

PCC News

The newspaper for all PCC members to help support your church



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Worship in the woods



Charlie Houlder-Moat
Licenced Lay Minister

Worshipping outdoors isn't something new. It might be labelled as a Fresh Expression, but it has its roots in the long tradition of Christian spirituality. Forest Church is the contemporary movement founded in 2012 and offshoots from this have been created.

Amazed that I could combine my skills in outdoor education and

forest bathing with spirituality I created 'Worship in the Woods' with the chaplaincy team, in my day job as military chaplaincy families worker. Last year, in my final year of Reader training I was encouraged to look where my ministry might take me and Wild Church Norfolk sprouted. Ironically it was the lockdown that was the launch pad!

I have been online for nearly a year and have been trialling various things – guided meditations, reflections and natural craft to encourage people to get outdoors in their own time, in addition to bringing the outdoors in for those locked down and shielding.

Worship in the Woods has a mixture of activities, from reflecting on scriptural themes linked to creation, to going on mini-beast hunts, to wild walks followed by time to share our encounters. It's usual to end with a fire pit, hot drinks and food!

If you are inspired to offer something in your space I want to encourage you to start where you are with what you have. There isn't a prescribed model – all you need is a few people and some nature. There are churches offering outdoor worship that follow their messy church structure, others offer a more contemplative atmosphere and another themed around wild play. Go Wild!

I am part of the Mission Enablers team and we have created the Wild Church Hub (East Anglia) to gather local practitioners to share their gifts and passion concerning Christian spirituality, church and mission in the natural world. If you would appreciate some help to explore how you could set up a Wild Church or have any questions then please do get in touch with me – I would love to hear from you – on 07581 408847 or at wildchurchnorfolk@gmail.com or Wild Church Hub East Anglia (Facebook page).



Change of leadership of Norwich Diocesan Board of Finance

Barbara Bryant
Bishop's Press Officer

It's all change here as we bid Bill Hussey a fond farewell and welcome a new Chair of the NDBF. Bishop Graham thanked Bill on behalf of the Diocese of Norwich: "I am immensely grateful to Bill for his long service to the Diocesan Board of Finance and for all that he has achieved during that time. From first meeting, I have found Bill to not only be generous with his time and wise in his observations, but also a person of deep faith and immense kindness. We owe him a great debt of gratitude as he retires from



being chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance and he goes with our prayers for him and Jill." Bishop Graham welcomed

Mark Jeffries as the new Chair of the NDBF: "I am delighted that, following an open recruitment process, the Bishop's Council has approved the nomination of Mark Jeffries to be the next Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance. Mark brings excellent skills and has vast experience across the professional services, business, education and health sectors.

"I am delighted that he is so willing to give his time to this voluntary role at such a crucial time of challenge and opportunity for the Church of England, as we share the Gospel of Jesus Christ and serve the needs of the people of Norfolk and Waveney."

We caught up with Mark ahead

of his new appointment to ask him for his thoughts.

My formative years were spent in Yorkshire and Hampshire. After school at Hymers College in Hull, I read law at St John's College, Cambridge, landing in Norwich to pursue my legal career in 1979. I became managing partner of Mills & Reeve in 2001 and Senior Partner in 2007, a position I held until stepping down to pursue non-executive roles in 2015. It was hugely enjoyable and provided various challenges as we grew the firm from its Norwich base to a national presence with offices across the country.

My current non-executive roles are on the boards of R G Carter, the Norfolk & Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group, and Norwich University of the Arts. I also chair the Evolution Academy Trust. My role there will end later this year. Other roles have been on the boards of the

Norfolk & Norwich Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

I am on the electoral roll at Christ Church, Eaton where my wife, Catherine, is a churchwarden.

I felt drawn to taking on the role of Chair. By any standard, the last few years have been turbulent. The angst they have caused has been exacerbated by the pandemic which has brought into even sharper focus the surprising levels of inequality across the diocese. The church is a much-needed bedrock across Norfolk and Waveney and I was delighted to see that the diocese has such a strong vision of how it will discharge that role, with clear priorities to deliver it. A sustainable financial base is crucial and I was attracted by the opportunity to oversee the work needed to put that in place.

Editorial

Robert Culyer
Parish Funding Support Officer
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Knowing the demographic of our church congregations I hope by now that many of you have had your vaccinations and we can all now see the light at the end of the tunnel. Light in our world suggests hope. Hope for tomorrow, whatever tomorrow brings. In that hope we need to be resilient, embrace changes implemented and work harmoniously together to make our church stronger.

Whilst still in lockdown we have had a massive drive to support our churches to help their congregations fulfil their Christian stewardship in the form of the online giving platform. We have also been busy sending out resources, in the form of posters and cards, paid for by The Listen Stream for use in our church buildings following our safe return. It is hoped that these resources will help regular and casual visitors to our church buildings to make a donation to support the work of our churches.

I do not need to tell you how important it is to fund the work of the Church at the moment. In my role as a parish funding support officer I was recently involved with applying for a grant to fund Imagine Norfolk Together (fortunately, we were successful and have secured funding for the next three years). Whilst completing the application form I was made aware of the fact that although the project has been heavily involved with helping to establish the homeless shelter in Great Yarmouth, there are still 18 people on the streets who cannot find any provision. During the past few weeks when the wind

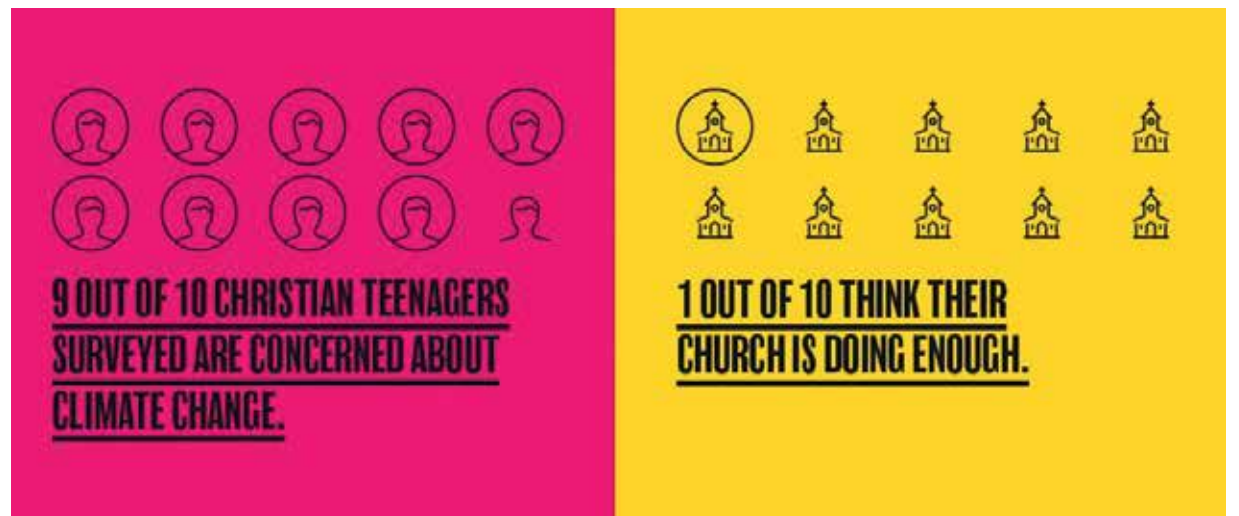
and rain has been lashing against my windows at home, I have genuinely felt for those homeless people. I am just so thankful that the contributions that we have all made to Parish Share have, in effect, helped our diocese to address and be involved with this initiative and many others like it across our diocese. Although the project is nothing to do with Parish Share, Parish Share payments have helped to pay for the clergy who are involved with these projects, as well as all the support staff such as the finance team (preparing budgets etc.), comms team and my costs in supporting these much-needed projects. Bearing this in mind, it is quite easy to see that Parish Share supports the work of 'our church', reaching needs that some smaller parishes could not meet on their own. It funds:

