

 Diocese of Peterborough

archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens

Thank you!

It has been another year of change, last Easter Chel Cullen became PA to both Archdeacons and in many ways the 'glue' that's holding our new Archdeacons' office together, which can be challenging when we are spread over both Peterborough Diocesan office and Bouverie Court, Northampton. Despite the challenges, we have formed a good team with a focus on serving the whole Diocese and in particular yourselves as Churchwardens.

This last year has also seen some significant challenges with over 100 parishes being in vacancy at the same time and more than 27 benefices being vacant during the last year. We are aware that this not only puts pressure on the Archdeacons' office but also means that you as wardens carry a heavier burden and some of these vacancies are and will continue to be much longer than any of us would want to be the case.

Safeguarding has seen more change in the last year as we had our new Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor join us in December, it is good to welcome Carole Fitzsimons to lead the team, this means we can serve the whole Diocese with training, advice and response to all matters of Safeguarding.

Finally, we would like to say that it has been a privilege to work with you as Bishop's officers and to see the support which you have been able to give to one another sharing experiences, skills and struggles. We encourage you to continue to work together

in your own Benefice and Deanery as well as wider where helpful such as the experience of re-ordering where knowledge and ideas can be very usefully shared.

So for all of you who serve your communities, churches and PCCs so faithfully...

*For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.
(Psalm 122 v9)*



Alison Booker
Archdeacon of Oakham

Chel Cullen
PA to the Archdeacons

Richard Ormston
Archdeacon of Northampton



Net Zero Carbon and church buildings

Jon Breckon

In February 2020, the Church of England's General Synod set an ambitious target to urgently reduce carbon emissions and work towards Net Zero by 2030. Since then, a suite of advice and guidance has been developed to help parishes identify what actions they can take. But with so much new information available, where do you start?

By far the most useful tool is the **'Practical Path to Net Zero Carbon for Church Buildings'**, available here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church>. This sets out a series of recommendations and suggestions for you to consider. It is worth drawing attention to the very first set of actions as a relatively simple and easy way to make a quick impact. The advice here is based on sound principles of regular cyclical maintenance and basic care of buildings, namely;

1. Maintain the roof and gutters, to prevent damp entering the building and warm air escaping. *(Damp air takes more energy to warm up, and damp walls conduct heat quicker than dry ones).*
2. Fix any broken windowpanes and make sure opening windows shut tightly, to reduce heat loss.¹ *(Problematic draughts can contribute to significant heat loss, and while ventilation in buildings is important, it is more important that you are in control of the amount of ventilation).*
3. Insulate around heating pipes to direct heat where you want it; this may allow other sources of heat to be reduced in this area.
4. If draughts from doors are problematic, draught-proof the gaps or put up a door-curtain.¹
5. Consider using rugs/floor-coverings (with breathable backings) and cushions on/around the pews/chairs.

Stretton Church, which has been repaired and re-ordered
(photo supplied by St Nicholas Stretton Project Team)



Defective gutters and saturated stonework

¹If interiors are of historic, architectural or artistic interest, seek professional and DAC advice.

For some minor maintenance works, such as fixing leaking gutters, or replacing broken glazing, you may be able to get a small grant towards the cost of the work. The National Churches Trust has a 'Maintenance Booker' scheme, details here: <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/get-support/buildings-maintenance/maintenancebooker>. If you would like to discuss church building maintenance, please feel free to contact the Historic Churches Support Officer.

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Open churches



There is much churches can do to unlock their visitor potential! Should churches be kept locked at all times?

The answer is no, provided suitable precautions are taken.

Here are top tips for being open and secure:

- Carry out a full risk assessment. You can find this on the Ecclesiastical website at [ecclesiastical.com/churchriskassessment](https://www.ecclesiastical.com/churchriskassessment).
- Ensure local residents know that the church is operating an open-door policy so that they can observe suspicious activity.
- Encourage local people to visit the church while passing by.
- If possible, create a rota of volunteer stewards to be present in church – but don't forget to consider their personal safety if, for example, they might be alone in a church at any time.
- Create a secure storage area in which all valuables can be locked.

