



Diocese of Sheffield

archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens

I am delighted to have the privilege to welcome you on behalf of Archdeacon Malcolm and I. As I write this in early February, the Church of England faces significant challenges. There is no doubt that the Makin Review's published report exposed significant safeguarding failures in the Church of England, which led to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Subsequent unconnected allegations put pressure on other senior leaders and caused the Bishop of Liverpool to resign. As a direct consequence, trust in the senior leadership of the CoFE has reached a new low, as was apparent in the debates during February's meeting of the General Synod. Even so, it has been widely acknowledged, and we would want to affirm, that safeguarding at the local parish church level is in much better shape, with PCCs, clergy and Parish Safeguarding Officers working hard to make our churches safer places for all. While there is always room for improvement, we want to thank you for all you are doing in this regard and remind you that if you have any concerns or questions around safeguarding, our excellent Diocesan Safeguarding Team is always available to support and help.

Despite the challenges, I am greatly encouraged by how, as a diocese, we have continued to move forward to realise our vision and strategy in the past year. For the last 18 months, we have been working on discerning a refreshed Diocesan Strategy for 2025-2031, ably led by Archdeacon Malcolm and Alex Shilkoff (our Strategic Programme Director), supported by Katie Bell and the Church House team. This has led to a request to the National Church for significant partnership funding to support our vision and strategy for growth and sustainability. By the time you read this, we will have learnt if

we were successful and be working on how and where we might use these extra resources to maximum effect for the Kingdom of God.

Our church officers, including clergy, PSOs and Churchwardens at the heart of the local church leadership, are essential for worship, mission and ministry, and serving the local community. Without Churchwardens, we cannot ensure good governance and care for our places of worship. Many of you offer sacrificial service, which is key to building the kingdom of God and realising our Diocesan Vision. Your mindfulness, love and care are exemplary. Archdeacon Malcolm and I would like to express our gratitude to each of you for all you do and your commitment to serving as Churchwarden over the coming year. We want to warmly welcome you, especially if you are new to the Churchwarden office. We look forward to working with you and assure you of our support and prayers.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the new Churchwardens' training in June or at the Churchwardens' Conference in November. Over the last couple of years, we have had a particular focus for Churchwardens' Conferences, with 2024 recording the biggest-ever attendance. These two events are especially for you and provide helpful information and fellowship, so please make an effort to join us.

Prayers, blessings and best wishes,

Ven Javaid Iqbal

Archdeacon of Doncaster



Javaid Iqbal
Archdeacon of
Doncaster



Malcolm Chamberlain
Archdeacon of Sheffield
and Rotherham

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Doncaster City Centre Revitalisation



When God calls us to something new it can often be very perplexing and yet very exciting at the same time. That has been our experience over this time as we have been discerning and planning a new Doncaster city centre mission. This calling initially came while, unbeknown to us, plans were being made

to revitalise the Church's presence in the centre and bless the city and so it seems that He was providentially moving us.

As part of the wider plans, which involve the two main city centre parish churches in Doncaster, our discernment has led to the creation of a new pioneer initiative that will work in conjunction with the Minster Church of St George and St James at the Interchange. The new initiative is based in a retail unit in the city centre as a way of reaching out and ministering to people in the city. We strongly feel that God intends this to be both a bridge into the Established Church as well as a place where people, who might not usually engage with church, can be met where they are, be discipled and encounter the love of Christ whatever their starting point.

This new ministry, which started in January 2025 and operates as a Bishop's Mission Order (BMO) out of The Resurrection Doncaster (St Aidan's Wheatley Hills, St Paul's Wheatley Park and Intake), is intended to be a five-year project funded from the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board and has been amazingly supported by many, including the Bishop of Doncaster and the Diocesan Mission Development Advisor, Revd John Marsh.

Day to day in the city centre we will use the unit as a place to meet people, provide a regular pattern of worship in different traditions to engage people from different backgrounds, run discipleship programmes and offer resources for learning and prayer. It will also be used as a launch pad to local mission and pastoral care to those on the margins. We passionately believe that God deeply loves the city of Doncaster and wants to reach His people here.

Please do consider praying and supporting us as we reach out with the good news of Jesus.

