



DONCASTER MINSTER

 THE DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD

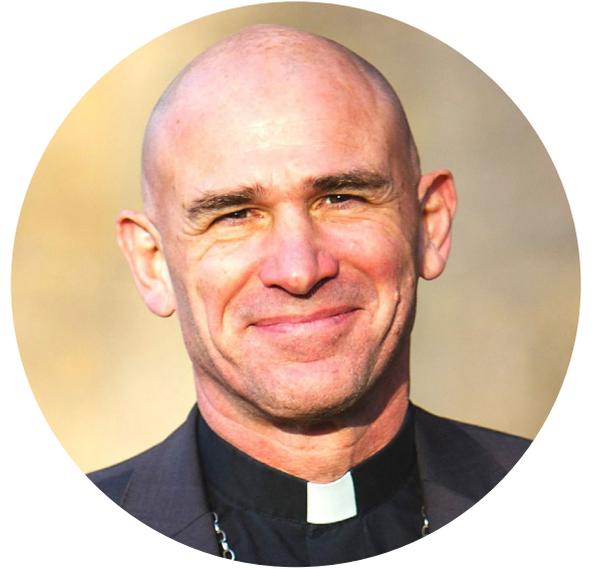
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Dear friend,

For several reasons, 2025 feels like the start of a new chapter in the life of the Diocese of Sheffield.

First, it is the year in which we launch the refreshed version of our Diocesan Strategy, by which we seek to be 'renewed, released and rejuvenated, by God's grace and in Christ's service. The original seven-year strategy, launched in 2018, has served us well and (despite the very real ravages of the Covid-19 pandemic) there has been much fruitfulness in that time for which to give thanks to God: a new prayer community developed, new ministries begun, and new congregations formed. A Diocesan-wide consultation over the refreshing of the strategy gave a clear message: increase the emphasis on seeking the welfare of local communities, of our neighbours and neighbourhoods, but retain the 3Rs and the Diocesan Vision Prayer. This we have sought to do.



Secondly, it is the year in which the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board responded generously to our partnership funding request, committing £17.5 million for investment in the revitalisation of our Diocese with immediate effect and in principle committing a further £18.5 million for the period 2028-2031. We are hugely grateful for this resource and for all the exciting potential it brings, as we continue to seek to see the whole people of God mobilised in the whole mission of God, and every baptised person enabled to enter into the full dignity of their baptismal vocation to shine as a Light for Christ in the world to the glory of God the Father.

Thirdly, it is the year in which we will welcome a new Bishop of Doncaster and a new Archdeacon of Sheffield and Rotherham into post, to bring fresh energy and perspectives to the Bishop's Senior Staff Team.

In this context, the appointment of a new 'Oversight Minister' for Doncaster Minster is all the more important: this will be a key post in the delivery of our vision for a renewed, released and rejuvenated Christian Witness in the Mission Area that encompasses the centre of the City of Doncaster, just at the moment the City Council themselves are moving to implementation phase of their own renewed vision and investment strategy for the City centre.

In this Gospel adventure for the sake of the coming kingdom of God, the leadership of these church families is going to be vital. It will require someone who is able to exercise an enabling oversight, with a passion for teamwork, for developing leaders and for empowering the whole people of God for the whole mission of God. It will require someone able to raise up leaders to take on responsibilities as 'focal leaders' in every congregation and someone who understands that overseeing the ministry of the body of Christ does not mean doing everything personally, but releasing the gifts and ministries of others.

We are praying that the Lord will bring to us a person with a strong sense of vocation to this task at this time; a person of faith and hope and love in God; a person who laughs easily and has a zest for life in Christ; a person with a sense of adventure, unafraid of failure and reliant on the grace of the Holy Spirit. If that might be you, we would love to explore with you the possibility that the Lord is calling you to this role.

With every blessing

The Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox

Bishop of Sheffield



Section One: Summary of the Profile

The aim of the Minster is to provide a warm welcome to all, and to serve Doncaster and surrounding area, through our worship and events, using the skills and talents of people who are the Minster Community.

www.doncasterminster.co.uk

1a Who we are?

