

 Diocese of Bath & Wells

# archdeacons' visitation news

## Dear Churchwardens

### Hard-pressed on every side! Perplexed!

Well those words sound like an apt description of what the experience of many a churchwarden can be like at times. These words are actually from the Apostle Paul, as he describes to the church in Corinth how he is feeling as a church leader. Don't you love Paul's honesty? But he doesn't stop there. In 2 Corinthians Chapter 4 he says: "we are hard pressed on every side but not crushed; perplexed but not in despair". He describes himself as like a cracked fragile storage jar, but inside there is treasure. Wonderful treasure. He describes that treasure in two ways. First, he says it is dazzling light, the light of knowing Jesus Christ, which keeps him going no matter how tough it feels. And second it's power, the power that can only come from God, that keeps him going in ministry.

As Archdeacons, we want to thank you SO much for your willingness to serve Jesus and his church at this time as churchwarden. It can be very tough. We are all facing struggles with resources, both human and financial. Each deanery is having to look hard at where stipendiary resources are deployed and that can create anxiety. However, we want to encourage you to fix your eyes on the wonderful good news of Jesus Christ as you embark on this year of being a churchwarden. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, so that that light can spur you on. And keep reminding yourself, that God's power is more than sufficient, and don't hesitate to cry out for more of it. God has promised it. And your Archdeacons are here to help as well. As, churchwardens, you are so vital to the thriving of the churches across this diocese. Please don't hesitate to be in touch if we can help in any way.

With our prayers and with our thanks

**Archdeacons Simon, Adrian and Charlie**



**Simon Hill**  
Archdeacon of Taunton

**Adrian Youings**  
Archdeacon of Bath

**Charlie Peer**  
Acting Archdeacon of Wells

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# Notices and Information...

## Churchwarden Days

We are pleased to offer two opportunities for this highly valued day exploring the role and responsibilities of the churchwarden and who can offer you support:

**Saturday 29th July and Saturday 23rd September**

Both sessions will be held in Flourish House, Wells. We strongly recommend this course to new churchwardens, and seasoned churchwardens are also encouraged to come for a refresher.

Booking via this link: <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=pmobfwCRBE200eGH02pcC6h5r5i1931BqoeLB-Npdh5UQkg0UEtZNFBTWVJPuzNFTk9aSFJSNThKRi4u>

Or contact Sophie Moore on [sophie.moore@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:sophie.moore@bathwells.anglican.org)

## Statistics for Mission

The National Church requests Statistics for Mission annually from each parish so that they are able to speak accurately about what is happening across the Church of England. These statistics include the counts from your Easter, October and Christmas services. The statistics are most easily completed online and, once registered, you can complete sections as you gather the relevant data.

If you aren't already on the system, you will either have the opportunity to be signed up at the Churchwardens' Days on Saturday 29 July and Saturday 23 September or contact Sue Whitehead [sue.whitehead@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:sue.whitehead@bathwells.anglican.org) telephone **01749 685272** to register.

## Safeguarding

The Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 requires that all clergy, readers, lay workers, churchwardens, and parochial church councils must have due regard to guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. This legal duty includes ensuring safeguarding training has been completed and is refreshed at least once every three years.

Safeguarding denotes measures to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, which allow people – especially children, young people and vulnerable adults – to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

In a church setting, safeguarding is the way that we ensure that churches are a safe place for everyone to worship. There is a particular focus on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults to ensure they are protected from abuse. Abuse can take many forms from domestic abuse to physical, sexual, emotional, or financial abuse. Churchwardens, clergy and other PCC members, as charity trustees, are required to give due attention to safeguarding and as such must undertake safeguarding training and where required a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

If your parish doesn't have a Safeguarding Officer, the churchwarden along with the Incumbent is responsible for making sure that the safeguarding policies are implemented. Ecclesiastical Insurance has advised us that if an incident occurs as a result of the safeguarding policies not being followed, it may invalidate the church's insurance. The policies are all available on the diocesan website on the safeguarding pages: [www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocese/safeguarding](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocese/safeguarding)

If you have any concerns or queries about safeguarding, please do get in touch with Ben Goodhind (Diocesan Safeguarding Manager).

E: [Ben.Goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:Ben.Goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org) T: **01749 588917**

You can access safeguarding guidance, policy and templates via our website. Our website also offers an online safeguarding referral system and training booking. [www.bathandwells.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/safeguarding)

For training or Safer Recruitment enquiries, please contact Leonie Jones (Safeguarding Co-ordinator) – Training Enquiries E: [training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org)  
DBS Enquiries – E: [dbs.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:dbs.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org)

## Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) gives individuals rights and protection on how their personal data is used by organisations. Parishes must comply with its requirements, just like any other charity or organisation.

