



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living and telling the story of Jesus

Churchwardens' Handbook



July 2026

Loving God

You alone bring growth to your Church and transformation to our communities.

We give thanks for the ways in which you are already at work in our lives and world.

As we look to the future, send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning, wisdom to our actions, and grace in living and telling your story.

Help our churches to grow in commitment to you, in numbers and diversity, and in partnership with our local communities in all that gives life.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

bathandwells.org.uk/prayer

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Almighty and loving Father,
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
guide, strengthen and inspire me
in my service to you and your Church.
Give me the wisdom and understanding
to carry out my duties faithfully and with love,
following the example of Jesus Christ my Lord.
Amen

What is a Churchwarden?

‘Churchwardens are the unsung heroes of parish life – stewards of sacred space and companions in ministry. Whether navigating the practicalities of churchyards, pastoral reorganisation, supporting clergy and congregations, or offering a prayerful presence in times of change, your contribution is both invaluable and deeply appreciated.’

+ Jonathan, Bishop of Portsmouth in Foreword to The Churchwarden’s Yearbook 2026

Welcome to our 2026 Churchwardens’ Handbook. We hope this information will be useful to you whether you are new in role or an old hand.

As we visit parishes across our diocese, we see the hugely important work done by churchwardens, key lay leaders working alongside their incumbents, and that this leadership is pivotal to enabling churches to thrive and grow as places of love and welcome.

Your role has significant responsibilities, as set out in [Canon E1](#)¹, but we want to ensure that you know there isn’t an expectation that everything has to be done by you, and that there is support available to help you. Do draw on that support, and on the gifts of your congregation and wider community.

Thank you for all that you are and do, and we trust that God will bless you and your parishes.



Michael Beasley
Bishop of Bath & Wells



Fiona Gibson
Bishop of Taunton



Simon Hill
Archdeacon of Taunton



Charlie Peer
Archdeacon of Bath

What is the undertaking?

You have been elected by the people of your parish to the ancient and important office of Churchwarden.

The functions of your office are a vital part of the life and witness of the Church.

Are you resolved to be faithful in your duties as an officer of the bishop?

Churchwardens: I am.

Are you resolved to be faithful in prayer and public worship,
to live by the Gospel of Christ,
to work co-operatively with others
and to encourage them to do the same?

Churchwardens: I am.

From Archdeacons’ Visitation Service

¹ Canon E1 can found on the Church of England website: About/Leadership and Governance/Legal Services/Canons
bathandwells.org.uk/churchwardens

Being a churchwarden in the Diocese of Bath and Wells

At its simplest level, as Christians across our diocese, we want all people to know that they are loved by God, as part of a world created by God.

That message of God's love is shared in so many ways by churchwardens as local leaders: through the tone that you set, alongside other local leaders, that allows people to feel welcome; and through the practical things that you do or enable which mean that your church building is a place of welcome and sanctuary in an often-confusing world.

The support you give your clergy is an invaluable part of your role. As a key layperson in the parish, you will be able to offer a trusted listening ear to them, to give advice, and to pray for and with them in their responsibilities. Caring for your clergy is as important as caring for the church buildings and churchyards.

Each of you will carry out the role slightly differently, and sometimes the practical things may feel like a distraction, but it all adds up to a welcoming church actively living and telling the story of Jesus – which continues to be our diocesan vision.

In response to God's immense love for us, we seek to be God's people, living and telling the story of Jesus.

The welcome that people of all ages and backgrounds receive in your churches can be genuinely life changing: a manifestation of God's immense love for us all. We can easily underestimate the impact of that welcome and the Christian message of equality in the eyes of the God who created us. We really believe that the warm welcome our churches offer is one of the most significant elements in our ability to grow churches and transform communities because it makes church somewhere that people want to be and in which they can feel safe, accepted and inspired to live as Jesus calls us to live.

This handbook aims to help you find support for your role as part of our collective mission to share God's love and be part of growing churches and transforming communities across our diocese. Our hope is that it will help you

- get advice when tackling the practicalities and legalities,
- know that you are valued in the role that you have taken on, and who supports you,
- know that you are part of the way we share in ministry and leadership in our diocese,
- help your church sustain and grow God's mission and ministry in your community.

As a diocese we seek to share in ministry and leadership. Thank you for sharing in this leadership role and please do take advantage of the many sources of support that exist, and know that we regularly pray for you as you exercise your role as an officer of the diocesan bishop.



Michael Beasley



Fiona Gibson

Appointment and responsibilities of a churchwarden

Below is a simplification of the appointment² and key responsibilities set out in Canon E1.

Appointment of churchwardens

- Two churchwardens should be chosen annually by each parish, not later than 31 May each year at a public meeting of the parishioners³.
 - This is important legally and because, as the principal representative of the laity in the parish, the churchwarden needs to have a mandate from the parishioners.
- Candidates for the office of churchwarden can only be nominated with their consent. The written nomination must be received by the minister of the parish before the meeting.
 - This prevents someone being nominated without time to prayerfully consider whether they can fulfil the role. It is also designed to ensure that anyone nominated can work cooperatively with the incumbent, as the role requires.
 - If the minister believes that the election of someone might give rise to serious difficulties, it is possible for the minister to make a statement before the election that only one churchwarden is to be elected by the meeting. This would only be done in exceptional circumstances.
- After election by the parish meeting, a churchwarden is admitted to office during the Archdeacon's Visitation, although they may share in some of the duties before that.
 - The Visitation is usually conducted by the archdeacon on behalf of the bishop. It must take place before 31 August, and in this diocese is usually in June or July.

Overview of the responsibilities of churchwardens⁴

- As an officer of the bishop and key lay representative in the parish, to both represent the laity and cooperate with the incumbent.
- To help parishioners be faithful in their Christian faith – both by your example and your encouragement.
- To promote unity and peace amongst your parishioners.
- To make sure that the church and churchyard are places suitable for worship, and to ensure orderly behaviour during services.⁵
- To be responsible for ensuring that church property is looked after. You are required to keep an inventory of the plate, ornaments, and other movable goods of the church.

² See Appendix B for detail on the qualifications for churchwardens.

³ Parishioners in this context are those on the church's Electoral Roll and/or on the local government electoral roll for the civil parish.

⁴ See Canon E1 for full details.

⁵ The church building and churchyard should not be used for things that are inconsistent with a place of worship. That does not rule out secular use of the building as part of the church's mission to the community but simply means that churchwardens, PCCs and incumbents should ask what is and isn't consistent with God's mission. Similarly, it is the responsibility of churchwardens not to allow behaviour that is inconsistent with a place of worship. This should not be taken to mean that joy is not permitted but behaviour that is inconsistent with the commandments, for example, should not be allowed.

General responsibilities

- Churchwardens, as key lay leaders, work alongside their incumbent⁶. The minister is responsible for the conduct of services⁷ and churchwardens ensure that things are in place to enable services to go well, such as ensuring that enough bread and wine is available for Holy Communion and that the church is in a fit state for holding services. From time to time (especially during vacancies) it may be necessary for churchwardens to lead worship. An order of service and some helpful guidance notes can be found on the Diocese of Derby website:

[Resources for Churchwardens - Diocese of Derby](#)

- Churchwardens must follow the guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults as part of enabling the safety of parishioners and visitors to the church.⁸
- When a benefice is vacant (in other words during the period between the retirement or resignation of an incumbent, and the appointment of their successor) additional responsibilities have to be undertaken by the churchwardens. These are set out in a separate guidance note.⁹ [See the section on Parishes in Vacancy](#) for more information on navigating a vacancy.

Church property responsibilities

Background

The incumbent of the benefice (the rector or the vicar) owns the church and churchyard but the churchwardens have joint right with him or her to possession of it. It is the duty of the PCC to maintain and insure it.

Churchwardens are custodians of the contents of the church i.e. the furniture, plate and books. It is the duty of the PCC to preserve and to insure them.

