



archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens

Welcome to this year's edition of Archdeacons' Visitation News.

We are all aware of the significant challenges facing our society and the whole world at this time. Alongside the terrible situation in Ukraine, there is the cost-of-living crisis, disruption to public services, natural disaster and fear about a climate emergency; to which you can surely add many other concerns, both great and small.

The Christian faith does not protect us from the reality of life in this world, but it does offer us hope. Central to our hope is that God is always with us and that he can bring good out of every situation.

"Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8.38-39)

Your faithfulness and the faithful work you do in your parishes is a clear sign of God at work in our midst. Our Sunday visits over the past year have been a source of great encouragement as we have seen how local people are enabling churches to emerge from the worst of the pandemic, amidst all of the other challenges, to bring forth spiritual life and growth. **Thank you so much for all that you do.**

One of the Diocese's major tasks is **Deanery Development Planning**. This involves important questions about the deployment of ministry and financial sustainability, but it is much more than that. The aim is to gather your goals and aspirations for ministry and mission in order to focus Diocesan support on what local churches most want and need. A particularly useful aid to your thinking and planning is the material generated by the REACH Ely project, more of which can be read later in this edition and on the Diocesan website here: www.elydiocese.org/church-in-action/reach-ely.

It was great to see so many of you at the Churchwardens' training day in February (2023), which had a record turnout and generated lots of very positive feedback. Please look out for further details of the next Churchwardens' training day to be held in late September 2023.

With thanks for our fellowship in the Gospel,
Richard and Alex



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Churchwardens' Training Day 2023

Calling to all Churchwardens across the Diocese



We would like to invite you to attend this year's Churchwardens' Training Day which will, as ever, be of interest to all Churchwardens, whether you are newly elected or have been in post for some time.

If you know of someone within your parish who might be thinking about serving as a Churchwarden in the future, do encourage them to come along too, as the day is a good overview of what to expect when in office.

Date: Saturday 16 September
Time: 9.45am to 3.30pm
Venue: St Mary's Church, Ely

Further details will be shared in due course and made available on the Diocesan website here: www.elydiocese.org/churchwarden-training-day.php

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Energy and heating churches

Geoffrey Hunter, DAC Secretary and Head of the Church Buildings and Pastoral Department

In 2020, the Church of England General Synod voted to set a target date for 'Net Zero Carbon' of 2030. Since 2020, the increase in the cost of energy has introduced a further imperative.

The Church Buildings Council has produced a suite of documents to assist churches. You can access these on the Church of England website by clicking on this link www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/heating. This guidance focuses on saving both carbon and money. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. The process of planning what to do must start with each church reviewing what it needs from its heating system.

The old principle of heating the entire building via radiators or underfloor heating may be the right approach for some churches in regular use and for long periods. For most rural churches, the approach needs to be quite different.

Church buildings were not generally heated at all until the nineteenth century and there is a misconception that heating is good for the building fabric. The most authoritative advice now is that this is not the case and too much heating can be harmful, thus we no longer think about heating the church, but about heating the people!

For churches with fixed seating, heat sources around the seating area can be a good approach. Pew heaters are now more efficient and often do not require Faculty consent. Heated pew cushions may also answer both the question of heating and making pews more comfortable.

Radiant heating has also developed in recent years, with new types of wall-mounted heater that don't glow brightly and can be more easily hidden. These are useful in churches which don't have pews or for when people aren't sitting. These localised heating systems are also easy to 'zone', providing heat in the areas in use. They also provide heat almost instantly and don't need to be switched on in advance.

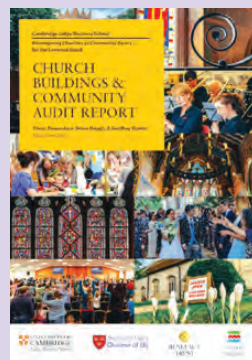
Further resources are available on the Church Buildings section of the Diocesan website.

