

Quick Wins Grant

Eligibility Criteria

Introduction

The Diocese of Birmingham has secured up to £58,850 for the Quick Wins Grant from the Church of England Environment Programme to distribute to our churches. The fund is being offered to support your church with small actions that can have an impact on your energy output, to cut the carbon footprint.

Grants up to the value of £5k are available based on the parish's deprivation rank. This is outlined further in the supporting eligibility criteria documents. All Parishes will be eligible to apply for a grant of at least £2,500.

The grants will be administered by the Care of Churches Officer, Alice Latham, and will be assessed by a grants committee. There will be four grant application deadlines and all works must be completed by December 2025.

Eligibility

- The works can be to Churches and church halls where activities are taking place in a building owned by part of the CofE.
- The applicant must be legally responsible for repairing and maintaining the buildings.
- The level of grant awarded is assessed against the indices of multiple deprivations by the ecclesiastical parish. Discussed in more detail under **Assessment**.
- The parish **MUST** have had an initial discussion with the DAC.
- Eligibility does not guarantee an award, it will be based on individual needs.
- The church **MUST** submit their annual CofE Energy Footprint Tool return (using last year's utility information).

Eligible works

These grants are aimed at helping parishes on their net zero journey with a focus on reducing the energy footprint of buildings within the Birmingham Diocese.

Eligible Net Zero Solutions

The building itself:

- A1. Repair to the roof and rainwater goods (e.g. gutters, downpipes)
- A2. Fix any broken windowpanes* and make sure opening windows shut tightly
- A3. Insulate around heating pipes
- A4. Draught-proof the gaps* or put up a door-curtain*.
- A5. Rugs/floor-coverings (with breathable backings) and cushions on/around the pews/chairs.
- B1. Where there is an uninsulated, easy-to access roof void, insulating the loft*.
- B2. Installing a glazed door within your porch or a draught-lobby*.
- B3. Creating one or more smaller (separately heatable) spaces for smaller events.
- B4. Fabric wall-hangings or panels, with an air gap behind.

Heating and lighting:

- Matching heating settings better to usage *.
- Replace lightbulbs with LEDs, where simple replacement is possible.
- Replace floodlights with new LED units.
- Install a HIVE- or NEST-type heating controller, to better control heating.
- If current appliances fail, replace with A+++ appliances.
- Learn how the building heats/cool and the link to comfort, by using data loggers.
- Improve heating zones and controls.
- Install TRVs on radiators in meeting rooms & offices.
- Under-pew electric heaters *.
- Infra-red radiant panel heaters*.
- Magnetic sediment “sludge” filter to extend the life of the system.
- Thermal and/or motion sensors on lighting.
- Install energy-saving device such as Savawatt on fridges or other commercial appliances.
- Installing a smart meter, to better measure energy use.

Temporary heating solutions, which enable a church or church hall to avoid undertaking a like-for-like oil- or gas-heating replacement, when their heating breaks down:

- Heated chair cushions *
- Boiler hire
- Electric heater hire or purchase *

It is expected these temporary solutions will last for not more than one year, whilst the church makes plans, seeks advice, applies for faculty, and fundraises. At the end of the temporary period, once the church has installed their permanent heating solution, the diocese has the right to ask for items which have been purchased to become the property of the diocese, in order that they can be lent to other churches.

Electrical upgrades to enable direct electric heating, heat pumps, or solar panels

- Upgrades to the electrical system, to enable a church or church hall to move away from oil or gas heating, or to substantially reduce their use of existing oil or gas heating.

Other

- Heated chair cushions, which either replace or significantly reduce the use of oil and gas fired space heating *.
- Solar PV, where a church can demonstrate it has completed all other measures to transition to net zero carbon, and so this is the next step
- Works not listed above but which have been confirmed as being eligible, under the change control process. These works will be added to the central list.

* If interiors are of historic, architectural, or artistic interest, professional & DAC advice must be sought before these steps are taken. If they could disturb bats, advice must be sought.

Other eligible costs

VAT (for unlisted churches and work to listed churches which falls outside the eligibility of the Listed Places of Worship (LPW) grant scheme). It will be assumed that PCCs will apply to the LPW grant scheme wherever possible.