The archdeacon and the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) need to be consulted about any repairs or alteration to the church, or any acquisitions or disposals of contents, and relevant ecclesiastical permissions (Faculties) must be obtained before any work is begun. Advice is available from the Church Buildings Adviser, and please do seek that advice at an early stage to avoid proceeding with work that might damage your church building, not be permissible and could, in some cases, be unlawful as well as causing unnecessary expense. [See the Church Buildings section](#) for more details.

⁶ Incumbent: the minister appointed by the bishop to the parish, holding legal responsibilities

⁷ a churchwarden shouldn't intervene during a service unless the minister's behaviour is 'riotous, violent or indecent'

⁸ Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, section 5(1) and (2)

⁹ Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1992, s 1(1).

Building and fabric related tasks

Some tasks must be done by the churchwarden; but most tasks are things that the churchwarden must ensure are done. Don't feel you have to do it all yourself. Others may be better suited to do particular tasks, with perhaps more time and relevant skills.

Churchwardens must:

- ensure that records of church lands and all church property are kept up to date, are available for inspection and are handed over to any successor in good order. To fulfil this, churchwardens are responsible for
 - the inventory and photographic record of all moveable church property, such as plate, ornaments etc
 - the full terrier¹⁰ of all lands and buildings belonging to the church
 - a logbook of any alterations, additions, repairs to, and any other events affecting the church lands and articles.¹¹
 - More guidance can be found on the Diocese of Canterbury's website canterburydiocese.org/terrier-and-inventory-and-church-logbook
- ensure that an inspection of the fabric of the church, and all that belongs to it, is done at least once a year¹²
- share the terrier, inventory, and the logbook for the previous year with the PCC, with a statement signed by them to the effect that the contents of those documents are accurate, as soon as practicable at the beginning of each calendar year
- deliver the Annual Fabric Report to the PCC at the meeting before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). And then to deliver the report to the APCM, including any amendments agreed by the PCC
- ensure if any alterations, additions, removals or repairs are proposed to be made in the fabric, ornaments or furniture of the church, a faculty or other necessary permission is obtained.¹³
- ensure quinquennial inspections (5-yearly building inspections) are organised, and repairs are carried out
- ensure records of any property transactions, including licences under Faculty and tenancy agreements and leases, are kept.
- be responsible for the locking and unlocking of the church, and the security of the contents.
- ensure all valuable items are securely kept

Churchwardens will often:

- be a key member or leader of a reordering or building development project. Their support is indispensable to such projects but that doesn't mean that the tasks need to be undertaken by them. Others, including people from the wider community, may have the right skills and capacity to help the church realise its full potential for mission.
- alongside other church leaders and members, have an important role in helping churches set positive targets for the care of the environment and the achievement of net-zero.

¹⁰ the list and description of any land or buildings belonging to the church

¹¹ Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018, s 49.

¹² Ibid s 50(1).

¹³ Canon F 13 para 3.

PCC and incumbent responsibilities - but useful to know

- It is up to the incumbent, as a matter of law, to decide where in a churchyard any given burial is to take place. He or she is entitled at his or her discretion to prescribe any position, including one where there has been a former burial. The only exception is where a specific plot has been reserved by faculty. It is vital that an accurate plan is prepared and kept up to date. An incumbent has a legal responsibility and can be held liable if a burial takes place in a grave that has been reserved.
- When churchyards are full it is possible to apply to the Ministry of Justice for an Order in Council closing it for further burials. Once closed, maintenance responsibilities can be passed to the local authorities. The burial of a body in a churchyard closed by Order in Council is a criminal offence.
- Trees in churchyards are the responsibility of the PCC unless the duty to maintain has passed to the local authority following closure. Responsibility extends to the planting of trees as well as to every aspect of the maintenance of trees and ultimately to their felling. You should be aware that the law is unclear and that local authorities may resist liability to maintain trees. The Church Buildings Council has provided detailed guidance on churchyard trees, and links to the Guidance, and many other useful resources can be found on the Churchyards section of the diocesan website bathandwells.org.uk/church-buildings-and-churchyards
- The PCC is to ensure a list of all ecclesiastical trusts and charities associated with the parish is maintained.
- The PCC must have a health and safety policy and ensure that it is implemented (See [Church Health & Safety Policy | Risk Management \(ecclesiastical.com\)](http://Church Health & Safety Policy | Risk Management (ecclesiastical.com)) for policy templates and guidance.)

Keeping it manageable

Managing the expectations of others can be one of the most difficult aspects of the churchwarden's role. A good, honest, and open relationship with your incumbent, any fellow churchwardens and your PCC is key as it makes it easier to ask questions about what is really required and how you are going to do things together, and in partnership with the wider church and community.

If expectations become a problem, you might find it helpful to sit down with fellow churchwardens or clergy and discuss how to make things more manageable.

Your support network

You do not have to solve everything yourself. Please make use of the support networks available to you.

Local support

Your incumbent, any assistant clergy and Readers, fellow wardens and the PCC are all there to help carry the load. Do involve them and build your team. And the wider community – people who wouldn't think of themselves as 'church people' are still often happy to get involved if it's with things that are of interest to them, and that can be a great point of connection.

Deanery support

Churchwardens in the neighbouring parishes and benefices can be a real asset for informal support and encouragement. Your area and lay deans are also a source of support, especially in a vacancy. If there are subjects you feel unsure about, it's worth asking the area and lay dean whether anyone else in the deanery might be able to help.

Archdeaconry support

As officers of the bishop, your archdeacon is your first point of call for more significant or sensitive issues, that can't be handled within the parish. Please let your archdeacon know the good as well as the difficult. They see themselves, together with you, as partners in the mission of the church and they are there to support, encourage and rejoice with you.

The diocese is divided into three archdeaconries: Bath, Wells and Taunton. If you aren't sure which one you belong to then just ask. The key contacts list on the [Diocesan contacts page](#) of the website shows you the range of support based in your archdeaconry and across the whole diocese.

Diocesan support

As key lay leaders, churchwardens often get involved with a very wide range of issues, from drainpipes, via organ pipes to mission and pastoral care. No-one is an expert on everything and so through the diocesan support services you can access a wide range of support and advice. The support services team includes full-time and part-time paid staff alongside voluntary advisers and people based in parishes and deaneries who offer a diocese-wide specialism alongside their local work. There are links to further information, often on the diocesan website, throughout this document. If you have any problems accessing it, just get in touch with one of the human beings listed. Don't hesitate to use your archdeaconry office or your [deanery accompanier](#), if you aren't sure who to contact.

National support

There is a great deal of useful information on the Church of England website. There is also a Facebook group for churchwardens (and former churchwardens). It is called Churchwardens England: facebook.com/groups/churchwardens and offers a space for discussion, mutual support, and the sharing of best practice. (see Appendix C for more information)

Legalities – Registry and diocesan office support

Churchwardens are required to undertake the duties assigned to them by church law, the general law, and custom, which can sound intimidating, but you are not on your own.

You are not expected to have a detailed knowledge of the law, but to have a sense of where there may be legal considerations, and when it would be sensible to seek advice. Below is an indication of when advice is best sought from the Registry, and which are matters that the Assistant Diocesan Secretary can best help with.

The Registry

The Registry team is friendly and approachable and handles a great many enquiries every year from churchwardens, clergy and PCCs. You are not alone, and often the same sorts of situations and emergencies arise in different places. They can use our knowledge and experience to provide straightforward information and advice on areas such as:

- Legal matters relating to your role, clergy, other church officers, and PCCs
- Licensing, management and use of churches, churchyards and church property
- Faculties (permissions for work on churches, churchyards, alterations and memorials)
- Legalities in relation to the appointment and licensing of clergy, lay readers and lay officers
- Property transactions and title queries
- Questions about responsibility/ownership of boundary walls/maintenance and responsibilities for closed churchyards/memorials/grave space reservations and exhumations
- The legal formalities relating to marriages such as marriage documents/schedules, marriage of foreign nationals, relevant nationals, same sex marriages, and marriages of people of an acquired gender. This is particularly useful if you don't have an incumbent
- Issuing Common Marriage licences in circumstances where wedding banns cannot be called.

