small rural churches.

Also, to support time-constrained churches and volunteers, looking for quick information on the diverse fundraising landscape, the hub offers concise, insightful bitesize videos addressing key fundraising issues. Additionally, sign up for live, free webinars conducted in collaboration with Philanthropy Company across 2024. For additional help, call the fundraising helpline below.

📞 0345 601 9959

🌐 [www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising)



## An update from grant-making charity, Benefact Trust



# BENEFACT TRUST

Every day, Benefact Trust, the charitable owner of Benefact Group, witnesses the crucial role churches and charities play in our communities. Since the Trust was established in 1972, it has awarded over £256m in funding to support these organisations to thrive and make a positive

impact in society. Benefact Trust's grants support a range of causes and there are many heart-warming stories to be found on the website.

🌐 [www.benefacttrust.co.uk/news](http://www.benefacttrust.co.uk/news)



## Nominate your church for a chance to win



The Movement for Good Awards programme is back again with grants of £1,000 and more to give to churches and charities. Ecclesiastical is proudly part of the Benefact Group, who are giving away over £1 million to churches and charities in the 2024 Movement for Good Awards.

### £1,000 draws are now open for nominations

- You can nominate your church or favourite charity for the £1,000 draw.
- You can nominate as many charities as you like; it's one nomination per charity per person.

There are six £1,000 draws this year giving away between £50,000 and £120,000 in each. Once you've nominated, share your nomination, and get your friends and family to support too.

### Did you know?

**The Movement for Good Awards has gifted over £5.75 million to more than 2,500 charities since the initiative started in 2019.**

Last year, A Rocha UK was awarded £5,000 in the Environment and Climate special draw. A Rocha UK is a Christian charity working to protect and restore the natural world and is committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment.

Also, in 2023, £11,000 was awarded to 10 church-related charities through the £1,000 Movement for Good Awards; Kilkenny Christian Centre in ROI actually won twice! So please get nominating; next time it could be your church! You can find out more at:

🌐 [www.movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical](http://www.movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical)

Contains promotional material

# Would you like to sign up for e-news?

The monthly e-news is full of useful information to support you in areas such as fundraising, church security and environmental impact. Signing up is easy and you can unsubscribe whenever you choose. Many of Ecclesiastical's customers have chosen to receive this and we hope you would like to join them.

 [www.ecclesiastical.com/signup](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/signup)



## Financial support for your 2025 sabbatical

**Established in 1987, the Ecclesiastical Ministry Bursary Awards (MBAs) have assisted over 1,400 clergy members in funding a variety of extended leave projects.**


The experience of a sabbatical can be life-changing and have a positive and long-lasting impact on your church and community. One of the 2023 recipients, the Rev'd. Heston Groenewald, vicar of All Hallows Church in Leeds, received a bursary to support his local interfaith ministry.

He visited India and Pakistan to experience and learn more about the diverse cultures and customs that make up the fabric of the local community. On his trip, Heston experienced the Holi festival in India and celebrated Easter with Christians and Muslims in Lahore.

**//** The MBA grant enabled an amazing adventure around India and Pakistan and so has been a valuable, wonderful investment in my wellbeing and in my local interfaith ministry. **// Rev'd. Heston Groenewald**

The application window for the 2025 MBA programme is now open and closes in September 2024. In 2025, we are particularly keen to see more sabbaticals which aim to support the drive for net zero carbon.

**If you would like to find out more about the Awards, including eligibility criteria and application details, please visit:**

 [www.ecclesiastical.com/mba](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/mba)



## Invest in making a difference

Worries about social matters, our planet and the environment are factors most of us think about daily. To do more to help address these concerns, there is increasing interest from people looking to invest ethically in accordance with their principles.

### What is ethical investing?

Richard Wood, Director of Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services (pictured below), explains, "Put simply, ethical investments allow people to invest without sacrificing their environmental, social, moral or religious principles while at the same time aiming to make a profitable return."