Ineligible Works

- Works to buildings used by CofE congregations meeting in rented or leased accommodation owned by others.
- Cathedrals, schools, housing and other building types.
- Maintenance costs.
- Routine cleaning.
- Works to furnishings that may qualify for additional grants administered by the Church Buildings Council.
- Conservation Reports.
- Routine Inspections (QI, appliance testing etc.)
- Routine Servicing.
- Any work covered by insurance.

Assessment

The grants are being allocated based on the demonstrated need and the anticipated carbon benefit of the intervention. A grant committee has been established to assess applications against the criteria listed above. There will be four application windows for parishes to submit. These will be in June and October of 2024 and February and June 2025, the exact closing date will be released on our website shortly.

The level of grant available is determined by the IMD by the ecclesiastical parish as shown in the [Church of England Parish Map](#).

The following scale for grant rates will be used:

- Deprivation rank 1,266 to 12,307 – grant @ 50%
- Deprivation rank 733 to 1,265 – grant @ 60%
- Deprivation rank 501 to 732 – grant @ 70%
- Deprivation rank 293 to 500 – grant @ 80%
- Deprivation rank 167 to 292 – grant @ 90%
- Deprivation rank 1 to 166 – grant @ 90% (or more if exceptionally justified)

Cross-funding of projects with other Building for Mission or Net Zero Carbon grant streams

- Cross-funding of projects which meet the requirements of both the Building for Mission Minor Repairs and Improvements Fund and Quick Wins Fund is eligible.
- Cross-funding the same project with other NZC grants is generally not eligible; o For example, a NZC Demonstrator Church is not eligible to use Quick Wins grant funding towards the funds raised for their 50% contribution to stage 2 capital costs.

- The exception to this is the £3k grant offered following a fully subsidised energy audit. This £3k grant is intended as a contribution to support a church in undertaking the initial steps recommended by the audit. A church is therefore eligible to supplement this £3k grant with an additional Quick Wins grant.
- A church which has previously received a grant from the NZC Programme (for example a Give To Go Green match-funding grant) is eligible to subsequently receive a Quick Wins grant for a separate NZC project, where this project was not previously funded, or for NZC works which are the next step in a larger project to support the transition to net zero carbon. It is at the diocese's discretion to determine how best to distribute funds in an equitable manner.

Conditions

- The offer of a grant from the Fund will not remove the requirement for the PCC to obtain faculty or approval under list B, as necessary, or any other necessary permission before the work goes ahead. The offer of a grant does not imply support for the proposal for the purposes of faculty or any other approval and does not indicate that permission will be forthcoming.
- Work must not begin until the diocese has approved the scope, methodology and estimated costs of the work and made an offer in writing which the PCC has accepted.
- Work carried out before a grant is offered is ineligible.
- Work costing more than £1,000 will need to be subject to some form of competitive procurement (normally by obtaining itemised quotations for comparison) on a best-value basis. A full competitive tender exercise will not be required unless the nature of the work or other factors make it necessary.
- Work will need to be carried out, paid for and claimed within a year of the offer date or by 31 December 2025, whichever is sooner.
- The diocese reserves the right to cancel grants towards projects not implemented within the timescale above.
- Grants are a restricted fund item for the purposes of PCC accounting and must be spent on the agreed work. The diocese reserves the right to claw back the grant if the work undertaken is not the work for which the grant was approved and/or any work or activity is removed from the project (and the diocese has not been informed in advance and approved any such change).
- The diocese reserves the right to withhold or recover the grant in part or in full if the work is not carried out in accordance with the agreed method statement or specification.
- Should the cost of the agreed work prove higher than estimated or quoted, the diocese is under no obligation to increase the grant, though it may do so at its own discretion.
- Grant recipients should retain relevant documentation relating to the grant and the work carried out for at least six years after the work is completed. The work should be recorded in the logbook. Documentation, including photographs, should be made available to the diocese on request.
- The grant recipient should be encouraged to acknowledge the grant in any parish magazine, relevant publicity, or annual report. For formal reporting purposes, the grant donor should be recorded as the Archbishops' Council and the scheme identified as the [Net Zero Carbon Programme Quick Wins Grants Fund](#).
- The dioceses reserve the right to publicise the grant and the project and to use relevant information in case studies, monitoring reports etc as it sees fit.

If after reading the above eligibility criteria you wish to proceed with an application, please request an application form from buildinggrants@cofebirmingham.com