



Esgobaeth Llanelwy / Diocese of St Asaph

Newyddion Ymweliadau visitation news

Lighting the Darkest Corners



The Diocese of St Asaph is blessed with a large array of buildings. Some ancient, some modern. Some large, some small. Some highly ornate, some beautifully simple. Our buildings often punctuate the skylines of our towns and cities, and lie in the heart of our hamlets and villages.

For many they are a familiar

piece of the landscape, both precious and rarely visited. For some they are places of refuge, hope or prayer.

Many of our buildings are open, accessible, welcoming.

Others are closed, uninviting, and reserved for a select few.

The best adventurously bring the past into the present. The least successful seem to cling to a way that is increasingly distant and unfamiliar to our modern world.

Thankfully many of our buildings have changed in recent years, both in outlook and provision. Some have become Warm Hubs or Food Clubs. Others, spaces for social gatherings, friendly conversations or a multitude of meetings and activities that enliven and inform.

The spires of our buildings have long pointed their communities to God. Their inverted roofs, when seen from the inside, have whispered that faith is a ship that can survive the worst of storms. But sadly too many of our doors have been closed to those who have passed by, and our buildings inaccessible to strangers and pilgrims alike.

Our churches have always been a gift from the past that resonate with potential for the future. And our challenge, as we embrace the needs of the present, is to open once again what has been locked for too long, and prayerfully discover what many have found before – that with keen hearts and minds even the darkest corners can be filled with light and the most unpromising areas can be lovingly transformed.

Goleuo'r Cilfachau Tywyllaf

Bendithiwyd esgobaeth Llanelwy ag amrywiaeth eang o adeiladau. Rhai hynafol, rhai modern. Rhai mawr, rhai bach. Rhai wedi'u haddurno'n gywrain, rhai'n hyfryd o syml. Yn aml, gwelir ein heglwys i'n ymgodi uwchlaw'r adeiladau o'u cwmpas mewn trefi ac yn ganolbwynt i'n pentrefi. I lawer, maent yn rhan gyfarwydd o'r dirwedd, yn werthfawr er mai anaml yr ânt i mewn iddynt. I eraill maent yn noddfa, yn fannau i droi iddynt i weddio ac yn ffynhonnell gobaith.

Mae llawer o'n hadeiladau'n agored, yn hygyrch ac yn groesawgar. Mae eraill dan glo, yn ddigroeso ac wedi'u neilltuo ar gyfer y dethol rai. Aiff y goreuon ati mewn ffordd anturus i ddod â'r gorffennol i'r presennol. Mae'r rhai lleiaf llwyddiannus fel pe baent yn benderfynol o aros mewn cyfnod pell sy'n anghyfarwydd i'n byd modern.

Da dweud bod llawer o'n hadeiladau wedi newid dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf, o ran eu hagwedd a'u darpariaeth. Daeth rhai yn Ganolfannau Clyd neu'n Glybiau Bwyd. Mae eraill yn denu pobl i gymdeithasu a sgwrsio neu i gymryd rhan mewn llu o gyfarfodydd a gweithgareddau sy'n bywiogi ac yn addysgu.

Mae gan lawer o'n heglwys i feindwr i gyfeirio eu cymunedau at Dduw. O'r tu mewn, mae eu toeau'n edrych yn debyg i long sy'n sibwrdd y neges bod ffydd fel llonga a all oroesi'r stormydd gwaethaf. Ond, gwaetha'r modd, mae drysau gormod o'n heglwys i wedi eu cloi, a'n hadeiladau'n ddigroeso i ddiethriaid a phererinion fel ei gilydd.

Rhodd o'r gorffennol yw ein heglwys ond maent yn llawn potensial ar gyfer y dyfodol. Yr her i ni, wrth gofleidio anghenion y presennol, yw agor unwaith eto'r hyn a fu o dan glo am ormod o amser, a darganfod yn weddigar yr hyn y mae llawer wedi'i ganfod eisoes – y gall calonau a meddyliau eiddgar lenwi hyd yn oed y corneli tywyllaf â goleuni a bod modd mynd ati â chariad i drawsnewid y mannau lleiaf addawol.

