



Parish Returns Handbook

A short guide to the building, attendance and financial data parishes are asked to return to the Diocese of Liverpool and the National Church each year.

St James' House

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0151 709 9722
liverpoolcofe.org
centralservices@liverpool.anglican.org

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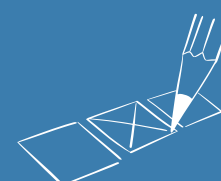
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Parish Returns Overview

This booklet is a helpful guide and reminder of the various items of data that parishes are asked to send in each year. It covers the data collection requirements for your church/parish in the Diocese of Liverpool. We hope you will find the what, why, when and how of data submissions helpful.

It is the diligence of parish officers and volunteers in every church and parish who make it possible for the church, the deanery and for the governing bodies of our Diocese (and the National Church) to have a clear picture of the missional and financial health of our churches. We are deeply grateful for the work you do in gathering and returning this data to us. Thank you.

A word from the Archdeacons

We hope that the data you gather and submit is also useful to you and your PCC as you make decisions for the future. Your mission statistics form, for example, should be shared with the PCC. Your financial return can be a basis for your PCC budget and your safeguarding dashboard enables you to see what you need to do next as you develop a healthy safeguarding culture in your church.

It also enables us to know how best we can support you in your mission and ministry. It is a great help to the staff at St James' House if they don't have to spend a lot of time chasing parishes up for this data. That time could be more usefully spent helping parishes.

Please endeavour to submit all returns on time. If you think you will be late, if you have problems or need help completing the forms, or if you anticipate missing the deadline on your return, all the correct contact information is in this booklet to speak to the teams at St James' House who are ready to help and support you.



Annual Returns	
Up to 31st January	Statistics For Mission form submission deadline.
Up to 31st May	Annual Parochial Church Meeting held: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual Report presented• Electoral Roll Certificates returned• Certificate of Elections prepared
Up to 30th June	Submission deadline for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Return of Parish Finance• Energy Footprint Tool
Archdeacons Visitations Event (June)	The final chance to bring any of the APCM documents and the Quinquennial Review Form in person. And, to formally admit your Churchwarden/s as office holders of the Diocesan Bishop.
Ongoing or Ad-Hoc Returns	
Quarterly	Service by Service Attendance Return due at the end of each quarter
Ongoing	Parish Safeguarding Dashboard
Ad-Hoc	Parochial (or Statutory) Fees
Mission and Planning Reviews (MPR)	Providing a Church Budget

Statistics for Mission

What is it, and why do we need this data?

This Statistics for Mission form is a snapshot of church attendance and church life. Read more about Statistics for Mission on the diocesan website page: liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/statistics/statistics-for-mission

When is it due?

The deadline for submission is the 31st January each year.

- if you have trouble submitting this on time, or have queries about the data requested, get in touch with the Resources Team.

How do I submit it?

Please complete the form online using the Parish Returns Portal: parishreturns.churchofengland.org | see page 10

- The Service Register App the easiest way to enter your attendance data throughout the year. We highly recommend you make use of this easy-to-use app to manage your attendance data.
- We do also provide electronic and paper copies of the forms on the diocesan website which can be returned to the Central Services team. However, the preference is that you submit the information online.

Contacts and Support

Resources Team contact information:

resources.team@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 705 2108

Returning the form to Central Services:

central.services@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 709 9722



Service by Service (Quarterly) Attendance Returns

What is it, and why do we need this data?

In addition to the Statistics for Mission return which captures October attendance, we also ask churches to record and report the numbers of adults and children attending worship at:

- All our Sunday church services, both regular and occasional.
- All our midweek services, including school services.
- All Fresh Expressions of church in our parish, whether Sunday or midweek, weekly, monthly or termly – including *regular* services in nursing homes.

When is it due?

We ask that each church returns attendance data at the end of each quarter.

How do I submit it?

Please complete the form online using the Parish Returns Portal:
parishreturns.churchofengland.org | see page 10

- The Service Register App the easiest way to enter your attendance data throughout the year. We highly recommend you make use of this easy-to-use app to manage your attendance data.
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Contacts and Support

Resources Team contact information:

resources.team@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 705 2108

Returning data to Central Services:

central.services@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 709 9722

Using the Service Register App

You can use the app on a smartphone, or on a web browser using the URL: serviceregister.parishreturns.info

1
Username r

2
Password

Username and password can not be blank

3
LOGIN

FORGOT PASSWORD?

NO ACCOUNT YET?