Advice for parishes on GDPR compliance is available on the parish resources website: [www.parishresources.org.uk/gdpr/](http://www.parishresources.org.uk/gdpr/) and on the diocesan website: [www.bathandwells.org.uk/data-protection/data-protection.php](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/data-protection/data-protection.php)

Please contact Peter Evans, Assistant Diocesan Secretary: [peter.evans@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:peter.evans@bathwells.anglican.org) if you need further information.

## Parochial and Casual Duty Fees

The current 2023 Table of Parochial Fees (summary) should be displayed on church noticeboards and the PCC Treasurer and churchwardens should also have a copy.

The table can be downloaded from the Diocesan website : [www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/treasurer-support/parochial-fees/](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/treasurer-support/parochial-fees/)

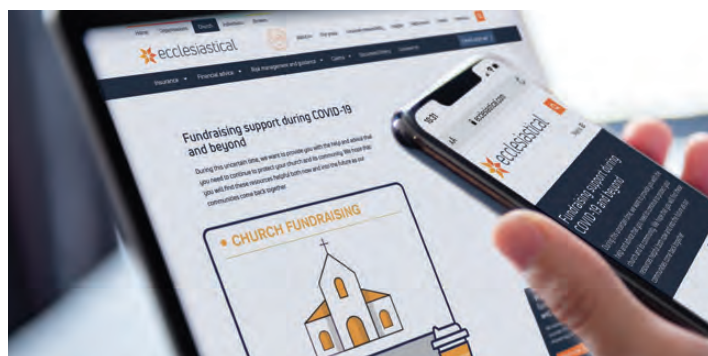
The 'Quick Reference' to the Table of Parochial Fees, showing the apportionments to retired ministers, can also be found on the above diocesan website page, along with the latest Bishop's Guidelines (v8).

The guidelines contain very useful information regarding best practice for the processing of Parochial Fees, as well as details on casual duty fees, which is currently held at £37.

If you have a question concerning any aspect of Parochial Fees, please e-mail: [fees@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:fees@bathwells.anglican.org).







## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:getadvice@ecclesiastical.com)



[www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> Ecclesiastical was also voted the best home insurance provider in the Times Money Mentor Awards in 2022.<sup>3</sup>

For more information about Trust130 and Home Insurance, visit [www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130)

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

<sup>1</sup> Terms and conditions apply. <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.thetimes.co.uk/money-mentor/article/times-money-mentor-awards-2022-winners](http://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.<sup>1</sup>



**0345 450 9396**



[www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance)

<sup>1</sup> 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](mailto:info@epsfunerals.com)



[www.funeralplans.co.uk](http://www.funeralplans.co.uk)

# Notices and Information...

## Church Representation and Ministers Measure 2019

- APCMs and Vestry Meetings must be held between 1 January and **31 May**.
- The 2019 Measure revised the Church Representation Rules. Various basic features of the old Rules were preserved – for example by providing for church electoral rolls (including electronic rolls), annual parochial church meetings, the membership and business of parochial church councils, elections to deanery and diocesan synod and to the House of Laity of the General Synod.
- Various procedural requirements relating to the church electoral roll have been eliminated. The rules relating to parish governance are now all set out in a self-contained part of the Rules. These rules take the form of model rules, which represent a simplified form of the existing rules. It will be open to a parochial church meeting to amend, supplement, or replace the model rules by way of a scheme made by the meeting, subject to obtaining the approval of the Bishop's Council. Where a parish does not make a scheme, the model rules will automatically apply.
- The Rules make provision for the creation of joint councils covering two or more connected parishes (for example, parishes in multi-parish benefices). The joint council takes the place of the individual PCCs which go into abeyance. This differs from the provision for joint councils under the old Rules where joint councils represented an additional layer of governance.
- The term Chair has been adopted by the Rules instead of Chairman.
- The forms to be used under the Rules have been updated.