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Managing church events



From fetes to firework displays, charity walks to cinema evenings, every year we hear of many new and innovative ways churches are engaging their local communities through events and raising vital funds for their churches. Most of the time, such activities represent little or no additional risk. However, larger events or

unusual fundraising activities can present more significant ones. These will need to be properly managed to ensure people remain safe.

Before welcoming people to your church, you may need to plan to ensure the event runs smoothly to keep people safe. These are some of the things you may need to consider.

- Do we have enough knowledge about health and safety to organise the event properly?
- Is there a clear understanding within the organising team of who will be responsible for safety matters?
- Do we need to prepare risk assessments and a safety plan?
- Is the venue suitable?
- Are there activities which could present additional or unusual hazards (e.g. bouncy castles)?
- Do we need to liaise with other agencies (e.g. the police, emergency service or local authority)?
- Do we need to obtain a licence to run the event?
- Do we need to use contractors, and if so, are they suitable and competent?
- Do we have the right welfare facilities in place (e.g. toilets)?
- Have we thought through and implemented good health and safety procedures and checks?
- Have we planned sufficiently for incidents and emergencies?

Read Ecclesiastical's guide on 'Your responsibility for church organised events' by visiting www.ecclesiastical.com/events



Theft of metal

Metal theft continues to be a challenge for churches. Recently, an Ecclesiastical's Risk Management Surveyor, on a visit to a church, noticed water cascading from under a door. He gained entry and found the wooden parquet flooring inundated with water. The church had suffered a significant metal theft loss and rainwater had entered the building causing extensive damage.

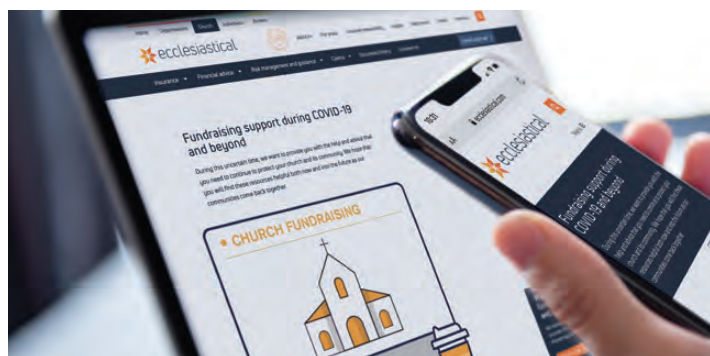
This unfortunate event highlights the devastating impact theft of metal can have on a church. While world demand for metal remains strong, the current value of scrap metal will continue to attract metal thieves to churches.

Here are some things you can do to reduce the risk of metal theft:

- Restrict vehicle access to the building, locking gates where possible.
- Consult with your local police crime reduction officer.
- Encourage your community to be vigilant in reporting any suspicious behaviour to the police immediately.
- Deter thieves using security lighting, and by cutting back any trees/plants which could conceal criminal activity.
- Take extra care while any building works are in progress – scaffolding, building access equipment and ladders left around the church will make life easier for thieves.
- Ensure you have marked your metal with SmartWater®, which is a policy condition, and display the signage as a visual deterrent in a prominent position.
- Invest in an approved roof alarm, they can be extremely effective in reducing the risk of a theft occurring.

Ecclesiastical Church Insurance customers are required to have some security measures in place and may receive a discount or additional cover for implementing others.

Ecclesiastical has produced a 'Theft of metal checklist' to help you improve the security at your church, reducing the possibility of theft. Find out more at www.ecclesiastical.com/metaltheft



Fundraising hub to support your church

Fundraising has always been vital for churches, from the traditional, well-loved flower festivals and cake sales to the world of digital fundraising opportunities that the internet has opened up. But it can be daunting to know where to start, so Ecclesiastical's easy-to-use online fundraising hub is here to help with great ideas and simple advice.

Drawing on the advice of experts and our own 135 years' experience in working with churches, we've pulled together a range of top tips to help you boost existing income streams and develop new ones. There's help with researching sources of funding and writing professional grant applications that can make all the difference to the answer you receive. There are great video webinars with fundraising specialists offering their insights into key fundraising issues.

Other guidance includes fundraising in less affluent areas, fundraising in rural parishes, how to build a fundraising team and more to keep your congregation and the wider community informed and engaged.

