



Diocese of Chester

archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens

Warm greetings to you again – this time with Jane Proudfoot newly appointed as Archdeacon of Macclesfield. The two of us are looking forward immensely to working together and to serving all of you in your vital role of leadership in the parishes.

It is good to be able to share Archdeacons' Visitation News with you once again. As before, we are grateful to Ecclesiastical Insurance for covering the cost of this. We hope you will find helpful guidance here, including from within the Diocese of Chester.

We are at a really important time of change in our diocese. In particular, we have been discerning together a fresh vision for where God is leading us now and in the future, and developing a strategy to underpin that vision. Many of you will have taken part in the consultation process which took place across the diocese as we reflected and sought God's guidance together.

The vision we discerned together is that, in the Diocese of Chester, we are to be 'Together in Christ, sharing hope'. We are called to be united in following Jesus in everyday life, and we are called to share the hope he gives us with others. Over the last few months, we have often been challenged to think about how what we do as the church really impacts on the lives of the 1.5 million people who live within the diocese and who do not, as yet, have regular contact with any Christian church. Christ loves every one of those people, and died for them. Reaching out to our communities in the love of God should be at the heart of what we do as the local church.

The strategy which is emerging in the diocese will include helping congregations focus on mission, enabling churches to be as inclusive as possible of people of all ages and backgrounds, encouraging the planting of new worshipping communities, and developing the kinds of leadership we need.

But in all of this, the focus will remain on the local – helping parishes to engage with their communities, building on the great strengths which already exist and the great things you and your congregations are already doing. We are looking forward to working with you at this exciting time.

Thank you once again for your wonderful ministry as Churchwardens in the diocese.



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Churchwarden Training

Saturday 13th July – For New Churchwardens – Church House

Saturday 12th October – For All Churchwardens – St John's Church Hall, Lostock Gralam

Details of how to book are on the diocesan website under the Events section for July and in the E-Bulletin. October to appear nearer the time. Booking is essential for catering purposes.

Any questions, please contact: Laura Howard: **01928 643435** or Deb Toole: **01928 643420**

After your APCM, please ensure your parish updaters update CMS with correct contact details. If you have problems or if you require further assistance, contact Ruth Laemmel: **01928 643446** email: ruth.laemmel@chester.anglican.org or Emma Hathaway: **01928 643424** email: emma.hathaway@chester.anglican.org

A New Ministry Team at Church House

After a year with several vacancies, January saw the start of a newly formed diocesan Ministry Team. Four new members of staff joined the existing team of four, based at Church House and working closely with additional volunteer team members.

The team's work covers a range of activities seeking to encourage, equip and develop the calling of all God's people to live out their faith in the world and the church, including discernment, selection, training and ongoing support for those in a wide variety of lay and ordained ministries.

That includes:

- Vocation and discernment for ordained and licensed lay ministers
- Women in ministry
- Spiritual accompaniment
- Curate training
- Pastoral Worker ministry
- Reader ministry
- Resourcing leadership and discipleship
- Self-supporting ordained ministry
- Ministerial development review
- Healing ministry
- Deliverance ministry

One recent development is a collaboration with the Finance and Safeguarding Departments, alongside the Archdeacons' Office, to offer particular **resource and support to parishes in vacancy**. This might include provision of PCC training in the area of Clergy Wellbeing, so that a parish is best placed to welcome a new incumbent, or it could be offering support for licensed lay ministers in a vacant parish.



The team are working on a range of other projects, with some key current projects being:

A rebranded **Foundations for Ministry programme**. This will run in two 10-week blocks from September 2024, in venues across the diocese. FfM is a course of learning for anyone who wants to become better equipped to serve God in the world and the church. People join to learn more about a variety of ways to serve, including in the workplace, the home and the community, as well as roles within church (Churchwarden, PCC member, administrative work, music ministry, pastoral work, outreach) and licensed or ordained roles.

For those who find themselves leading worship on an occasional basis, and not feeling called to licensed or ordained ministry, we offer a short course in **Leading Public Worship**, which is part of the process of becoming a locally authorised Occasional Worship Leader (yes, an OWL!). This course runs twice a year in spring and autumn.