Example of heated glass panels in church



Building security and the REACH Ely resources

Geoffrey Hunter, DAC Secretary and Head of the Church Buildings and Pastoral Department



The Church Buildings and Community Audit Report

Among the resources published as part of the REACH Ely project is guidance for churches on 'safe opening'. Responses to the REACH audit indicated that many churches had not returned to their pre-pandemic opening patterns and more churches are now being left locked.

Ecclesiastical has consistently advised that keeping churches open for visitors during the day reduces the risk of a break-in and theft. Even if your church gets very few visitors, the fact it is unlocked makes any would-be thief worried they might be disturbed.

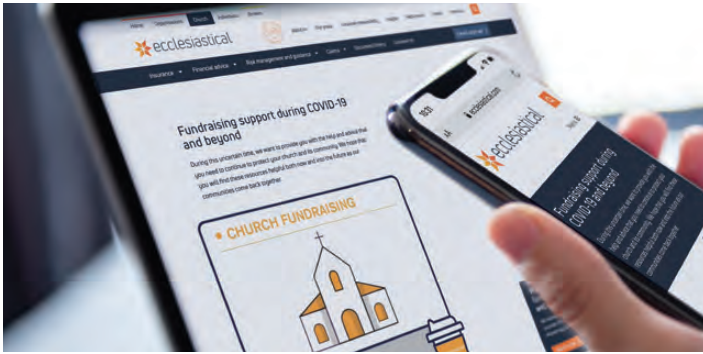
The majority of church break-ins lead to little of real monetary value being stolen. The bulk of the cost from break-ins is in fixing the damage caused from the break-in itself.

Churches do have treasures of course, and items of value should be locked in a secure safe. We are aware that some churches are storing their keys in a church 'key safe'. We would discourage that practice as it makes it obvious where the keys are and it is normally an easy job for a thief to access a key safe.

Computer and audio-visual equipment is often the most attractive item for thieves as it is easily sold on. In designing how these technologies are installed, PCCs should consider how they can be kept safe from theft and design-in storage for moveable items.

For churches who can't find volunteers to regularly open and close the church, a relatively new development is the automatic timed lock. These are not a substitute for regular inspections, but they do mean these inspections don't have to be first thing in the morning. Some church buildings are left open 24/7 without incident of course. The risks of this approach should be carefully assessed with your insurer.

Advice from Ecclesiastical on safe opening of churches can be found in the REACH resources, along with a case study video on a time-lock installation. www.elydiocese.org/church-in-action/reach-ely



Fundraising hub to support your church

Fundraising has always been vital for churches, from the traditional, well-loved flower festivals and cake sales to the world of digital fundraising opportunities that the internet has opened up. But it can be daunting to know where to start, so Ecclesiastical's easy-to-use online fundraising hub is here to help with great ideas and simple advice.

Drawing on the advice of experts and our own 135 years' experience in working with churches, we've pulled together a range of top tips to help you boost existing income streams and develop new ones. There's help with researching sources of funding and writing professional grant applications that can make all the difference to the answer you receive. There are great video webinars with fundraising specialists offering their insights into key fundraising issues.

Other guidance includes fundraising in less affluent areas, fundraising in rural parishes, how to build a fundraising team and more to keep your congregation and the wider community informed and engaged.

There are plenty of useful resources and handy templates for all types of churches on our Church Fundraising Hub at www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising

Nominate your church for a chance to win



The Movement for Good giving programme is back with awards of £1,000 to give to charities helping those in need. Ecclesiastical is proudly part of the Benefact Group, and together they are giving away over **£1 million** to charities in the 2023 Movement for Good Awards.

£1,000 draws are now open for nominations

- You can nominate your favourite charity or church at any time for the £1,000 draw.
- It's one nomination per charity, per person, so if you have more than one favourite, get them in the running today!
- There are three £1,000 draws this year giving away between £120,000 and £150,000 in each.
- Once you've nominated, share your nomination and get your network to support too.

Get nominating and find out more at www.movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical

Did you know?

In 2022, 15 churches each won a £1,000 grant.

