## Diocese of Bristol archdeacons' visitation news

### Dear Churchwardens

Churchwardens are important people! Not just because you are officers of the Bishop, nor because the office you hold has been around for some 900 years. You are important because you have said yes to Christ's call. A call to play a unique, responsible, and sometimes challenging role in our church communities. Thank you for all the work that you do!

This is a role that no one can do on their own. The Archdeacons have the great privilege of admitting Churchwardens to their office at the Visitations each year and these give us a moment to both commit to working together and to acknowledge that none of this can be done without God's help.

In the coming months, the implementation of the Diocesan strategy, 'Transforming Church. Together,' (TC.T), will continue to grow and shape the way we work together as we seek to follow Jesus, to serve others, and to transform communities.

A programme of events has already been happening throughout this year to help us explore together where this transformation might begin to happen in every community throughout the Diocese. We hope that you now have a good feel of what this will look like for your parish as we seek to be open, generous, creative, and brave in everything we do. If you would like help in working out what it looks like in your context than we work on that together too – you only have to ask!

The remainder of this year's Archdeacons' Visitation News contains stories and articles which we hope you will find helpful and inspirational in your work and calling to be a Churchwarden. Be assured of our prayers as we commit to doing this together and with the help of God.

### All change!



This year saw significant changes in our Archdeacon's Office after the appointment of Rt Revd Neil Warwick as Bishop of Swindon in late 2023. In response, Bishop Viv welcomed Revd Becky Waring as Acting Archdeacon of Bristol, and Revd Adam Beaumont as Associate Archdeacon across Bristol and Malmesbury.

Becky brings 20 years of parish ministry experience, focusing on enabling and equipping people, while Adam, with a background in biochemical research and teaching, is deeply passionate about supporting clergy. Both have now integrated into their respective roles and continue to play a crucial part in embedding TC.T in parishes. They share a commitment to fostering joy and fulfilment in ministry and are eager to witness God's work in local churches.



**Ven Christopher Bryan** Archdeacon of Malmesbury



**Revd Becky Waring** Acting Archdeacon of Bristol



Revd Adam Beaumont Associate Archdeacon

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## Getting your church to net zero: free audits!

## As a Churchwarden, adding another task to your list can be a daunting prospect but when the task at hand may end up saving your church money, whilst increasing its chances of reaching net zero carbon, it is worth your time...

In February 2020, General Synod recognised the climate emergency and voted to set a target for the whole Church of England of achieving 'net zero' carbon by 2030. This commitment requires us all to take action to reduce our carbon footprint.

Diocesan Environment & Sustainability Manager, Amy Dartington, and Officer, Kit Connell, are on-hand to offer you support in reaching your sustainability goals. The team is offering free energy audits for churches to help you achieve net zero by 2030, increasing the efficiency and reducing the financial impact of heating your church buildings.

To access this, we ask church representatives to complete the Energy Footprint Tool and return an application form, which you can find on our website. After the audit, each church can access up to £10,000 in grant funding to implement the recommendations made. The audit results will inform future support and programmes for church decarbonisation.

On our shared journey to bring our collective net carbon footprint down to zero, there are several steps churches can take to make their buildings more energy efficient. Your energy audit will provide excellent guidance of the route to achieve net zero. You may want to discuss your report with the environment team to determine next steps and the final preferred route to decarbonising your heating. Once your church has reached net zero, you will be awarded a celebratory Net Zero Church badge, which you can use alongside your Eco Church award on your website and social media platforms.



You can find out more about our Net Zero Church award and download practical resources from our website:

#### www.bristol.anglican.org/how-to-get-a-church-to-net-zero

To speak to a team member for support with the audit application process, or to join our Eco Champions network, contact:

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## Bristol DAC Awards 2024

Each year, the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) recognises outstanding church projects through its awards scheme. The DAC Awards acknowledge projects completed to exceptional standards of workmanship or those pivotal to a parish's growth and mission. In May, we gathered to celebrate achievements from across the Diocese.

The DAC forms a key part of the process, by guiding parishes through the proposal development process for their buildings and obtaining necessary consent for work. Collaborating closely with parishes, it assists in caring for buildings and adapting them to support mission and growth. Despite often facing significant challenges, so many of your churches demonstrate remarkable commitment and passion, resulting in wonderful stories of success. The evening was a huge encouragement and celebration. We were pleased to celebrate your successes with you, awarding parishes for their outstanding efforts to improve the care, maintenance, and development of their church buildings. Congratulations go to the parishes in receipt of awards.