Gaining Access

1. Enter your username (likely your email address) and password, then choose Login.
2. If you have forgotten your password, use the Forgot Password? button to reset it.

If you do not have a password, contact Central Services to provide you with one.

Benefits of using the app

- Quickly set up a regular service which can be edited each week to reflect the Minister, Preacher, attendance or special services.
- Use the handy +/- button helps you count attendance, no need for paper
- See a graph of attendance over time, helping you seen real-time growth
- Enter this data throughout the year and pre-populate around 70% of your end of year Statistics for Mission, making that a much quicker job

11:27 75%

Regular Service

Day Sunday ▾

Frequency Weekly ▾

Time 09:00 ▾

When does the regular service start? (The service will start appearing in your service register on the first valid date on or after the date you specify below)

Valid From 12 January 2024 📅

Minister Please select... ▾

Preacher Please select... ▾

SAVE

CANCEL

Further Service Register App information:

liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/statistics/service-register-app

Guidance for using the app

liverpool-diocese.zoholearn.com/s/finance

Return of Parish Finance

What is it, and why do we need this data?

The Return of Parish Finance (RPF) is a standard form filled in by every church in the country to summarise their church accounts into a standard format. This data is widely used in the diocese to support parishes with their finances, and sent on to the national church to populate national statistics. Read more: liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/statistics/return-of-parish-finance/

When is it due?

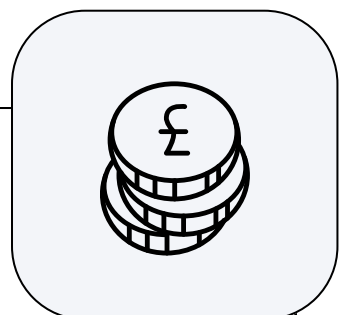
The national deadline for submission is 30th June. Please make your finance return as soon as it is ready.

- If you have trouble submitting this on time, or have queries about the data requested, get in touch with the Resources Team.

How do I submit it?

Please submit your Return of Parish Finance online using the Parish Returns Portal: parishreturns.churchofengland.org

- If you are using the MyFundAccounting.Online software, you can upload the information easily from within the software. Find out how to do this at liverpool-diocese.zoholearn.com/s/finance
- We do also provide electronic and paper copies of the submission forms on the diocesan website, which can be returned to the Central Services team, or brought along to the Visitations Event. However, the preference is that you submit the information online.



Contacts and Support

Support with MyFundAccounting.Online:

resources.team@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 705 2108

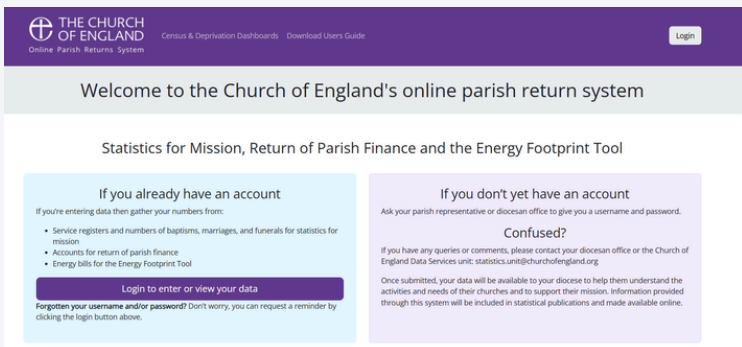
Returning the form to Central Services:

central.services@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 709 9722

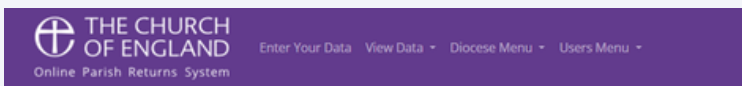
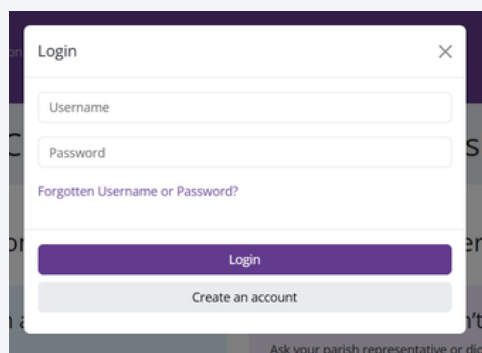
liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/regulation/visitations/