[www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/church-representation-rules](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/church-representation-rules)

## Diocesan Registry move

On 1st February 2023, the Diocesan Registry moved from Harris & Harris in Wells to Stone King solicitors in Bath. Harris & Harris continues to specialise in the other areas of law for which it is well known and highly regarded. The Registry team comprising Christopher Jones (Registrar), Sarah Williams (also DAC Secretary) and Janet Saxon (Deputy Registrar) are all now contactable through Stone King:

**Christopher Jones** E: [ChristopherDJones@stoneking.co.uk](mailto:ChristopherDJones@stoneking.co.uk)

**Sarah Williams** E: [SarahWilliams@stoneking.co.uk](mailto:SarahWilliams@stoneking.co.uk)  
**01225 324406**

**Janet Saxon** E: [JanetSaxon@stoneking.co.uk](mailto:JanetSaxon@stoneking.co.uk)  
**01225 324404**

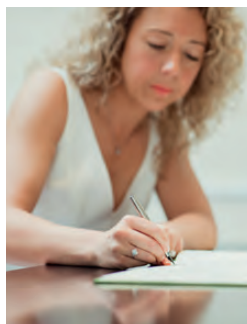
## Change to Minimum Age

The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 came into effect on 27th February 2023, raising the minimum age of marriage and civil partnership from 16 to 18 in England and Wales. As a result, 16- to 17-year-olds will no longer be able to marry or enter into a civil partnership under any circumstances.

The Act aims to protect children from forced marriages. The current law states that forced marriage is only an offence if the person uses a type of coercion. However, the new Act expands the criminal offence of forced marriage in England and Wales meaning that coercion such as threats need no longer be proven – it will become an offence in all circumstances to do anything intended to cause a child to marry before they turn 18.

## Caring for your Parish Registers and Records

The long-term care of parish records is very important. The Somerset Heritage Centre is the place where parish registers and records should be deposited once they are no longer needed for the day-to-day running of the parish.



**If a baptism or burial register contains entries which are over 150 years old, the register must immediately be closed if still in use and be deposited at the relevant Diocesan Record Office.**

**All baptism and burial registers which were completed over 100 years ago must be deposited at the relevant Diocesan Record Office.**

With the change to the Marriage Act in 2020, one set of your marriage registers

will have been handed in to the relevant Registration Services, and whilst the second copies may be seen as duplicates, they are in fact important parish registers and should be deposited alongside the registers of baptism and burial at the Somerset Heritage Centre.

Any registers which are deposited at the Somerset Heritage Centre remain the property of the parish and can be made available for research or exhibition. All records in our care are stored in our environmentally monitored strong-rooms, with flood and fire detection systems. Any access to the records for research purposes is monitored in our public search room, in accordance with our access and security provisions.

Details on depositing at the Somerset Heritage Centre can be found in our online guide: <https://somerset-cat.swheritage.org.uk/researchGuides/depositing> and we are always happy to discuss the care of, or deposit of records with us. T: **01823 278805**.

Useful information about the care of parish records can be found in the leaflet Keep or Bin – the Care of Your Parish Records, on the Church of England website:

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/care\\_of\\_pariah\\_records\\_keep\\_or\\_bin\\_-\\_2009\\_edition.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/care_of_pariah_records_keep_or_bin_-_2009_edition.pdf)

Records are kept under the terms of the Parochial Records and Registers Measure, which can be found at [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukcm/1978/2](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukcm/1978/2)

## Lay Ministries

As churchwardens, one of your priorities will be to encourage the growth of your church's ministry within the parish. In the diocese we encourage people to consider whether God is calling them to offer their gifts in ministry to the local community.

**The diocese offers training and support for a diversity of lay ministries:**

- Readers (who are licensed to preach and lead services)
- Lay Worship Assistants (who assist with leading worship)
- Lay Pastoral Assistants (who visit and help with pastoral care)
- Chaplains (working in the community with schools, villages, care homes and many other contexts)
- Pioneers (exploring worship and outreach with people outside the existing church)

You can find out more about lay ministries and what they are able to do on the website: [www.bathandwells.org.uk/events-and-training/lay-courses/](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/events-and-training/lay-courses/) As churchwardens, please consider who in your churches may be called to these ministries and encourage them to develop their vocation.

# Notices and Information...

## Online Decree Absolute

Couples wishing to marry where one or both parties are divorced need to show a copy of the decree absolute (now known as a Final Order).

As the divorce process is now online, you should ask the person whose decree it is to forward you the email received from the court attaching the electronic PDF of the decree absolute. If this is not possible, you can ask for a screenshot or photograph of the email from their phone or computer to be emailed to you.

The digital decree absolutes may look different to ones you have seen before in that the seal of the court is now black and not raised as they used to be.

If you are in doubt as to the validity of the decree absolute you have been provided with, you can ask the person whose decree it is to provide confirmation from the Family Court that it is a valid document.