There were thousands of nominations for these churches. The more nominations received, the greater their chance of winning.



Contains promotional material

Rebuilding the historic Church of the Ascension in Salford

In February 2017, a fire broke out at the Grade-II listed Church of the Ascension in Lower Broughton, Salford, Greater Manchester. Six crews from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service battled for hours to contain the blaze, which ultimately devastated the building.



Many members of the local community gathered outside the church building to survey the damage, some reduced to tears. Much used and loved by young and old, the building plays an important role in both spiritual and social terms as an inclusive community space accessible to all. The church had recently undergone a £250,000 restoration project which people in the community had helped to fund.

Immediately following the fire, Ecclesiastical carefully assembled the right team of experts to attend the site as soon as the fire service authorised it.

Repair work began in October 2018 with teams of carefully selected experts appointed to complete the works. Phase one included reinstatement of the structural elements of the building,



such as columns, roof structures and slate coverings; stone and brick repairs; stained glass window and window guard replacements; and ceiling finishes.

Phase two began in September 2021, focusing on preserving the historical features of the church. As part of the restoration, Ecclesiastical worked with customers to build in modernisations to enable them to make the space better serve the requirements of today's use.

Restoration of the building was completed by the end of September 2022.

In November 2022, the church and community came together to mark the completion of the £5m restoration project with a rededication ceremony.

Read the story in full and see more pictures at www.ecclesiastical.com/church-of-the-ascension

// It has been a long five and a half years since the fire... we can now look forward to the future with a beautifully restored church which is fit for the 21st century. //

Shirley Kehoe, PCC Secretary at the Church of the Ascension



Take our advice – for a brighter future

Ecclesiastical is well-known as a leading insurer of churches and other heritage buildings. But many people aren't aware that we also have a stand-alone financial advice arm here to help you make the most of your money.

Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services (EFAS) provides fully independent advice on pensions, investments, life assurance and mortgages for the clergy, church community and PCCs.



You don't have to be an insurance customer to use the service – we're happy to help anyone – but we obviously have specialist knowledge of the church sector, as IFA Kieran Harper explains.

'I've been in the industry for seventeen years and with Ecclesiastical for all but two of those,' said Kieran, who's based in our Gloucester office. 'When it comes to

providing regulated financial advice to the clergy and the wider church community, that experience helps.

'Many of our customers are clergy – we understand their pension scheme, we know about the issues with living in tied accommodation such as vicarages – so when it comes to retirement planning, we're already ahead of the game. We also have a deep understanding of ethical and sustainable investing – as you would expect of a company with such strong links to the church – and this area is getting ever more popular with a lot of our customers.'

Please get in touch to find out how Kieran and his colleagues could help you.



0800 107 0190



getadvice@ecclesiastical.com



www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice

Have you signed up for Ecclesiastical's monthly e-news?



This monthly email is full of tips and information for all Ecclesiastical's church customers and anyone in your church community. Signing up is easy and, if at any time you decide you no longer want to receive it, you can click the 'unsubscribe' button at the

bottom of the email. Feel free to pass the sign-up link to anyone you think would like it.

Sign up at www.ecclesiastical.com/signup

Support for your 2024 sabbatical

Are you planning on taking a sabbatical in 2024?

Did you know that there may be support available for you through Ministry Bursary Awards? Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards provide financial support for members of the clergy taking extended study leave, and we are now accepting applications for sabbaticals taking place in 2024.

The experience of a sabbatical can be life-changing and have a long-lasting impact on your church and community.

Established in 1987, the Ecclesiastical Ministry Bursary Awards have supported over 1,400 members of the clergy to finance a wide range of extended leave projects and plans. The application window runs between April and September. Judging will take place in November 2023, with the awards made in December 2023.

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

www.ecclesiastical.com/mba



Have you visited the Ecclesiastical website recently?