You will be joining a vibrant, joyful, and prayerful congregation at the heart of Doncaster. Doncaster Minster is located in the city centre and occupies an ancient site, it was given minster status in 2004. Doncaster Minster is a successful liberal Catholic church, which welcomes the ordination of women. We enjoy elements of the sacramental and choral traditions, including BCP. Most of the Electoral Roll of 77 live outside the parish. We welcome all, irrespective of faith or no faith.

As part of the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board funding request, for investment in the revitalisation of our Diocese, there is a dedicated strand of this funding called "Love Doncaster". This hugely important investment will allow the Minster community to lift its head from daily challenges and develop an exciting vision for the future. A summary of the successful funding bid request for Love Doncaster is available upon request.

As part of Love Doncaster, we will be

strengthening connections and collaboration with St James' (with congregations that include Urdu and Persian groups) and St Vincent's Mission through informal and formal fellowship/ worship events.

You will be joining a dedicated and passionate Christian community who are ready to fully support and embrace you as you deliver an ambitious programme of positive change. It has been remarked on by many people how impressively the Church Wardens and wider Minster Community have maintained a thriving and welcoming ministry during a prolonged interregnum.

You will be coming into a role that has not been delivered in this way before and will have a chance to define the role. We realise that this is a monumental task that even a superhuman could struggle to achieve. Be assured that we do not want you to do this all on your own; you will be well supported by a dynamic and supportive PCC and community of volunteers who are excited to work with you as well, a team of paid staff.

1b What do we do and how do we do it?

The Minister occupies a deeply ancient historical site, where there has been a church on the site since the Middle Ages, with continuous activity on the site dating back to at least AD71.

Following a devastating fire in 1853, the current Grade I Listed Minster church was designed and built between 1854-8 by Sir George Gilbert Scott, architect to Westminster Abbey. The Grade II Listed 'Mighty Schulze' organ, installed in 1862, is a major asset and attracts visitors from all around the UK and across the world.

The Minster continues the rich history, spanning back to medieval times, of providing excellent choral and organ music to enhance our worship. Through Love Doncaster, we will increase outreach in the community, including nurturing a love of music among our young people. There is an aspiration to take part in the Diocesan School Singing Programme, hosted by the Cathedral, which will help us to both recruit new choristers and address social justice for the poorer children across Doncaster.

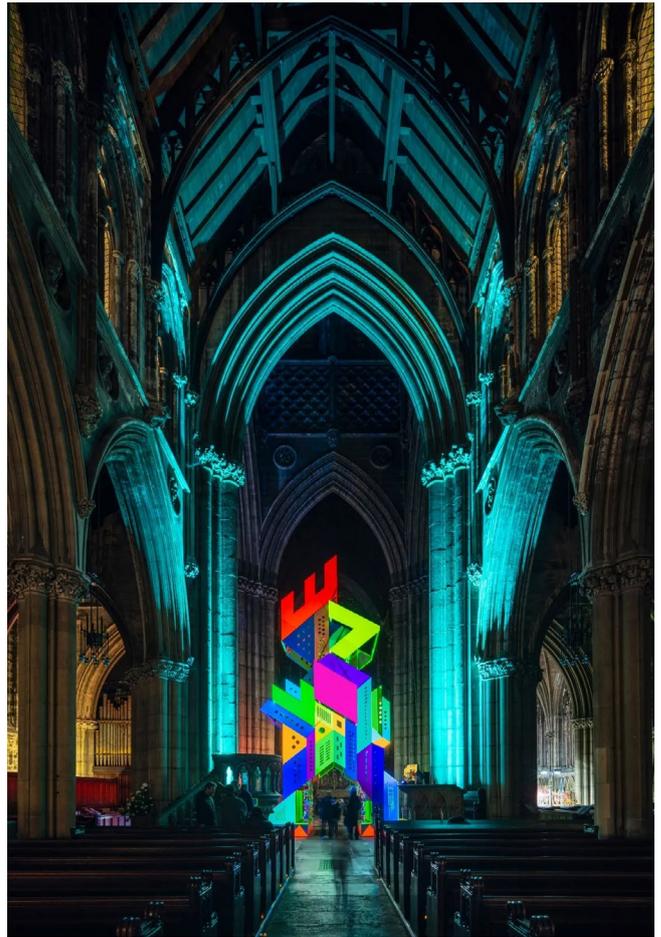
The Minster is the Civic Church for the city of Doncaster, with a long history of hosting civic services and other large services for the benefit of the wider Doncaster community. Love Doncaster offers rich opportunities to strengthen this connection, working together for education and heritage and in community support.