Nominations for this year's awards may be made by anyone throughout the year but projects must be complete at the time of nomination. If you would like to find out more about the awards nomination process, email:

#### Sovernancesupport@bristoldiocese.org



### I want to know 'how to'...

The diocesan website is home to a range of 'how to' guides, which give you pointers on a host of topics. This includes everything from 'How to make the most of your church buildings' to 'How to make a great church website':

#### www.bristol.anglican.org/howto

In the coming months we are looking to develop more multimedia resources and training videos to enhance your learning experience. In the meantime, you can contact **comms@bristoldiocese.org** to ask for advice on how to access the information you need.

There is also a National Church resources site where you can find a treasure of information covering maintenance, administration, funding, and lots more:

#### $\bigoplus www.parishresources.org.uk/churchcare \\$

We also love this guide to church communications, written by Donor Box:

#### www.donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/church-communications

It highlights why church communications are so important, who to have on your team and creating a comms strategy.

## 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

 $\bigoplus$  www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising



### An update from grant-making charity, 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.



# 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:

Contains

www.movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical

## 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



## 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. **TRev'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:



## 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
- 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 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

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



### 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:



### 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.

### 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
- $\bigoplus www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance \\$

<sup>1</sup> Terms and conditions apply. Visit www.ecclesiastical.com/ trust130-terms <sup>2</sup> www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customerexperience-ratings/home-insurance <sup>3</sup> www.ecclesiastical.com/ homeinsurance

## Caring for our communities



Our churches stand not only as places of worship but as places of sanctuary for their surrounding communities. Across the Diocese we see amazing examples of generosity in action, embodying our core values of openness, generosity, creativity, and bravery. We want to highlight some of the brilliant work of our parishes that speaks to these values.

St Luke's in Barton Hill exemplified these values last year by supporting neighbours evacuated from Barton House. Through their long-standing work with children and families, and weekly food bank, they have extended support to both residents and the broader community, using the church crypt as a shared cooking facility. The church team continues to work with other community and faith leaders to support those living in temporary accommodation and to raise wider community housing concerns.

Similarly, Pattern Church in Swindon hosts Growbaby, providing free essential items like baby formula, nappies, and pushchairs to local families, regardless of income, background, or faith. Their commitment to welcoming all shows great openness and generosity.



As Christians, we are stewards of the earth, summoned to 'work it and take care of it'. Our parishes' efforts towards reaching net zero carbon highlights dedication to protecting God's creation. All Saints, Lydiard Millicent, have heated pews installed to provide comfort to churchgoers, whilst reducing carbon emissions. Elsewhere, St Matthew's, Kingsdown, have found a significant reduction in cost through their innovative low-carbon heating system, the 'Halo' radiant heating chandelier. We also congratulate Hazelnut Community Farm on receiving their Gold Eco Church Award for their on-going work with nature.

Inclusivity remains a cornerstone of our mission. Cotham Parish Church's recent re-ordering has made their space accessible, while LIGHT Church in Chippenham supports those with learning difficulties and their loved ones. Bristol Deaf Church takes place in Bradley Stoke to provide worship in British Sign Language and OpenTable runs monthly at St Paul's Church, Clifton, as a safe worship space for Christians in the LGBTQ+ community.

We want to celebrate and share your community support through Diocesan channels to foster a church environment that welcomes all people. Tell us about the work you are doing by emailing:

#### 🖂 comms@bristoldiocese.org

## Celebrating our growing communities

The philosophy behind any transformation is to address the root causes of current challenges and addressing those challenges head on. According to a 2022 survey, just 6% of adults in the UK are practicing Christians, whilst average Church of England Sunday service attendance was 509,000. To reach more people, we need the right forms of church in the right places, which is why celebrating our growing communities and looking to new forms of worship for inspiration sits as such a prominent part of our 'Transforming Church. Together' strategy.

Over the last year, we saw our newest church community, Concord Church, reach its first birthday, after being planted at Aerospace Bristol by St Nicholas Church in the city centre. Whilst in Chippenham we have seen the start of a new Mission Area,



which joins four churches in a shared endeavour to serve the continually growing Chippenham town and suburbs. These are two immensely exciting opportunities that are helping to reach people outside of our existing congregations.