## Faculty Jurisdiction Rules

The most recent version of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules came into force on 1st July 2022 which brought about some changes to Lists A and B. Works added to List A include 'provision for draught proofing an external door or window' and electric vehicle charging points (where the church is not listed). Included in List B are solar panels (provided the church or church hall is not listed or in a conservation area) and electric pew heaters (where pews were made on or after 1850). The new rules will permit the replacement of boilers without a faculty, where the replacement boiler is in the same location using the existing fuel supply *if it is a non-fossil fuel supply* or entails *switching to a non-fossil fuel*. However, the provision for a 'like for like' replacement of a boiler that uses a fossil fuel has been removed from List B - such works will now require a faculty. The replacement of an oil tank would also require a faculty. These are moves to assist the 'net-zero' agenda.

The DAC asks all parishes to register for and to use the Online Faculty System to process all List B and Faculty applications: <https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/> a full user guide for which can be found at **Online Faculty System (churchofengland.org)**.

Dates for upcoming DAC meetings can be found on the website: [www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/church-buildings/working-with-the-dac/](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/church-buildings/working-with-the-dac/)

## Churchyard Plan and Reservations of graves or cremation plots

There is a legal responsibility for each church with a churchyard to maintain an up-to-date churchyard plan showing all burials and including plots that have been reserved by Faculty. Considerable difficulties can result where the reservation of a plot is overlooked so

it is important to have such a plan. Anyone can petition for a faculty to reserve a burial or cremation plot within an open churchyard – the current fee payable for all faculties is £317. Without a faculty, any plot is not legally reserved. Guidance on the process and petition forms are available from the Diocesan Registry – [bathandwellsregistry@stoneking.co.uk](mailto:bathandwellsregistry@stoneking.co.uk)

## Churchyard Regulations 2020



The current Churchyard Regulations were issued by the Chancellor of the Diocese of Bath and Wells in July 2020. These apply across the diocese and all parishes should have a copy of the Regulations on display. The Regulations are available on the diocesan website: [www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/legal-support/legal-support.php](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/legal-support/legal-support.php)

## Closing your churchyard

If your churchyard is filling up, there are various options to be considered, such as re-using the ground so long as over 75 years have passed since the last burial, but it may be appropriate to consider applying for the churchyard to be officially closed. This will prevent any further burials, with the exception of any reserved plots or further interments within family graves. Guidance and application forms for this are found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-to-close-a-churchyard](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-to-close-a-churchyard)

Once a churchyard has been closed by an Order in Council, the maintenance responsibilities can legally be passed on to your local authority.

## Environment Agency guidance on groundwater pollution and burial grounds

In April 2022, the EA issued guidance on new procedures to prevent groundwater pollution from burial grounds, including a permit scheme. In general, this will not apply to existing churchyards unless there is a proposal to extend an existing churchyard such that it requires planning permission, e.g. purchasing some additional farmland... You may need to carry out an environmental risk assessment to establish the level of risk. Even if a permit is not required for an extension, there are new suggested minimum guidelines. Further information is found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-groundwater-from-human-burials](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-groundwater-from-human-burials)

## Blessing prayers for same-sex couples after marriage

General Synod approved a motion in February 2023 to introduce prayer resources for same-sex couples following a civil marriage or civil partnership but these have yet to be finalised. The Prayers for Love and Faith will be finalised by the College of Bishops later in the year along with pastoral guidance.

## The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

The Listed Places of Worship Scheme has been extended to March 2025 and gives grants that cover the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings in use as places of worship. The scheme covers repairs to the fabric of the building, along with associated professional fees, plus repairs to turret clocks, pews, bells and pipe organs. Applications can be sought directly through the scheme available at [www.lpwscheme.org.uk](http://www.lpwscheme.org.uk)





# Notices and Information...

## Deanery and Parish Support Team

There is a wide variety of skills and knowledge in the Diocesan Support Services for you to draw on in your role as churchwardens. The website provides you with some useful links on buildings, giving and funding, safeguarding and legal advice. [www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/churchwardens/churchwardens](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/churchwardens/churchwardens)

A Deanery and Parish Support Team has been created as part of the restructure of support services. Some members of the team are linked to particular archdeaconries, alongside the specialist support they offer across the diocese. We hope that this will deepen the connection between parishes, deaneries and the support on offer by making it more local and more personal. Please do give us feedback to help us make this work for you.

The team is part of Mission Support & Ministry Development and is committed to serving parishes through both practical support and resources and accompanying and supporting parishes and deaneries through periods of change and development. The team is supported by two part-time administrators:

Sophie Moore [sophie.moore@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:sophie.moore@bathwells.anglican.org) or 01749 95116  
and Sue Whitehead [sue.whitehead@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:sue.whitehead@bathwells.anglican.org)  
or 01749 685272.