The Registry publishes any notices on latest guidance on its page on the diocesan website.

bathandwells.org.uk/legal-support

Procedural and governance advice from the Assistant Diocesan Secretary

Peter Evans, Assistant Diocesan Secretary, can provide procedural and governance advice to parishes, including the following:

- Parish trust issues e.g. land ownership and disposal of trust property
- Pastoral reorganisation e.g. parish boundaries, union of parishes, or closed churches
- Elections for Deanery Synod, Diocesan Synod, and General Synod
- Sending out statutory notices during vacancy
- Electoral Roll
- Church Representation Rules
- General advice on parish structures and governance

Where necessary these questions can be referred to the Diocesan Registrar on behalf of the parish.

Please also use Peter as a point of contact for other services and do not be reluctant to get in touch with him if you think he, rather than your incumbent, Area Dean or archdeacon, might be able to help.

Who to contact

Diocesan Registrar	Christopher Jones	01225 485723
	Diocesan Registrar	ChristopherDJones@stoneking.co.uk
Registry Manager	Sarah Williams	01225 324406
		SarahWilliams@stoneking.co.uk
General enquiries		bathandwellsregistry@stoneking.co.uk The Bath and Wells Diocesan Registry Stone King LLP Upper Borough Court Upper Borough Walls Bath. BA1 1RG
Assistant Diocesan Secretary	Peter Evans	01749 685108 peter.evans@bathwells.anglican.org

Safeguarding and PCCs

Safeguarding in the church community - making our churches safe for children, young people and vulnerable adults – is everyone's responsibility. As key lay leaders, churchwardens have an important part to play in setting the tone of that shared responsibility, even though the tasks fall principally to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). The diocesan safeguarding team is there to provide professional advice and training to parishes to ensure they can meet that responsibility, as well as support those who may have suffered abuse or exploitation in a church setting.

Every PCC needs to appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and to comply with the House of Bishops' Guidance and relevant policies. The PSO will monitor safeguarding training attendance, organise DBS checks, and ensure that activities involving children and adults at risk are carried out according to the safeguarding policy the PCC has adopted.

Safeguarding dashboards

Safeguarding Dashboards are indispensable for PSOs and PCCs as they make it clear which safeguarding tasks need to be done and also enable PCCs to show that their church is up to date with requirements. These dashboards can be made visible to churchwardens by the PSO so that you can help monitor your church's progress. There should be a standard safeguarding item at PCC meetings. If no PSO is appointed, then the safeguarding responsibilities remain with the PCC collectively.

If your parish doesn't do any specific work with children and young people (Sunday School, Messy Church, Youth Club etc) or with adults at risk of abuse or harm (pastoral visiting to the sick or housebound, visits to nursing homes or hospitals, lunch clubs for the lonely etc.) then the PSO can be a churchwarden, although as it is a role you are allowed to delegate you may wish to appoint someone else anyway!

Safeguarding training for churchwardens

As a churchwarden and the Bishops Representative, you need to do safeguarding training.

As soon as possible after taking up office, you must undertake Basic Awareness training, a one hour safeguarding induction which can be completed online safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org

If your role requires you to have a DBS check, then you must also undertake the Foundation Safeguarding Course as soon as possible, available online from the above link.

If you regularly supervise activities in the church or are in vacancy, you are strongly encouraged to attend the Safeguarding Leadership Course. These courses are delivered by the diocesan safeguarding team either in person or online. You can book onto this yourselves via our online events and training page on the Diocesan website: bathandwells.org.uk/calendar. Select 'Safeguarding' from the filter to see all safeguarding training events.

DBS checks for churchwardens

As a churchwarden you are a member of your PCC. If that PCC sponsors and approves work with children or vulnerable adults, then you will be eligible for an Enhanced DBS. If your role involves

direct contact with children or regular contact with vulnerable adults, then a DBS will be required to carry out this work. Contact your PSO or DBS.Safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org for more information.

If your PCC does not sponsor work with children or vulnerable adults, and if contact with these groups is not a requirement of your role, then you will not require a DBS.

Safeguarding concerns

It is important to ensure that anyone in your parish who wishes to report a safeguarding concern knows how to do so. Information about your Safeguarding Policy and who to contact must be displayed:

- on the church noticeboard with information about how to contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, the Parish Safeguarding Officer and how to get help outside the church with child and adult safeguarding issues and online
- and clearly visible on the church website.

For more information about any aspect of safeguarding, please see the Safeguarding pages on the Diocesan website: bathandwells.org.uk/safeguarding

News and updates

Please visit our website for frequent updates. The Safeguarding newsletter is automatically sent to all PSOs on our diocesan database.

Who to contact

DBS and Safeguarding Training queries	Leonie Jones Safeguarding Coordinator	01749 588907 dbs.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org
Casework, safeguarding concerns and advice	Jo Austin Julie Davies Safeguarding Caseworkers	01749 588905 01749 588911 safe.guarding@bathwells.anglican.org
Safeguarding advice and high-level casework	Ben Goodhind Safeguarding Manager	01749 588917 ben.goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org
Dashboard/Hub support, policy and practice queries	Jake Lent Parish Safeguarding Support	01749 588907 jake.lent@bathwells.anglican.org

Out of hours cover

In order to ensure that out of hours safeguarding support is available, without reducing the daytime capacity of the Safeguarding team, the diocese is partnered with [thirtyone:eight](#).

For emergency out of hours safeguarding queries, please call 0303 003 1111. The emergency line operates:

Monday to Friday 7am to 9am and 5pm to midnight
Saturday/Sunday 7am to midnight
Bank Holidays 7am to midnight
In DSA absence 7am to midnight

An Information Sharing Agreement between thirtyone:eight and our diocese allows the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) to receive a copy of the advice offered so that appropriate follow up and support can be offered when the DSA returns to the office.

Contacts for technical queries

To help the Safeguarding team to help you please use the mailboxes below for non-urgent enquiries. Using these rather than directly emailing staff will ensure a quicker response as they are monitored by the whole team.

Appointing Parish Safeguarding Officer and DBS checks	dbs.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org
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Safeguarding training queries	training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org
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Building and land matters

Church buildings

Churchwardens have an important responsibility for the care and use of their church buildings. Churchwardens are responsible for ensuring that the PCC cares for and maintains the church and its contents, as well as any other relevant buildings in the parish, and the churchyard or grounds.

There is a wealth of information on the diocesan website bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/church-buildings. Below are some key areas to be aware of and some additional sources of information and support.

- Good maintenance of a church building can save you a great deal of time, trouble and money in the long run.
 - Church of England (ChurchCare) has excellent guidance and advice on the day-to-day maintenance of your church and on how to go about making changes to your building churchofengland.org/more/church-resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings
 - Calendar of care churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/CCB_Calendar-of-Care_Aug-2016.pdf
 - SPAB useful maintenance toolkit spab.org.uk/campaigning/maintenance-co-operatives-project/mcp-fim-resources
 - The National Churches Trust information and resources nationalchurchestrust.org
- Church buildings are sacred and holy spaces that have an important role to play in God's mission. It's important for a church to reflect on how people can experience God's presence in their building. Sometimes this can be through simple changes and at other times it might involve a larger project. A churchwarden has a key role to play alongside others with the necessary vision and skills. Some helpful resources for this include:
 - Managing Your Church Buildings Project Checklist - bathandwells.org.uk/getting-started/getting-started.php
 - Buildings for Mission book by Nigel Walter and Andrew Mottram
- Accessibility
 - There is a wealth of resources on the diocesan website bathandwells.org.uk/accessibility-and-conservation
 - And the Toolkit for Rural Churches arthurrankcentre.org.uk/mission/accessible-welcome/
- Ecclesiastical permissions (faculty). Except for minor matters, before a parish takes any action to a church involving alteration, repair, extension or demolition, or the addition or removal of contents it must seek the permission of the archdeacon or (in more complex cases) the chancellor. See Church Buildings Permissions section for details.
- Health and Safety, Heritage Crime churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/crime-and-security-prevention

Church buildings permissions

Some routine maintenance and minor repairs can be carried out without formal permission. However, if you are new to the role of churchwarden, it is always wise to pause and check before any work begins in a church or churchyard.