It's full of information to help you run your church, such as the **Made Simple Guides**, which cover these key topics:

- Church insurance made simple
- Administering your church insurance
- Building works
- Church events
- Church property
- Community outreach
- Legal expenses
- People on church premises

You will also find information about church, home, commercial and legal insurance and how to make a claim. **Explore the website at www.ecclesiastical.com/church**

Protect your home and support your church with £130 donation



As part of a financial services group that exists to give its available profits to good causes, one of the ways in which Ecclesiastical do this is through the Trust130 Home Insurance offer. For every new direct home insurance policy taken out, Ecclesiastical offer to donate £130 to an Anglican church or cathedral of the policyholder's choice.¹

Originally launched in 2017 to celebrate the 130th anniversary, Ecclesiastical has since donated more than £460,000, helping to support over 2,500 churches. A donation of £130 may not sound like much, but churches and congregations have used the donations in many creative ways to fund all sorts of things.

In the **Parish of Harpenden**, the donation will be used to support Cornelia's Coffee Shop, which is a community resource that enables them to engage with local people, offering fellowship and raising funds for charity.

It needs some new equipment – not least, a new freezer – and the donation will help in this general regard. It does great work to benefit the community and other great causes. One of our recent events at Cornelia's was to help our local Ukrainian arrivals.

Kevin Featherstone, Parish Warden

St Mary's Church, Wythall, used their donations to offer a weekly hot meal to families struggling with the increase in the cost of living.

This happens directly after school and includes activities for children and a Bible story or video. £130 will pay for meals for about 20 families, funding the food for about two weeks, which is a great boost financially, but also to the step of faith which this venture is.

Pam Miller, Treasurer

Award-winning home insurance



As well as supporting your church, when you take out a home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical you are joining the most trusted home insurance provider with the happiest customers.

Ecclesiastical continued to top the Fairer Finance league table in spring 2023 for home insurance for a record 17th consecutive time, retaining the gold ribbon status.² Ecclesiastical was also voted the best home insurance provider in the Times Money Mentor Awards in 2022.³

For more information about Trust130 and Home Insurance, visit www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

Call us for a home insurance quote on **0345 777 3322** and mention code **TRUSTPA**.

¹ Terms and conditions apply. ² www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customer-experience-ratings/home-insurance ³ www.thetimes.co.uk/money-mentor/article/times-money-mentor-awards-2022-winners



Car insurance

Our Clergy Motor Insurance is tailored specifically for the clergy and includes benefits such as business use, no admin charges and up to £500 cover for church goods in the car.¹

0345 450 9396
www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance

¹ Subject to terms and conditions.



Funeral planning

Ecclesiastical can help you make financial provision for your funeral, reducing the worry for your family and ensuring your wishes are provided for. Terms and conditions apply.

0800 055 6503
info@epsfunerals.com
www.funeralplans.co.uk

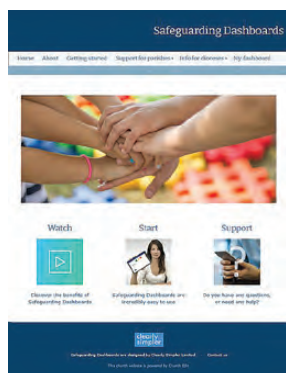
Has your parish signed-up to the Safeguarding Dashboard?

Rebecca Boswell, Safeguarding Advisor

New policies and procedures are making churches safer, but they have also brought a significant increase in the amount of administration for church leaders and Safeguarding Officers. This is where Safeguarding Dashboards can help.

Safeguarding Dashboards

Safeguarding Dashboards (www.safeguardingdashboards.org.uk) is addressing this challenge by making safeguarding administration simpler. It is available free to Church of England churches in participating dioceses, of which the Diocese of Ely is one.



Parish Safeguarding Dashboard

Authorised users can see the status of safeguarding within their parishes at a glance. A traffic light system highlights areas with 'Green lights' bringing reassurance that all is well, 'Amber' indicating that action is needed and 'Red' flagging something in need of urgent attention.