As well as a parish church, the Minster is a resource for Doncaster as a whole. The church is open to visitors daily, attracting visitors from around the world as well as members of the local community, including those who have lived in the city for many years and have never visited before – for some it is a new realisation that they can visit the Minster - and they are amazed by the building and its heritage. A lot of visitors come with a preconception that they will not be allowed in if they are of another faith, so we make an effort to emphasise that all faiths are welcome.

1c What do we want from our vicar?

We are seeking someone who will respect our confidently catholic worship style and who will:

- Guide the Minster to be a friendly and exciting place at the heart of the City offering excellent liturgy and worship, and enriching the wider life of the City.
- Guide us in growing our congregation in number and diversity, with new members who are keen to take an active role in the Minster community.
- Encourage people to recognise themselves as disciples of Jesus and assume part of the life



of the church at all ages, including children and young people.

- Support us to provide alternative worship on a regular basis.
- Actively encourage the regular and successful identification of new leaders with fresh vision who reflect the diversity of our church and community.
- Lead this community into a new, exciting, and uncertain future, drawing on external help as necessary.
- Explore the variety of pathways to becoming part of the City Centre Ministry community.
- Develop the Minster's contribution to addressing the poverty and social inequalities so evident in the city centre and across Doncaster as a whole. Working more closely with St James' and the new Bishop's Mission Order of St Vincents provides rich opportunities to drive improvement in this area.
- Lead delivery of Love Doncaster, enabling others to support through their gifts.

Section Two: The Wider Context

The Diocese of Sheffield is made up of Church of England organisations located throughout South Yorkshire and the southern parts of the East Riding of Yorkshire. It comprises parishes, schools, chaplaincies, missional communities and other organisations all united by their common Christian faith.

It is an Anglican diocese that is made up of a diverse community of mission-focused

people who are seeking to transform their lives, and the lives of others, by sharing the Christian faith. Since the creation of the diocese in 1914, the shape of the villages, towns and cities may have changed but the people are still vibrant, energetic and passionate about serving our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section Three: Who Are We Seeking?

We are seeking someone who is:

- An experienced, friendly, confident leader with humility; emotionally intelligent, unifying and encouraging.
- A leader who will help us develop a nurturing church where people of all ages and backgrounds can belong.
- Someone comfortable with providing traditional worship in the C of E choral, liberal-Catholic tradition, with the energy and flexibility to lead worship regularly, while helping us to find new ways to worship.
- A strategic thinker who can manage change whilst maintaining the good, making sure that everybody is valued and that the congregations' views are heard.
- Rooted in their own daily prayer life and excited to support us in broadening, deepening, and strengthening our own prayer lives.
- A people leader who will monitor their teams' workloads to ensure a healthy working environment for all.
- A teacher who can engage with and relate the Bible to everyday life to give us a fresh, deeper understanding of scriptures to deepen our faith.
- Happy to offer the blessing associated with the implementation of "Living in Love and Faith"
- A priest who supports people in learning new skills by helps them to identify their gifts.
- Someone who enjoys social activities and who is willing to enter fully into the life of the community.
- Innovative to develop our pastoral ministry to help us connect with those who come to us for baptisms, weddings and funerals.
- Experienced in training curates.
- Bringing their financial and business experience to work with the PCC to complete restoration plans and future developments.