There is no impact on the church insurance premiums if a church is open during daylight hours. If you have any concerns, speak with Ecclesiastical's customer services team on **0345 777 3322**.

Welcoming Emily to the DAC Office



Emily Elliott

We were recently pleased to welcome Emily Elliott to the DAC Office as Church Buildings Caseworker. She has just completed her MPhil in Heritage Studies with the University of Cambridge and received her 1st class BA (Hons) Archaeology and Landscape History from Anglia Ruskin's Peterborough Campus in 2021. Emily has over four years' voluntary experience within the heritage sector and is keen to work with parishes in the Diocese.

Emily's appointment will assist the work of the DAC office and parishes seeking to look after their church building and navigate the faculty process. This is very welcome, following a busy year in the office, due to the vacant post.

New projects and the Church Buildings Team

If your parish is considering exploring a new project for your church building, perhaps lighting, audio-visual improvements or a reordering project, do get in touch with us. With some projects we may have an advisor we can ask to contact you to provide some initial guidance and with others, we can give you a steer as to how you might initially approach the project. This can help to get things started in a positive way and flag up resources you might find useful. If you are exploring grant funding, there are some great resources on Jon Breckon's page of the Diocesan website which can be accessed via this link:

www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/aboutus/diocesan-staff-teams/historic-churches/grants-fundraising-5250.php

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The path to Net Zero Carbon

Just a reminder that there is a wealth of information available in relation to achieving Net Zero Carbon. The Church Buildings Council website has a designated page with links to guidance, webinars and case studies: www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church

If you are looking for a starting point, the helpful Practical Path to Net Zero Carbon For Church Buildings document, can be found via the above link.



Our journey to Net Zero

The WWF has released their 'Living Planet Report 2022'¹, which shows the ways in which we are damaging the world around us. They reported that in the last 50 years:

- **Deforested land has increased by +40%**
- **Marine fish catching has increased by +47%**
- **Human population has increased by +107%**
- **CO² emissions have increased by +146%**
- **Materials extraction has increased by +193%**
- **Meat production has increased by +244%**
- **Dams have increased by +293%**



Joanne Ormston

Meanwhile, it shows that our wildlife populations have plummeted by -69%.

This rate of decline in the biodiversity of our planet is starting to put all species at risk, including humans.

As Christians, it is our duty and responsibility to safeguard and care for God's creation. We are not only called in Genesis 1:24-26 to rule over and care for creation; we are also called in Mark 12:30-31 to love our neighbours as ourselves.

The climate crisis is a huge social injustice that our world is facing; with those who are affected the most being those who have contributed to it the least. They are also those who are the least equipped to fight our global environmental issues.

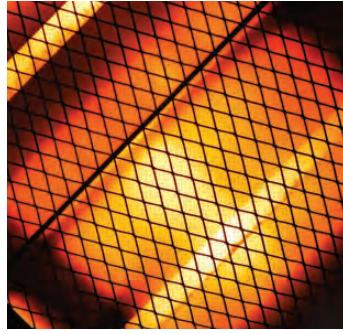
Whereas the figures above, for the last 50 years, paint a dark image; the Diocese of Peterborough has committed to reaching Net Carbon Zero by 2030. We have the opportunity to change the picture of what the next 50 years will look like. We can act now and care for God's creation. We can outreach to our communities and bring people to Christ through nature. The changes we make now can protect our future generations.

So, take a moment to think. What is your church doing on your journey to Net Zero? How are you embracing this exciting moment of change? What could you be doing differently to better care for God's creation?

If you are looking for resources on Eco Church, the Energy Footprint Tool, Outdoor Church, or Policies, look no further than our Diocesan resources page: www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/support-for-parishes/environment

If you would like any further information or support, please do get in touch with the Environment Team on:
environment@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

¹ https://wwflpr.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/lpr_2022_full_report_1.pdf



Managing energy costs

As churches look to lower energy use costs, they may unknowingly increase the risk of damage to church property or people, and extra precautions may be required. These recommendations help protect your property and keep people safe.

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 that 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 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 [ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/energy-savings-guidance](https://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/energy-savings-guidance)**

For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 **Email:** churches@ecclesiastical.com
Facebook: Ecclesiastical **Twitter:** @churchmatters

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