- the great work that our clergy are doing on the ground pastorally as well as spreading the word of Our Lord
- clergy to lead on these desperately needed projects
- the support staff who support our clergy and parishes.

Being Christians, we need to lead by example and our teachings constantly tell us to be good stewards of our resources. The wonderful Earth that God created for us is so precious and we must be good stewards of these resources. In this edition of your newspaper I have included a few articles on our environment to stimulate some thought and debate.

Please keep safe. Hopefully we are nearly there. We have the light of hope.

Youth voices



Jonathan Richardson
Children, Youth & Families
Development Officer

As we look to the future of our church communities, now more than ever, we need to recognise and consider the voices of young people as we work out the new shape of church. In November 2020 young people from Church of England schools across the country were asked what worries or concerns they had about the world – in the three age groups of primary, secondary and further education the top three responses were racism, poverty and climate change. A separate piece of research by Tearfund and Youthscape called 'Burning Down the House' focused more specifically on young people's feelings and ideas about the church and climate change. In this research it was found that one in 10 young people didn't think the church was doing enough about climate change.

Studies into the current culture of young people identify that generally they are:

- longing for safety
- pragmatic and realist
- clean living; no rebellion
- hyper-connected
- impact focused
- less 'how can I change the world?' and more 'how can we change the world?'

This highlights the need for us to work with young people to build safe communities where they are respected and trusted and where people work together across age boundaries to tackle problems – developing an active faith that impacts on the world around them. As you consider the future and the emerging new vision and priorities of the diocese I would urge you to not only consider young people but to engage and talk with them, to include them in the conversation and the building of your church community.

Learn to Listen offers a wide variety of resources, ideas, suggestions and practical advice to help you take the first steps towards listening to the children and young people in your church community and beyond.

(www.learn-to-listen.org.uk)

As part of the study with young people from church schools, young people were asked to write a vision for the church – take some inspiration from these quotes: "I want to see a tolerant church so that youth can worship with older people too." (primary)

"It should be a church that inspires young people to act, and that inspiration flows through leaders who model Christian values." (secondary)

weare.tearfund.org/burning-down-the-house/

Speaking on BBC Radio 4 about the Tear Fund/Youthscape report, Bishop Graham said, **"We need to hear the voices of young people and enable them to be prophetic in that voice in encouraging the whole Church to engage much more with climate change. This also offers us a mission opportunity in our sharing of the Gospel amongst this age group."**

Back to the garden?

Revd David Lloyd
Lead Practitioner - Church Planting

What might it look like if we saw more of heaven on Earth? Restoration and renewal in every home? People worshipping on every street?! Church would and could be everywhere!

The Garden is a growing network of missional communities that have no specific building or

centre. They are a network of communities or houses united by five core Biblical values and six simple practices, a rhythm of daily Bible reading, Bible project YouTube clips and prayer to enable everyone the opportunity to sample and live out a transformational rhythm and rule of life in Jesus Christ. Disciples that are built around the kitchen table for the off-road track, travelling light and hoping for much.

Garden Church is not a 'new model' of church. It is simply a reconnection with the movement and mode of the Church in Acts 2:42. It is a framework to provide structure and freedom to release simple church in the home and provide an accountability network and support for local mission. We work alongside and in partnership with all denominations, local churches of any tradition or flavour and we come in peace!

The missional communities help us to experience the best of 'big' and best of 'small' and being zero cost they are sustainable and replicable and can work

in partnership with their local church. They provide a safe and friendly environment in which to test drive the call in Ephesians 4 to develop the gifts and skills of God's people because they are small enough to allow everyone to play. They provide an environment in which to grow and 're-disciple' disciples for this new era. The Garden also enjoys the encouragement that comes from being gathered on a monthly basis with faces from Stalham to Walberswick, a house boat on the river Waveney to an inner city estate in West Earlham, an eco-centred small holding in Loddon

or new housing in Sprowston, The Upper Nar Villages and more recently the Tamil Nadu region of India! We have much to learn from each other. Young and old. A chance to be refreshed and for kids and youth to hang out. Garden Church in partnership with The Mitre Benefice and The Diocese of Norwich Church Planting and Revitalisation Programme is exploring this mode of ministry with new plants in Sprowston and The Upper Nar Villages. Let us know if you would like to learn more: hello@garden-church.org www.garden-church.org



2020 Parish Share – paid in full!



Christine Minns
Treasurer (UTVAS)

We were asked how did we manage it? The answer was - comfortably!

The Upper Tas Valley All Saints parish (UTVAS) is a multi-church parish with seven churches and four Church of England primary schools. Along with Fundenhall PCC we make up the Upper Tas Valley Benefice in the south of the county. As we are formed from five original PCCs we take responsibility for a fifth to a sixth of the Benefice Parish Share.

Ever since 2003 we have traditionally only held one or sometimes two services across the Benefice on a Sunday taking it in turn to use all the churches

on a rota basis. With an electoral roll of just under 50 people we still got a regular attendance of 18-24 people on a Sunday before lockdown and most people were willing to travel to whichever church was holding the service. We are a strong, united church community and work together for all the churches in our parish.

In 2003 we set up a system of monthly giving by standing order (STO) and where possible Gift Aided, which over the years has grown. We have a retiring collection at each service and some people contribute to that as well as the STO, and up until April 2020 the church members giving was very generous.