Section Four: About The Parish

Following expansion of the parish in 2023 to include the parish of Holy Trinity, the new parish includes the residential area of Town Moor and two schools, Town Field Primary and Hall Cross Academy, and Doncaster College. Previously most of the parish was made up of the city centre, retail, large shopping centre, markets, with only one person on the electoral roll, who was resident in the parish. The addition of schools and Doncaster College to the parish presents opportunities for ministry to both young and mature students and to refugees who access the ESOL and IT courses.

Although the parish has been extended to include the residential areas of Town Moor the largest area is inside the City Centre which is the second most deprived community in Doncaster. Some of the data shows:

- 48.8% of year six children are overweight or obese
- 26.4% are living in income deprivation
- Coronary Heart disease is the leading cause of death
- 57% of homes occupied by one person
- Largest BAME community, 21.6 %
- 19% of city centre residents are inactive (Well Doncaster January 2024)

You will be the Oversight Minister for a new Mission Area, to include the parishes of Doncaster Minster and St James, and a new Bishop's Mission Order at St Vincent's. You will be the Priest in charge for St James and will work closely with St Vincent's.



St James Church has a unique character and diversity of its own.

Congregation consists of Farsi speaking Iranians, people from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and British, the Urdu Fellowship has been using our Church twice a month for the past year, growing in number during that time. As the Urdu Fellowship are becoming more involved at St James and many are on the Electoral Roll, it is anticipated that some of them will become part of the team of governance at our forthcoming APCM. As there are also many children, we expect that a children's group will be formed, which at present we are unable to do. We are positive that together we have a future that will certainly bless each congregation.

We have services using Common Worship, Holy Communion once a month and a Parade Service led by the Boys Brigade and Girls Association. The atmosphere within our services is relaxed and people are encouraged to read the lesson, lead prayers and intercessions and do the Offertory. We also have a Barnabas spot where people are encouraged to share what God has been doing in their lives to encourage others, and we offer prayer to those who feel they need a special touch from God.

Our Church Hall is used by Community groups, a Men's Group, an Art Group, Trussell Trust Foodbank, and Boys Brigade. This latter group

has grown significantly during their time with us and has drawn many children from our Parish area. Our hope and prayer is that they will find faith and become part of our regular congregation. We long to see more children and families at our Church to see God's kingdom grow and extend.

We long to be a people who love and want to share Jesus with others, to be filled with love, compassion and goodness for all who cross our doors, whatever their age, colour or creed, and to be able to meet the needs of those who are struggling.

Our biggest challenge at the moment is that we lack younger people who could take on roles of governance and do the necessary jobs in the day-to-day upkeep of the Church, our Hall and the gardens. It would also be a great asset for us to have musical worship to complement our singers.

Saint Vincent's Mission Doncaster is a new pioneer ministry being set up in Doncaster city centre. Funded by a mission grant until June 2030, it is a Bishop's Mission Order (from The Parish of The Resurrection, Doncaster) collaborating with the churches of St George's Minster and St James' to achieve the city centre revitalisation of Doncaster vision. It is staffed by a funded team of a full-time priest, part-time Mission Outreach Worker, part-time administrator, and also those who minister on a voluntary basis.

Saint Vincent's Mission Doncaster is a mixed ecology mission that operates from a retail unit in the city centre to reach those on the margins, the unchurched, and to grow new disciples of Jesus. The mission provides a place for the Church to engage with people where they are by providing drop-in pastoral support and a range of support groups. It is also a place where people can explore and grow in faith by accessing resources, teaching and the Sacraments. As a mission, we are passionate about benefiting our city in positive ways and seeing lives transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Section Five: About The Church



This is an exciting time to join the team at Doncaster Minster. After decades of the Minster team focusing on just keeping going, the investment that comes with Love Doncaster provides an opportunity for a very different future.

Currently, there is only one paid member of staff (the Director of Music), with a great deal of support provided to the incumbent from volunteers who organise and oversee all the activities that take place in the Minster, including Church Wardens, PCC members, retired clergy (who cover services), readers, altar servers, welcomers, stewards, and the volunteers from the wider Minster community.