### Head of Deanery & Parish Support

**Julia Hill**  
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### Deanery & Parish Development Adviser for Taunton Archdeaconry (part-time) Rural specialist

**Rob Walrond**  
E: [rob.walrond@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:rob.walrond@bathwells.anglican.org)  
T: 07967 838499



### Church Buildings Adviser (Mat Cover)

**Jonathan Foyle**  
Jonathan offers support around all aspects of church buildings from care and maintenance, developing them as places for mission for wider community use and managing a successful building project.

E: [jonathan.foyle@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:jonathan.foyle@bathwells.anglican.org)



### Deanery & Parish Development Adviser for Wells Archdeaconry (part-time) Peacebuilding advocate

**Caroline Bruce**  
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T: 01749 685127



### Deanery & Parish Development Adviser for Bath Archdeaconry (part-time) Magnificat Parish advocate

**Claire Horton**  
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T: 01749 588919



### Lead Giving and Funding Adviser

**Gary Watson**  
Gary offers support around all aspects of generosity including giving and associated tools, income generation and fundraising for both capital and revenue projects.

E: [gary.watson@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:gary.watson@bathwells.anglican.org)

## Deanery Accompaniers

Each deanery has an accompanier from Diocesan Support Services. Their remit is to get to know the deanery so that our support for you is based on reality. They are also able to signpost you to relevant support from other colleagues. A list of accompaniers can be found on the website:

[www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/deaneries-hub/deanery-accompaniers](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/deaneries-hub/deanery-accompaniers)

## HM Revenue and Customs Audits

We are aware that HMRC selects a number of PCCs (registered or excepted charities) each year for audit. It is the PCC's collective responsibility to ensure that suitable procedures, records and documentation are in place to support all daily transactions. If any further advice is required on any specific issue, please contact HMRC, or the Finance Team at the diocesan office. A Handbook for Treasurers, a general source of information on parish accounting and tax matters, is available on the diocesan website.



# Dear Churchwardens



It is so good to be here! During the last few months my family and I have arrived in our diocese, my installation took place in our cathedral and I'm now out and about getting to know people in our churches, schools, chaplaincies and communities. I've been honoured and humbled to receive the welcome of so many churchwardens. Thank you for the warmth and kindness with which you have received me.

I'm delighted that during this summer many of you will be coming to Churchwardens' Gatherings being held at the Bishop's Palace here in Wells. It will be great to be with you and to get to know you better. If you've not yet replied to your invitation, please do sign up to come. If you've not yet received an invitation, please do contact my colleague Penny Gibbs who'll be glad to get one to you – [penny.gibbs@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:penny.gibbs@bathwells.anglican.org).

During 2023, our Dwelling in the World passage that we're using across our Diocese of Bath & Wells is taken from Romans Chapter 12. Its words speak powerfully into the ministry that churchwardens offer into the life of the people and churches that you serve:

*12: 6 We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; 7 ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; 8 the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.*

*9 Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; 10 love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. 11 Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.*

*14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another.*

I'm hugely thankful for all the gifts you bring to your role. These include not only all that St Paul mentions, but a whole range of additional skills that somehow didn't make it into the Biblical text – applying for faculties, dealing with recalcitrant boilers, negotiation with insurance companies and many more! I also want to express my gratitude for the ways in which you enable our churches to be places in which God's life can be found through all the qualities that Paul lists. These include love, mutual affection, hope, generosity, patience and hospitality. Finally, as much as for all you do, I want to say thank you for who you are. Thank you that you stand alongside your people and your clergy rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep, helping us all to live in harmony.

It's great to be with you and I'm proud to be your partner in the Gospel.

This comes with all good wishes,

**Bishop Michael**

## The Archdeacons are always ready to help, so please do not hesitate to get in touch

### The Venerable Dr Adrian Youings – Archdeacon of Bath

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(The Archdeacon's usual day off is Friday.)

The Archdeacon of Bath's PA is **Denise Blake**

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(Her day off is Wednesday.)

### The Venerable Simon Hill – Archdeacon of Taunton

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(The Archdeacon's usual day off is Saturday.)

Taunton's Archdeaconry Assistant is **Alison Cruickshank**

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### The Revd Charlie Peer – Acting Archdeacon of Wells

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The Archdeacon of Wells's PA is **Sue Anderson**

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## For more information

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**Facebook:** Ecclesiastical **Twitter:** @churchmatters

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