Revd Canon Adam Priestley
Vicar, The Resurrection

Stuart Carrier
Churchwarden & PCC Secretary

Being Built Together – Being Fruitful Together in the North

In October 2024, Sheffield Cathedral held the first ever UK/ME GMH Conference hosted by the Church of England's Racial Justice Unit. *'Being Built Together – Being Fruitful Together in the North'* was mainly aimed at Christians of global majority heritage (GMH) and UK/ME (those of minority ethnicity in the UK). In our fragmented society, people of all backgrounds, longing for connection and belonging in their churches and communities, can end up marginalised, discriminated, and their gifts overlooked. This conference offered an opportunity to meet, listen to each other and reflect on what *'Being Fruitful Together'* can mean.



UK/ME GMH Conference at Sheffield Cathedral

There were representatives from our diocese and the whole Northern Province, and the keynote speakers included The Revd Canon Dr Sarah Siddique Gill, Leicester Cathedral. Using the image of the vine and the branches in *John 15*, she stressed that our identity and dignity are rooted in Jesus, that all of us are made in God's image, and we can sustain fruitful ministry if we strive to work together as one body.

The Revd Canon Dr Sharon Prentis, of the Racial Justice Unit, emphasised that together UK/ME, GMH and white people are part of God's redeeming love story, and that our church must be a *'beacon of justice, grounded in humility and truth'*.

From the Methodist Church, The Revd Dr Claude Kimpinde stressed the importance of ecumenical work which can bring unique perspectives, traditions, and gifts that enrich our collective witness.

A powerful speech was given by Ami Kemoh, a Sheffield youth leader. She said that even if we don't have much in common, we can still grow together as the community God wants us to be, if we use *'young thinking'*.

The conference reminded us that *justice* lies at the heart of the Gospels. The Church has a role to play in God's work of *transforming*. It is our hope that the whole Church will be inspired to be champions of change, in a collective effort to disrupt racial inequalities, in the Church of England and in society, fostering belonging and working together for the sake of Jesus' message.

Revd Anesia Cook
Racial Justice Officer



Support and resources for Churchwardens from Ecclesiastical

Ecclesiastical understands that volunteering for the role of Churchwarden and supporting your church can be a demanding job. Managing a treasured building and ensuring that it's a safe place for your congregation to worship, visit and enjoy can be daunting, but you don't have to do it alone.

Ecclesiastical church support managers

At no additional cost, Church Support Managers are there for their Ecclesiastical church customers. Providing tailored help and training to support church insurance needs, they can offer guidance on risk management, health and safety legislation and direct you to online resources. They can also deliver online and in-person group training sessions around topics including the basics of insurance, fire safety, fundraising, climate change and net zero, open churches and theft of metal.



Heather Ford



Joseph Davies

Heather Ford – Church Support Manager for the North.

Heather has roots in the Church, having previously worked for the Diocese of Manchester, and understands the demands of church life. Heather is passionate about supporting churches to understand how insurance can help, rather than hinder, to enable people to focus on their ministry and thrive.

Joseph Davies – Church Support Manager for the South.

Joseph is very much part of the Church family – his father was a parish priest, his mother a hospital chaplain, his wife was recently ordained as a curate, and he spent nine years as a verger at Salisbury and Ely Cathedrals.

“ Fundraising is crucial for sustaining church activities and initiatives. I am always delighted to offer guidance on effective fundraising strategies. We have an excellent online Fundraising Hub which has lots of information about how to get started and how to keep going on your fundraising journey. ”

✉ meetus@ecclesiastical.com
 🌐 ecclesiastical.com/church/church-support-managers

Fundraising hub

Fundraising plays a key role in boosting finances for your church. Ecclesiastical's fundraising hub offers user-friendly support guides which take you from 'where to start' through to 'key factors for successful fundraising' and everything in between.

If you have an Ecclesiastical policy, you can also contact their fundraising helpline, to arrange a call back from their expert team.

📞 **0345 601 9959**
 🌐 ecclesiastical.com/church/fundraising



Ecclesiastical's plain English guides

If you are looking for help in areas such as legal expenses, building work, or outreach, Ecclesiastical has a range of easy to understand Made Simple Guides to help, and their comprehensive document library is full of useful tools like risk assessment templates and Guidance Notes.

🌐 ecclesiastical.com/church/#madesimple

Ecclesiastical church insurance team

Do you have questions about your Ecclesiastical policy?

📞 **0345 777 3322** – lines are open 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays
 ✉ churchteam@ecclesiastical.com

Risk Advice Helpline

Are you looking for advice on how to minimise risks as you manage your church?

📞 **0345 600 7531** – lines are open 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays
 ✉ risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com

A claims team that really cares

Ecclesiastical's claims team are experts.