Using the Parish Returns Portal

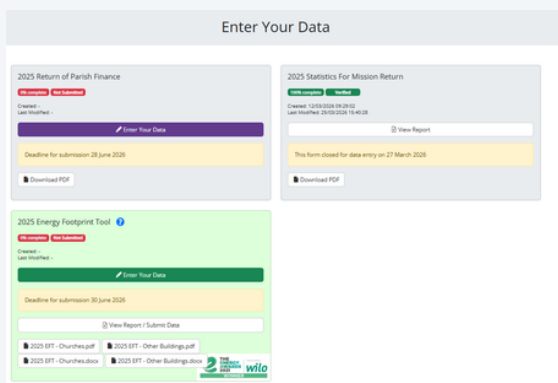
Go to the Parish Returns Portal by typing the URL into your web browser:
parishreturns.churchofengland.org/



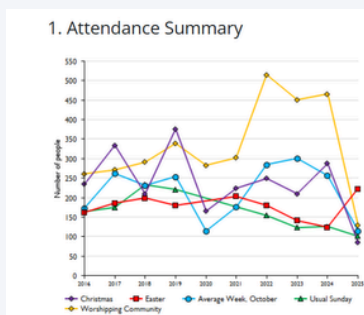
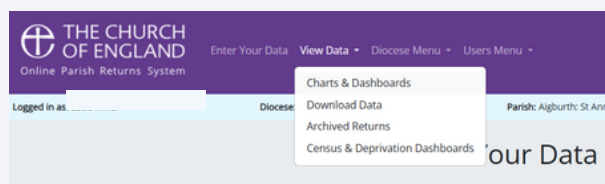
Log in using your username and password. Contact Central Services if you need access or a new password.



You can select 'Enter Your Data' and choose the submission you would like to make.



You are also able to see historical data in 'Charts & Dashboards'

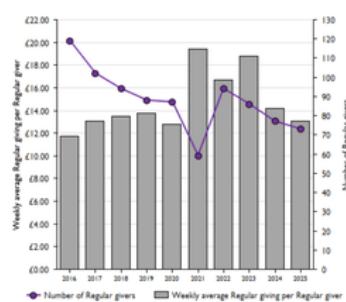


	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Christmas	233	333	208	374	164	223	248
Easter	161	185	198	179	-	202	179
Average Week, October	172	261	230	253	113	175	284
Usual Sunday	163	174	232	220	-	-	153
Worshipping Community	260	270	290	338	282	301	514

N.B. Because of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, churches were not at Sunday attendance for 2020 or 2021, or their Easter attendance for 2020

- Christmas: Christmas Eve & Christmas Day;
- Easter: Easter Eve & Easter Day;
- Average week, October: includes Sunday and midweek church services & fresh exp excludes attendance at services for schools;

3. Regular giving and Regular givers



Further Service Register App information:

liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/statistics/parish-returns-online/

Gaining access:

central.services@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 709 9722

Energy Footprint Tool

What is it, and why do we need this data?

As a Church, we have a target to meet net carbon zero by 2030. The Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) is one of the tools developed as part of this ambition. Nationally, as a diocese and as churches it helps us know our carbon baseline – where we are starting from – and how much progress we are making. By measuring and reducing energy use, we take practical steps to combat the impact of climate change and live out our calling to love our neighbours.

Completing the EFT is a simple but powerful way to support the Church of England's shared journey to net zero. Each year's data builds a clearer picture of our carbon footprint and helps us act more strategically, *together*. It is also a requirement for existing and upcoming Net Zero funding.

When is it due?

The deadline for submission is the end of June, for the previous year. If you have the information ready you can do this sooner.

How do I submit it?

The EFT can be completed online using the Parish Returns Portal parishreturns.churchofengland.org and you will need the following:

- Gas, electricity and other fuel bills covering January–December
- Readings or billing information for each supply
- Basic details about your building(s)



Advice and Support

Diocesan Environmental Officer Contact information:

Phil.Leigh@liverpool.anglican.org | 07469840148

liverpoolcofe.org/energy-footprint-tool-faqs/

Knowledge Platform

www.faiths4change.org.uk/nzc2030-knowledge-platform.html



NET
ZERO

Join us on the journey.

Our **Net Zero Carbon 2030** Programme offers a dual approach, equipping church teams with resources to support your journey to net zero carbon, and Eco Church. Please get in touch to find out more, and in the meantime use the links below to explore some resources. Click [here](#) to read more.