Lockdown could have been a disaster financially, but I

contacted all the members on the electoral roll and other regular worshippers and invited those with STO to consider increasing them, at least until we are able to resume church services. I invited those who do not have a STO to consider taking one out or alternatively putting away the normal collection each week and then letting me have the cash periodically.

Did this work? Yes, it did! 2020 regular income from the giving by our church community was maintained to the same level as 2019.

Now all we look forward to is the day when we can be together as a worshipping, caring community face to face and not through a Zoom link to an electronic device.

Surprising findings?



Robert Culyer
Parish Funding Support Officer

The Church of England has just commissioned a survey on Giving in The Anglican Church. The results of the survey have provided some key recommendations that you might feel are appropriate for your PCC to consider and possibly address:

- 40% of Anglicans have never been asked to give
- Nearly 50% have never been asked to review their giving
- Nearly 50% of church members have made an online donation but only 12% to their church
- Only 50% of Anglicans have heard a sermon on giving in the past 12 months.

Key recommendations following these findings are:

- Make sure your church has technology in place to enable online giving
- Provide regular opportunities for people to learn about

generosity and giving via individual and group study, sermons and retreats

- Encourage giving in services, your e-newsletter and website or on Facebook
- Inspire your members to lead generous lives.

Anglicans are three times as likely to leave a legacy to another charity:

- Only 15% of Anglicans have ever been asked to support their church by leaving a legacy.

Key recommendations to address this are:

- Ensure information about why legacies are needed is available
- Ask church members to consider a gift in their will to your church.

Some of the other findings were:

- 49% of givers said they would feel motivated to give more if they understood the impact of their giving
- Less than 30% say that they

are thanked for their gift

- Anglicans have trust and confidence in their churches
- They are passionate about supporting the building and local community.

Key recommendations that you can consider are:

- Regularly communicate 'the impact' of your members giving
- Share good news stories of projects made possible by their support
- Ensure givers are formally thanked at least once a year for their giving.

From the survey you might feel that some of the findings represent your parish and that you can adopt some of the key recommendations. It might be worth nominating a PCC member to draw up a timetable to implement those recommendations in your parish. Generosity is at the heart of our faith and our own generosity is a testament and hallmark of our faith in action.

Vulnerable Persons and Giving

As a faith organisation we have to tread a very fine path with regard to receiving donations. It is important that we always observe due diligence when receiving gifts for our church and develop a greater understanding

and confidence in responding to givers appropriately, where issues of vulnerability might arise. The Church of England has produced guidance to help you. www.churchofengland.org/code-fundraising-practice

Prayer

Risen Christ, you are our shepherd,
you know us and call us each by name:
in this strange and uncharted territory,
give us the grace to recognise your voice.

You go ahead of us, leading us on and out
to each new pasture of our lives
and search for us when we stray:
may we trustingly follow in your footsteps.

As restrictions gradually ease, O Christ,
may we imitate your shepherding,
looking out for the hurting and the cautious
and those damaged by lockdown in any way.

Guide and grace us, your Body on earth,
with imagination and renewed wisdom,
as we serve our local communities
during the post-pandemic days ahead.

You have laid down your life for your sheep
and offer us the gift of life, abundant life:
we pray for the courage to accept this gift,
daily exploring how to live life in all its fullness.

Amen

Climate chaos robs Rose of the water she needs to survive.

A dam full of water would give her **hope**.

Christian Aid Week is nearly here.

Be part of this life-changing week and stand with people like Rose.

With every gift, every prayer, every action, we stop this climate crisis.



Give today at **caweek.org**

Christian Aid Week 10-16 May 2021

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Generous giving in an exceptional year

Susan Bunting
Director of Finance

Bishop Graham has written to parishes thanking them for their generosity in 2020:

“2020 was an extraordinary year bringing challenges in difficult times and opportunities for us all to share the Gospel and demonstrate God’s love in the communities we serve. I have been stunned by the generosity of parishes towards the mission and ministry of the Church: both your collective efforts as well as your individual contributions. I am keen that we encourage one another with God’s faithfulness and generosity, and I ask that you pass on my thanks to your parish for all they have given this past year. Thank you!”

In 2020 Parish Share received by the diocese totalled £6.160 million, 77.28% of the £7.971 million amount requested and a shortfall of £1.812 million. We believe around £1 million of this is a direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parish Share is a contribution by churches towards the cost of the mission and ministry of the Church in the diocese, which funds clergy posts and central services.

Whilst this is a decrease of

£926,398 or 13.07% compared to the amount given in 2019, it is a phenomenal effort given the challenging circumstances the pandemic has brought. (The total received in 2019 was £7.086 million and 89.54% of the request.)

Our predicted operating deficit for 2020 is around £660,000 (subject to external audit), and this is better than originally predicted for several reasons:

■ Our income from Parish

Share, as detailed above, has seen a significant fall but is better than our worst-case scenario fall of 40%

■ We have been able to secure additional sustainability grant funding of £215,000 from Archbishops Council to help with the impact of COVID-19

■ We utilised the government’s Job Retention Scheme for diocesan lay staff, receiving funding of £99,000

■ Stipendiary clergy numbers

have decreased by five posts

■ Vacancy costs, first incumbency grants and removal costs have reduced by over £90,000 as we have not seen the movement in clergy roles due to the pandemic

■ Housing quinquennial inspections have been delayed – this is a saving in 2020 costs but will not be a future saving as this is a legal requirement

■ Ministry training costs, such as the clergy leadership conference,

new posts conference, study days and summer school significantly reduced due to the pandemic

■ Event costs, such as the Norfolk Show, Soul Shaper, ‘One Big Day’ have not been run, and the Events Co-ordinator post was made redundant

■ Headteacher training costs and recruiting costs reduced

■ Travel costs, meeting costs and printing costs have all significantly reduced due to home-working.

I want to thank all those who have worked tirelessly to ensure our expenditure has been as low as possible. The additional income and cost savings mentioned above have significantly mitigated what could have been a much larger operating deficit.

However, as we emerge from the pandemic and activities resume, this deficit and future predicted deficits are not sustainable.

In addition to the deployment review of our clergy posts – aiming to reduce stipendiary clergy numbers by 10 per cent; around 15 posts – we have also undertaken a full central services review of functions performed by diocesan lay staff, with a view to making substantial permanent cost savings for the future. The outcome of this review will be known later this year.





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I expect that many of you will have seen the news that our bishop, The Bishop of Norwich, Graham Usher, has accepted the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury to lead the Church of England's Environment Programme with a charge to lead bold, deliberate, collaborative action across the Church to tackle the grave existential crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Bishop Graham will work with the Mission and Public Affairs department of the Church of England to lead on delivery of the

Church of England's Environment Programme, including the commitment to net-zero carbon impacts across the Church of England by 2030 set by General Synod in February 2020. Bishop Graham is no stranger to environmental issues. His first degree was in ecological science from Edinburgh University.

