



Building Survey Introduction

Context

In November 2025 Diocesan Synod approved a motion brought by Christchurch Deanery Synod and amended by Bishops Council. The motion was:

This Synod:

Takes note of the proposal from Christchurch Deanery Synod and their highlighting of the Hereford Diocesan Toolkit, Crossing the Threshold, due to be updated in 2026.

Requests all Deanery Synods to review and collate the current usage and facilities of all church buildings across their deanery, reporting back to Diocesan Synod within 9 months.

Instructs the Diocesan Team, to support Deanery Teams in this work, providing templates and guidance to aid the process, and for collating the final results at a diocesan level.

More details about this motion and supporting documentation, including examples of using buildings as community assets can be found here: https://winchester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/DS_25_17a_Christchurch_Deanery_Synod_Motion.pdf

In response we're inviting all PCC's to complete a buildings survey. This is an opportunity for PCC's and Deaneries to review their building usage and explore new opportunities to serve our communities as well as develop alternative income streams. We also hope these surveys will help the Diocesan Team identify opportunities to support parishes making use of their buildings.

Use of Buildings As Community Assets

As Christians we are called to serve our community, supporting those in need (Matthew 25:35-40, Isaiah 58:10) and to seek the prosperity of our local community (Jeremiah 29:7). Our buildings are a huge asset which we can use in our ministry to our communities.

Historically our buildings have been key assets in our communities. Naves in medieval church buildings acted as important meeting places, hosting a variety of events. In the 12th and 13th centuries churchyards were often used to host markets.

Many churches are already using their buildings to support and serve their communities through:

- Food and Clothes Banks:
 - o [Basics Bank — Lord's Hill Church](#)
 - o [Bitterne Park's local website - bitternepark.info - City's Clothes Bank moves to Bitterne Park](#)

- Community Café's and community food stores:
 - o [Community - St Barnabas Church](#)
 - o [The Marketplace at Saint Mary's Southampton - Diocese of Winchester](#)

- Meal Clubs:
 - o [HAMOU \('Have a Meal on Us'\) - The Parish of St Matthew with St Paul](#)
 - o [Bursledon Parish Sees Real Blessings From its Make Lunch Group - Diocese of Winchester](#)

- Retired Social Groups:
 - o [The Beehive | St Barnabas Winchester](#)

- Stay and Play Groups:
 - o [Lil' Flames Toddler Group Helps Build Community and Faith at Lord's Hill Church - Diocese of Winchester](#)

There also opportunities to generate income and provide a community service, like hosting a post office or shop, concerts, tourism events or art exhibitions. Here are some examples:

- o [Rock Choir Brings Fun, Friendship and Funds for Colden Common Church and Community - Diocese of Winchester](#)
- o [Churches Across the Diocese Give Thanks for Jane Austen! - Diocese of Winchester](#)
- o [Exhibition of Past Weddings Highlights Church's Role in Family Life - Diocese of Winchester](#)
- o [Can commerce and worship co-exist? A way out of the red for churches](#)

These are all examples of ways in which church buildings can be used as community assets, responding to God's call to serve our community.

Many churches are already engaged in this work but may not have reviewed their activity or agreements with outside hirers for many years. Other PCC's may not have considered using their buildings for this purpose. We hope this survey will help parishes to consider their current building use and any potential opportunities to use buildings for community use or income generation.

Crossing The Threshold – Hereford Diocesan Toolkit

Considering your buildings current use may inspire a PCC to explore or review how they can use their buildings to serve the community. There are many ways this can be done. Three key steps might be:

- 1. Reviewing you current building use** – We hope this building survey will help with this.
- 2. Considering the needs of your community** – The PCC might conduct a community audit.
- 3. Develop a vision for how the local church can help** – Whether it's hosting or facilitating a service, event or group.

To support PCC's in this work, Hereford Diocese have developed 'Crossing The Threshold', a toolkit for parishes looking to review their buildings use or manage a building project. It contains many helpful guides including 'Undertaking a Community Audit', 'Developing Your Vision' and fundraising guides. The toolkit can be found here: <https://www.hereford.anglican.org/parish-support/community-partnership/crossing-the-threshold-toolkit/>

Please note: Parishes are not required to complete or use the guide for the Buildings Survey, it is simply provided as a useful guide for PCC's looking to take this work further.

Sometimes projects may require changes to a building layout, facilities or fabric. Remember to contact the Diocesan Church Buildings team who can help you in your planning and advise on any permissions requirements. You can find more resources and contact the team here: <https://winchester.anglican.org/church-buildings/>

How To Complete The Building Survey

To aid parishes and deaneries in this task we have created three survey types, to try and capture all the types of buildings a PCC might have.

You only need to complete the surveys relevant to the buildings your PCC owns or manages.

The three surveys can be found here:

- **Church buildings:** [Use of church buildings survey – Fill out form](#)
 - All PCC's should complete this survey. Please complete one form per church building (i.e. if the PCC manages 3 church buildings please complete 3 entries of this form.)

- **Church halls:** [Use of church halls survey – Fill out form](#)
 - Only complete this form if your PCC owns/manages a church hall. This should be completed in addition to the Church Building form. If your church hall is attached to the church building please complete this form in relation to the hall only.

- **Other buildings:** [Other buildings survey – Fill out form](#)
 - Only complete this form if your PCC owns/manages buildings as well as a Church Building and/or a Church Hall. This may include: offices, shops, houses, car parks, etc. This should be completed in addition to either/both of the above form.

Please complete one entry of each form for each of the building types your PCC manages. For example if your PCC managed 2 church buildings and 2 church halls, please complete the church building form twice for each of your church buildings and the church hall form twice for each of your church halls.

Review Building Use

As part of this process you may find it helpful to map out a simple building use review for each of your buildings. This is not required to complete the surveys, but it may help PCC's to understand the current use of their buildings, identify gaps and understand how it impacts your income.

A template to help with this can be found [here](#):

Question Notes

Parish Number

Your Parish Number is a unique identifier assigned to each parish by the national church. We have included this at the top of your building survey email. If you need help finding your number, please contact parish.support@winchesterdiocese.org.

Financial Contribution

This question is to help the PCC understand the net benefit or loss of letting out your building. It will also help the Parish Support Team understand the broader impact of letting buildings and identify areas for future support.

This does not need to be exact and can be rough estimate. If the PCC would like to take this opportunity to review building use more fully please see the 'Building Review Table' document [here](#): . This may help, but is not a requirement for PCC's completing this survey.

Please note: The PCC's answer to this question will have no impact on their CMF request or calculation. We are requesting this to identify opportunities for support only.

Car Parking

If you have one car park for multiple buildings (e.g. one car park for both a church building and church hall) please include the same number of spaces in both surveys.

We are asking for this information to help support parishes with income generation through schemes like Just Park.

Tourism

Many of our buildings have been part of our wider cultural and political heritage. Often these buildings receive regular tourist visitors. These visitors offer an opportunity for ministry and for donations to the work of the parish. We're working to support parishes engage with tourists more fully. To help with this we're looking to gather more information on visitor numbers across our churches.

For this survey, visitors are defined as anyone visiting outside of services, private worship, and organised events.

This does not need to be an exact number and can be a rough estimate.

Boilers

In July 2022 the national faculty rules changed, requiring all parishes to explore other options when replacing their boiler. Our Church Buildings and Creation Care team are working to support parishes to create a plan in case of a heating failure. This includes considering alternative options and exploring grant funding.

To help with this we're ask the age of your boiler. This does not need to be exact and can be an estimate.

If you have any questions about this survey, please email parish.support@winchesterdiocese.org