There are plenty of useful resources and handy templates for all types of churches on our Church Fundraising Hub at www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising

Nominate your church for a chance to win



The Movement for Good giving programme is back with awards of £1,000 to give to charities helping those in need. Ecclesiastical is proudly part of the Benefact Group, and together they are giving away over **£1 million** to charities in the 2023 Movement for Good Awards.

£1,000 draws are now open for nominations

- You can nominate your favourite charity or church at any time for the £1,000 draw.
- It's one nomination per charity, per person, so if you have more than one favourite, get them in the running today!
- There are three £1,000 draws this year giving away between £120,000 and £150,000 in each.
- Once you've nominated, share your nomination and get your network to support too.

Get nominating and find out more at www.movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical

Did you know?

In 2022, 15 churches each won a £1,000 grant.

There were thousands of nominations for these churches. The more nominations received, the greater their chance of winning.



Contains promotional material

Rebuilding the historic Church of the Ascension in Salford

In February 2017, a fire broke out at the Grade-II listed Church of the Ascension in Lower Broughton, Salford, Greater Manchester. Six crews from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service battled for hours to contain the blaze, which ultimately devastated the building.



Many members of the local community gathered outside the church building to survey the damage, some reduced to tears. Much used and loved by young and old, the building plays an important role in both spiritual and social terms as an inclusive community space accessible to all. The church had recently undergone a £250,000 restoration project which people in the community had helped to fund.

Immediately following the fire, Ecclesiastical carefully assembled the right team of experts to attend the site as soon as the fire service authorised it.

Repair work began in October 2018 with teams of carefully selected experts appointed to complete the works. Phase one included reinstatement of the structural elements of the building,



such as columns, roof structures and slate coverings; stone and brick repairs; stained glass window and window guard replacements; and ceiling finishes.

Phase two began in September 2021, focusing on preserving the historical features of the church. As part of the restoration, Ecclesiastical worked with customers to build in modernisations to enable them to make the space better serve the requirements of today's use.

Restoration of the building was completed by the end of September 2022.

In November 2022, the church and community came together to mark the completion of the £5m restoration project with a rededication ceremony.

Read the story in full and see more pictures at
www.ecclesiastical.com/church-of-the-ascension

// It has been a long five and a half years since the fire... we can now look forward to the future with a beautifully restored church which is fit for the 21st century. //

Shirley Kehoe, PCC Secretary at the Church of the Ascension



Take our advice – for a brighter future

Ecclesiastical is well-known as a leading insurer of churches and other heritage buildings. But many people aren't aware that we also have a stand-alone financial advice arm here to help you make the most of your money.

Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services (EFAS) provides fully independent advice on pensions, investments, life assurance and mortgages for the clergy, church community and PCCs.



You don't have to be an insurance customer to use the service – we're happy to help anyone – but we obviously have specialist knowledge of the church sector, as IFA Kieran Harper explains.

'I've been in the industry for seventeen years and with Ecclesiastical for all but two of those,' said Kieran, who's based in our Gloucester office. 'When it comes to

providing regulated financial advice to the clergy and the wider church community, that experience helps.

'Many of our customers are clergy – we understand their pension scheme, we know about the issues with living in tied accommodation such as vicarages – so when it comes to retirement planning, we're already ahead of the game. We also have a deep understanding of ethical and sustainable investing – as you would expect of a company with such strong links to the church – and this area is getting ever more popular with a lot of our customers.'

Please get in touch to find out how Kieran and his colleagues could help you.



0800 107 0190



getadvice@ecclesiastical.com



www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice

Have you signed up for Ecclesiastical's monthly e-news?



This monthly email is full of tips and information for all Ecclesiastical's church customers and anyone in your church community. Signing up is easy and, if at any time you decide you no longer want to receive it, you can click the 'unsubscribe' button at the

bottom of the email. Feel free to pass the sign-up link to anyone you think would like it.

Sign up at www.ecclesiastical.com/signup

Support for your 2024 sabbatical

Are you planning on taking a sabbatical in 2024?

Did you know that there may be support available for you through Ministry Bursary Awards? Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards provide financial support for members of the clergy taking extended study leave, and we are now accepting applications for sabbaticals taking place in 2024.

The experience of a sabbatical can be life-changing and have a long-lasting impact on your church and community.