Each light has an information page that explains what action is required, and these pages also contain links to other useful resources. Speak to your Parish Safeguarding Officers

to explain more about this tool, and if your church is not using it, please make contact with the Diocesan Safeguarding team (sarah.king@elydiocese.org) so we can help sign you up.

Safeguarding Hubs

The Church of England updated its Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance in 2021. It includes mandatory requirements for parishes that came into force in January 2022.

To support parishes, in addition to the Safeguarding Dashboards, there is now an additional tool available to your Parish Safeguarding Officers called 'Safeguarding Hubs'.

Safeguarding Hubs are making parishes safer by helping them to meet the Church of England's safeguarding requirements. The Safeguarding Hubs will, through the use of the Role Creator, People Manager and Recruitment Tracker, assist parishes in meeting their requirements.

For more information on the Safeguarding Hubs, visit here: www.safeguardingdashboards.org.uk/info/safeguarding-hubs/hubs.php

If you're not sure if your parish is using the Safeguarding Dashboards or Safeguarding Hubs, please do speak to your Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding training – a requirement reminder

Rebecca Boswell, Safeguarding Advisor



We frequently find that parish role holders are unclear about what Safeguarding training modules they are required to have undertaken as part of their role and which of these need to be repeated. Core Safeguarding learning pathways (Basic Awareness, Foundation and Leadership) have been developed as a modular programme which builds learning according to role. These pathways should be completed in consecutive order until an individual has reached the required highest level of learning for their role.

The requirements for the most common Parochial Church Council and church volunteer and lay positions are highlighted below. More training is required for licensed role holders and those with particular Safeguarding and leadership positions, more on which can be found on the Diocesan website here: www.elydiocese.org/core-and-specialist-module-overview.php

We ask our Churchwardens who play a key leadership role within our churches to help support and encourage the completion of the Safeguarding training of their parish colleagues.

Parish Roles – all volunteer and paid roles in the parish church are required to complete:

1. Basic Awareness module (*renewal required every three years*)

PCC Members are required to complete:

1. Basic Awareness module
2. Foundation module (*renewal required every three years*)
3. Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse (*renewal required every three years*)

Churchwardens are required to complete:

1. Basic Awareness module
2. Foundation module (*renewal required every three years*)
3. Leadership module is also to be taken if the Parish is in vacancy. If this module is completed, renewal is required every three years in place of the requirement to renew the Foundation module.

Roles that have direct contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults are required to complete:

1. Basic Awareness module
2. Foundation module (*renewal required every three years*)
3. Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse (*renewal required every three years*)

Thank you for your continued support to keep our church spaces safe for all.

Schools and the work with our churches

Sarah Conant, Deputy Diocesan Director of Education (DDDE)

The importance of the work that schools undertake in developing the Church of England vision for education should not be underestimated.



*'In Church schools, the deeply Christian foundation for this vision will be seen explicitly in teaching and learning both in RE (Religious Education) and across the curriculum, and also in the authentically Christian worship and ethos of those schools.'**

With circa. 15,700 children attending one of the 85 Diocese of Ely church schools, school life plays an integral part of the work of the churches and their parishes. Children attend daily collective worship through participation both in school and in their local churches. This fosters a relationship between church and children, where children feel comfortable in church as they explore Christian values in a familiar setting.

The interaction with the parish through the local clergy, lay church leaders and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the cornerstone of church school life and is recognised in the work that the education team undertake.

The Team's role in schools is to support the leadership, both as educationalists and as those entrusted with the privilege of leading church schools. We aim to forge links between the parish and their schools through regular diocesan visits that explore the needs of both the schools and parishes and how working together can ensure that the vision is embracing *'the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people.'**

As a team, we also support school governance and the important role that foundation governors undertake, as well helping the schools develop their visions with their clergy 'enabling all to flourish' as part of SIAMS inspections.

To learn more about the work of the wider Schools team, please visit the Diocesan website at www.elydiocese.org/schools.

*Church of England Vision for Education Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good. Autumn 2016.



For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 **Email:** churches@ecclesiastical.com

Facebook: Ecclesiastical **Twitter:** @churchmatters



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