On his appointment he said "I am delighted to have been asked to build on Bishop Nicholas Holtam's outstanding environmental leadership within the Church of England. Responding to the climate and

biodiversity crises that the planet faces is not a luxury in the ministry of the Church but an urgent imperative for our mission.

"The care of creation is at the heart of the Anglican Communion's marks of mission and I hope it will also play a key part in the life of every church community and every disciple of Jesus Christ."

I hope in future issues of your newspaper to continue to look at ways in which we can support Bishop Graham to ensure that our diocese meets the zero-carbon target.

CofE's carbon footprint calculated for first time



Barbara Bryant
Bishop's Press Officer

The carbon footprint of Church of England buildings has been calculated for the first time. The estimate is that parish churches use about 185,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases each year.

The data has been gathered by the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT), an online calculator built by the statistics team at Church House, Westminster, which allows parishes to input their energy usage

and discover how much carbon-dioxide equivalent they are using.

Once churches have entered their data, the tool offers advice for how they could cut their energy usage, and a simple comparison on how they are doing compared with churches of similar size.

It is hoped that wider usage of the EFT will help to encourage the Church towards meeting its target, set by the General Synod, of reaching net-zero emissions by 2030. Have you used the tool yet? If not, visit:

www.DofN.org/energy-footprint

We need you! Register for the Eco Church journey

Barbara Bryant
Bishop's Press Officer

As part of our commitment to working towards net-zero by 2030, the Diocese of Norwich has registered to become an Eco Diocese within the A Rocha UK project Eco Church. In order to reach the first level Bronze Award, we need to have at least 10 per cent of our churches registering as Eco Churches. We currently have just 25. Please consider signing-up as part of your fifth mark of mission.

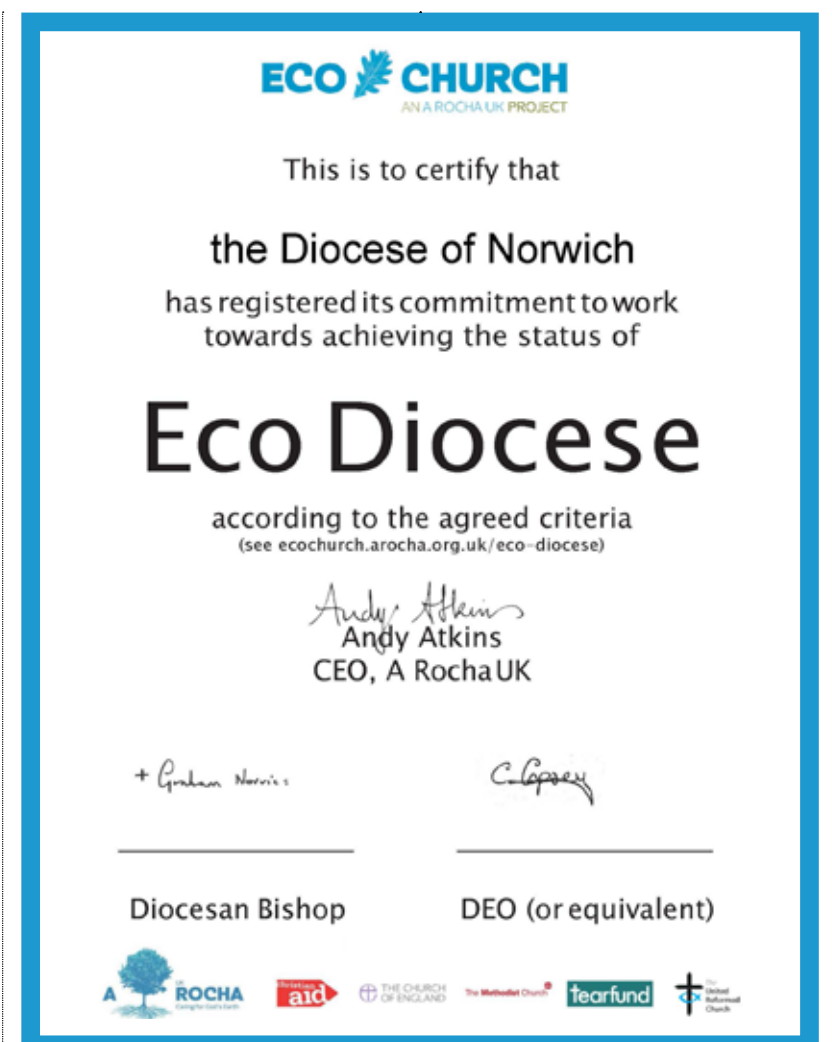
How Does It Work?

You register online and complete a simple survey about how your church operates in different areas of its life and work. Your answers will collect points towards an Eco Church Award - the more your church does, the more points you get!

If your score doesn't gain you an Eco Church Award straight away, don't worry - the idea is to complete suggested tasks in order to gain the points necessary for an Award. For example, you can switch to a green energy company or use Fairtrade for your tea and coffee supplies to gain Eco Church points. The survey takes you through five key areas of church life:

- worship and teaching
- management of church buildings
- management of church land
- community & global engagement
- lifestyle.

It takes into account whether or not your church has buildings or land. You can save your survey responses at any point and return to update them as your church completes additional actions. Free Eco Church resources give lots of support and advice about how to make the changes your church needs to become an Eco Church. Once your survey indicates that you have enough points for an



Award, you can apply to become an Eco Church.

The award has three levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold - and you will receive a certificate and (an optional) plaque from A Rocha UK. At Bronze and Silver level, a letter of confirmation from your church leader that the survey responses are a true reflection of the current work and witness of your church will be required. A Gold Award will be granted following a visit to your church by an Eco Church Assessor.

How long will it take to get an award?

The survey takes about 20 minutes to fill in - but the amount of work your church does to qualify for an Award and the time that takes is up to you! A Bronze Award will take

less time than a Gold Award - but if you are going for an Award, we say "go for Gold!"

You can find out more and register at:

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk>

Do please let me know if you are registering as we'd love to follow and support you in your journey. We can put you in touch with others who have already achieved their Bronze or Silver Awards to learn from their experience. Join the community at:

www.facebook.com/groups/NorfolkEcoChurch

Keep an eye out for all environmental updates and stories on the Diocese of Norwich environment page here:

www.DofN.org/environment

What is a “Climate Sunday”?



Joanna Fisher
Communications Officer

You may have seen church communities getting out into their churchyards and having a look at the exciting biodiversity with whom they share their outdoor space. You may have been part of a church who have done this – great! Have you thought about taking the next (or intrepid first!) steps towards integrating a greater care and understanding of creation into your life as a church?