The Minster Staff team is at a pivotal point, with a large expansion just around the corner. We are in the process of recruiting a paid Operations Manager to lead our church operations function at a strategic and management level. To enable delivery of Love Doncaster, with HR support from the Diocese, you will be recruiting:

- Admin officer
- Centenary Project Worker (Children, Families and Young People)
- Parish nurse
- Associate priest
- Music Programme Worker
- Social Action Community Transformation Worker or Community Development Worker

There are no focal ministers by name at the present time, but we do have lay people who undertake many of the roles that can be considered a part of Focal Ministry Team. People are seen as leaders of the church.

5a: The church and its people



5a.i A short history of Doncaster Minster and its wider site

The Minster occupies the same site as the Roman fort of Danum, and an 18 metre stretch of the fort wall can be seen at the north east end of the Minster site. The archaeological remains are a Scheduled Monument. A Norman fortification is also known to have occupied the site, and it is probable that the materials from that building were used, in part, to build the early church.

The destruction of the medieval church, by fire on the night of 28th February 1853, was seen as a great calamity for the town and the neighbourhood. The new building was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, architect to Westminster Abbey. It took four years to build and grand celebrations accompanied the consecration of the building by the Archbishop of York on 14th October 1858. It is undoubtedly better than the average Gothic revival building, and it has been suggested that it is the

“proudest and most Cathedral-like of Gilbert Scott’s Parish Churches.”

Inside the Minster, most of the fixtures and fittings – from paintings to stained glass to metal work and memorials – are of the highest standard of craftsmanship and add further to the beauty and unity of the internal space. Amongst its treasures are a clock by the designer of the Palace of Westminster Clock, more usually known as Big Ben and a spectacular 5 manual organ by the renowned German organ builder Edmund Schulze, installed in 1862.

There is a peal of eight bells, weighing 5.5 tons in total. The heaviest bell, the Tenor, weighs 1.5 tons alone. The bells were refurbished and recast just before the Second World War.

The Great East Window in Doncaster Minster was installed in 1862 and is dedicated to Reverend John Sharpe, who was vicar of Doncaster from 1817 until his death in July

1860. After Reverend Sharpe's death over 100 members of the public raised money and commissioned the design of a window to replace the clear glass window that was installed during the rebuild of the Church.

The window comprises eight upright lights which show the great events at the end of our Lord's life on earth, The Passion, Resurrection and Ascension. Above the upright lights the tracery shows the twelve apostles and twelve angels surrounding our Lord. The window was manufactured and exhibited in its entirety at the International Exhibition in London. After the Exhibition was completed the entire window was dismantled, transported to Doncaster and installed in the Church.

St George House, which is used as an office and meeting place is also Grade II Listed and is one of the oldest domestic buildings in Doncaster. The house was built in 1756 for Edward Miller, who was organist at the Minster 1756-1807.

5a.ii Worship

Our central service is an 11am Choral Holy Communion every Sunday with an average congregation of 92, this service is streamed live on our Doncaster Minster YouTube Channel. We sing a mixture of traditional and contemporary hymns, during term time these are accompanied by the organ and our robed choir. Tea and coffee after the service gives us a chance to chat and provide pastoral care. Lay people act as eucharistic assistants, servers, read the lessons, lead the intercessions, act as vergers, sidespeople, flower arrangers, or make and serve refreshments after services – and the list could go on. There is an award-winning Bellingring Team led by the Bell Tower Captain, bells are rung before the main Sunday morning service as well as for weddings and for some funerals.

On the first and third Sundays of the month, during term time, we hold Choral Evensong in the Minster at 4.30pm.

Baptisms are offered on the fourth Sunday of the month at 1pm.

During the week, we have said BCP Holy Communion every Tuesday in the Minster at 12.30pm and Morning Prayer on Zoom on Wednesdays at 9.00am.

We celebrate the main Festival dates in the church's year, with major saints' days celebrated occasionally.