Ethical investment funds can be screened using negative or positive criteria. For negatively screened funds, the fund manager will, for example, be screening investments to avoid a range of activities considered harmful – such as companies involved in manufacturing tobacco.

When using positive screening, fund managers actively identify companies that make a positive

social impact or who invest sustainably and/or responsibly. They will have, for example, good corporate governance and employment practices as well as being active in making a positive impact on the environment.

To find out more about ethical investing, contact Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services today.

 **0800 107 0190**  
 **[getadvice@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:getadvice@ecclesiastical.com)**  
 **[www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice)**

Please note: The value of investments can go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount you invested. Your capital is at risk.



# Looking for help to go green?

## Give your parishioners a warm welcome!

We all want our church buildings to be welcoming spaces for both prayer and for wider community activities, but particularly in the chilly months, keeping buildings warm is a challenge and can be costly and harmful to the environment.

Wherever you are in your journey to reduce your church's carbon emissions, Ecclesiastical would like to help. For example, they would like to spread the word about some interesting innovations that they've come across recently.

## Warming chandeliers

St Matthew's has been trialling innovative radiant heating chandeliers in their church in Bristol. These chandeliers use a very gentle wavelength of heat, like that of the winter sun, and they warm just the space needed, not the whole church. They have proved much cheaper to run than a central heating system and can help to lower your carbon footprint.



Through the Movement for Good awards, Ecclesiastical awarded a £35,000 grant to St Matthew's in 2023, which will allow them to make the trial installation permanent. If you would like to consider applying for a similar grant, further information can be found on page 3. Also, if you wish to install this type of heating, please let the Ecclesiastical Underwriters

know, so that they can advise on any potential insurance implications and ensure the system itself is covered.

## Heated cushions

Another innovation, helping church communities take steps to reduce their carbon emissions by warming people not spaces, is a heated seat cushion! These are powered by lithium-ion batteries which are widely used as a power source in portable electrical products. However,



if you do choose this option, it is important to select seat cushions and fabrics that have an appropriate fire performance and to follow the guidance on charging the cushions. Cushions should comply with British Standards and have the CE mark. If you think that this is an option for you, you will find guidance about the cushions here:

[www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-heated-cushions](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-heated-cushions)

Ecclesiastical has also developed a new Made Simple guide, which can support you on your journey to make your church buildings more environmentally friendly. It includes information about other alternative heating systems like heat pumps, information about LED lighting and much more.

[www.ecclesiastical.com/madesimple](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/madesimple)

If you have any tips that have helped your church in its environmental journey, why not drop Ecclesiastical an email and they can share your ideas in their monthly digital newsletter.

[weboffice@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:weboffice@ecclesiastical.com)



# Insurance made simple!

As church insurance experts, Ecclesiastical is well placed to help you navigate many of the complicated insurance responsibilities of your church. They have created a series of 'Made Simple' guides which highlight potential risks and insurance implications of the day-to-day running of churches.



The guides also offer help with activities and projects that PCCs often become involved in, which include:

- Climate change and your church
- Administering insurance
- Building works
- Church events
- Church property
- Church valuation
- Community outreach
- Digital technology
- Legal expenses
- People on church premises
- Unoccupied buildings

You can find lots more information at:

[www.ecclesiastical.com/madesimple](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/madesimple)

Herschel Infrared



## Funeral planning

As you know, funerals can be costly, but Ecclesiastical can help you make provisions to reduce the financial worry for your family when the time comes and ensure your wishes are provided for.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Terms and conditions apply – see website for details.

☎ **0800 055 6503**  
✉ **info@epsfunerals.com**  
🌐 **www.funeralplans.co.uk**

## Car insurance

Ecclesiastical's Clergy Motor Insurance has been tailored specifically for the clergy and includes benefits such as business use, unlimited windscreen cover and up to £500 cover for church goods in the car.<sup>1</sup> To find out more about the benefits of this policy, get in touch with Ecclesiastical.

