

Minor Repairs and Improvements Grants Fund Round 2

Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham Eligibility Guide

Eligible buildings

Church of England consecrated church buildings and licensed places of worship (including those which are the subject of sharing agreements or ecumenical partnerships).

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

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.

Eligible work

Minor repairs

Why now? - 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 months) takes priority, but any work required within the quinquennium is eligible.

- 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, e.g. propping, covering, protection etc.

Improvements

Why now? - in the case of improvements, a convincing case must be made that such works are essential to sustaining worship and mission use;

- 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.

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.

Works that are ***not*** eligible for this funding

- Routine maintenance.
- 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.).
- Conservation reports.
- 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

Other criteria for being eligible for a grant

The applicant body must have legal responsibility for the repair and maintenance of the church building. This will typically be the PCC but may in some cases be some other properly constituted body.

The work must not have started before the appropriate permission is obtained and the required funds are secured (i.e. grants pledged or monies in hand). The work needs to be completed, and the grant funds drawn down within 12 months of the grant being awarded, or before 31st December 2025 – whichever is soonest.

In order to give more grants to support more parishes, grants will not normally exceed £5,000 (or £6,000 if the VAT is not eligible under the Listed Places of Worship (LPW) grant scheme) at a rate of up to 90%. This means that, for an LPW-eligible project the maximum grant will normally be £4,500 and for an LPW-ineligible project, £5,400.

For churches that are in parishes within the 20% most deprived nationally the panel *may* award funds up to £10,000 (or £12,000 for LPW-ineligible projects) where funds allow within that period - again at a rate of 90%). This means that, for an LPW-eligible project the maximum grant will normally be £9,000 and for an LPW-ineligible project, £10,800.

It is expected that parishes will provide at least 10% - excluding VAT - of funding from their own resources – unless in exceptional circumstances.

The grant will not cover VAT where the VAT can be re-claimed through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Reclaim scheme.

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. Where comparative costs are not obtainable, the applicants should state why this is the case in their application.

Eligible grant applications will be prioritised using the following criteria:

- Repair works identified in quinquennial inspection reports as urgent.
- ArcGIS Parish Map Deprivation Rank
- Inclusion on Historic England's At Risk Register
- Churches that are up to date with their Parish Share payments (or have engaged in discussion with the Diocesan Board of Finance concerning an inability to cover payment).
- Status of PCC annual reports/financial statements.
- Churches that have not already received a grant during Round 1 of applications.

Further advice and guidance can be sought from Church Building Support Officer – Stephen Watson – Stephen.watson@southwell.anglican.org