

Grants and Loans for Church Buildings

Revised 2024-25

Information for Applicants



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I. Church Buildings Grants Revised 2024-25

The Diocese of Leeds has a number of restricted funds, which are available exclusively to support church buildings. Therefore, in order to support mission across the Diocese we launched a Church Buildings Grants scheme in 2021. This scheme is currently providing £80,000 of grants per year for a minimum of five years (i.e. 2021 – 2025)

Early in 2024 the Diocese of Leeds received additional “Buildings for Mission“ grant funding totalling **£272,000** from the Church of England’s 2023 -25 Triennium funding round, providing important investment for the future sustainability of our church buildings.

This additional funding has significantly increased our total grant fund and allowed us to broaden the range of projects that can now be supported through the Diocesan Church Buildings Grant Scheme.

Projects Eligible for Funding

The primary aim of this funding is to support churches with maintaining and improving their church buildings, as vital centres of worship, community, and mission. Eligible buildings are Church of England consecrated church buildings and licensed places of worship (including Local Ecumenical Partnerships). The definition of ‘building’ includes below ground drainage system, foundations, and immediate curtilage.

- Minor repairs to church buildings will be eligible for funding if they have been identified in the most recent QI report (or recent condition report) with priority being given to work recommended to be completed within the next 24 months.
- Projects which seek to improve functionality for mission including physical access, visitor facilities and digital connectivity to the building will be eligible for funding.
- Projects that reduce the environmental impact of our buildings (e.g. improved heating and lighting systems) as we aim to meet the Church of England’s 2030 carbon net-zero target. Parishes are encouraged to provide evidence of having conducted an energy audit on their building.

Other Eligible Costs

- Professional fees associated with minor repairs.
- Bat mitigation measures and associated ecologist’s fees

For examples of projects eligible for funding and exclusions please see Appendix A.

Ineligible Projects

The terms of these restricted funds mean that any grant cannot include work on organ or bells, furnishings or any work to churchyards, churchyard walls or routine maintenance as set out in the Church of England’s [Calendar of Care](#)

Grant & Project Size

Grants are made at the discretion of the grant award panel but may be awarded at up to 90%¹ of the project costs. Projects with a financial value of up to £10,000 (or £12,000 for unlisted buildings) are eligible. These limits will be reviewed after a year. In most circumstances we would expect you to contribute to your project cost from your parish reserves or match fund from a third-party funding source.

Grants awarded will be valid for 12 months from the date of the grant offer.

Grants will not be awarded retrospectively for work which has already been conducted.

Funding Rounds

There will be three funding rounds per year. Deadlines for each funding round in 2024 are:

17th March 2024 for grant awards made in March

30th June 2024 for grant awards made in July.

31st October 2024 for grant awards made in November.

Decisions

Decisions will be made by a grant award panel which will include a Bishop, an Archdeacon, an Incumbent, Director of Church Revitalisation and Chief Financial Officer. Parishes will be notified of the result of their grant application by email in the week following the grants' panel meeting.

Eligibility criteria

Project Need

Applications from churches and parishes are invited according to the funding limits set out in the Grant and Project Size section, although the grant award panel are keen to support projects where the need is greatest, and which offer the greatest benefits to the building and community.

¹ Grants will be awarded based on the indices of multiple deprivation of the ecclesiastical parish as shown in the [Church of England Parish Map](#). The following scale for grant rates is being used:

- Deprivation rank¹ 6,236 to 12,307 – grant @ 50%
- Deprivation rank 5,012 to 6,235 – grant @ 60%
- Deprivation rank 3,812 to 5,011 – grant @ 70%
- Deprivation rank 2,558 to 3,811 – grant @ 80%
- Deprivation rank 1,232 to 2,557 – grant @ 90%
- Deprivation rank 1 to 1,231 – grant @ 90% (or more if exceptionally justified)

Deprivation rank (1=most deprived, 12,307=least deprived).

Parish Finance

Preferential consideration will be given to applicants who have limited reserves to fund their project. Parishes will be expected to have utilised their own resources before approaching the diocese and will be asked to confirm what unrestricted and restricted building funds are held.

Areas of Deprivation

The Buildings for Mission funding project aim to give priority to areas which lack access to support, it also aims to address need. Grants will be prioritised according to the circumstances of the parish. Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) will be taken into consideration. To discover your parish's IMD ranking please consult the [Church of England Parish Map](#)

What is needed in a grant application?

Applicants need to complete the application at Appendix B. The application should be as simple and straightforward as possible; however, a good description of the project should be forthcoming along with an explanation of how the project enables and supports mission. Details of the church / parish applying and full contact details of two people who can talk about the project if clarification is needed.

Along with the application supporting documents, such as a Quinquennial Inspection Report / or other professional recommendation, at least two itemised quotations for comparison (if project cost is above £1,000) and relevant photographs should be provided. Applications which also provide evidence of regular building maintenance & inspection e.g. church maintenance plan, maintenance checklist will be favourably considered. The National Churches Trust provide a helpful template for a [maintenance plan/checklist](#) on their website.

Contact

For further information please contact us via e-mail at resourcingparishes@leeds.anglican.org or telephone Janet Edmond (Senior Stewardship Officer) on 07376 525684 or Alena-Rose Douglas (Church Buildings Support Officer) on 07933 509860

Completed application forms should be returned to Janet Edmond, Church House, 17-19 York Place, Leeds, LS1 2EX, or e-mail resourcingparishes@leeds.anglican.org.

***For the Grant Application Form please go to Appendix B**

2. Parish Loan Scheme

These loans provide a readily accessible source of funds to parishes for major works which a parish would otherwise be unable to complete.