If a proposal involves alterations, repairs, extensions, or the addition or removal of items, the parish will need to obtain the appropriate permission first. This can include List B permission for certain like for like repairs, or a faculty for more substantial works. In some cases, consent from the local (secular) planning authority may also be required.

All permissions are applied for and managed through the Online Faculty System (OFS). You are not expected to navigate this on your own — advice and guidance are available, and asking early can help avoid delays or difficulties later on.

It is the responsibility of a churchwarden under the guidance of the incumbent if possible, to prevent actions being taken without the right permission. The Faculty System for obtaining permissions can be used by a maximum of two registered users who can be churchwardens, clergy, the church architect or another person nominated by the PCC. It is important for the PCC to think about who has the right skills, time and interest to help with such applications.

Faculty Jurisdiction The Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 mandates that most works, alterations, and additions to parish churches (and some other consecrated buildings) require faculty approval. Please check with DAC Secretary what is required for your proposed changes before embarking on them.

PCC and Incumbent The PCC and the incumbent are jointly responsible for maintaining the church building and its contents, and they must obtain a faculty before undertaking significant works or works that risk altering the character or appearance of the church or churchyard.

Consequences of unauthorised works Undertaking works without a faculty is potentially unlawful and may result in the works being unauthorised, with the possibility of consistory court proceedings. The persons who caused the unauthorised works to be carried out may potentially be liable for putting things right, and for bearing the costs involved in doing so. In the first instance the Consistory Court has powers to grant a confirmatory faculty or a restoration order and to award costs. The faculty process is a judicial process, rather than an administrative process, and the outcome cannot be predicted. Rarely, in very serious cases, there is also the possibility of criminal proceedings.

Planning permission Churches also require planning permission for external developments, such as extensions. Intrusive repairs that risk roosts or remove roosting potential for endangered and protected species, as well as works to trees.

Health and safety	Health and safety legislation applies to church buildings and PCC members are responsible for compliance with this: ensuring the safety of Church members, visitors, hirers of the hall, employees and volunteers.
Construction regulations	The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM) apply to building work in churches and outline the responsibilities of those involved in construction projects to protect health and safety.

Current Online Faculty System

The Online Faculty System (facultyonline.churchofengland.org) is currently the place to make and track applications for faculties– from the initial advice of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) right through to receiving the sealed faculty from the Chancellor then processed through Registry. Once users have been registered and approved, they can apply to the DAC through the online system and receive updates as an application progresses.

You do not need to be a registered user to download the full guide for parishes (facultyonline.churchofengland.org/user-manuals) for the system. For more details see: bathandwells.org.uk/working-with-the-dac. However, we want to flag that the national church is working on an updated system (see below) which they anticipate will be in place by the end of August 2026.

New Online Faculty system

The existing Online Faculty System (OFS) is being modernised to make it easier and more straightforward to use, especially for those who are new to the faculty process. Improvements are being made to system security, and to the way case files are managed, including the ability to upload multiple files and larger documents.

The new system will be more intuitive, with helpful features such as autosave and a clearer way of moving applications forwards or, where needed, back for further work. These changes are intended to support parishes and churchwardens by saving time and reducing unnecessary duplication or confusion.

The updated system will be known as the Buildings Management Portal (BMP). It is planned as a single, unified system, with a rollout expected towards the end of the summer. More information can be found at [Online Faculty System and Church Heritage Record | The Church of England](#).

We appreciate that this may feel unfamiliar, particularly if this is your first time using an online permissions system. Further information will be shared via Connect and on the DAC section of the diocesan website, so please do keep an eye out for future communications.

Please be reassured that guidance and support will be available. We will continue to share updates as they become available and are in regular contact with the National Church Buildings team.

List A, List B and Faculty Applications¹⁴

Changes to church buildings fall into three categories:

- List A covers work that can be done without any prior authorisation
- List B includes work that archdeacons can authorise without the need for a faculty. (See below)
- A faculty is required for work which is likely to affect the character of the building or is of structural significance. It will also be required if deemed necessary by the archdeacon because the work is either controversial or raises pastoral issues in the parish.

The majority of changes are List A or B and do not require a full faculty but where a faculty is required it is essential to obtain one.

If you are unsure about which matters fall within List A and List B and which require a faculty, please ask for advice from your archdeacon's office or the DAC.

If the proposed work needs a List B permission or full faculty then the application must be made through the online Faculty System/Buildings Management Portal. Please see the latest guidelines on the Bath and Wells website at bathandwells.org.uk/faculty-and-list-b-permissions. If the link does not work search on 'DAC' or 'faculties'. While the process may feel slow, please be assured your application is being actively progressed. Please be patient keep in contact with the DAC.

If you are planning changes that require a faculty, we recommend you contact the DAC as early as possible! The full committee meets 6 times a year, with subcommittee meetings to progress things in between. Meeting dates are available on the website bathandwells.org.uk/working-with-the-dac along with further information about obtaining advice from the DAC and faculty approval.

Insurance

Amongst other things, churchwardens have responsibility for the goods appertaining to the church and for ensuring the inspection and upkeep of the fabric. Your parish insurance policy covers loss or damage to buildings and contents as well as the legal liabilities of clergy, churchwardens, PCC members and authorised volunteers which can arise in your activities and delivery of God's mission and ministry.

You will find a variety of resources to help you in your role on the Ecclesiastical Insurance website ecclesiastical.com/church including [guidance](#) on a wide range of subjects such as health and safety, security, fire safety, event planning, theft of metal and building works. Links to common useful resources for churchwardens are contained in the appendix. Ecclesiastical Insurance is owned by a charity, the [Benefact Trust](#), which uses the profits the Group returns to make [grants](#) to Christian churches and charities.

If you have a question regarding your policy, your activities or training please get in touch with Ecclesiastical Insurance on the number below, or your own provider if that is not Ecclesiastical.

¹⁴ New legislation came into effect on 1 January 2016 which allows for the simplification of the faculty process bathandwells.org.uk/churchwardens

The Ecclesiastical Insurance website is always being developed, with additional content. They have a suite of 'Made Simple Documents', which will help you in your role. See 'Church insurance made simple' under ecclesiastical.com/church.

If you have queries on managing risk at your church please see ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/risk-advice-line, call the EI Risk Advice line or contact your own provider.

Who to contact

Church buildings enquiry form		Use this online form for all enquiries
Church Buildings Adviser	Mark Lidster	01749 685135 mark.lidster@bathwells.anglican.org
DAC	Jacqui Carreira-White, DAC Secretary Joanne Finneran, DAC Officer	dac@bathwells.anglican.org
Registry Manager	Sarah Williams	01225 324406 SarahWilliams@stoneking.co.uk
Ecclesiastical Insurance (general queries)		0345 777 3322 churchteam@ecclesiastical.com
Ecclesiastical Insurance (Risk Advice Line)		0345 600 7531 risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com

Creation care

Caring for creation is a core part of our Christian calling. Our fifth Mark of Mission invites us to safeguard the integrity of creation, and as churchwarden, you play a key role in that work. From reducing your church's carbon footprint on the path to Net Zero, to managing land for biodiversity, your leadership can shape how your church honours and protects God's world. The diocesan team is here to support you with advice, resources, training, and connections.

