



Welcome to the Diocese's Minor Repairs & Improvements Fund.

The Diocese of Canterbury will distribute a small number of grants to cover minor repairs and improvements (from an overall total of £77,500 per annum). This period will last two years (2024-2025). Grants are offered to assist with funding small, stand-alone works up to £20,000 (or £24,000, depending on VAT implications). Grants will vary between depending on your IMD ranking. (see section 4 below).

Given the level of funding currently available, we will not be able to accept all applications. Churches on the Heritage at Risk register and in areas of high deprivation with urgent minor repair projects are a priority. However, all churches are welcome to apply.

A bi-monthly decision-making panel is in place to process applications; and we will try to come back to you as soon as possible with our decisions. If you are unsuccessful first-time round, you will not be disqualified from re-applying in subsequent rounds.

The first step, following an application, is to discuss your project with the Church Buildings Support Officer (CBSO). **Preliminary discussion with the CBSO is encouraged before finalising your application.**

For more information, please refer to the guidance below. It is essential that you have an up-to-date Quinquennial report (within 5 years of this date): without it you may be ineligible.

We hope these small grants will have a significant impact: supporting the congregations and buildings; resources and liturgy, essential to the Church's mission.

If you have any queries, please contact Samuel Barrett – Church Buildings Support Officer via SBarrett@diocant.org.

Kind regards,

Samuel Barrett

**BUILDINGS FOR MISSION MR&I GRANTS
FOR CHURCH MINOR REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS:
GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS (revised January 2025)**

(1A) Eligible buildings

Church of England consecrated church buildings and licensed places of worship (including those subject to sharing agreements or ecumenical partnerships) serving parishes in the Diocese of Canterbury.

The 'building' extends to its below-ground drainage system, foundations and immediate curtilage.

(1B) Ineligible buildings

Other buildings or structures in the churchyard or curtilage of eligible buildings which are not in ecclesiastical use.

Cathedrals; churches and chapels which are the responsibility of private owners or institutions;¹ Church of England churches outside England or the Isle of Man; non-Anglican places of worship; closed and closing churches.

(1C) Eligible work

Minor repairs

- Repair of building fabric (external): roof coverings, roof structure, walls, parapets, pinnacles and other architectural features, towers, spires, windows, doors, rainwater disposal system including below-ground drainage.
- Repair of building fabric (internal): ceilings, floors, doors, walls and wall linings (plaster/panelling but not wall paintings, mosaics etc).
- Repair of building services installations where essential for health and safety and/or continuity of worship and mission use.
- Emergency repairs or holding works, eg propping, covering, protection etc.

To be eligible, any such work must be recommended in the most recent QI report (or subsequent professional report or condition survey etc). Work classified as urgent (either category 1 - Urgent, requiring immediate attention; 2 - Requires attention within 12 months; or 3 - Requires attention within the next 12 - 24 months²) should take priority but any work required within the quinquennium is eligible. Works of differing urgency within that definition may be

¹ Such as schools, university colleges, hospitals and so-called 'peculiar' etc, even those which have opted into the Faculty Jurisdiction (under paras 38-44 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018 or previously under the Care of Places of Worship Measure 1999)

² See Commissioning Quinquennial Inspection Reports Guidance Note at <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/quinquennial-inspections>

undertaken together for the sake of efficiency and economy, especially where ‘stitch in time’ repairs can save money in the long term.

(2A) Improvements

- Additions, alterations or adaptations specifically to overcome building design defects or obsolescence (e.g. undersized hoppers or drainpipes) or to improve access for maintenance.
- Additions, alterations or adaptations where essential to improve physical access, e.g. handrails, ramps etc.
- Improvements to building services installations where essential to sustain worship and mission use, such as improvements to heating, lighting, wiring, kitchens, WCs. Where necessary, this might include the installation or upgrading of pipework or cabling to the perimeter of the churchyard or curtilage.
- New installations or improvements to existing installations for digital connectivity, whether through a wired connection or 4G/5G mobile Wi-Fi, where essential to sustain worship and mission use.
- Bat mitigation measures, including relevant ecologists’ fees and production of a bat management plan, where the impact of bats is a barrier to worship and mission use. A one-off deep clean can be an eligible cost as part of a mitigation plan.

(2B) Other eligible costs

- Professional fees to design, specify, inspect and certify the repair or improvement work.
- Ecologist’s fees to prepare a bat management plan.
- 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.