On World Environment Day (5 June) last year, an initiative was launched to equip and support churches in doing just that: Climate Sunday. To be part of

the initiative, local churches are encouraged to hold a Climate Sunday service of their own any time during a one-year period that started on 6 September 2020. During their local Climate Sunday, each church is invited to do one or more of three things:

■ **Climate service:** Hold a climate-focused service, to explore the theological and scientific basis of creation care and action on climate, to pray, and to commit to action.

■ **Commit:** Make a commitment as a local church community to taking long term action to reduce its own greenhouse gas emissions.

■ **Call:** Join with other churches and wider society by adding its name to a common call for the UK

government to take much bolder action on climate change in this country in advance of COP26, and to strengthen its credibility to lead the international community to adopt a change in action at COP26. It is a great way to provide focus for your church's climate change journey – no matter where you are along that journey. There are a wide range of beautifully presented downloadable resources to support and inspire you in hosting a Climate Sunday service for your church – including prayers, orders of service, worship music in various styles, all-age activities and more! Many of these are free and all are adaptable into your church service.

The culmination of the campaign will be a national Climate Sunday event on Sunday 5 September 2021, to share church commitments and pray for bold action and courageous leadership at COP26.

Climate Sunday is organised by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland with support from charities including CAFOD, Christian Aid, Tearfund, A Rocha UK, and Operation Noah.

To find the resources and more, go to: www.climatesunday.org



Is your information on Bright Map up to date?

Do you run a regular group or activity in your local community? If so, please add it to Bright Map. If your group is already listed, please check your information so

that we can keep it as up to date as possible.

Bright Map highlights regular activities across Norfolk and Waveney and helps people find out what's going on in their local area. Visit www.brightmap.org



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Batty thoughts



Caroline Rawlings
Care of church buildings

With spring fast approaching, we know many of you will be thinking of undertaking routine maintenance and/or repairs to your church buildings. But if the work is likely to disturb bats, or damage or destroy bat roosts, a

licence from Natural England will most likely be required. Licences are free but the required surveys and submission work can be costly. Most applications for licences are eventually granted. Works fall into three categories:

1. **Minor works.** These works can usually be undertaken without bat surveys. However, if you are in

any doubt obtain advice from an expert, either a Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor (see below) or a professional ecologist. Your architect should be able to suggest the best solution for you. Remedial works done within a limited timeframe are unlikely to harm bats and therefore we would encourage PCCs to move promptly on works within this list. Nevertheless, there are likely to be some times of the year when the potential for bats to be affected by different minor work is likely. The section on page 5 of the Church Care guidance note provides an indicative table that highlights this.

2. **Routine works.** Works listed below could in some circumstances impact on bats and you should therefore arrange a visit by an ecologist or a Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor (VBRV). VBRVs are Natural England volunteers and licenced bat experts and the service is organised and delivered by the Bat Conservation Trust (call 0845 1300 228). Remember the VBRVs are volunteers so there may be a delay in finding someone suitable who can help. Whilst VBRVs are bat enthusiasts and have useful knowledge of bat ecology and behaviour, they are not able to advise on protection and conservation of artefacts within the church. Whilst a VBRV is unlikely to be able to undertake a detailed survey, they can provide you with general advice about bats in your church and help you to plan minor works around them. After the visit, a letter will be sent to you detailing the advice that was provided.

These works include: the installation of new heating and lighting systems involving extensive work to the fabric of the church; structural work within boiler rooms and crypts; major repairs to tombs; significant plaster repairs; significant work in tower or roof spaces; fitting of insulation; treatment of fixtures and furniture against fungal or beetle infestation, if carried out at a time of the year when bats are in the building.

3. **More extensive works.** If you want to get more extensive works done, such as those listed below, you may need to get the help of a professional ecologist who can undertake bat surveys, and where required, apply for a licence. See Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. This may be permission to exclude bats from the building but is most likely to be permission to continue works. After submission of the licence application to Natural England it will take a maximum of 30 working days for a decision to be made. Sometimes, further information is required but most licence applications are eventually granted. For advice on how to obtain a licence see Natural England website. It is hoped that the research conducted by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) will in due course make it possible to encourage bats to move to less intrusive areas of the church. For the full research please see the DEFRA website.

Applications for licences must be supported by several surveys, which are generally undertaken during the summer months when bats are active. Therefore, it is vital that you consider the possible presence of bats and schedule any surveys that may be required into your work plan at the earliest opportunity. The services of a professional ecologist can be expensive, so it is recommended you obtain more than one quote for the work and discuss how to reduce costs with them.

For more information about bat surveys and what to expect, please refer to 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines' which is an accepted industry standard. If grant-aid is to be sought to assist in the works, the ecologist should be appointed before an application is submitted, so that they can provide potential costs to be included in the application. You should agree with the ecologist that you can contact them for further advice if unexpected risks appear while building work is ongoing. You will need to agree guidelines. Your architect/surveyor will be able to advise you on the next steps.

For the full list of works please go to: www.DofN.org/bats-in-churches

With many churches in our Diocese now taking part in the NHLF funded Bats in Churches Project, you may also wish to contact our Bat Engagement Officer Diana Spencer diana.spencer@churchofengland.org

We all need some encouraging news, especially at this time.

On this page I have chosen just a few stories of great things going on in our diocese. It is wonderful to see, as Christians, we are supporting others. I think that we are

all aware of other fantastic things going on close to us.

Hopefully you might be able to adopt some of the ideas explained in these articles and offer a similar provision in your parish or engage with other parishes to provide support.



Angels to the rescue

Elizabeth Winter
Churchwarden Knapton

It is a great shame that so many events and club meetings in Knapton have had to be cancelled for such a long period because of COVID, but the Knapton Angels have done a fantastic job of supporting our parishioners through these dark times, meeting over 400 requests for support and help. The Parish Council also decided to continue the project over the coming months expecting the need for help to continue over the winter months. I am one of the Angels and am still supporting ladies who live alone. We are a very small rural village of less than 300, it is also very spread out, it

has a limited bus service on just five days a week and no shops, our nearest is Trunch. Unfortunately, our congregation at St Peter and St Paul's Parish Church is very small, now down to less than 10 and mostly elderly, which makes them in the vulnerable category. With this in mind and in addition to the Knapton's Angels our Rector, The Revd Andrew Jones, asked some of us to keep in regular phone contact with other members of the church who were isolating, this we have done. During the summer months Knapton Church installed a sound system and new hearing loop which meant that during the period when in-church services were permitted, we were able to host the Benefice-wide services which rotated using mainly three of the churches. In fact, as our church was the easiest to make covid-safe, we hosted the first of the Benefice Services in July. Albeit meant a lot of cleaning and extra work for the two church wardens, we did it with a happy heart as it meant that people could join together in person for a service. So many in our area were feeling the strain of isolation, so let's hope that we can soon return to church and our human communities.