Net Zero

The Church of England has set a target to reach Net Zero carbon by 2030, and many churches in our diocese are already making great progress. Moving towards Net Zero isn't just about reducing emissions, it can also bring real cost savings by making your church building more energy efficient. As churchwarden, you play a key role in helping your church choose greener heating/lighting systems that are not only better for the planet but also more suitable for the long-term conservation of historic buildings. We're not here to mandate change - we're here to support you. Visit the Environment section of our website for advice, bathandwells.org.uk/environment.

Energy Footprint Tool (EFT)

The EFT helps track your church's carbon emissions and progress towards Net Zero. The tool is part of annual Parish Returns. It's a vital step in understanding how your church uses energy - and how to use less. Visit our bathandwells.org.uk/energy-footprint-tool to find out how to complete the EFT and gain access to free energy and heating guidance from the Environment team.

Eco Church

Eco Church is run by Christian charity A Rocha UK. It helps churches reflect on how they care for creation across worship, buildings, land, lifestyle, and community engagement. Embedding creation care into church life makes a significant difference towards NetZero. Signing up can help shape values, inspire action, and you can celebrate progress through achieving awards. A quarter of our churches are already registered, join them here, bathandwells.org.uk/eco-church.

Churchyards

Churchyards are often biodiversity havens at the heart of communities. If you're interested in managing yours more sustainably, visit our website bathandwells.org.uk/churchyards-and-biodiversity and check out the Wilder Churches initiative. Signing up connects you with others doing the same and helps you make meaningful changes for nature and people alike.

Who to contact

Creation care	Sara Harbron p/t Climate Justice and Environment Adviser	07900 694118 sara.harbron@bathwells.anglican.org
Net Zero	Dan Wills Net Zero Project Lead	01749 685117 dan.wills@bathwells.anglican.org

Annual returns to the National Church

The Church of England requests annual data from parishes so that it can speak knowledgeably about what is happening across the country. Three sets of data (Statistics for Mission, Parish Finance Return and the Energy Footprint Tool) are all submitted using the online portal parishreturns.churchofengland.org. Forms can be downloaded from bathandwells.org.uk/finance-forms-returns

Statistics for Mission

Statistics for Mission requests information relating to baptisms, weddings, funerals, attendance at Christmas and Easter, attendance on Sundays and weekdays during October, 'worshipping community' and Electoral Roll numbers. There is usually an additional one-off question on the form.

The statistics for a calendar year need to be submitted via the national online portal by end of the following January. The diocese may send reminders to Churchwardens that the online returns are available to be completed, and this can be done in stages as statistics become available.

Please note that the total number of adults regarding the Worshipping Community figure on the Statistics for Mission form should be calculated in the same way as the Regular Worshippers number on the Parish Share Survey Form, the only difference being those members who had left or joined, in between the completion of the two forms.

Online services register – A Church Near You

This is the digital equivalent of keeping a paper Services Register book, and it works in online and offline mode through A Church Near You.

Data put into the register can be automatically uploaded to your Statistics for Mission return, saving time at the end of the year.

The Online Services Register was approved by General Synod in July 2023 as a legal alternative to a paper Services Register book.

The National Research and Statistics Unit produce Parish Dashboards each year from the information provided (for each individual parish), which are available to be viewed and downloaded through the Online Parish Return System.

If you would like help with submitting data onto the Parish Returns System, or downloading your Parish Dashboards, please contact returns@bathwells.anglican.org

Statistical information about parishes can also be viewed on the

- Church of England's Research and Statistics page churchofengland.org/about/research-and-statistics
- Church Urban Fund [Look Up Tool](#)

Deanery and Parish Support team

Alongside factual questions that churchwardens encounter, there is also the more general responsibility to be a leader in helping your church flourish, grow in faith and share that faith with others.

That can be daunting at times, especially at times of change or when your priest or another key leader has moved on. Each archdeaconry area (Bath, Taunton and Wells) has specific people who can support you, including Deanery and Parish Advisers who you can talk to about what is happening in your context and then can share ideas and resources and offer facilitation for events that can help your church consider how to move forwards.

The team has particular areas of expertise such as

- Rural ministry - how churches in a rural setting can flourish
- Magnificat - helping us to celebrate and work with the gifts in areas high levels of multiple deprivation
- Conflict - helping churches to work with their differences in a healthy way
- Building teams - sharing the workload so no one is overpowered, and people are able to use their gifts.

The Deanery and Parish Support team also provide support to benefices in drawing together a benefice profile as part of the appointment process.

Who to contact

Bath Archdeaconry	Claire Horton p/t	01749 588919 claire.horton@bathwells.anglican.org
Taunton Archdeaconry	Rob Walrond p/t	07967 838499 rob.walrond@bathwells.anglican.org
Wells Archdeaconry	Caroline Bruce p/t	01749 685127 caroline.bruce@bathwells.anglican.org

Parishes in vacancy

A vacancy is a time of transition which brings with it different emotions, hopes and fears. It can be a time when parishioners feel a sense of loss that needs to be taken seriously. It can also be a fruitful time, where talents can emerge and grow.

When a vacancy arises, the Archdeacon will seek to meet with the churchwardens, Area Dean and Lay Dean as soon as possible, as the partnership with the deanery is very important, especially when a paid post falls vacant. More information about the vacancy process can be found here bathandwells.org.uk/parish-vacancy-process

Leadership

During the vacancy the Churchwardens and Area Dean have legal responsibility. Any licensed clergy (e.g. curate, associate minister or PTO) and Readers will assist them. This does not mean that churchwardens must do everything, but they must ensure that it is done. A lay chair (who need not be a churchwarden) will chair the PCC and also the APCM, if it occurs during the vacancy.

It is often helpful to have a small steering team or transition group to co-ordinate activities in the vacancy. The churchwardens should be part of any such group along with any person licensed with specific ministerial responsibilities.

Local lay ministries

Having people in commended and commissioned lay ministry roles (e.g. Lay Worship Assistants, Lay Pastoral Assistants) can be a significant help during a vacancy. Those in existing roles are encouraged to continue to exercise their ministry. Support for these ministries should be arranged by the incumbent before they leave, especially for those exercising a pastoral ministry. A neighbouring incumbent, retired priest or Reader may be able to offer such support, alongside any existing support network.

Equipping people for locally commissioned lay ministries can continue during a vacancy, with the agreement of churchwardens and PCCs and working closely with the PSO to ensure safeguarding requirements are met. Such equipping can be through deanery or diocesan run sessions if it is not possible to cover this locally. The Area Dean is responsible for signing off the application for ministry. For more information about lay ministry please visit bathandwells.org.uk/lay-ministry-pathway or email training@bathwells.anglican.org

Worship

During the vacancy churchwardens are responsible for the provision of services. In some cases, the pattern of services may need to be changed, depending on the availability of clergy, Readers and authorised lay ministers. The Area Dean will be able to offer support and advice.

Occasional Offices

In the absence of an incumbent, make it clear how arrangements can be made for weddings, baptisms and funerals. Funeral directors should be told who to contact for funeral requests.

Safeguarding

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team is available to support and advise parishes in ensuring that due regard continues to be given to safeguarding during the period of vacancy.

The PCC, working with the churchwardens, must ensure that all information about safeguarding matters is securely stored before passing the information on to the new incumbent. The departing incumbent must give any safeguarding information to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) who can pass the information on to the new incumbent when they take up their new role.

See the section on Safeguarding for contact details for support.

Finances

When there is no incumbent in post, the churchwardens of the benefice and the Area Dean act as sequestrators: legally responsible for administering the income of the benefice. Do check that your PCC Treasurer is aware of the following.