☎ **0345 450 9396**  
🌐 **www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance**  
<sup>1</sup> Subject to terms and conditions



## Month by month support



So you can better look after your church and parishioners, Ecclesiastical has again produced their easy-to-view calendar to help you plan maintenance activities throughout the year.

🌐 **www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-calendar**

## Insure your home with Ecclesiastical and they will donate £130 to a church of your choice

Trust130 is just one of the ways in which Ecclesiastical gives back to the community; for every new direct home insurance policy taken out, Ecclesiastical offers to donate £130 to an Anglican church or cathedral of the policyholder's choice.<sup>1</sup>

Since 2017, Ecclesiastical has donated over £500,000 to more than 2,500 churches in the UK.

A £130 donation really helped **St Peter's Church in Parwich**. Church Treasurer **Stuart Chambers** told Ecclesiastical:

“ If you're short of numbers, it's a big job keeping everything ship-shape. I have a ride-on mower, but you can't get to the actual graves on that so inevitably they can look a bit unkempt, which is a real shame. ”

With the £130 donation, St Peter's was able to keep its graveyard looking neat and tidy by paying for a man with a strimmer.

### Award-winning home insurance

As well as supporting your church, when you take out a home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical you are joining one of the most trusted home insurance providers with the happiest customers.<sup>2</sup>



Ecclesiastical continued to top the Fairer Finance league table in Spring 2024 for home insurance for a record 19th consecutive time, retaining the gold ribbon status. Their buildings and contents cover is also a Which? Best Buy and it was voted the best home insurance in the Times Money Mentor Awards in 2023.<sup>3</sup>



### Get a home insurance quote

Ecclesiastical is a specialist insurer who understands the needs of those working in the church and for the church. Their policy helps to protect your home and takes into account the extra duties you carry out for the church.

☎ **0345 777 3322** and quote **CHOPS24**  
🌐 **www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance**

<sup>1</sup> Terms and conditions apply. Visit [www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130-terms](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130-terms) <sup>2</sup> [www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customer-experience-ratings/home-insurance](http://www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customer-experience-ratings/home-insurance) <sup>3</sup> [www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance)



# Minor Repairs and Improvements Grants



The Diocese of Leicester has secured up to £148,500 from the Church Commissioners' *Minor Repairs and Improvements* scheme to distribute during 2024-2025. Grants of up to £5k are available (£10k for those within the 20% most-deprived parishes on the Church Urban Fund deprivation index) to support parishes in the upkeep of their buildings by making minor 'stitch in time' repairs or to facilitate small improvements to aid the mission and ministry of the local church.

Any PCC can make an application provided they have a project that meets certain eligibility criteria but the grant panel will prioritise repairs marked as urgent by quinquennial inspection (QI) reports and those improvements that will enable local mission but may not necessarily attract funding. Examples might include: stonework, rainwater goods, electrical work, and works to improve access to buildings.

It's very much hoped that these funds will prove to be a blessing and an encouragement to parishes, especially where lack of funds and small grants might be preventing a project from getting off the ground. Detailed eligibility criteria and an application form are available at:

 [www.leicester.anglican.org/minor-repairs-improvements-fund](http://www.leicester.anglican.org/minor-repairs-improvements-fund)

# Faculty Jurisdiction

The **Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2023** were passed by General Synod on 10 July 2023 and came into force on 01 January 2024. These amendments address the issue commonly referred to as 'contested heritage'. Contested heritage is where historic objects, structures, buildings or places where the associated stories or meanings have since become challenged.

**In short, the amendments require:**

- a. Those intending to apply for a faculty relating to contested heritage to have due regard to statutory guidance on that subject issued by the **Church Buildings Council (CBC)** and to demonstrate they have done so; and
- b. Chancellors, when giving reasons for granting or refusing a faculty petition in relation to contested heritage, to state how their decision has taken the statutory guidance into account.