📞 **0345 603 8381** – 24-hour reporting service
 🌐 ecclesiastical.com/claims/claim-online

Ecclesiastical would love to hear from you

Do you have a story for Ecclesiastical? Perhaps you overcame a fundraising problem or found a way to get your local community more involved with your church. Sharing 'a day in your life' could really help other Churchwardens and members of the PCC.

✉ meetus@ecclesiastical.com

Contains promotional material

Month-by-month support

To help you plan maintenance and manage your church and its grounds, Ecclesiastical has created a calendar to keep you organised and on track – you can download your copy using this link:

 ecclesiastical.com/risk-calendar



Get monthly tips straight to your inbox




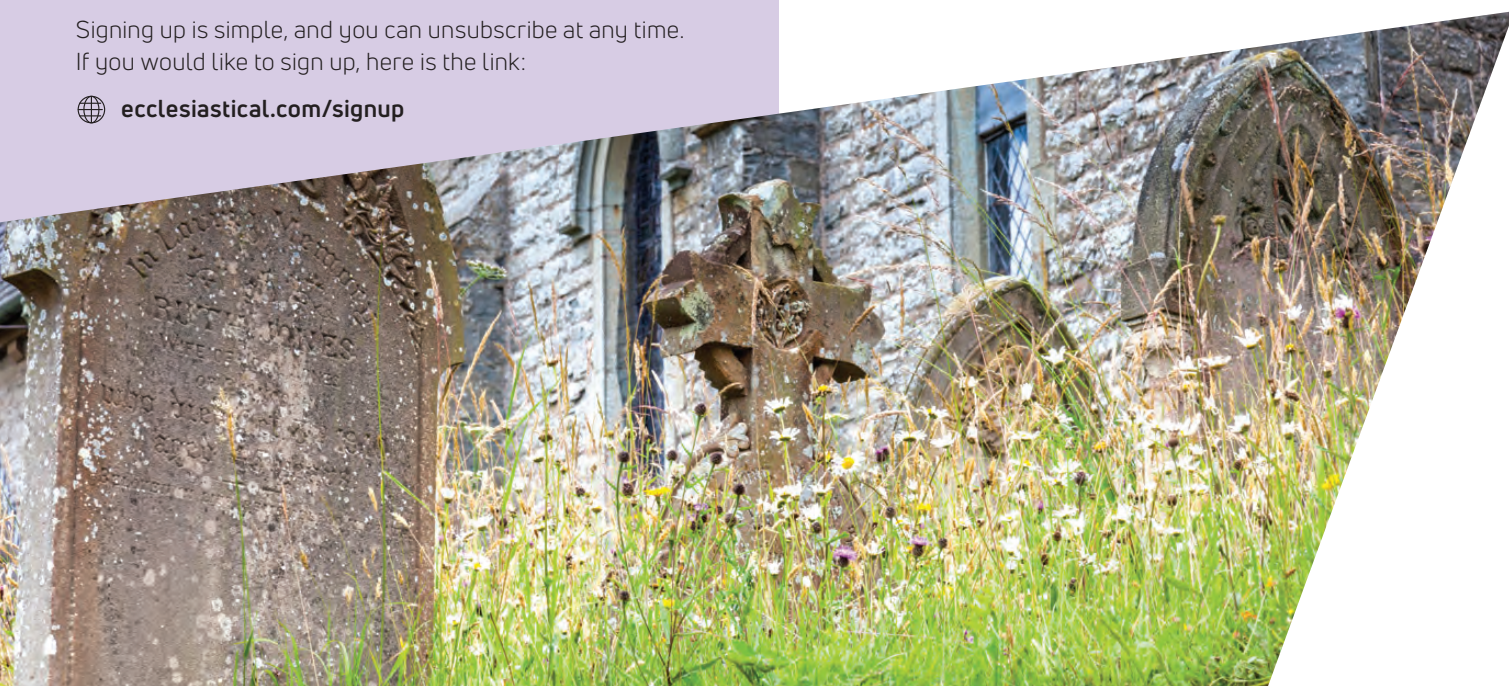
Join the community of church leaders who receive Ecclesiastical's monthly e-newsletter. It's packed with valuable advice about church security, event planning, fundraising and more.

Many of Ecclesiastical's customers already benefit from this e-newsletter, and we hope you'll join them.

Feel free to share the sign-up link with others in your church community who might be interested.

Signing up is simple, and you can unsubscribe at any time. If you would like to sign up, here is the link:

 ecclesiastical.com/signup



Why should net zero be a focus for churches?