Fees and travel expenses for services and pastoral duties undertaken by clergy with the Bishop's Permission to Officiate (PTO) during a vacancy can be claimed from the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) sequestration fund, within the following limits

- Fees can be claimed by the benefice for up to four services a week (excluding weddings and funerals) and for up to two days of pastoral visiting. For anything more, funds must be found by the PCC.
- Travelling expenses should be reimbursed, at one of the current recommended PCC rates: either full reimbursement at 45p per mile (HMRC tax free rate) or the public transport rate equivalent of 25p per mile. The decision as to which rate is to be used is a matter for agreement between the sequestrators and the officiating clergy.
- The above fees are not payable to full time stipendiary clergy, self-supporting ministers (OSSMs), Chaplains or Readers, although they can claim travelling expenses. Fees are only paid to clergy who hold the Bishop's Permission to Officiate (PTO). It is the responsibility of the sequestrators arranging the service to ensure that this requirement is complied with.

Sequestration funds cease to be available the day before the institution of a new Incumbent or the licensing of a Priest in Charge.

Schools

During a vacancy it can be helpful to identify someone to be the main point of contact with any schools in the parish. This person can help ensure continuity and offer support to school leaders and staff. At the beginning of a vacancy, it is helpful to set realistic expectations with your schools about the level and type of support the church can offer during this period. Clear communication early on helps to sustain trust and avoid misunderstandings.

Churchyards

During the vacancy the Area Dean is responsible for considering all applications for churchyard memorials.

Care of the Vicarage/Rectory

The Property team will contact the churchwardens about the care of the vicarage during the vacancy. They may arrange for the property to be rented out. See page 28 for more detail. Any questions about the property should be addressed to Annabel Cook, Property Coordinator annabel.cook@bathwells.anglican.org or telephone 01749 588902.

Communication

It is important to keep the church family and wider community up to date with the vacancy. A useful maxim is “tell as many people as much as you can, as often as you can”. Consider regular updates in church communications and have a contact person on the PCC who people can talk to. Ensure that someone updates your A Church Near You page, website, noticeboard etc, so that people know who to contact during the vacancy.

Curates in training

Where there is a curate in training, the Ministry Training Team Leader, in consultation with the Archdeacon, will appoint someone to take on the supervisory role.

Benefice Share situation

Each benefice contributes into the diocesan Common Fund. This payment is called the Benefice Share. If you would like to know more about the Common Fund, please see bathandwells.org.uk/common-fund-parish-share. When a benefice goes into vacancy we look at whether the Benefice is managing to remain up to date with payments, so that if a benefice is struggling to pay into the Common Fund, we can work together to plan how that payment might be reached and the benefice be able to feel confidently sustainable into the future. This means that if the Benefice Share has not recently been paid in full, we will not immediately go ahead with the appointment of a new incumbent. Instead, there will be a conversation with the Archdeacon and the diocesan Support Services team about the options for the future.

The following prayer that may be used in the parish during the vacancy. You may, however, wish to write a prayer specific for your context.

God our Father,
you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus
and called us to be his body in this place;
Send us your Holy Spirit,
at this time of uncertainty and change,
to fill us with vision, energy, and faithfulness in prayer,
that we may be true to our calling to bring new life to our community;
And guide with your heavenly wisdom
those who are to choose a new Incumbent for this parish,
that the one who we receive may be a wise and gentle shepherd of your people:
 ready to serve us with joy,
 to build us up in faith,
 and to lead us by example
in loving obedience to your son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

Care of vacant clergy housing – guidance from the Property team

When a clergy vacancy occurs, churchwardens have particular responsibilities, alongside the Area Dean. One of those responsibilities is to care for the vicarage/rectory.

Keys and security

- Ensure that all doors are locked and bolted and windows shut and secure
- The incumbent will have been asked to leave a key in the box, so please ensure you have the code from them. The remaining keys can be left in the property
- Leave internal keys in the property, please do not lock internal doors and remove keys; Please label or identify keys where possible
- Notify the Police and Neighbourhood Watch that the house is empty.

Utilities

- On departure, occupant to read meters and close account and put in the name of 'Bath and Wells Diocesan Board of Finance' and the address 'Flourish House, 2 Cathedral Avenue, Wells. BA5 1FD' and use the email address of property.invoice@bathwells.anglican.org
- Bills for gas, electricity, LPG and oil whilst the house is empty will be met by the Bath and Wells DBF - please forward bills to Property team Diocese of Bath and Wells via post to Flourish House or take a photo and email to property.invoice@bathwells.anglican.org
- From time to time, we will request meter readings in order that accurate bills can be generated.
- Whilst the property is vacant, if the utility meters need updating to smart meters, please be available for appointments at the property to aid installation of these.

Heating

Insurance requirement - from 31 October until 31 March the heating should be set on continually at the minimum of 10 degrees. If the house is to be empty long term, the property services department will arrange for the heating system to be drained down and water isolated.

Please ensure, in the case of oil systems, that the oil supply is checked regularly. When oil is required, please contact the Property team who will place a purchase order direct with a supplier for the minimum order of 500 litres. Invoices will not be paid without an official purchase order.

Should there be any problems with gas central heating systems or other maintenance issue please contact the Property team.

Telephone

- Outgoing vicar/rector to cancel telephone account or make arrangements to have calls diverted or install answerphone. They must contact the provider to discuss this and have calls diverted to a churchwarden or other nominated person, in order not to lose the telephone number. It is rarely possible to suspend a number.
- Telephone accounts and associated costs are the responsibility of the PCC.

Inspection

Insurance requirement - if the house remains empty including before and after a let:

- Ensure that it is inspected at least once a week to maintain the Board's insurance cover and that is recorded on the inspection record
- Continue inspections until the house is re-occupied, either by a member of the clergy or a tenant
- If possible, it would be helpful if curtains could be hung at windows, in order to create a more 'lived in' appearance and hopefully deter intruders
- Use lamps on timers
- In the event of malicious damage, please advise the Property team and, if appropriate, the Police immediately
- Please remove all mail promptly as this also advertises that the house is empty.

Garden

- In the case of Benefice properties, the care of the garden during a vacancy rests with the PCC before and after a let
- During the 'growing' season the lawn will need cutting regularly, shrubs trimmed, and borders weeded hopefully by volunteer labour.

Lettings

- We usually seek a tenant during the vacancy period, and we will advise you if an agent is appointed and keep you updated on this process.

Further support and information

You may find it helpful to review the DBF Housing Guide which contains lots of useful information for the vacancy and re-appointment process bathandwells.org.uk/clergy-housing

If you have a general enquiry about church buildings (rather than clergy housing) then please contact the Church Buildings Adviser. They work closely with the DAC, who can be contacted via the DAC Secretary. More information is available on the website bathandwells.org.uk/church-buildings-and-churchyards

If you have any queries or you would like to discuss any of the information above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Who to contact

Clergy housing repair queries	Annabel Cook Property Coordinator	01749 588902 property.helpdesk@bathwells.anglican.org
Clergy housing maintenance, repairs and invoicing	Chantelle Jenkin Property Administrator	01749 685128 property.invoice@bathwells.anglican.org
Clergy property maintenance and inspections	Owain Wynne Property Manager and Diocesan Surveyor	Report a clergy property issue via the Fixflo website 01749 670777 ext 2295 owain.wynne@bathwells.anglican.org
Head of Property and Glebe	James Millard	01749 670777 james.millard@bathwells.anglican.org

Money matters

Churchwardens have oversight with the incumbent and PCC of the financial administration of the parish, which includes making sure that appropriate procedures are in place for counting the collection, recordkeeping etc. As with many things, this does not mean that you need to do all tasks yourself but that you need to be sure they are done in the right manner. For example, ensuring no one individual has sole access or control of Church funds.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) may appoint any one or more individuals to act as treasurer. The churchwardens act as treasurers of the PCC when:

- they are appointed by the PCC or
- the PCC does not appoint anyone else as treasurer, in which case the churchwardens act as ex-officio Treasurers to the PCC.