- ✓ **Work out your carbon footprint using the **Energy Footprint Tool****
Watch a video guide about how to do this using your energy bills, click [here](#). All churches are asked to fill out the survey annually by June 30. We need your help to understand our footprint across the diocese, so we can progress towards net zero carbon. Got a question? Contact our **NZC2030 Programme Lead Phil Leigh** - email: phil.leigh@liverpool.anglican.org
- ✓ **NZC2030 Knowledge Platform** View a map of churches already committed to the NZC2030 Programme and explore our open access resources - click [here](#).
- ✓ **NZC2030 & Eco Church Newsletter** Sign up [here](#) to receive updates, stories and ideas.
- ✓ **Progress your Eco Church journey**
We encourage all churches to make progress towards your next Eco Church award in 2024 - whether you are just starting out or already have an award. For information click [here](#), and for help contact our **Net Zero Team** - email: NZC@Faiths4Change.org.uk

**Together we can look after God's creation -
now and for the future.**



Annual Accounts

What is it, and why do we need this data?

Your annual report is a summary of your PCC and church community's aims, activities and achievements. The full report must include three elements:

- The Annual Trustees Report
- The Annual Accounts (Financial Statements) of the PCC
- The Independent Examiner's Report (or, an Auditor's Report)

The preparation and presentation of the documents above are a legal requirement for all charities*, and sending Annual Accounts to the diocese is a requirement of canon law of Church of England.

**If your church's total income is more than £100,000 your PCC must register directly with the Charity Commission to retain the benefits of charitable status. By the end of March 2031, all PCCs with an annual income of over £5,000, will be need to be registered.*

When is it due?

- For your church: Your PCC must complete an Annual Report following Charity Commission guidance, and present this report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) **before 31st May**.
- For the Diocese: You can send the report to the Central Services team **anytime after your APCM** via email or post. The Visitations event in June is the last opportunity to bring the report along.

How do I submit it?

- Churches registered with the Charity Commission must submit their Annual Accounts online: www.gov.uk/prepare-charitys-annual-accounts
- Churches who are *not* registered can return them to Central Services.

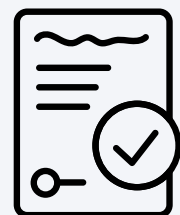
Advice and Support

Returning the form to Central Services:

central.services@liverpool.anglican.org

0151 709 9722

liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/regulation/visitations/



Annual Accounts: What this includes

Annual Trustees Report

The preparation of a written annual report, like the preparation of the accounts, is the joint responsibility of the whole PCC. It puts all the PCC's financial statements into perspective and relates them to the wider life of the Church. It will review the past year and link financial plans to the vision for the future. While it is legally a separate document from the accounts, it provides important accompanying information to the accounts.

The Annual Accounts (Financial Statements) of the PCC

As charities we are expected to report clearly and fully on the money we receive and spend. The type of accounting required is based on your annual income. For parishes with a gross annual income of less than £250,000, you can choose to prepare your accounts on a Receipts and Payments basis. Parishes with a gross a income greater than £250,000 per year must produce accounts on the "accruals" basis.

Independent Examination

Your PCC will need to have the financial accounts checked by someone competent, and independent of the PCC, to ensure that you have complied with charity law. Unless your turnover is over £1 million, you are likely to do this by independent examination rather than by an audit.

Parish Resources Website

For clear and up-to-date guidance on compliance with the Charity Commission, we highly recommend you refer to the Church of England Parish Resources website, where support with each element of the Annual Accounts is available:

parishresources.org.uk/resources-for-treasurers/accounting-and-reporting/

Quinquennial Review Form

What is it, and why do we need this data?

Within the Church of England, every church building must be inspected by an architect or chartered building surveyor approved by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) every five years. This is known as a Quinquennial inspection (QI), because it takes place every five years.

The Quinquennial Review Form (QRF) is a summary of the QI works that have taken place on each church building throughout the year, every year until a new inspection is undertaken.

When is it due?

- The Quinquennial Review Form is sent out to Churchwardens in the Spring, with the expectation for churches to **return the QRF at the Visitations event in June**, or sooner where possible.

How do I submit it?

- You can return the form via email or post to Central Services: visitation@liverpool.anglican.org



Advice and Support

Support with the QRF:

Diocesan Buildings Advisor, Tom.Beesley@liverpool.anglican.org

0151 705 2108

liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/regulation/visitations/

Certificate of Elections

What is it, and why do we need it?

The Certificate of Election is a legal form sent from the Archdeacon's office to the parish where you can formally record the election of its Churchwardens. Churchwardens are elected by the annual parish meeting (APM) but admitted to office at the Archdeacons visitation which is usually held in June.

When is it due?