Lee Coley

Therefore, the amendments require any petitions proposing the movement, removal or alteration of statue, plaque, memorial, monument or other article due to it being considered as being in conflict with the role of a church as a local centre of worship and mission, must, as part of the faculty application process, provide an explanation of how they

have had due regard to guidance issued by the CBC. The amendments also set out which documents must be submitted to the DAC when the petitioners are seeking advice on the proposals. Additionally, a further duty is placed on the DAC when issuing its notification of advice in that it is now required to state whether it considers the petitioners' explanation of how they have had due regard to the CBC guidance is adequate and, if it considers that it is not, it must give reasons for that opinion.

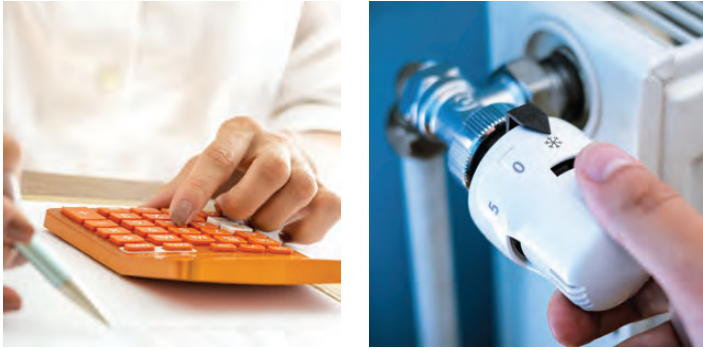
As well as further duties being placed on petitioners and the DAC, the new amendments also place a duty on Chancellors. Chancellors must now give reasons for the granting or refusing of any faculty relating to contested heritage and in doing so must clearly state how they have taken into account any relevant statutory guidance issued by the CBC.

**Lee Coley**  
Registrar of the Dioceses of Leicester



# Managing Energy Costs

The rise in energy costs is of great concern to many and you may be looking into lower-cost ways to heat and light your church. By planning ahead and taking sensible precautions, it is possible to reduce energy costs and minimise risks to your property and its occupants, avoiding the enormous inconvenience and financial impact of property damage.



## Central heating

If you're planning on reducing your heating output to just a few areas of the building, it's worth considering reduced heating can cause damp and mould to form in unused areas.

Many radiators are fitted with thermostatic valves that control the heat output, giving better energy efficiency. We recommend turning the valve down to a lower setting in unused areas to help keep the area damp free rather than turning heating off. This will also significantly reduce the risk of water pipes bursting. Water leaks can cause major property damage and enormous inconvenience. Radiators in occupied areas can be set at higher temperatures, as desired for comfort.

Important items, such as paintings and rugs may be susceptible to damage in colder conditions. These items should be relocated to warmer parts of the property or suitably protected by appropriate coverings where there is a risk of damage.

## Portable heaters

The use of portable heaters may be considered as an alternative. If you are considering using portable heaters, we recommend the following checks before usage:

- Before purchase, check the heater is not included on published recall lists. Defective heaters are a known common cause of fires and even death.
- Use of portable gas, paraffin and other flammable liquid heaters should be avoided. They significantly increase the risk of fire.
- Ensure heaters are maintained as recommended by the manufacturer and kept in good working order. Only a competent person should undertake servicing or repairs.
- Heaters must be kept away from combustible items, including timber furniture and altar frontals.
- Before moving any heater, ensure it is turned off and has cooled down.
- Do not leave portable heaters operating unsupervised.

## Candles

Candles are, of course, synonymous with churches but are not recommended as an alternative form of lighting. Battery-powered torches or candles that are pre-charged should be considered as an alternative. If candles are used, they should be kept in holders designed for purpose and sited well away from furnishings, especially curtains. They must be extinguished before leaving a room.



By planning ahead and taking sensible precautions, it is possible to reduce energy costs and minimise risks to your property and its occupants, avoiding the enormous inconvenience and financial impact of property damage. Find out more at:

 [www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/energy-savings-guidance](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/energy-savings-guidance)

## For more information

**Call:** 0345 777 3322 **Email:** [churches@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:churches@ecclesiastical.com)

**Facebook:** Ecclesiastical **X:** @churchmatters

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