A backward glance

Andrew Frere-Smith
Development Worker,
Imagine Norfolk Together

What does a development worker do during lockdown? Although it may sound like a joke, it was a genuine question and one that worried me back in March 2020. I was delighted not to have been furloughed but had no idea what my work was going to look like in the new world of isolation. Many of the groups I had been supporting were closed, network meetings were cancelled and all plans were put on hold. Thankfully, it was not long before a 'new normal' emerged. Meetings went online, networking took place via Zoom, and webinars became a regular source of training. Although working from home meant working alone, it didn't mean having to be lonely. In fact, I probably attended more meetings during lockdown than ever before. I was spared the wasted travelling time, could take more control of my diary, and was able to make coffee whenever I wanted! From my home office in the spare bedroom, I observed people across the country looking out for one another in new ways and communities pulling together like never before. This was as true in King's Lynn as anywhere. Local Facebook groups emerged connecting those in need with volunteers and people everywhere seemed willing to help. Although many things had changed, my role remained much



the same as before. I spent many hours writing grant applications for churches and charities. I supported King's Lynn foodbank, night shelter and debt centre. I wrote reports, articles, and newsletters. And best of all, I continued to help new projects to emerge. There were two initiatives in particular that I was involved with. One was a holiday hunger project offering food and activities for children, and the other a telephone befriending service for people feeling isolated, lonely, or stressed. These projects developed quickly. Organisations showed a fresh enthusiasm for partnering together and funders were more generous than they'd previously been. Bureaucracy was reduced and funds were released quickly. Despite the pandemic, we were discovering new ways of working that were more efficient and effective than before. I hope, when we finally move forward from this challenging time, we can take with us some of the good practice we have learnt, especially those things that make a development worker's job just a little easier!

Case Study: Two's Company
At Imagine Norfolk Together our work revolves around bringing people, churches, and groups together to find ways to love and support our community. At some points during the COVID-19 pandemic it has felt paralysing as we can no longer do many of the things we used to do like setting up new groups and running courses in person. But with a little bit of flexibility and creativity we have been able to discover new ways of meeting old and new needs. For me, this has been partly through working together with Linking Lives to set up a Two's Company project in the Great Yarmouth Borough. Two's Company is a telephone befriending service for churches to run to support those who are feeling lonely or isolated in their local area. I was able to set up a session online for Linking Lives to explain to interested people from Great Yarmouth churches what Two's Company was all about, and then to support those churches who wanted to pursue it to get it set up. We currently have five churches involved across the borough, with nearly 30 volunteers, and the referrals are pouring in! A number of professionals from local agencies have told me how much it is needed. God is opening new doors.

Anna Heydon

Please hold the line caller

Elizabeth Dawes
Licensed Lay Minister Aylsham &
District Team Ministry

Just opposite the church in Blickling, on the side of the road, is a lovely old red phone box which, a couple of years ago, was looking a bit unloved and forlorn. The Aylsham & District Team Ministry decided to buy the phone box from BT and restore it with tender, loving care to use as a community facility but they weren't sure what at the time. The National Trust at the Blickling Estate got involved and just as the last lick of paint and pane of glass was being applied the pandemic broke out. An immediate use for it suddenly became obvious. It became a community larder for the residents of the Blickling Estate which includes the parishes of Aylsham, Blickling, Iteringham, Oulton and Ingworth, with food available to anyone who needed it and no questions asked. As the cafés closed due to restrictions on the Blickling Estate,



the fresh fruit and vegetables they could no longer use were donated to the larder. The Revd Jack Branford, who was a curate in the team at the time and instrumental in the setting up of the larder said, "Since the pandemic we have seen a hike in use at the church food bank, so we decided to turn the phone box into a larder. It has been very well used because it's in the middle of

nowhere. It means people have more anonymity." Over the course of the last year the larder has been in constant use. Tesco in Aylsham have been amazing and donate items weekly to stock it and a kind volunteer goes over weekly to refill it. The feedback has been amazing and one Blickling resident said it perfectly shows Blickling, the church and the community.

Honour where honour is due

Paddy Seligman,
PCC Secretary, Wickmere

The Reverend Tony Lynn
Aylsham & District Team Ministry

The 2011 Census identified 177,918 young carers in England and Wales. A startling statistic when sadly these young people often go unnoticed, receiving little recognition or thanks for the sterling work they do - just a few of the reasons we were prompted to do something for

young carers in our area.

After some research, we discovered there were over 50 young carers in North Norfolk, attending both primary and secondary schools. Holt Youth Project supports these young carers in all sorts of ways, but, as a group of churches, we decided we could offer them a gift, some sort of sign of our gratitude for what they do. From a list of suggestions for Christmas presents, we decided to give each child a pair of pyjamas. Slightly wacky, but easy to advertise the appeal and collect

the pyjamas, and the convenience of online buying was available.

The churches in Wickmere, Itteringham, Little Barningham and Aldborough have small congregations, so we were very hesitant that we'd achieve 50 pairs of pyjamas. Happily, other congregations within the Aylsham and District Team Ministry joined in and there was a welcome donation from the National Trust Embroidery Team in Oulton.

And the total? We ended up giving 128 pairs of pyjamas! A stunningly wonderful total. And all thanks to the generosity of local people.

The Holt Youth Project who received the pyjamas, placed them in a stocking along with chocolate and other small donated gifts to ensure that all the young carers across North Norfolk, as well as other disadvantaged young people, had a parcel to open on Christmas morning just like other children.

Julie Alford, Co-founder and Manager at the Holt Youth Project responded: "Young carers are even more in demand during the



pandemic when other statutory services fall away leaving these amazing, resilient young people to pick up the slack. Young carers, some as young as six years old, quietly go about their responsibilities, often unseen, caring for family members. Not unusually they also have the additional tasks of household chores and shopping as well as looking after siblings.

Of course, it's more than just pairs of pyjamas. For the young carers it was a chance to receive something personal in recognition of their tireless work of caring and giving out to

others, for the church and wider community it was the opportunity to help others; determination to recognise and celebrate those who do such necessary and demanding work - but out of the limelight - giving, and expecting nothing whatsoever in return.

Proverbs 3:27 reminds us, "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act."

This summer, are there ways we as individuals and churches can recognise and celebrate those who, in whatever capacity, have quietly persevered in their work and actions in recent times?