(2C) Ineligible work

- Routine maintenance, as set out in our [Calendar of Care](#).
- Routine cleaning.
- Work to furnishings, such as bells and bell frames, books and manuscripts, church plate, clocks, monumental brasses and decorative metalwork, monuments, organs, paintings and wall paintings, stained glass, textiles, wooden objects. These may qualify for the grants administered by ChurchCare (see [Grants for historic church interiors and churchyard structures | The Church of England](#)).
- Conservation reports. These may qualify for the grants administered by ChurchCare (see [Grants for conservation reports | The Church of England](#)).
- Routine inspection (Quinquennial Inspections, periodic inspection of electrical installations, appliance testing, gas safety checks, etc).
- Routine servicing of building services installations.
- Any work covered by insurance.

(3) Eligible applicants

Applications must be made by a member or designated representative of the PCC. Please ensure the PCC has discussed and agreed to the works and to the application to the MRIF before submitting your application, and that a record of this agreement has been made in the PCC's own records. Funds can only be paid to the PCC, not directly to contractors or other companies appointed to undertake the work.

(4A) How much money should I expect to be awarded?

You can request a particular amount or leave it to the diocese to decide to award a suitable level of grant.

Grants of up to £20,000 can be made towards projects with costs of up to £20,000. If VAT is chargeable but is not eligible for reclaiming under the government's Listed Places of Worship (LPW) grant scheme, the total project costs can be up to £24,000.

Unless in exceptional circumstances, a grant awarded will be no more than 90% of the total cost of the work.

The factors affecting the level of grant awarded, will be:

- **Amount of other funding that a parish has raised or has available** - it is expected that most parishes will supply an element of partnership funding from their own resources.
 - o Please also note that, as part of this scheme, at least 50% of the grants awarded across the Diocese in total must go towards 'repairs' rather than 'improvements'.
- **The IMD 'deprivation rank'** of the parish (according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation) – for the implications of this, and the scale to be applied, please see below.

The scale for grants (based on a parish's national IMD 'deprivation rank') will usually be applied, as follows:

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

However, in exceptional circumstances, if the scale of need being faced by a church is greater than indicated by the 'deprivation' of households in the parish, a church may request a higher level of grant.

To find IMD ranking, see Church Urban Fund's Look-up tool - <https://cuf.org.uk/lookup-tool>

(4B) Requirements for procurement

The Buildings for Mission expects to see value for money in any grant-aided activity. Work costing more than £1,000 will be subject to competitive procurement (obtaining itemised quotations for comparison) on a best value basis before a grant can be offered.

A full competitive tender exercise will not be required unless the nature of the work or other factors make it necessary.

The number of quotes required will vary, but we expect, at least, to see two or more quotes. We realise there may be circumstances, however, where only a single quote can be obtained, for example where the availability of suitable contractors is low and other contractors declined or were simply not available, or where the project is small even within the parameters of a grant scheme with a maximum project cost of £10,000 (or £12,000 if the VAT is not eligible under the Listed Places of Worship (LPW) grant scheme).

The absence of a second or third quote in those circumstances will not be a bar to making a grant if best value can be adequately demonstrated. The objective is to make a price/quality comparison. This will be helped by having itemised quotations. Even a single quotation which is itemised will provide some basis for comparison with work previously commissioned by the church or by nearby churches for similar work.

(5) Why does this scheme focus on urgent minor ‘stitch-in-time’ repairs?

The findings of an earlier pilot scheme, run in two other dioceses, concluded that minor repair grants prevented loss of historic fabric and saved costs. Prevention and saving money is the ‘stitch in time’ principle. Now, the current scheme is in continuity, with a beneficial extension towards facility ‘improvements’.

(6A) Who makes decisions?

The grant-scheme is administered by the CBSO.

The decision-making panel consists of the Archdeacons, DAC Secretary, and Diocesan Secretary.

Grant conditions

- The offer of a grant from the Fund will not remove the requirement for the PCC 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 the 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 dioceses reserves the right to publicise the grant and the project and to use relevant information in case studies, monitoring reports etc as it sees fit.

Please make sure you have included the following documentation when submitting your application.

1. An up to date Quinquennial Inspection Report if one hasn't already been sent to the diocese.

The grant cannot be offered to churches that do not have an up to date QI. If one is booked in, or you are awaiting the report from your architect, please stress to them the urgency of getting the report asap due to the demand and funding deadlines.

2. An up to date set of accounts showing any restricted fabric funds.
3. Competitive tenders or quotations for the work if over £1k.
4. Photographs of the works to be undertaken
5. An explanation of the works if they are to be improvements and how the improvements benefit missional objectives
6. Application form including the deprivation index rating for your parish.
8. No late applications will be accepted past the published dates.