

**To: Heads and Chairs of Governors in Voluntary Aided Schools**

26<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Dear Colleague

### **VA School Capital Maintenance Responsibilities**

Recent school visits have indicated that some VA Heads and Chairs of Governors would welcome clarification of roles, responsibilities and relationships with regard to capital maintenance work and associated funding streams. The following information may therefore be helpful.

#### **Governors Responsibilities**

Governing Bodies are responsible for ensuring that school buildings and infrastructure are maintained in a safe condition and that satisfactory arrangements are in place to ensure that all legal, statutory requirements are complied with (eg inspections, surveys, equipment testing etc). Some VA schools subscribe to local authority Building Maintenance Indemnity Schemes (BMIS), some have a property management and maintenance programme dealt with by The Hookway Partnership and others may have a contract with an independent property management company. It remains the responsibility of the governing body to ensure the service provided complies with legal and statutory requirements so please check with your service provider if you are unsure of your cover.

#### **Capital Funding Streams**

There are two capital funding streams currently available to VA schools:

- Devolved Formula Capital Grant (DFCG) is allocated on the same per pupil formula as for all other schools and academies. VA schools are able to opt for the Diocese to act as 'banker' for their DFCG. Most VA schools take advantage of this as it enables their unspent funding to be invested at a higher rate of interest than is possible for smaller amounts with the interest being sent to schools six-monthly. In addition, The Hookway Partnership, our agent, takes responsibility for completing EFA return forms, ensuring no funding is lost under the three-year rule and maintaining balances for each school.
- Locally Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP) is for capital projects beyond the reach of schools using only their DFCG. LCVAP is allocated per local authority based on the number of pupils attending VA schools (both Anglican and Catholic) within that local authority. This funding is allocated strategically by the two Dioceses and the LA, usually according to the following priority order:
  - health and safety and basic DDA provision
  - condition issues which would result in the closure of a school (ie failed boilers, leaking roofs etc)
  - other condition issues
  - suitability improvements where existing buildings are a barrier to delivery of the curriculum
  - suitability improvements which would have a positive impact on the running of the school
  - other non-essential building improvements

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Both DFCG and LCVAP projects have to be a minimum of £2,000 excluding VAT. It is possible to group related items carried out at the same time to reach the de minimis limit. LCVAP funding has to be spent within the financial year for which it is allocated.

### The Hookway Partnership Services and Fees

The Hookway Partnership has offered services to Bath & Wells VA schools for many years at minimal cost. In order to continue to offer a quality service, some costs now need to increase and the table below outlines services available, the existing cost and the revised cost with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

Service	Current Fee/Charge	New Fee/Charge
<p><b>Grant Claims</b> The Diocese requires all VA school capital projects to be processed through Elaine Davis at The Hookway Partnership. Fees for this work are included in the overall cost of the project.</p> <p><b>LCVAP projects</b></p> <p><b>DFCG projects</b></p>	<p>£500 to £1500 depending on the complexity of the project.</p> <p>£150 per project where no surveying is required. Where multiple projects occur in a single year, fees are capped at 6 x £150. No fee is charged for ICT projects or if Hookways project manage during the year.</p>	<p>Unchanged</p> <p>Unchanged</p>
<p><b>Surveying and project management services</b> The Diocese recommends that schools do engage a project manager to oversee building works. This does not have to be Hookways; governing bodies may engage their own project manager should they wish. Do please bear in mind however, that the governing body is signatory to any contract, and must ensure reasonable checks are carried out on any company/consultant engaged, including levels of professional indemnity insurance, experience within a school environment and financial probity.</p>	<p>9% of building work (if engaged)</p>	<p>Unchanged</p>

Service	Current Fee/Charge	New Fee/Charge
<p><b>Property management and maintenance service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially schools complete a service record sheet confirming the equipment at their school, who services it etc</li> <li>When equipment is due for servicing, Hookways contact the contractor and the school.</li> <li>Once the service has been carried out, the school pays the servicing fee direct to the contractor and sends the service report to Hookways for their records.</li> <li>Hookways send an annual audit form to schools to ensure records remain up to date.</li> </ul>	Free of Charge	£250 pa for primary schools. £500 pa for secondary schools.
<p><b>Condition Surveys</b> We expect all schools to have a condition survey at least every two years. Without this we cannot support capital projects. Some schools may already have this through BMIS or a similar scheme.</p>	£100	£200 to update £500 for a new survey.

Further information on school buildings and capital is available from our website:

<http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-children/school-organisation/school-buildings-capital/>

or if you wish to discuss issues specific to your school please contact:

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Yours sincerely

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