We have an evening Choral Eucharist for Ash Wednesday and during Holy Week we hold services including an evening Choral Eucharist for Maundy Thursday, a Choral Good Friday service, and a Dawn Choral Eucharist on Easter Sunday, in addition to our 11am Choral Eucharist and 4:30pm Evensong.

At Christmas, our services include a Christingle service and a service of Nine Lessons and Carols. We have a Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day we have an 8:30am said Holy Communion and a sung Eucharist at 11am.

As the Civic Church for the City of Doncaster, we hold Civic services from the City of Doncaster Council, including a choral Service of Remembrance on Remembrance Sunday, with a procession from Doncaster's cenotaph.

Over the last twelve months, we had 1 wedding and 11 funerals. Most of the funerals took place in the church, with others at the local crematorium.

5a.iii Spiritual and Pastoral Life

We have held a variety of groups and initiatives to aid our spiritual growth, during the vacancy, these have been led by one of our Associate Clergy, Revd Susan Bedford, and we are keen to increase the take-up of these activities. These have included confirmation classes and a series of monthly prayer meetings exploring different types of prayer.

An annual Memorial Service is held on the Sunday nearest to All Souls' Day. Relatives of those whose funerals have taken place in church during the previous twelve months are invited personally by letter to attend. Other members of the congregation are asked to submit the names of any they would like remembered and are also welcome to attend.

In the past we have Lent groups and Lenten lectures, and we would be keen to reinvigorate this practice.

We have a chapel, the Forman Chapel, available to people for private prayer and meditation during normal opening hours. Candles may be lit and placed on the candle stands to assist with private prayer. Prayer cards are provided for those struggling with challenging aspects in their lives.

Our model for growth at the present time must be considered as being attractional. New members of our congregation come to us through word of mouth, and we find that new members are attracted to the Minster because of the style of the worship. We are network based and not parish based. We have transient visitors who are passing through who enrich our congregation. We have previously gone into the community of wider Doncaster to engage a new congregation and intend to do so in the future, working with St James and St Vincents BMO.

5b. The Church and Community it Serves

The Minster hosts a number of community groups, including:

- TLC – offer local vulnerable people a meal and a warm drink in a safe place.
- Mothers' Union - work towards ending poverty, inequality, and injustice.
- Flower Guild – arrange church flowers and host activities like wreath-making.

- Good Companions – meet-up once a month and also go on day trips together.
- Bellringers – ring Minster bells, host visiting bell ringers, and teach bell ringing.
- Friends of the Minster – meet for social events and raise funds for the Minster.

Other groups that have been successful in the past, and which could potentially be re-invigorated include a Literacy group and a Dementia Café.

The addition of new staff will be a great support to these various groups, ensuring safer recruitment, good safeguarding and risk assessment processes, and a more unified approach to the identity of the Minster as an inclusive and a welcoming space to all sections of the community.

The church is open to visitors from 10.30 am until 3.30pm daily, enabled by a group of volunteer stewards, many of whom have worked together over the past 15 years and have a wealth of knowledge of the history and life of the Minster, which needs to continue and be channelled and lauded. Visitors to the church appreciated the welcome they receive.

As the Civic Church for the city of Doncaster, the previous incumbent developed excellent relationships with the Civic Mayor and the City Council as chaplain and the Vicar of Doncaster is a key figure in all city-wide emergency/disaster plans.

In addition to their duties with the Minster choir, the Director of Music uses music to engage the wider community within and beyond the Ministry, leading choir, teach a weekly community choir, teaching the 'Voice for Life' course, managing organ scholars and choral scholars, visiting schools, and organising organ recitals.

We host regular coffee mornings to raise money for charities or the Minster and provide an opportunity to socialise.

The minster is used by various groups as a space for events in the city centre, including concerts and other events by local community or charitable groups, schools, and commercial enterprise. A highlight of our events calendar is the annual Doncaster Festival of Light, which is run by Right Up Our Street as a free cultural event for the community of Doncaster that strives to push boundaries and provoke

conversation by providing a space for audiences to connect to joy and embrace experiences and participatory moments and to show that culture belongs to everyone.