Established in 1987, the Ecclesiastical Ministry Bursary Awards have supported over 1,400 members of the clergy to finance a wide range of extended leave projects and plans. The application window runs between April and September. Judging will take place in November 2023, with the awards made in December 2023.

If you would like to find out more about the Awards, including eligibility criteria and application details, please visit www.ecclesiastical.com/mba



Have you visited the Ecclesiastical website recently?

It's full of information to help you run your church, such as the **Made Simple Guides**, which cover these key topics:

- Church insurance made simple
- Administering your church insurance
- Building works
- Church events
- Church property
- Community outreach
- Legal expenses
- People on church premises

You will also find information about church, home, commercial and legal insurance and how to make a claim. **Explore the website at www.ecclesiastical.com/church**

Protect your home and support your church with £130 donation



As part of a financial services group that exists to give its available profits to good causes, one of the ways in which Ecclesiastical do this is through the Trust130 Home Insurance offer. For every new direct home insurance policy taken out, Ecclesiastical offer to donate £130 to an Anglican church or cathedral of the policyholder's choice.¹

Originally launched in 2017 to celebrate the 130th anniversary, Ecclesiastical has since donated more than £460,000, helping to support over 2,500 churches. A donation of £130 may not sound like much, but churches and congregations have used the donations in many creative ways to fund all sorts of things.

In the **Parish of Harpenden**, the donation will be used to support Cornelia's Coffee Shop, which is a community resource that enables them to engage with local people, offering fellowship and raising funds for charity.

It needs some new equipment – not least, a new freezer – and the donation will help in this general regard. It does great work to benefit the community and other great causes. One of our recent events at Cornelia's was to help our local Ukrainian arrivals.

Kevin Featherstone, Parish Warden

St Mary's Church, Wythall, used their donations to offer a weekly hot meal to families struggling with the increase in the cost of living.

This happens directly after school and includes activities for children and a Bible story or video. £130 will pay for meals for about 20 families, funding the food for about two weeks, which is a great boost financially, but also to the step of faith which this venture is.

Pam Miller, Treasurer

Award-winning home insurance



As well as supporting your church, when you take out a home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical you are joining the most trusted home insurance provider with the happiest customers.

Ecclesiastical continued to top the Fairer Finance league table in spring 2023 for home insurance for a record 17th consecutive time, retaining the gold ribbon status.² Ecclesiastical was also voted the best home insurance provider in the Times Money Mentor Awards in 2022.³

For more information about Trust130 and Home Insurance, visit www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

Call us for a home insurance quote on **0345 777 3322** and mention code **TRUSTPA**.

¹ Terms and conditions apply. ² www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customer-experience-ratings/home-insurance ³ www.thetimes.co.uk/money-mentor/article/times-money-mentor-awards-2022-winners



Car insurance

Our Clergy Motor Insurance is tailored specifically for the clergy and includes benefits such as business use, no admin charges and up to £500 cover for church goods in the car.¹



0345 450 9396



www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance

¹ Subject to terms and conditions.



Funeral planning

Ecclesiastical can help you make financial provision for your funeral, reducing the worry for your family and ensuring your wishes are provided for. Terms and conditions apply.



0800 055 6503



info@epsfunerals.com



www.funeralplans.co.uk

Rural ministry

This guidance is for rural churches with small congregations and few volunteers. Here are some key steps for fundraising in rural parishes.



1. Start small

Think of a targeted and manageable activity that will give you a chance to refine your fundraising skills, show others what can be achieved and build your confidence for larger projects in the future.

2. Understand your community

In rural communities, levels of isolation and loneliness may be high and there might be a lack of access to services, transport links and social hubs. Invite people from your community to take part in a consultation and look into whether there are opportunities to work in partnership with others.

3. Understand your project

Fundraising can feel impossible if the project isn't clear to others. Your project should be easy to describe and something that most people in the church think is a project you ought to be doing. Also make sure you have all relevant permissions in place and have accurate costs for the project.

4. Understand your resources

In fundraising, one of the hardest things to manage is the feeling that you are on your own. So, to address this, try to assemble a list of all the resources and people who can help you.

5. It's sometimes easier to earn money

Rural churches can often earn money by providing services to visitors or to local people. Offering a paid-for service can be a great way of generating income, especially over the long term.