Curiosity into wonder



Photo credit: www.newsightphotographyuk.com

Ivan A Barnard
Churchwarden Fishley

The Saxons founded Fishley in the 10th century, followed by the Normans who built the current church of St. Mary's. The Saxons and the Normans are long-since gone and yet this gem of a much-loved round church is still a place of worship today. Standing in isolation completely surrounded by open farmland with glorious views across the Bure Valley. It is the destination of those seeking its peace and tranquillity, to pray and to learn something of its history and its cultural heritage.

The Parish of Fishley has virtually no permanent residents which makes it unique in the Diocese of Norwich. It was curiosity that led me to it. Indeed, it is curiosity that is why people from around the world come and visit us on a Friday every week of the year: to view the rich complexities of its cultural heritage and its architecture. Since 2006 the churchwardens and a dedicated band of volunteers have, by their initiative and physical hard work, provided the funding to preserve and enhance the building. This has twice led them in successive years to be recognised in the English Heritage Angel Awards. Although these buildings were

undoubtedly built for the worship of God they were also at the centre of our communities. It is this community and cultural heritage that is to be found in these glorious buildings, why most people visit today and where curiosity turns into wonder.

“The question that I am sometimes asked is, how can a church move from being a place of worship to an historical building?”

The question that I am sometimes asked is, how can a church move from being a place of worship to an historical building? First of all, it is already an historical building. What we as volunteers and historical detectives have to do is: research, document, exhibit and publicise the 1000 plus years of history of the building in an architectural sense. Then there is the wealth of cultural heritage that successive families, often noble ones, have left us. As an example if you Google EDP Fishley then you will see what I mean.

This all brings a sense of wellbeing and indeed romance, as we now average seven to eight weddings a year.



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Recently I was pointed to an article in The Guardian looking at how the welfare state was now looking to the Church to pick up and support the less fortunate in our communities. Before the welfare state was introduced the Church was the main player in providing support. It appears that the tide

has turned and the Church is now in a Catch-22 position. It is part of our Christian teachings to look after the less fortunate but with limited numbers in our churches and already stretched funds it is difficult to meet these requests. This prompted me to bring to your attention a sometimes overlooked source

of finance. Many of our parishes have trusts that were set up in Victorian times to support the needy of the parish and quite often the PCC or vicar has the discretion to distribute these funds. Is this something you might have in your parish? Here are some stories from parishes that have these trusts.

Heating cost support

Revd Janet Allan
Vicar, Swaffham and Sporle

The Sporle Relief in Need Charity (charity number 213063) owns Sporle's Town Farm: a farm which nowadays is sadly separated from the village by the A47, with no bridge or easy means of crossing. The farm does, however, contribute significantly to the life of the village: thanks to the farmer, David Pick, and the cottage tenant, Town Farm even hosts Rogation Sunday services in normal times, as it has a barn with a stunning natural acoustic which is briefly available at the right time of year.

The income from Town Farm is used primarily to address fuel poverty within Sporle (or to be precise, the ancient parish of Sporle with Palgrave), with small grants being made each year to around 30 individuals and families as a contribution towards heating costs. The charity is also able



under its terms of reference to support the community in other ways: urgent help has been given in cases of need, and facilities for the community, such as the sports pavilion and church boiler have received much needed help. The advantage of a local charity is that the individuals, families and needs

are known, and it is possible to respond relatively quickly. The trustees can even set up deliveries, as when a young mother needed a cooker urgently and a new one was better value. Sporle has an excellent sense of community and that helps people work together for the common good.

An amazing array of support



Revd Helen Rengert
Team Rector, Reepham & Wensum Valley

The rector and churchwardens are the Trustees of Reepham

Church Charities which includes a plot of land, currently leased to Reepham Town Council for allotments, but also funds accumulated from rents which are to be used specifically for 'the relief of the poor of

Reepham'. It is these funds that we were able to use to help those in urgent financial need as businesses closed and workers were laid off before the furlough scheme was launched at the beginning of the first coronavirus lockdown. Grants were advertised for those living in Reepham who were suffering financial hardship, through the church communication channels, the Reepham Life Website and the Reepham Good Neighbours Facebook page. There were not as many applications as the Trustees had envisaged but other ways of supporting our community surfaced as time went on.

When the children returned to school in the summer, it was found that there was a considerable need for counselling of pupils at Reepham High School, but space was in short supply. An old mobile classroom was available to be converted to two counselling rooms but the school needed help with funding. Reepham Church Charities and Reepham Rotary Club were able to assist and both rooms were in full use before Christmas. During the third lockdown the charity was able to buy four new laptops for the High School to lend to pupils in need studying at home.



Supporting education in Brooke

Revd Lynn Chapman
Priest in charge, Brooke benefice

Like my predecessors I am a trustee of several small village-based charities. Most of these involve the ongoing distribution of benefit to "the poor", the cost of which is met by income derived from land owned by the trust. Historically, these trusts provided bread or coal, but the modern expression of their gifts is in the form of a small grant of money to those of pensionable age in the parish. The fact that the vicar remains a trustee of these charities is a sign of the importance of the presence of the church in village life.

The Brooke Townlands Charity has particularly supported the mission of the church in the parish. Founded originally in a gift of land in the 1500s, the trust was later re-formed in 1857 to provide a school in the village. Both vicar and church were heavily involved

in this project and Christian principles and values lay at its heart. In modern times the school, still in its original building, is in Local Authority care, maintaining its Christian distinctiveness as a VC school. The charity's funds were invested following the sale of the charity's land and the income used to support the education of Brooke's school children. A small grant is made each year to the churchwardens for the maintenance of the church (in accordance with the original scheme) and each year those leaving Brooke Primary School are presented with a gift from the charity; in recent years a reading book and a Bible. The school can apply for grants to support extra-curricular activities, while the PCC have been able to obtain grants to support their work with the school children. This has enabled us to develop our link with the Primary School and also to resource the projects we undertake together.

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Friends in a time of need



Anastasia Moskvina
Historic Church Building Officer

'Do we carry out urgent repairs to the building or do we pay our parish share in full?' Too many PCCs have to ask this question, which causes a lot of stress and often arguments over what needs to be prioritised.

With small congregations and PCC members already overloaded with work and responsibilities, one of the ways to inject new energy and income is to look to the wider community for help. As a way of doing this, establishing a Friends Group has proved to be an effective strategy to secure more support and generate more funds.

A Friends Group is a group of volunteers who don't have to be church-goers and don't even have to live locally but who have an affection for a church building and are willing to be involved in putting on events or making donations. The Friends are coordinated by a committee and exist in conjunction with the PCC. It is usually a good idea to have one or two people from the PCC on the Friends committee, which will ensure dialogue and collaborative spirit while keeping the two bodies separate. Separation is important, because while the PCC looks after the matters concerning church life, the Friends take on the responsibility of raising funds for

maintenance and repairs to the church building and the upkeep of the churchyard. The funds raised by the Friends are given over to the PCC, and a clear agreement needs to be in place to ensure that this money is spent on the fabric. Membership in the Friends Group can be based on subscription, which means all members make regular donations. Alternatively, members can be nominally signed up and called upon when either funding or specific skills are needed. Friends Groups can exist as an extension of the PCC or as a separate charity. There are different membership models, different rewards a church can be offering to the Friends and an endless range of events the Friends can organise to boost the income! Regardless of what you do and how you do it, establishing a Friends group is a good way of reducing the pressure on the PCCs and securing support of the people who would otherwise not consider coming to church.