A Q&A with the Church of England



BENEFACT TRUST



Julian Atkins

In 2024, our Group's charitable owner, Benefact Trust, pledged £1.5m towards the Church of England's ambitious goal of reaching net zero by 2030. Benefact Trust's funding is focused on equipping and inspiring churches across the UK to start their journey to net zero and reduce their impact on the environment.

Benefact Trust sat down with Julian Atkins, Net Zero Programme Director for the Church of England, to talk through some of the most commonly asked questions about the Church's net zero goal.

Whilst many of us want to play an active role in tackling climate change, the prospect can seem overwhelming due to the scale of the issue, the urgency to take

action and the abundance of complicated information. In Benefact Trust's short Q&A with Julian, he emphasises how important it is to keep things simple and start small.

Julian discusses what net zero actually means, why the Church has a responsibility to reduce its impact on the climate and low-cost ways to get started. Watch 'Net Zero and the Church' on Benefact Trust's YouTube channel:

 youtube.com/@benefacttrust

Here you'll find a host of helpful videos, including a full podcast with Julian Atkins.

Ecclesiastical supports sabbaticals

Ecclesiastical aims to support Anglican clergy by offering financial assistance for life-affirming sabbaticals through their **Ministry Bursary Awards (MBAs)**.

Established in 1987, these awards have distributed over £1.4 million, benefiting more than 1,500 clergy members. An MBA can rejuvenate and enhance the ministerial development of clergy, offering them opportunities to engage in extended study, travel, or other enriching activities that can have a lasting impact on their personal growth and to the ministering of their congregations.



St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Kolkata, West Bengal, India

The **Revd Adam Dickens** is a recent recipient of such an MBA and he told Ecclesiastical:

“ I was very grateful for the MBA grant as it facilitated my sabbatical visit to Kolkata and wider West Bengal where I spent a month engaging with projects run by the Cathedral Relief Service of Kolkata Cathedral, as well as visiting various establishments that came under the ambit of the Diocese of Calcutta; these included churches, schools, colleges, a TB clinic, an AIDs hospice and a residential home.

“ It was an extremely rich time as I was offered a window into the joy and despair of life for people living in the city (as well as some of the rural areas in the state of West Bengal) and the creative ways in which church communities were responding. It provided interaction with a very different culture to the one I'm used to inhabiting, with all the challenges and growth that comes with it. ”

The application window for the 2026 MBA programme opens in spring 2025 and closes in September 2025. In 2026, we are particularly keen to see more sabbaticals which aim to support the drive for carbon net zero.

If you would like to find out more about the Awards, including eligibility criteria and application details, please visit:

 ecclesiastical.com/mba



Give yourself a financial health check

In today's world, with the high cost of living and rising taxation, it's more important than ever to ensure your finances are in top shape.

Expert advice for clergy



Ben Dabbs




Ben Dabbs, an independent financial adviser with Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Service (EFAS), emphasises the importance of financial planning for clergy. “With little time available for clergy in their busy lives to focus on themselves, it's important for them to seek expert advice to manage their finances effectively and ensure their personal well-being and that of their

dependants is planned and catered for,” he explains. “Too often, clergy members will delay financial planning until the twilight of their ministry, which can lead to unnecessary hardship.”

Plan ahead with confidence

To help you review your financial arrangements, such as life assurance, pension savings, investments, mortgage options¹ and retirement planning, it's worthwhile seeking expert advice from an independent financial adviser who understands your circumstances and can put in place a plan to help give you peace of mind for the future.

If you would like to arrange a financial health check or receive a brochure providing information about the advice and services available, please contact EFAS at:

 **0800 107 0190**
 **getadvice@ecclesiastical.com**
 **ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice**

¹Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on a mortgage. The value of your investments including pension investments can fluctuate, and you may not get back the amount you invested. Your capital is at risk.



Join the Movement for Good



Ecclesiastical is part of the Benefact Group and we do financial services differently – we give all available profits to charity and good causes. It's thanks to our customers that we can make this happen.

The Movement for Good Awards is our annual giving programme and anyone can get involved. The Awards give you the opportunity to nominate the charitable causes that matter most to you.

We're proud to have supported churches, Scouts groups, food banks, hospices, heritage charities and more, all nominated by their supporters.