The aim of this loan is to support churches with maintaining and improving their church buildings, as vital centres of worship, community, and mission. We are particularly keen to support projects that reduce the environmental impact of our buildings as we aim to meet the Church of England's 2030 carbon net-zero target; but we will consider all items of maintenance and improvement to the structure of the church and its contents. This can include heating and lighting systems as well as work on organ, bells, and furnishings. Works to churchyards and churchyard walls will also be considered.

Loan Size

Loans of up to £25,000 can be applied for.

Application Deadlines and Decisions

Loans can be applied for at any time.

Loan applications will be reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and DBF Finance Manager, and depending on the size, may be referred to the Finance, Assets, and Investments Committee for decision. The Committee meets nine times a year.

Applying for a Loan

A completed loan application form supported by the Accounts for the last two years and a cash-flow forecast covering the loan period should be submitted.

Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions are in place:

- 1) Loans initially attract interest at the Bank of England Base Rate + 0.50% at the point of issue (i.e. on 31 October 2023 5.75% per annum).
- 2) The rate of interest would then be reviewed and reset every two years on the same basis, with the maximum loan length being five years.
- 3) Repayments are by monthly or quarterly standing order over the term of the loan.
- 4) Loans not taken up within 12 months of being granted will automatically lapse and re-application will have to be made.
- 5) The PCC must sign a form of Undertaking to Repay.

All loans are granted at the discretion of the Leeds Diocesan Board of Finance and are subject to the terms and conditions as stated.

***For the Loan Application Form please go to Appendix C**

Appendix A

Examples of eligible improvement works include:

- Accessibility – handrails, ramps etc
- Rainwater Goods to improve climate resilience.
- Heating
- Lighting
- Wiring
- Kitchens
- WCs
- Internet/Wi-Fi/4G/5G (for mission use)
- Bat mitigation

Examples of eligible repair works (external) include:

- Roof coverings
- Roof structure
- Walls
- Parapets
- Pinnacles
- Towers
- Spires
- Windows
- Doors
- Rainwater goods
- Drainage
- Ceilings
- Floors
- Doors
- Walls
- Wall Linings
- Building services (electrical, lighting etc)

Exclusions:

- Wall paintings
- Mosaics
- Bells & bell frames
- Books & manuscripts
- Church plate
- Clocks
- Monumental brasses & decorative metal work
- Monuments
- Organs
- Paintings
- Stained glass
- Textiles
- Wooden objects
- Conservation reports

Routine inspections (QI, electrical certs, gas safety, PAT etc.)

Appendix B

Application for a Church Building Grant (continue onto more pages if necessary)

What is your name and the name of your church or parish? (please indicate if you are a single or multi-church parish). Please indicate below if your church has listing status.

Please tick if your church is listed.

Please tick the boxes below which best describes your project:

Minor repair works

Physical Access Improvement

Improvement to Visitor Facilities (WCs, kitchens etc)

Digital Connectivity

Environmental Improvement (heating, lighting etc)

Enhancement of building spaces for activities

Bat mitigation measures

Other

Please provide a more detailed explanation of your project.

Are proposed works to be conducted because of a Quinquennial Inspection, Maintenance Plan or Energy Audit? If so, please provide a copy. If not, please detail why the work is being undertaken.

How does this project fit with your plans to see your church grow? If you have a mission plan please attach it. If it does not, what other support might you need to think about your next steps in mission?

Please explain what short and long term benefits your project will offer to your building and wider community?

What is your IMD ranking ([see Church of England Parish Map](#)) and please explain the financial challenges faced by your parish.

Have you sought Archdeacon's permission and/or have you applied for a faculty for this application?

How much will your project cost? (Provide a breakdown of costs).

Have you provided at least two quotes with your application?

Please detail any grants applied for and/or committed by third parties.

How much would you like to apply for? (Maximum grant available is £10,000)

How will you make up the shortfall (if any)?

Please state the amount of your unrestricted and restricted reserves:

Restricted Building Funds

Unrestricted General Funds

Have these funds been allocated? And if so for what?

Full contact details of at least two people involved in the project.

Please return this application to Janet Edmond, Church House, 17-19 York Place, Leeds, LS1 2EX, or e-mail resourcingparishes@leeds.anglican.org.

Checklist of documents that you are advised to include with your application:

Completed Application Form *

Quinquennial Inspection Report (QIR) or Condition Report **

Maintenance Plan

Contractor Quotations

Copy of List B or Faculty Permission letter

Relevant Photographs

Mission Statement

*Denotes document is mandatory

** QIR or relevant condition report are mandatory for all applications involving minor repair works.

Appendix C

Application for a Parish Loan (continue onto more pages if necessary)

Parochial Church Council of	
Purpose for which loan is required.	
Total cost of above scheme (A): £	Amount of Loan required (B): £
Has DAC approval been given YES/NO	Period of Loan..... (Max 5 years)
How does the Parish propose to fund the difference between A and B above?	
Financial Information:	
Current Year Share Request £	Amount paid to date £
Outstanding Share Arrears (if applicable) £	
Outstanding Diocesan Loan (if applicable) £	
On behalf of the Parochial Church Council, we apply for the above loan and enclose. (1) Accounts for the last two years (2) Cashflow forecast for the loan period.	
Chair of PCC	Date:
Secretary of PCC	Date:
Notes	
(1) Loans initially attract interest at the Bank of England Base Rate + 0.50% at the point of issue (i.e. on 31 October 2023 5.75% per annum)	
(2) The rate of interest would then be reviewed and reset every two years on the same basis, with the maximum loan length being five years.	
(3) Repayments are by monthly or quarterly standing order over the term of the loan.	

Please return this application to Janet Edmond, Church House, 17-19 York Place, Leeds, LS1 2EX, or e-mail resourcingparishes@leeds.anglican.org.