5c The Church Buildings and Resources

One of the great strengths of the Minister is the beautiful Grade I Listed church building designed in 1854-8 by Sir George Gilbert Scott. The Grade II Listed 'Mighty Schulze' organ, installed in 1862, is a major asset in its own right. These attract visitors from all around the UK and across the world.

Doncaster Minster is on Heritage England's Heritage at Risk list and there are complex needs and challenges for maintaining and developing the church and the site. The restoration of Doncaster Minster, in common with other major churches of significant size, is a long term and continuous job.

Over the past decade, several large-scale restoration projects have taken place at Doncaster Minster, costing nearly £4 million. Most recently, the North Transept and the high altar reredos were holistically conserved and repaired using traditional conservation techniques on the stained glass, paintings, stonework, leadwork and stone carving.

Chief among these is the maintenance and conservation of the 1756, Grade II Listed, St George House, which is used as an office and meeting place and the Memorial Hall on the site, dating from 1908, which is derelict and unused.

Before Covid a great deal of work and consideration went into planning how the Memorial Hall could be renovated. The re-imagining of the scope would offer included opportunities for new mission, heritage education, and community use. We hope that you will come with good ideas about how to move things on and engage with new and existing people in creative ways.

Although upkeep, repairs and adaptations of the buildings and the organ will be a steep learning curve much has been achieved in the last 25 years, with past incumbents and the PCC spending a lot of time with finances and the perennial question of how to increase revenue. A roadmap for this work, in consultation with the Minster Architect, has been laid out in the 2018 ten-year plan for the repair and development of the church fabric and buildings

on the site.

Our main aim is always to ensure that the church is welcoming to everyone who visits the church for worship, learning, community activities and events. All physical change to a building as significant as Doncaster Minster is based on rigorous analysis of the needs of the people and communities that use the church and its site, to ensure that the building is retained for future generations to enjoy and appreciate the history and heritage.

The servery and toilet provision, which were part of this plan, was completed in 2022. These new facilities have had a massive effect on the life of the church; they have made the church much more accessible and improved opportunities for the church to be used as a venue space hosting a variety of concerts and other events. Planning for the next phase of work, which will centre on restoring the 170ft tower and the addition of modern facilities, is currently underway.

Restoration work on this scale, and to the necessary high standards for a building and site of such significance, is very expensive. Funding for this scale of work comes from a wide range of sources from grants from charitable trusts, grant giving bodies and donations from individuals and the general public.

The minster is the largest space for events in the city centre, which would have implications for any future building project. There have been discussions of the need to remove some pews to create more flexible spaces. Hosting large events offers an opportunity to increase the number of people visiting the minster and to obtain a constant income stream.

Anti-Social Behaviour is a continuous problem and has been for many years because of the isolation of the site, despite investment into lighting, alarms and cameras. The City Council has recently invested more money into increasing the number of Community Support Officers in the city Centre. It is hoped that the social justice strand of Love Doncaster will help to reduce this.

Financing the daily running of the site is challenging, with past incumbents and PCC spending a lot of time considering financial statements and budgets and the perennial question of how to increase revenue. The Minster is reliant on donations, grant funding, income from a range of events and specific fundraising events such as fairs and coffee mornings.

We pay in full all legitimate working clergy expenses and we expect them to take proper holidays and days off. We support clergy to take time for training (CME), reading weeks, personal development, retreat and academic study. We act with concern for the health, well-being, and personal and professional development of our priests.

5c.i The Rectory

As we are in the process of acquiring a permanent Rectory house, you will initially move into the Rectory for St James.

While the St James Rectory is not within the Parish of the Minster of St James, it is only two miles away from Doncaster Minster. It is set in a quiet residential area, making it ideal for children and for pets. It includes a generous hall, with direct access to the large study, which in turn has direct access to the downstairs lavatory. There is a utility room and a double garage. There is a large sitting room, a separate kitchen, and dining rooms. Upstairs, there are four bedrooms, including a main bedroom with an adjoining dressing room and an ensuite, as well as a family bathroom.