6. Open your church

Especially in rural communities, church buildings are much more than just bricks and mortar. They can offer vital spaces for quiet time, reflection and connection. If people have been to your church, they may be more likely to get involved in church events, volunteering or fundraising.

7. Find your donors

There are many possible sources of donations for most church projects. Research sources of funds and think about which could work best for your church.

8. Create a realistic timeline

As well as the time needed to deliver the project, include the planned time for fundraising for the project in your timeline. Be realistic, don't rush it but also do not have such a long timescale that your fundraisers or community lose interest.

9. Stay focused

Stay focused, despite any disappointments which are inevitable due to demands for funding. Remember that there are funds available for church projects and there will be people who will help you to succeed.

This is a summary of full guidance, which can be found on the Ecclesiastical website and includes more information on how to find your donors and links to organisations providing support to small rural parishes.

Find out more at www.ecclesiastical.com/rural-parishes

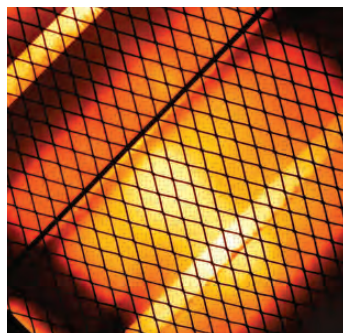
Tasks at height

We've all been there – a little job needs doing, inside or outside, so why not stick up a ladder or a scaffold tower and get it done? These tasks, along with any others carried out at height, can pose a risk of serious injury to those involved.

Thankfully, falls from height are not common in churches. But where they do happen, several have resulted in injuries that have been permanently disabling. There's plenty you can do to minimise risk – from planning a job correctly, using and maintaining equipment properly, or taking weather conditions into account.

Ecclesiastical's handy guide, 'Church health and safety toolkit – working at height', is full of useful tips and can be downloaded. Please visit www.ecclesiastical.com/workingatheight





Managing energy costs

As churches look to lower energy use costs, they may unknowingly increase the risk of damage to church property or people, and extra precautions may be required. These recommendations help protect your property and keep people safe.

The rise in energy costs is of great concern to many and you may be looking into lower-cost ways to heat and light your church. By planning ahead and taking sensible precautions, it is possible to reduce energy costs and minimise risks to your property and its occupants, avoiding the enormous inconvenience and financial impact of property damage.

Central heating

If you're planning on reducing your heating output to just a few areas of the building, it's worth considering that reduced heating can cause damp and mould to form in unused areas.

Many radiators are fitted with thermostatic valves that control the heat output giving better energy efficiency. We recommend turning the valve down to a lower setting in unused areas to help keep the area damp free rather than turning heating off. This will also significantly reduce the risk of water pipes bursting. Water leaks can cause major property damage and enormous inconvenience. Radiators in occupied areas can be set at higher temperatures, as desired for comfort.

Important items such as paintings and rugs may be susceptible to damage in colder conditions. These items should be relocated to warmer parts of the property or suitably protected by appropriate coverings where there is a risk of damage.

Portable heaters

The use of portable heaters may be considered as an alternative. If you are considering using portable heaters, we recommend the following checks before usage:

- Before purchase, check the heater is not included on published recall lists. Defective heaters are a known common cause of fires and even death.
- Use of portable gas, paraffin and other flammable liquid heaters should be avoided. They significantly increase the risk of fire.
- Ensure heaters are maintained as recommended by the manufacturer and kept in good working order. Only a competent person should undertake servicing or repairs.
- Heaters must be kept away from combustible items including timber furniture and altar frontals.
- Before moving any heater, ensure it is turned off and has cooled down.
- Do not leave portable heaters operating unsupervised.

Candles

Candles are not recommended as an alternative form of lighting. Battery-powered torches or candles that are pre-charged should be considered as an alternative. If candles are used, they should be kept in holders designed for purpose and sited well away from furnishings, especially curtains. They must be extinguished before leaving a room.



By planning ahead and taking sensible precautions, it is possible to reduce energy costs and minimise risks to your property and its occupants, avoiding the enormous inconvenience and financial impact of property damage. **Find out more at www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/energy-savings-guidance**

For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 **Email:** churches@ecclesiastical.com
Facebook: Ecclesiastical **Twitter:** @churchmatters

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