How to nominate a charity or church to win £1,000

1. Visit movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical
2. Nominate before 15 December 2025. Your nomination will be included in all the remaining £1,000 draws in 2025, so the earlier you nominate, the more chances you have. It's one nomination per charity, per person, so you can get as many as you like in the mix.
3. Further down the page, there are resources you can personalise and share with your colleagues and congregation to encourage more nominations.
4. Keep scrolling to sign up for notifications, including special £5,000 draws and larger awards through partnership funding.

You'll also find more information about the Awards, including the terms and conditions at:

 movementforgood.com/tc

Best of luck!

Trust Ecclesiastical to insure your home and give back to your church!

As a church official, your home could serve as both a living space and a place for your ministry. You might host prayer meetings and counselling sessions from your home, or even help parishioners plan weddings and funerals. You will be supporting your parishioners throughout the years, and Ecclesiastical Insurance is there to support you, with their tailored home insurance policies.

A home insurance policy from Ecclesiastical Insurance can be adapted to suit the needs of the clergy in your work on behalf of the Church, or the general needs of your congregation and community.

Ecclesiastical Home Insurance

Ecclesiastical Home Insurance provides up to £750,000 for buildings and £75,000 for contents as standard. This cover includes protection for your home, personal belongings and even contents away from home up to £3,500. Additionally, 24-hour home emergency assistance and legal expenses are included, helping to ensure you are covered in unexpected situations.

But there is more!

When you take out a new home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical, they will donate £130 to an Anglican church or cathedral of your choice¹ – this programme has already contributed over £500,000, to churches across the country.



You can trust Ecclesiastical. They regularly win coveted awards for their home insurance products. In November last year, they retained their top spot in the Fairer Finance Home Insurance league table for a record twentieth time and remain the UK's most trusted home insurance provider!² Importantly, in today's online world, they also have an 'Excellent' score on Trustpilot too.³



When you talk to the friendly experts at Ecclesiastical's UK-based Head Office, they will work with you to make sure that your home and its contents are well-protected against a variety of risks. By choosing Ecclesiastical, you're not just insuring your home; you could also be helping your church. Call us today!

 **0345 777 3322** and quote **CHOPS25**
 **ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance**

¹Terms and conditions apply. Visit ecclesiastical.com/trust130-terms. ²Fairer Finance Home Insurance customer experience rating, spring and autumn 2015 – 2024. ³Trustpilot reviews – 419 between 1 February 2023 – 14 April 2025. Correct at time of going to print.

Think Global, Act Local – Ulley Eco Church

Holy Trinity Church, Ulley, is a small rural church blessed with a large, open churchyard. In 2012, discussions about a wind farm installation on the edge of the village focused our thinking more keenly on our environment and reducing our church's impact on it. When we learnt about the Eco Church scheme, we were eager to take part. It took a year of small changes from September 2021 to be awarded our Bronze, and a further 18 months to receive our Silver award.

We have an old church building which is not at all eco-friendly: a very high, uninsulated roof and an oil-based heating system. We monitor the building's temperature/humidity as part of the Historic Heat project, suggesting ways to best heat and protect it.

Analysing our carbon footprint for both church heating and travel let us offset our environmental impact via a Woodland Trust tree planting scheme. We have planted bulbs in the churchyard and have left part of it wild to encourage wildlife including bees from our hives which produce church honey!

Day-to-day, we have reduced our paper use via our AV system, bought Fairtrade coffee and sustainable cleaning products while encouraging recycling and turning off our LED lights.

As an increasingly eco-centred worship community, we use our weekly intercessions and prayer diary, along with our PCC agenda, to focus on the environment.

Annually, as part of the village well dressing event, eco-activities are offered to the community: making new paper from scrap, building birdboxes and insect hotels, preparing leaf skeletons, and surveying the churchyard's nature. We have celebrated our success through social media and even in the Network magazine.

'Think global, act local' allows us to focus on what we, as a church, can do and be seen as a green light shining in the community.

Charlotte Darling

Churchwarden & PCC Secretary, Ulley Holy Trinity



Town End Community Hub

At St Peter's, we try to work out our faith through five lenses. Adoration (Worship), Belonging, Compassion, Discipleship and Evangelism (with great thanks to Bishop Graham Tomlin for the alphabet mnemonic). We've always seen belonging as growing a church where people belong but also drawing people from outside into our family too. Another foundation of our approach being 'belong, believe, behave'. We also see that so many times in the gospels Jesus has compassion and helps and heals people.



