



4 January 2021

Dear all,

**RE-IMAGINING OUR CHURCHES AS COMMUNITY ASSETS FOR THE COMMON GOOD – REACH ELY**

It is our pleasure to write to you about REACH Ely. Some of you will be aware that this is a major part of the diocesan Strategy, Ely2025. We are now approaching the key part of the first phase of REACH Ely, which is an audit of all our church buildings and the communities that surround them.

The Diocese of Ely established the REACH Ely project in association with Cambridge Judge Business School, with support from the Allchurches Trust and Historic England, to gather evidence of the wider community use of church buildings and the contribution that churches make to the common good. The project began with forty case studies of a wide range of different churches across the diocese. Out of those case studies the project team has designed a buildings audit to collect local information that will matter to the future of all our churches.

Your responses to this survey will contribute directly to assessing the economic, spiritual, social, cultural and environmental value to communities of churches and church buildings. **We ask that your PCC, or equivalent management body, provides a corporate response to this survey** (an opportunity for individual voices to be heard will be provided later in the project). However, we anticipate that it will be filled in by one or two key people in each parish. Our suggestion is that this is one of the Churchwardens along with the clergy.

In order to do this, you will need to spend some time preparing. **The survey will take about an hour to complete** and you will need a copy of your 2019 church accounts, your church services register and your most recent quinquennial report. You should be able to answer the remainder of the questions without prior research. If you do not have access to the information required by any of the questions, please give a best estimate or leave blank.

We have included in this mailing an advance copy of the audit to help you prepare. Once you have assembled all the answers (as far as you can) then they can be entered into the online survey by following the following link: <https://www.elydiocese.org/church-in-action/reach-ely/>. On the same page there is a short guidance note to assist with filling in the online form.

The purpose of gathering this information is to identify how churches might develop into the future. Given that the COVID-19 lockdown has led to the closure or partial use of all churches and associated buildings, please tailor your responses to the typical usage of your church prior to March 2020. The questions are also tailored to the re-opening of churches and their post-COVID-19 usage.

**ely2025**

*We pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ.*

Please submit your response by **31 January 2021**.

We realise that some of this information is already available through the Annual Returns and Articles of Enquiry, however this audit enables all of that information and much more to be collected in one place.

We know that churches continue to face some difficult challenges moving into 2021, but we encourage you to complete the audit as we believe it will be hugely helpful in the future. Help is available from the church buildings team at the diocese. If you think you will need assistance with filling in the audit, please don't hesitate to contact Geoffrey Hunter [geoffrey.hunter@elydiocese.org](mailto:geoffrey.hunter@elydiocese.org)

Yours sincerely,

Three handwritten signatures in black ink are arranged horizontally. From left to right: 'Alex Hughes' in a cursive script; 'Hugh McCurdy' in a more stylized cursive script; and 'Geoffrey Hunter,' in a cursive script with a horizontal line underlining the name.

The Ven Hugh McCurdy  
The Ven Dr Alex Hughes  
Geoffrey Hunter