

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

As this is the time of year for our APCM's and the election of new PCC members and church officers I would like to say a few thank you's. Thank you to all those who serve as churchwardens and for all the hard work that you do looking after our church buildings across the diocese. If you are stepping down from this role this year, thank you for everything that you have done and I hope that you enjoy a rest from the busyness of this role. Please do forward this to your successor. If you are taking on the role of churchwarden for the first time then thank you for offering to serve in this way and please do get in touch if you need any information or support.

### **Energy Footprint Tool for 2023 Energy Usage**

The energy footprint tool (EFT) is now open for you to enter your 2023 energy data. The EFT is accessed via the parish returns website and guidance documents are available on the website.

The process has been simplified this year and basically all you need is the utility bills for each of your church buildings, however it would be really useful if you could enter the KWh data as well as the cost as we have a wide range of energy tariffs depending on when you started your contract.

If you require any support in entering the data, please contact Bethan Still (Diocesan Environmental Officer) or myself.

### **Training Opportunities 2024**

Below is the list of training sessions that have currently been planned to support you as you look after your church buildings. I would however like to draw your attention to a couple of sessions that are coming up.

- Churchyard Management can be something that takes up a lot of time, especially if you still have an open churchyard that is well used by the local community. Our registrar Mr Philip Wills will be running the session and will help you to understand the Churchyard Rules and explain how to deal with different situations that you may find yourself in. Last years session was very popular, so do book early.
- Faculty Workshops – these have proved very popular during the last year but I am trying this as a Zoom session at a lunchtime instead of a face to face session. If you would like to attend but this time is not convenient then please let me know and I can arrange one at a different time.

You can book a place at any of the sessions by clicking on the booking link or if you prefer then just email me.

Date	Time	Venue	Event	Booking Link
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> May	12.00pm	Zoom	Faculty Workshop	<a href="https://bit.ly/3GSAbNq">https://bit.ly/3GSAbNq</a>
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> May	6.30pm	Holy Trinity, South Hetton	Churchyard Management	<a href="https://bit.ly/3SvkmBu">https://bit.ly/3SvkmBu</a>
Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	1.30pm	Cuthbert House	New Churchwardens	Please contact your Archdeacon
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	7.00pm	Zoom	Training	Please contact your Archdeacon
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> September	2.00pm	St Peter's, Jarrow	Annual Maintenance Schedule	<a href="https://bit.ly/48st1v4">https://bit.ly/48st1v4</a>
October	TBC	TBC	Faculty Workshop	TBC
November	TBC	TBC	Undertaking Church Building Projects	TBC

### **Volunteer Flood Warden – Environment Agency**

I have been asked to share this information with anyone who might be interested in our churches.

Flood Wardens can help their communities become more resilient by sharing key communication and putting together a flood plan with actions to take before, during and after a flood.

If you are interested in this role then more information can be found at Durham Community Action website:

<https://www.countydurhamvolunteering.org.uk/opportunity/flood-warden--1082>

They are also encouraging residents to check their flood risk: <https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk>

To sign up to receive free flood alerts/warnings visit: <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/alerts-and-warnings>

For further information you can also email [engagement\\_northeast@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:engagement_northeast@environment-agency.gov.uk) for further information and/or to register as a Flood Warden.

### **Quick Wins Grants**

The diocese has been successful in applying for some additional funding to support small Net Zero Carbon projects within our churches. We are currently finalising the details and awaiting the funding but as soon as these are confirmed we will let you know how you will be able to apply and the types of projects that will be supported by this funding.

### **NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST GRANTS**

The National Churches Trust helps to keep the UK's churches, chapels, and meeting houses open and in use. Since it was founded in 2007, it has awarded 3,000 grants and distributed £28 million in funding. In 2024 it continues to support churches, chapels and meeting houses with funding for maintenance, repair, project development and the installation of kitchens and toilets. You can find an FAQs page [here](#). A summary of the Programmes:

The [Small Grants](#) programme funds urgent maintenance and high priority small repairs, as well as small investigative works and surveys. **Small Grants are usually between £500 and £5,000. Decisions are made every two months.**

The [Medium Grants](#) programme funds essential maintenance and repair projects between £20,000 and £80,000. Medium grants can also help churches in developing projects, for example by funding feasibility studies or investigative work.

**Medium Grants are usually between £3,000 and £10,000. There are 3 decision rounds a year.**

The [Large Grants](#) programme funds large repair projects, such as roof works, costing more than £80,000, or kitchen and toilet projects costing more than £30,000 – ideal if you are hoping to improve your church's accessibility or ability to host events. **Large grants are usually between £10,000 and £50,000. There are 3 decision rounds a year.**

### **Churches Count on Nature – webinars**

As part of Churches Count on Nature the popular webinar series will run from Monday 10th to Friday 14th of June this year between 12noon and 1pm.

There will also be an additional webinar on Wednesday 22nd of May to help people to prepare to record the wildlife during their event.

Wednesday 22nd May	- Knowing your Ant from your Alder with Harriet Carty
Monday 11th June	- Planting your Tree in the Communion Forest with the Rt Revd Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich
Tuesday 11th June	- Your church - your Swifts with Edward Mayer
Wednesday 12th June	- Ancient Yew Trees with Chris Knapman and Russell Ball
Thursday 13th June	- Solitary Bees with Brigit Strawbridge
Friday 14th June	- Blueing the Church: Exploring the oceans through science and faith with David Curry

[Visit this webpage](#) for more details and to book a place.

### **Enter the Green Church Awards**

There's still plenty of time to get your entries in for The Church Times Green Church Awards. The awards are aimed at celebrating the great work of church communities and church schools around the country who are caring for God's creation. Entrants have until 30 June to enter the seven categories.

The awards are organised jointly with the Church of England's environment programme, the Methodist Church, the Salvation Army, and Eco Congregation Scotland. Find out more [here](#).

### **Durham Diocese Churchwardens Forum**

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

[DDChurchwardenForum - Google Groups](#)

If you are already on the Churchwarden Forum, why not ask a question. The more it is used the more useful it becomes.

Following APCM's it does take a few months for all of our church contact details to be updated so if you are no longer the person who should be receiving this email, please forward it to the correct person.

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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