We want to support parishes,

Concord Church

Bishop's Mission Orders, church grafts and plants, Fresh Expressions of Church, and chaplaincies in their goals to reach people in the places that they are, in the ways that best serve their individual communities. Whilst Fresh Expressions will be shaped and energised by people at the heart of your parish, we have a team of people on-hand to support you in everything from fundraising and communications to mission and ministry in your evolving communities.

If you would like to explore your ideas for any new forms of church, whether that is a Deanery Mission Area, church plant or graft, or a Fresh Expression within your existing community, don't hesitate to contact your Archdeacon for an initial conversation. If you're not yet sure what outreach looks like in your church context, our Adviser for Parish Development can help you establish an unclouded vision for your Parish, building on what you do well, and understanding where God is calling. Just contact:

#### mmsupport@bristoldiocese.org



### A message from your Giving and Resources Officer, James Morrey

We believe in a generous God who entered His creation to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Following in Jesus' footsteps means seeking to be like Him. Just as generosity was a hallmark of Jesus' life, so it should be a hallmark of ours.

We give thanks that we see evidence of this hallmark in action across the Diocese. We see people being generous with their time to walk alongside those who are exploring the claims of Christ. We see people being generous with their skills in serving others. We see people and churches being generous with their finances as they support others. One aspect of this generosity is Parish Share which embodies our shared belief that God has blessed us and so enabled us to give generously towards the work of Christ in the Diocese. Thank you to all those churches who are paying their Parish Share month by month in 2024 and were so generous in 2023.

I started as Giving and Resources Officer in January 2024, whilst also working as Parish Administrator for St Paul's Chippenham with Langley Burrell. So, I have a practical understanding of the challenges that fundraising for a parish can bring. If I haven't already done so, I hope to meet with you soon.

I can help you with a range of stewardship resources, advice on fundraising support and the Parish Giving Scheme, which is a simple and secure service for managing one-off and Direct Debit giving. It is designed to support churches with funding their mission and ministry while reducing the amount of administration! Registration is simple, and I can help.

Finally, thank you all for your hard work, devotion, and service of Christ, His people, and your communities. I look forward to supporting you in your ministries. If your church or parish are struggling financially, or have questions about Parish Share, please do contact me by emailing james.morrey@bristoldiocese.org, or alternatively to get hold of another member of the team, email:

#### ☑ fundraising@bristoldiocese.org

### Resources to support your role

• Safeguarding training: House of Bishops' guidance is that Churchwardens complete their safeguarding training, known as Basic Awareness (CO), Foundation (C1) and Leadership (C2). They are recommended to complete S1 and S3 as well. For more details, please contact safeguarding@bristoldiocese.org or call 0117 906 0100. You can book these and other courses on our website by visiting: www.bristol.anglican.org/safeguardingtraining

 Parish Officers' Days: We're back for 2024, and as Parish Officers, Churchwardens are invited, alongside PCC Treasurers and PCC Secretaries to a day of equipping, resourcing, and connection! So, keep an eye on your inboxes and our social channels for further updates:

Saturday 6th July 2024 in the Chippenham area Saturday 28th September 2024 in central Bristol

• House group booklets: We want to make it as easy as possible for you to convey what TC.T means in your contexts. On our website, you can find booklets exploring the four TC.T values, which you can use in your Small Groups: www.bristol.anglican.org/ resources-for-house-and-small-groups

Parish resources: You can find support for your Churchwarden role, such as guidance on how to make your church buildings accessible and dementia-friendly, DAC meeting dates, GDPR and all sorts of other resources by visiting: www.bristol.anglican.org/ resourcesforparishes

• Fundraising support for capital projects: If you are a parish seeking funding and support for capital projects, then have a look at our website. We have a comprehensive Diocesan Funding Guide listing local and national grant-making bodies, and guidance documents to help with planning and communicating your project. Visit: www.bristol.anglican.org/fundraising for more details or email: fundraising@bristoldiocese.org to speak to one of the team.

• Hear more from us: Our monthly Diocesan News email features events, campaigns, and news to be aware of across the Diocese. If you don't already receive this newsletter, you can sign up here: mailchi.mp/bristoldiocese/signup

You can also hear more about what is happening in Environment and Sustainability across the Diocese by signing up to our Eco Champions Newsletter. Email: environment@bristoldiocese.org to find out more.

#### For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 Email: churches@ecclesiastical.com **Facebook:** Ecclesiastical X @churchmatters



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