For practical information, please see www.nationalchurchestrust.org/involving-people/setting-friends-group.

If you would like help with setting up a Friends group or can share a story about how your Friends Group has made a difference, please contact Ana on anastasia.moskvina@dioceseofnorwich.org, 01603 882336.

Powerful friends

Mary Yule
St Peter's Church, Forncett St Peter

When the local community learnt that St Peter's Church, Forncett, was threatened with closure, the response was immediate; their beautiful 1000-year-old Anglo Saxon church with its iconic round tower must be saved for future generations! The Friends of St Peter's Church, Forncett, was launched in October 2019 and has over 100 Friends supporting a huge fund-raising challenge to raise the necessary 'partnership funding' to make a National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) bid to save St Peter's. The figures are mind-boggling – over £750,000

is needed for essential repairs to the fabric and new facilities to transform the church into a vibrant community hub.

The Friends' Committee is a sub-committee of the Upper Tas Valley All Saints PCC, with sub-committees focusing on publicity, events, building and grants. It draws on a wide range of professional expertise from the community, and benefits greatly from advice and practical support from the Diocesan Historic Church Buildings Support Officer. All fund-raising events were cancelled when COVID-19 struck, but planning continues on Zoom and alternative 'socially distanced' ways of fund-raising found e.g. a kind lady made masks for sale,

another took 'lockdown' family photographs, Christmas cards designed by the village art group, Christmas cakes and puddings all sold well, and a Christmas hamper was raffled. Together with many generous donations plus four grant offers, this means the Friends has already raised almost £40,000, and is about to submit an 'Expression of Interest' to the NLHF, the first step towards a Lottery application. A lot has been achieved at a difficult time, thanks to a strong community who care passionately about saving their historic church.

The campaign can be followed on: <https://forncett.info/forncett-churches/st-peter.html> and on the Friends of St Peters Facebook page.

£15,000 raised in a day

Ken Grapes
St Catherine's Church, Ludham

Founded in 1993, this village organisation has truly gone from strength to strength. Its simple raison d'être is 'to maintain for the benefit of the public the Church of St. Catherine and its churchyard'.

It is run by a small committee and has a substantial membership both from the village and beyond. The membership subscription is low cost, which helps maintain numbers - important because the Friends' main fundraising activity requires the help of well over 100 people, mostly drawn from the membership.

Every other year, the Friends organise Ludham Open Gardens Day. This may sound a bit commonplace, but it has two unique selling points. The first is that the dozen or so (very good)



gardens are either side of Womack Water, a short tributary of the River Thurne. A fleet of motorboats ferry visitors to and fro across the water and there are refreshments and loos and minor attractions on both sides. The second is that our experience tells us that many of the visitors are not garden buffs and, for these, a major display of classic cars is a great attraction. The whole event stands or falls on efficient, friendly and well-signed

car parking. (More than 700 cars to be parked) plus a plethora of loos and different types of refreshments so that visitors are never very far from food or drink (or the other!).

Is the event worth all the effort? The writer is the Fabric Officer of St. Catherine's Church and is positive that it is. These Open Gardens days usually raise over £10,000. In 2019 more than £15,000 was raised - not bad we think, for a one-day village event.



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The Government has announced that the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme www.lpwsscheme.org.uk (0800 500 3009 – don't panic when they answer the telephone as TopMark!) will be renewed this year, operating on the same terms as previously.

This is the scheme which allows listed places of worship to claim a

sum equal to VAT which has been paid on repairs and alterations. It was due to cease running at the end of this financial year. The continuation of this level of government support is very good news indeed.

No excuse now not to get on with those much-needed church repairs!

Mission Hub

As you look towards preparation for summer activities and leading in to Harvest, do not forget to have a look at Mission Hub for resources and inspiration to support you to engage with the environment in your worship and prayers.



An introduction to Forest Church

Get started in your exploration of Forest Church. The hope is that Forest Churches will become a spiritual home for those outside the traditional church who relate better to outdoor spirituality than gatherings in a church building.



Exploring outdoors for all seasons

This booklet provides you with four Bible-based activity/worship outlines to use outside with children and young people or family groups—one for each season of the year.



Outdoor church ideas

A collection of creative resources for taking church outdoors, including prayer stations, outdoor worship and walks.



Wild worship field guide

Use as a group, family or individual; this guide helps you to spot the many connections between scripture and the world around us and highlights "the richness of the connection between creation and worship."



Doxecology hymns

Thirteen congregational worship songs that celebrate the wonder of creation, acknowledge our failures, and anticipate a glorious restoration in Christ. There is also an accompanying study guide.



Prayers on a theme of creation

Some simple and some longer prayers for anyone to use at Harvest time to consider Creation and thank God for it.

Recommend a resource...

If there is something your church has found particularly helpful, please tell us about it! We love to spread the word about great

resources to enable and support the flourishing of our local churches. Go to www.DofN.org/MissionHub and scroll to the bottom of the page to tell us about your favourite resources!

Here to help...

To speak to a member of the Diocesan staff team contact:

01603 880853

info@dioceseofnorwich.org

Useful websites

Church of England COVID-19 guidance

Read the regularly updated guidance for all churches including links to resources, liturgy and prayers

www.DofN.org/coronavirus

Previous editions of PCC News

Download and read previous editions in PDF format

www.DofN.org/pccnews

Grant Finder

A free online funding website for local parishes to help you find grants and funding

www.DofN.org/grantfinder

Diocesan Registry

For advice on legal matters

www.DofN.org/registry

ChurchCare

Lots of information on caring for church building, contents, churchyards and developing your church building

www.churchcare.co.uk

Church Legacy

Quick and easy access to essential information for individuals considering leaving a gift in their Will to their local church

www.churchlegacy.org.uk

Parish Resources

Information from the National Stewardship & Resources team: resources to support all aspects of stewardship, administration and church management

www.parishresources.org.uk

PCC News is sent to all PCC members in the Diocese of Norwich. In addition to stories and top tips from parishes, it highlights information you need to be aware of in your role as a church charity trustee.

To unsubscribe contact data@dioceseofnorwich.org or 01603 882322.

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Image from a valuation day at St. Andrews Church, Deopham

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