



Dear Churchwarden (and those who look after your Church Buildings),

Following the APCM's and the appointment of new Churchwardens in some of our parishes, it takes a little while for the information to be updated on our database. If you are no longer the churchwarden then please forward this email to them.

As usual please find below information that I have come across over the last few weeks that will be useful for you to know as you look after your church buildings.

Building Management Portal (New Faculty & List B System)

The Building Management Portal has now been up and running for over two months and apart from the initial issues, the system seems to be working well and I have positive feedback from those using the new system.

If you have not used it yet then why not come along to one of our Faculty Workshops, the next one is actually on Thursday 2nd July) at Cuthbert House starting at 1.30pm.

If you need any support with the new system, then please look at the resources available at [Faculty Guidance - Diocese of Durham](#) or do get in touch.

Places of Worship Renewal Fund

The new Places of Worship Renewal Fund was launched by Historic England last month. A summary is found below but all the relevant information can be found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/grants/what-we-fund/places-of-worship-renewal-fund/>.

- The new fund will focus on capital works that keep places of worship open, active and safe
- It will support urgent fabric repairs, without a requirement for buildings to be on the Heritage at Risk Register
- Applications can be made for essential improvements, such as electrical upgrades, heating, facilities and step-free access
- The in-year spend for each of the four years will be £23m per year
- All listed places of worship of any faith or denomination in England, including listed buildings that have been repurposed as places of worship, are eligible for funding; the key thing is that the building is an active place of worship

The PWRF is divided into 3 streams: small grants of £10,000 to £50,000, medium grants of £50,001 to £350,000, and large grants of £350,001 to £1,000,000. The fund is competitive, and not all applications will be successful. It is a new programme and should not be seen as a direct replacement for the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS) and the amount of the grant is not in any way linked to the amount of VAT to be paid. The first deadline for submitting Expressions of Interest (EOIs) has now passed but there will be a second round for applications in September.

The Historic Religious Buildings Alliance is running an information session on Tuesday 7th July at 2pm. Further details should be available on their website [The Historic Religious Buildings Alliance | Who we are / what we do](#) or email them for further details.

A note on VAT

Following the closure of the LPWGS there is a much greater need to engage with VAT reliefs that are available for some works to churches in certain circumstances. There is a [page on the Church of England Website](#) and a separate guidance note [Zero-rated VAT for churches](#) to download.

Energy Footprint Tool (EFT)

A BIG thank you to everyone who has completed this or reminded others to complete this and I apologise if Bethan I have been pestering some of you over the last week. We now have data from over 97% of our churches which allows us to have a really clear understanding of where we need to support parishes to reduce their carbon output. Over the next few weeks we will be checking through the data to check that there no errors with the data entered.

Requests for Archdeacons Permission – List B works

With the launch of the new Faculty Management System, we have now moved to processing all List B through the Online system as is currently done by most other dioceses.

The system seems to be working well with lots of List B permissions being issued on the day they are submitted.

To submit a List B request please register for the Building Management Portal at <https://buildings.churchofengland.org/>

DAC Awards

Thank you to all those churches who have submitted projects for the DAC Awards.

The DAC are now looking through the submissions and we will announce those who have achieved an award in September.

Church Building Training 2026

The Church Building Training Programme for the remainder of 2026 is shown below

Date	Time	Venue	Event	Booking Link
Thursday 2 nd July	1.30-3.00pm	Cuthbert House	Faculty Workshop – New Online System	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My0xMjA/t
Thursday 9 th July	6.00 – 8.00pm	Cuthbert House	Grant Workshop	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My05OQ/t
Tuesday 28 th July	1.00pm	Cuthbert House	New Churchwardens Training	Please see information from Archdeacons nearer the time
Wednesday 29 th July	6.30pm	Zoom		
September	TBC	TBC	Annual Maintenance Schedule	TBC
Tuesday 6 th October	1.30-3.30pm	St Mary's Church Hall Whorlton	Faculty & Grant Funding Workshop	https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NzY5My0xMTA/t

Church Architecture Awards 2026

The UK Church Architecture Awards for 2026 are open for applications. The awards, organised by the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association and the National Churches Trust, are the only national awards devoted to church buildings. Churches can be from any Christian denomination but must remain in use for worship. Full criteria and an entry form are set out on the awards page of the [National Churches Trust website](#).

There are three award categories

- The King of Prussia Gold Medal, for outstanding conservation or repair work.
- The Presidents' Award, for new church buildings, re-orderings, extensions, and alterations to existing church buildings.
- The Young Church Architect or Surveyor of the Year Award.

Full details [here](#), applications close at noon on 26 July.

Counter Terrorism Roadmap

The National Counter Terrorism Security Officer is pleased to share a new product designed to support organisations at all stages of their counter terrorism security and preparedness journey. This product provides a practical introduction for those starting out, while also offering value to organisations looking to build on existing work. It is scalable and can easily be adapted for different sectors and settings. It is online here: [The Roadmap](#).

- It is a structured tool that signposts users to relevant existing guidance so they can better protect people and places from acts of terrorism as well as wider criminal threats.
- It is intended for any organisation, venue, and premise. It brings together key principles, guidance, and links to trusted resources, enabling users to take a step-by-step approach to improving their security posture.
- It is designed to support all settings, regardless of whether they are in scope for the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law. If your setting is subject to [The Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Act 2025](#), you should refer to the [Section 27 statutory guidance](#) to understand compliance with the legislation.

Please review 'The Roadmap' to assess how it may benefit your sector and the organisations you support and share it with relevant stakeholders as appropriate. NaCTSO is keen to make its products as beneficial as possible and so welcomes any feedback on what works and what else would be helpful. Please provide any feedback to the [NaCTSO Lead Government Department team](#).

Resourcing Church Administration

This 'just-in-time' video training resource is an open library of 120+ videos to support anyone whose role includes church administration. It includes a 'Buildings administration' series of videos, offering practical suggestions for how churchwardens and PCCs can be supported. There are no login walls or linear courses to follow: officers and volunteers can watch what they want in their own time. Since this is in a beta-testing stage, feedback forms are provided throughout.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/resourcing-church-administration>

Cool Spaces

Now that summer heatwaves occur regularly, people in your community may be looking for places where they can avoid the heat during the hottest hours of the day. If it is practical to do so, opening churches during those key hours could provide a much-appreciated community service. Many local authorities are asking for 'cool spaces' to register with them as indoor and outdoor areas where people can cool down in hot weather. If your church could offer such a space, go to your local authority website and register. Churches may not have air-conditioning, but they are usually cooler than a lot of homes.

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

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