

Dear Churchwarden,

Please find below information that may be of use to you in your role as a churchwarden.

### **Faculty Workshops**

The first two of our faculty workshops take place this month and we still have plenty of spaces available at each session.

The first two sessions are:

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2pm at St Paul's, Ryhope

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February, 7pm at St Mary's, Gainford

They can be booked by clicking on the following link <https://durhamdiocese.eventbrite.com>

The format of these workshops will be as follows and it is anticipated that they will last approximately 2 hours:

- Brief overview of the faculty process including any recent changes.
- Overview of the Online Faculty System (OFS)
- Workshop session – opportunity to discuss issues with OFS, documentation, etc

### **Durham Diocese Churchwardens Forum**

Having been a churchwarden myself I understand that the challenges of the role and if you are not fortunate to be able to work alongside another experienced churchwarden, then you may feel quite isolated and unsure of what needs to be done in different situations. Fortunately, across the diocese we have a lot of churchwardens who have done the role for a long time and have built up lots of experience.

I have set up an online Churchwardens Forum using Google Groups to allow you to ask questions and share information with other Churchwardens. I would encourage you to sign up and you can do so by clicking on the following link.

[DDChurchwardenForum - Google Groups](#)

When you click on the link the first time it should give you the option to request to join the group. In the reason box please add the name of your church, so that I can then authorise your membership. If you have problems joining this way then just email me with your Name and Church and I will add you to the group. Each time someone posts a question or shares some information you will get an email to which you can simply reply if you are able to help.

Once you have joined, I will send further details of how you can use the group.

### **Heating Survey**

Over recent months many churches have experienced problems with their heating systems and many churches are also looking at how they can change their heating systems to enable them to reach Net Zero by 2030. At present I am only aware of the heating systems in a small number of churches and in order to offer support it would be really useful to understand more about the types and conditions of heating systems in each church.

I would be grateful if you could complete a very short heating survey by clicking on the link below.

[Durham Diocese Church Heating Survey \(google.com\)](#)

This information will allow me to focus the support we can offer.

### **Policies**

Every church needs to have a range of policies and procedures in place to ensure churches can function effectively. Some policies such as the Safeguarding Policy are provided centrally but other policies need to be written to reflect the needs of individual parishes. I am hoping to put together a resource consisting of some sample policies that churches can then personalise to their specific

needs. I would be grateful if you could send me policies that you are willing to share and I will begin to develop this resource.

### **Diocesan Website**

I have recently done some work to the "Church Buildings" section of the diocesan website and it now contains some additional resources. I will be adding more information over the coming months. If anyone has any difficulty navigating the website, the Church Buildings section can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

### **Fire Safety**

Following the major fire at St John's Wood in London recently, I just wanted to remind you to carry out various checks on your church buildings at the required intervals. These checks include:-

- Electrical Safety Checks
- Gas Safety Checks
- Fire alarm testing and servicing.
- Fire extinguisher servicing
- Lightning Conductor testing
- Ensuring combustible materials are stored correctly.

Please also check your insurance policy to ensure you are aware of any additional checks that are required as part of your policy.

If you feel that you need some professional advice, there are a range of companies who can carry out fire risk assessments. I can send you details of companies that have been used by other churches in the diocese.

Finally if you need any support regarding work on your buildings, please get in touch with me and I will do my best to find you the information that you require.

Kind regards

Martin

### **Martin Howard**

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