

## **Buildings for Mission**

### **Minor Repairs and Improvements Grants Fund**

### **Guidance and Eligibility**

The Minor Repairs and Improvements Grants Fund aims to enable parishes to implement urgent minor repair projects and necessary minor improvements by means of grants targeted at areas of need and 'stitch in time' projects which can save money in the long term. In doing so, churches with fabric repair problems are put in better condition and thereby better able to remain open and sustainable. This will help foster robust and flourishing congregations and release resources, energy and potential for worshipping communities to engage with their communities. The funding has been made available to dioceses by the Archbishop's Council as part of the 2023-25 triennium funding programme.

- Grants of up to £10,000 can be made towards projects with costs of up to £10,000 (or £12,000 if the VAT is not eligible under the Listed Places of Worship (LPW) grant scheme) at a rate of up to 90%, unless there are exceptional circumstances. See 'Priority Areas' section below.
- This fund is not for works pertaining to Net Zero Carbon (NZC): the 'Quick Wins' fund is for this. Likewise, the Kingdom People/Healthier Churches fund should be approached for items relevant to those funding streams.
- If the applicant is not the PCC they must be able to prove that they have the legal responsibility for repair and maintenance of the church building or include a written letter of agreement from the PCC authorising them to apply on the PCC's behalf.
- The offer of a grant from the Fund will not remove the requirement for the PCC to obtain faculty or approval under list A or B, as necessary, or any other necessary permission before the work goes ahead. The offer of a grant does not imply support for the proposal for the purposes of faculty or any other approval and does not indicate that permission will be forthcoming.
- Work should not begin until the Diocesan Board of Finance (as funder) has approved the scope, methodology and costs of the work and made an offer in writing which the PCC has accepted.
- Work costing more than £1,000 will need to be subject to some form of competitive procurement (normally by obtaining itemised quotations for comparison) on a best value basis. A full competitive tender exercise will not be required unless the nature of the work or other factors make it necessary.

- Work will need to be carried out, paid for, and claimed within a year of the offer date or by 31 December 2025, whichever is the sooner. The final deadline to submit an application for funding will be 30 June 2025.

## Eligible buildings

- Church of England consecrated church buildings and licensed places of worship (including those which are the subject of sharing agreements or ecumenical partnerships)
- The 'building' extends to its below-ground drainage system, foundations and immediate curtilage.

## Ineligible buildings

- Other buildings or structures in the churchyard (or curtilage) of eligible buildings which are not in ecclesiastical use.
- Off-site church properties such as church halls.
- Cathedrals; churches and chapels which are the responsibility of private owners or
- Institutions; non-Anglican places of worship; closed and closing churches.

## Priority Areas

The Buildings for Mission project aims to give priority to areas which lack access to support for Church of England church buildings. The eligible level of grant will be assessed consistently according to the ranking of the ecclesiastical parish in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation as shown in the [Church of England Parish Map](#)

- Deprivation rank 6,236 to 12,307 (least deprived) grant @ 50% of total project cost
- Rank 5,012 to 6,235 (top 40-50%) grant @ 60%
- Rank 3,812 to 5,011 (top 30-40%) grant @ 70%
- Rank 2,558 to 3,811 (top 20-30%) grant @ 80%
- Rank 1,232 to 2,557 (top 10-20%) grant @ 90%
- Rank 1 to 1,231 (top 1-10%) grant @ 90% (or more if exceptionally justified)

## Eligible work

### *Minor repairs*

- Repair of building fabric (external): roof coverings, roof structure, walls, parapets, pinnacles and other architectural features, towers, spires, windows, doors, rainwater disposal system including below-ground drainage.
- Repair of building fabric (internal): ceilings, floors, doors, walls and wall linings (plaster/panelling but not wall paintings, mosaics etc.).
- Repair of building services installations where essential for health and safety and/or continuity of worship and mission use.
- Emergency repairs or holding works, e.g. propping, covering, protection etc.
- To be eligible, any such work must be recommended in the most recent QI report (or subsequent professional report or condition survey etc). Work classified as urgent (either category 1 - Urgent, requiring immediate attention; 2 - Requires attention within 12 months; or 3 - Requires attention within the next 12 - 24 months) should take priority but any work required within the quinquennium is eligible. Works of differing urgency within that definition may be undertaken together for the sake of efficiency and economy, especially where 'stitch in time' repairs can save money in the long term.

### *Improvements*

- Additions, alterations or adaptations specifically to overcome building design defects or obsolescence (e.g. undersized hoppers or drainpipes) or to improve access for maintenance.
- Additions, alterations or adaptations where essential to improve physical access, e.g. handrails, ramps etc.
- Improvements to building services installations where essential to sustain worship and mission use, such as improvements to heating, lighting, wiring, kitchens, WCs. Where necessary, this might include the installation or upgrading of pipework or cabling to the perimeter of the churchyard or curtilage.
- New installations or improvements to existing installations for digital connectivity, whether through a wired connection or 4G/5G mobile Wi-Fi, where essential to sustain worship and mission use.
- Bat mitigation measures, including relevant ecologists' fees and production of a bat management plan, where the impact of bats is a barrier to worship and mission use. A one-off deep clean can be an eligible cost as part of a mitigation plan.
- A convincing case must be made that such works are essential to sustaining worship and mission use.

## Other eligible costs

- Professional fees to design, specify, inspect and certify the repair or improvement work.
- Ecologist fees to prepare a bat management plan.
- VAT (for unlisted churches and work to listed churches which falls outside the eligibility of the [Listed Places of Worship \(LPW\) grant scheme](#)). It will be assumed that PCCs will apply to the LPW grant scheme wherever possible.

## Ineligible work

- Routine maintenance, as set out in ChurchCare's [Calendar of Care](#).
- Routine cleaning.
- Work to furnishings, such as bells and bell frames, books and manuscripts, church plate, clocks, monumental brasses and decorative metalwork, monuments, organs, paintings and wall paintings, stained glass, textiles, wooden objects. These may qualify for the grants administered by ChurchCare (see [Grants for historic church interiors and churchyard structures | The Church of England](#)).
- Conservation reports. These may qualify for the grants administered by ChurchCare (see [Grants for conservation reports | The Church of England](#)).
- Routine inspection (Quinquennial Inspections, periodic inspection of electrical installations, appliance testing, gas safety checks, etc).
- Routine servicing of building services installations
- Any work covered by insurance.

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