Weekly coffee morning

We had the opportunity to take a lease on a building in a part of the parish with no community space and where people often feel overlooked, particularly during and after the floods in 2019. It hasn't been an easy ride there, but we now have a school uniform project, a debt advice centre and a weekly coffee morning that we're hoping to extend to other days of the week through 2025. These are projects that meet real needs in the community, relieving poverty, helping recycle top-quality, pre-loved uniform, and starting to reduce social isolation.

We want everything we do to point to Jesus, but a ministry of compassion isn't really compassionate if you have an ulterior motive; not every person Jesus healed became a disciple. We will help anyone in need, whatever their opinion of faith, so instead we have an optional prayer time during the coffee mornings. It's in a separate room but everyone is invited and we're always happy and ready to explain how our faith motivates our work if people ask.

We're hopeful that over the next year, the fruit of our work at the Hub will be a fledgling worshipping community of people who feel like they belong with us and want to know more about the Jesus we serve.

Revd Dave Berry

Vicar, Bentley St Peter's

St Matthew's Parish Nursing Project



St Matthew's Parish Nursing Project has been serving the people of Sheffield for five years. Our vision was that our service would reach out to promote the health of body, mind and soul for our diverse community. Our mission – to offer a listening service with crisis support, to create sanctuary space and time

for people, to provide information and health education, to signpost to appropriate services and offer spiritual care to those of any or no faith.

The project has constantly evolved to adjust to the changing needs of our city. When we began our outreach to the homeless on the streets, there was as yet, no multi agency outreach forum or health MAP in place, but now these are really well established and we are key players in that forum alongside our colleagues at the Archer Project and Ben's Centre, with all agencies offering outreach now having access to a health MAP to support clients in accessing support to meet their health needs. We have made good links with the Sheffield Central Ward supporting their Local Area Committee public event, 'Health and Wellbeing – Your Voice'. We even took our blood pressure screening services to a Sheffield Steelers match to reach the fans!

Other forms of outreach include our permanent stall at the Moor Market, where shoppers can drop in for a listening ear and spiritual support, blood pressure monitoring, weight management, mental health screening, health advice and signposting services. We have seen people come to faith and join our team and supported several clients to attend our Walsingham pilgrimage. We continue to minister to those of all faiths or none, with a large proportion of our clients being Muslim stall holders. The greatest needs being social isolation, poor mental health, and health promotion advice and support.

We have developed fruitful partnerships with Diabetes UK, Healthwatch Sheffield, Sheffield Council, Macmillan and Wicker Pharmacy to support the health of our clients.

Outreach through the 'well-being cafe' in conjunction with Sheffield Art House and the Anderson-Green Project provides an art class with a homemade free hot meal, and peer support for those recovering from addictions. It is led by those with lived experience and supported by South Yorkshire Housing Association.

Michaela Suckling
Parish Nurse


Net Zero – Progress and Resources

In November 2023, Diocesan Synod voted to adopt our Net Zero Action Plan. Here are some highlights of the progress made since then.


During 2024 we collaborated with the Diocese of Leeds to appoint an energy consultancy to provide parishes with Energy Audits, part-funded by a grant from the CoFE Net Zero Programme. In more complex buildings they are essential for planning low carbon replacements to heating and lighting, and to support applications for faculties. Audits are available via either the Church Building Officers (CBOs) or Net Zero Programme Manager, who will be able to give more information and help you navigate the process.

Over 90 parishes completed the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) in 2024, up significantly from 2023, and our thanks go to everyone who made the effort to complete theirs. This is an important measure of the energy use and carbon emissions from your buildings and helps to inform where improvements can be made, and measure how we as parishes and a diocese are reducing our damage to the climate year by year.

One of the Net Zero milestones for 2025 is to convert old-fashioned lighting to LEDs. Many of our parishes have made lots of progress in the last few years, but this year we will be encouraging those that haven't to make a start. We recommend contacting your CBO or Sally Hunter in the Environment Team to discuss your situation, but there's also lots of advice on the Churchcare webpages:

 churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare

At the end of 2024, the diocese received just over £58,000 to help parishes implement quick and easy improvements to their buildings, such as draught proofing, updating heating controls and upgrading electrical supplies. The December 2024 round helped to fund a Hive smart controller, ceiling insulation, LED replacement lighting, roof repairs, a 3-phase electrical upgrade and a number of temporary emergency heaters for loan. To apply for a quick wins grant and for more information on Net Zero and the Environment Team, visit:

 sheffield.anglican.org/support/for-churches/social-transformation/net-zero/

David Castle
Net Zero Programme Manager

For more information

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

 **Facebook:** Ecclesiastical

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