Support from the Finance team

Our aim is to support parishes, as well as fulfilling our statutory responsibilities. The diocesan website offers advice and guidance on a number of areas, and this can be found by clicking on the Parish Support menu, and then Treasurers. bathandwells.org.uk/treasurer-support

Listed below are some of the ways we can help parishes.

- Parochial Fees form completion advice
- Accessing custodian trust funds held on your behalf by the DBF
- Accounting and bookkeeping advice
- Fund accounting and reserves policy advice
- Gift aid declaration advice
- Assistance when looking at funding requirements for major projects
- Financial training for Treasurers and other interested individuals
- Scheduling Parish Share payments
- Assisting in understanding statutory financial requirements – Accounts and Returns.

The above is not an exhaustive list, so if you have a question that you think the finance team can assist with, please do get in touch, either by email or by phone.

Who to contact

Parish finance returns and Parochial fees	Maria Stubbs Parish Support Officer	returns@bathwells.anglican.org fees@bathwells.anglican.org
Parish share		parishshare@bathwells.anglican.org
Finance queries	Debbie Smith Finance Manager	01749 685136 debbie.smith@bathwells.anglican.org
Finance and funding queries	Matthew Pinnock Head of Finance & Operations	01749 685112 matthew.pinnock@bathwells.anglican.org

Giving and grants

Growing a generous church

Our Giving and Funding team help and support parishes to take their next steps towards a more financially sustainable future, in which local ministry and mission can flourish and grow. From reviewing your church's giving practice, to developing a more generous giving culture, the team have a range of tools and resources to help PCCs talk about money matters with their congregations and communities, ensuring that worship, service and church buildings remain at the heart of their communities for generations to come.

For more information on any of the elements listed below please visit bathandwells.org.uk/giving-and-funding or scan the QR code

To receive regular updates, [sign up for Church Money Matters newsletter](#).



Annual giving reviews

We recommend that churches undertake an annual giving review, to reflect on what they are doing, and could do, to encourage giving and generosity within their congregations and communities. The Generous Church Check-Up is a useful tool for PCCs to get started, whilst support from the Giving and Funding team can help you to implement any actions identified.

Next steps might include:

Introducing new ways to give bathandwells.org.uk/ways-to-give

- The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) – our recommended method for regular giving, which offers benefits to givers, churches and treasurers bathandwells.org.uk/parish-giving-scheme
- Online Giving bathandwells.org.uk/online-giving
- Contactless Giving, including our Try B4 U Buy offer on contactless card readers bathandwells.org.uk/contactless-giving
- Legacy giving bathandwells.org.uk/legacies
- Easyfundraising bathandwells.org.uk/easyfundraising. This tool enables churches to generate additional income from online retailers when their supporters shop online and, increasingly, in store. It is free to register but offers church fundraising a welcome boost at no cost to your existing supporters.
- Communicating your ways to give - Ways to Give (WTG) is a tool developed by the diocesan giving team to help churches promote all the ways in which someone can give to support their church. Churches can register to use WTG for free and will receive a poster and pack of pew tools to leave in and around the church, directing givers to the WTG website. To register your church on Ways to Give please visit waystogive.org.uk/about-us.



Talking about giving and generosity with your congregation and community bathandwells.org.uk/talking-giving-generosity

Making the most of Gift Aid and the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme bathandwells.org.uk/tax-efficient-giving

Thanking your community and communicating impact bathandwells.org.uk/sharing-our-impact-posters-for-churches

Accessing grant funding Churches in Bath and Wells can now request access to Cornerstone, a free grant funding database developed by the National Giving Team. You can find out more about Cornerstone here bathandwells.org.uk/cornerstone or email givingteam@bathwells.anglican.org, confirming your name, church and email address, to receive your unique invitation to join the platform. Further help and guidance in applying for grant funding is available from Natalie Wainwright our Lead Giving and Funding Adviser (details below).

Ecclesiastical also has a Church Fundraising Hub where you can find guidance and resources to help your fundraising journey, whether that be for capital projects, missional projects, or everyday costs.

If you, your parish Treasurer, or other members of your PCC have questions, or are seeking advice about money matters, we would encourage you to book on to one of our online Mid-week Money Matters sessions or training days in 2026. Further details about these can be found here bathandwells.org.uk/money-matters-sessions

Getting in touch

We are here to help. Our Giving and Funding Advisers will be happy to discuss your giving and fundraising challenges, visit your PCC or working group and talk to you about the different tools and resources available.

The best way to contact the team, is to book an initial 30 minute appointment using this booking link: outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/GFBookings@bathwells.anglican.org/bookings

This will create an automatic Microsoft Teams meeting invitation, but you can state your preference for a telephone call or Zoom link if that works best for you.

Who to contact

Natalie Wainwright Lead Giving and Funding Adviser p/t	01749 685109 natalie.wainwright@bathwells.anglican.org
Kate Mayo Local Giving Adviser Bath Archdeaconry p/t	01749 588903 kate.mayo@bathwells.anglican.org
Abi Davies Digital Giving Adviser p/t	01749 597117 abi.davies@bathwells.anglican.org

Appendix A - Simple security advice for churches

Personal safety

Put your personal safety and that of others first.

Always...

- Tell someone where you are and when to expect you back... and tell that person if you change your plans
- Agree what to do if you do not appear when you are expected
- Have some means of calling for help from the church e.g. phone, mobile, panic button
- Look at potential problems in your church and carry out a risk assessment and ask for help if you need it when carrying out a risk assessment.

Never...

- Give money to people, no matter how genuine their story is. Be practical in your help instead
- Get into an argument of any sort when on your own in the church
- Disturb the scene of a crime if you find one
- Forget, or not bother to report a crime to the police, no matter how trivial it may seem
- Enter the church if you have any suspicion that there may be someone inside committing a crime. Call the police instead.
- Get security advice from a security company you do not know. If in doubt check with the Property Department.

Building safety

Look at your church as a criminal would...

- What could you easily steal?
- Is it easy to get it out of the church?
- Can you drive a vehicle right up to the church? Are there any obvious points of entry?
- Could you funnel any intruders towards an alarmed area?
- If you have a particularly valuable item, are they listed by any outside agencies, e.g. V&A, NADFAS, guide books?
- Have you spoken to your neighbours and asked them to ring the police if anything suspicious happens? Reassure them that you will not mind if it's a false alarm.
- Have you carried out a general risk assessment in relation to both church workers and volunteers and building security?
- Is there anything in your church that would be a significant loss to you if it was stolen? If so, how are you protecting it?



Put security as a fixed item in your budget. Every church needs extra security and to increase it over a few years will ensure that if you suffer a crime you will have done everything practical to limit the offence.

Appendix B - Qualifications and terms of office

Churchwardens must meet the following qualifications and must make a declaration to that effect at the Archdeacons Visitation before they are formally appointed to office.

Churchwardens must be

- baptised
- not disqualified
 - a disqualification from being a charity trustee under Charities Act 2011
 - included in a 'barred list' - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - convicted of an offence in Children and Young Persons Act 1933, Sch 1
 - under the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure 1977
 - having served six successive periods of office as churchwarden¹⁵

Churchwardens must be, unless an exception is granted by the bishop,

- named on the electoral roll
- actual communicant
- aged at least twenty-one¹⁶

Term of office

The churchwarden's term of office ends on the date of his successor's admission to office, or (if no-one is admitted) on 31 August in which case a vacancy arises.

Resignation and vacation of office

- A churchwarden may resign by sending a written notice of their intention to resign to the bishop by post.
- A churchwarden ceased to be a churchwarden if
 - Their name is removed from the electoral roll;
 - Their name is not on a new electoral roll;
 - They become disqualified under one of the general disqualifications (above).