Another priority for the whole team is the **growing of new vocations** to a variety of ministries. We are in no doubt that God is calling people across the diocese to join in the work of sharing God's love with the 1.5 million who do not yet know Jesus. For some, this will mean exploring a sense of vocation to licensed or ordained ministry, or supporting and encouraging someone else as they explore this. Do join us in prayerful expectancy as we discern the work of God among us, and do be open to the possibility that God might be calling you or someone you know to serve in new ways.

The full team are:

Jane Gerrard and **Jane Hood**, Executive Assistants

Karen MacMillan and **Jeanette Howe**, Bishop's Advisers for Licensed Lay Ministers

Richard Walker, Bishop's Adviser for the Diocesan Discernment of Ordained Ministry

Jenny Bridgman, Bishop's Adviser for Curate Development and Clergy Transitions

Lyndon Bannon, Bishops Adviser for Self-Supporting Ordained Ministry

Ian Arch, Bishop's Adviser for Ministerial Development

Simon Chesters, Director of Ministry

Timothy Hupfield, Diocesan Healing Adviser

Laura Rhodes, Interim Dean of Women (standing in for **Lesley Currie**)

Elaine Chegwin-Hall, Deliverance Team Convenor

For more information on any of the above, please email:

✉ ministry@chester.anglican.org



Your Church's Net Zero journey

In February 2020, General Synod voted for the whole of the Church of England to achieve Net Zero Carbon (NZC) by 2030, recognising that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation and a fundamental injustice. In November 2022, the Diocese of Chester adopted the same target.

The diocese has now recruited a full time NZC Project Officer (NZC PO), Katy Purvis, who may be already known to many parishes, having spent the last seven years working within Chester Diocese's DAC department. Katy is keen to continue to serve our parishes, supporting Churchwardens in their work, albeit with a new more direct focus.

The NZC PO's primary task is to develop and drive implementation of the Diocesan NZC Action Plan. One aspect of this work is to find ways to reduce emissions in the areas over which the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) has direct control (Clergy Housing, Diocesan Offices, staff travel). The second is to provide support to sectors of the diocese over which the DBF has influence but not direct control (Churches & Parish Property, Schools, Cathedral, Emmanuel Theological College).

Church buildings have particular challenges when it comes to implementing NZC 2030. They are often listed, large and or draughty. There may be limits as to what can realistically be achieved in terms of improving their thermal properties by insulation as we might in our homes. There are significant practical and financial constraints which can make keeping people warm inside our buildings quite difficult, even before we begin to think about decarbonisation. Technology is developing rapidly with prices expected to come down, but statutory requirements, finance and volatile energy markets remain challenging. We know the journey to net zero will be hard, but by working together, supporting each other, learning through experience, identifying good practice and sharing our success stories, we can safeguard and renew the creation that God entrusted us to care for.

To find out more and take the first steps on your church's net zero journey, visit www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church#webinars-advice-and-support or contact:

✉ katy.purvis@chester.anglican.org



Minor Repairs and Improvement Grants Fund

The Diocese of Chester has been successful in securing £123,750 from national Church towards the cost of minor repairs and improvement works to be spent over the next two years. There were 50 requests for funding, following 92 requested for the application form, split evenly across both Chester and Macclesfield Archdeaconries. The funding has been oversubscribed by a factor of two. It will be allocated based on the social deprivation of the parish and the Parish Share percentage. The applications were being considered as we went to press.

Sheena Wilson
Buildings for Mission Adviser

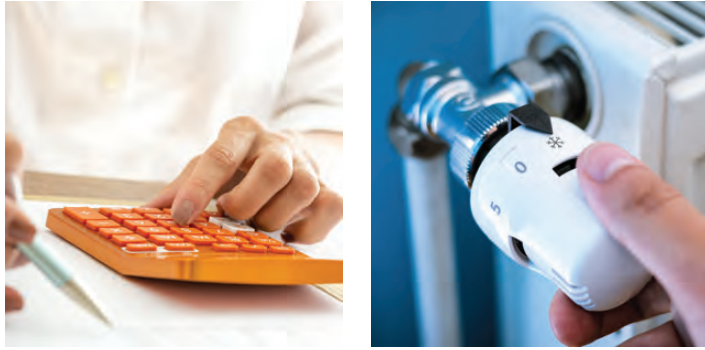
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Managing energy costs

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



Central heating

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

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

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

Portable heaters

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

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

Candles

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



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

 www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/energy-savings-guidance

For more information

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

Facebook: Ecclesiastical **X:** @churchmatters

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