Suspension from office

The bishop may suspend a churchwarden from office by serving written notice, specifying the reasons for the suspension,

- if the churchwarden is arrested on suspicion of an offence in the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, Sch 1
- if the bishop is satisfied, on the basis of information provided by a local authority or the police, that a churchwarden presents a 'significant risk of harm'.

¹⁵ This is a useful default limit intended to share the load and help the church be refreshed. However, in some cases, the reality is that there are few people to take on the role and the annual meeting of parishioners can pass a resolution that this rule should not apply.

¹⁶ This is a historic requirement but shouldn't discourage churches from involving younger churchwardens who might be able to fulfil the role – the Bishop can be asked to allow an exception, and often does so as to foster competent younger members of the congregation assuming positions of leadership and responsibility.

Appendix C - Further information and support

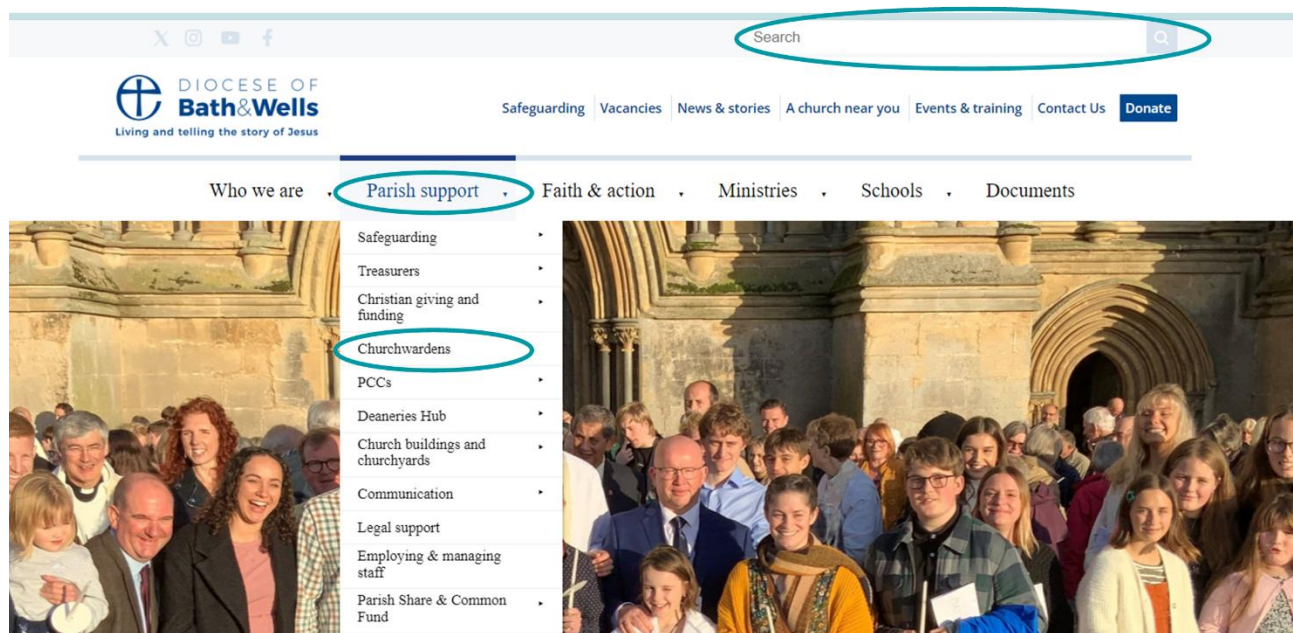
The diocesan website

There is a lot of information that will be relevant to you on the diocesan website

bathandwells.org.uk

Because it contains so much information, the search button in the top right is often the quickest way to find things.

The second menu heading: 'Parish Support' has much of the information you need, including a link specifically for churchwardens:



Connect

As a churchwarden you will automatically be added to the mailing list for Connect, the bi-monthly e-newsletter from the diocese. This is a key publication which contains updates from the bishops, highlights key resources, stories from around the diocese and more.

Social media

The diocese is on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This can be a good way to feel connected to the day-to-day life of our diocese. We would love to hear what is going on in your parish as well.

Do tag us or email stories to comms@bathwells.anglican.org

- facebook.com/bathandwells
- instagram.com/churchofengland_somerset

Churchwardens' Facebook page

Facebook has a closed group for churchwardens (and former churchwardens). It is called Churchwardens England: facebook.com/groups/churchwardens and offers a space for discussion, mutual support, and sharing of best practice.

bathandwells.org.uk/churchwardens

The Church of England website

The Church of England website also has useful information [churchofengland.org](https://www.churchofengland.org) and can be useful for anyone not familiar with the church to find out more e.g.

- [Resourcing Church Administration](#) has a number of very useful videos covering administration, faculties and how the Church of England works!
- The Life Events Section can be given to those considering weddings, funerals, or christenings.
- Faith in Action has inspiring stories from around the churches.
- Prayer and Worship has prayers and service materials
- About includes national governance, synods, national organisations



There are also sections for Resources and Safeguarding.

Appendix D - Further reading

There are various resources and books you might find helpful, some are available to borrow from the Diocesan office. Most can be purchased from Church House Bookshop chbookshop.hymnsam.co.uk at 31 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BN (tel. 020 7898 1300).

An ABC for the PCC: A Handbook for Church Council Members by J Pitchford (5th edition, 2019).

Churchwarden's Yearbook 2026. Produced each year this diary is packed with useful information.

The Churchwarden's Year: A Calendar of Church Maintenance by Graham Jeffery (2012) a humorous, illustrated monthly calendar of handy tips.

Church Representation Rules (There is a new 2025 edition which can be accessed free on the Church of England website [Church Representation Rules](https://www.churchofengland.org/church-representation-rules))

A Handbook for Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councillors by K M Macmorran and T Briden (2024 edition) the authoritative guide to the job.

The PCC Member's Essential Guide by Mark Tanner (2015). What it means to be a PCC Member.

Practical Church Management by James Behrens (4th edition, 2021). A compendium of information. It will date - so look for the latest version.

Rotas, Rules and Rectors: How to thrive being a Churchwarden (2018) An experienced Warden's encouragement to those thinking of becoming churchwarden, exploring the role.

So the Vicar's Leaving: The Good Interregnum Guide by Mike Alexander, Jeremy Martineau, and Ron Wood (2002) good advice for a vacancy.

Church House Bookshops also sells church supplies for communion, baptisms etc and forms (if you can't print your own for e.g. The Church Property Register, Applications for the Electoral Roll etc).

Other websites

- See the Diocesan and CofE websites in Appendix C
- ChurchCare churchcare.co.uk/ national support for the care of buildings
- parishresources.org.uk/ has national resources including things for the PCC, church administrators, finance, buildings, people management etc. Includes downloadable forms you may need.

Appendix E - Useful contacts

A list of useful diocesan key contacts can be downloaded from our website via the Contact Us pages:

bathandwells.org.uk/contact-us

The key contacts list is updated regularly, so please check via the link for the most up to date version.

Appendix F - Annual tasks

A list of key annual tasks that a Churchwarden will need to keep check of:

○ By 31 January	Ensure Statistics for Mission for previous calendar year are returned (alongside incumbent).
○ First quarter of the year	Share terrier, inventory and log book with PCC for sign off.
○ Prior to APCM	Ratify draft accounts and reports that require signing off by PCC prior to APCM. Complete Fabric Report (inspection of the fabric of church and all that belongs to it).
APCM no later than 31 May	
○ June (following APCM)	Place Audit will be sent out in June for completion by either PCC Secretary or another individual within the parish (to update the Diocesan database with APCM appointments).
○ Prior to Visitation	Complete Churchwarden's Declaration (but do not sign it!).
○ By 31 August	Archdeacon's Visitation (conducted by deanery and usually in June).
ANNUALLY	Ensure insurance policy is fit for purpose. Ensure compliance checks are carried out for fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, PAT testing (if due) and the boiler serviced. Review Parish records to keep or securely destroy.