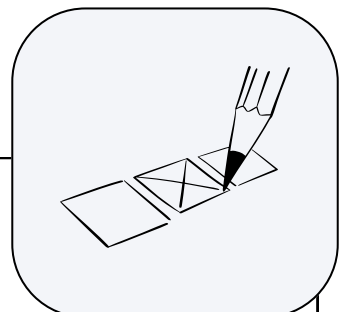
- The form must be returned as soon as possible, or **before the Visitations event in June.**

How do I submit it?

- The form can be returned electronically to the Central Services team:
central.services@liverpool.anglican.org

Safeguarding

Churchwardens are now required to do Leadership Safeguarding training. Churchwardens will be invited to do this training by the diocesan safeguarding team. If you have a question regarding this, please contact the Archdeacons Office.



Advice and Support

Archdeacon's Office

amy.fife@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 705 2163

Returning the form to Central Services:

central.services@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 709 9722

Electoral Roll Certificates

What is it, and why do we need this?

The Electoral Roll gives the diocese and the national church a picture of how many members belong to your church, to measure growth and development across the church.

The PCC must revise its Electoral Roll each year, and in every sixth year a new Electoral Roll must be prepared from scratch. Only those people named on the parish's Electoral Roll, at the start of the Annual Meeting, may vote in the PCC and Deanery Synod elections.

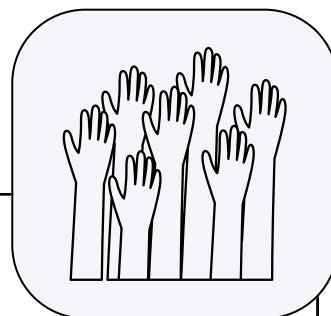
When is it due?

The chair, vice-chair, secretary or electoral roll officer of a PCC must, no later than 1st July in each year, give the secretary of the diocesan synod written notification of the number of names there are on the roll of the parish as at the date of the annual parochial church meeting.

See Church Representation Rules – Rule 10 (Notification of number on roll)

How do I submit it?

The Churchwarden/s may bring it to the Visitation, or return it electronically before the event to the Central Services team.



Advice and Support

Returning the form to Central Services:

central.services@liverpool.anglican.org

0151 709 9722

liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/regulation/visitations/

Parochial (or Statutory) Fees

What are Parochial (or Statutory) Fees?

These are fees set annually by General Synod for weddings, funerals and burials. There are two parts to the Parochial Fee:

- that part which is proscribed to the Diocesan Board of Finance
- that part which accrues to the local church, the PCC.

In addition to the Parochial Fee there is also a limited list of allowable extras that the church may additionally charge (such as for heating or an organist).

What fees to charge?

When calculating what fees should be applied, it should be noted that these fees are 'per service' and not 'per person'. For example, the burial of two lots of cremated remains into the same grave, at the same time, as part of one service, would only attract a single burial fee.

Our website page has practical guidance on these issues, as well as how to manage the DBF element of the fee, how to record fee income in the church accounts, and the sometimes complex question of which church actually owns the PCC element of the fee.

If you ever have questions or concerns about calculating fees for parochial services, please get in touch with us so we can give you the right advice.



Advice and Support

Support with Fees

resources.team@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 705 2108

liverpoolcofe.org/governance-matters/statistics/return-of-parish-finance/

Queries about Finances

Finance@liverpool.anglican.org

0151 705 2103

Providing a Budget

What is it, and why do we need this?

This is the only piece of additional information that we are requesting you send in as part of the Mission and Planning Review process. A church budget helps with planning and monitoring expenditure, but importantly it articulates our mission in numbers.

As part of the mission, planning and review (MPR), every church will be asked to submit their budget so they can identify any financial challenges, steward well the money that makes their mission possible, and articulate the vision for the future. The Diocesan Investment Programme (DIP) details that every church will have a budget by the end of the project.

You will receive help to support the creation of your budget if one does not already exist. The budget forms part of the Funding the Future Grant eligibility Criteria and will be reviewed each year as part of your MPR engagement.

When is it due?

- The budget will be required to be in place and uploaded at the point of applying for the grant. Funds from the Funding the Future grant will create a restricted fund in your accounts, and an updated budget is required each year as part of your yearly grant application.

How do I submit it?

- Log in to Cornerstone and find Pathways. Choose the 'Preparing a Missional Budget [Liverpool Diocese Only]' pathway and from the steps, choose 'Upload Budget'. You can submit your budget in any format.



Advice and Support

Support with Preparing a Budget or using Cornerstone

resources.team@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 705 2108

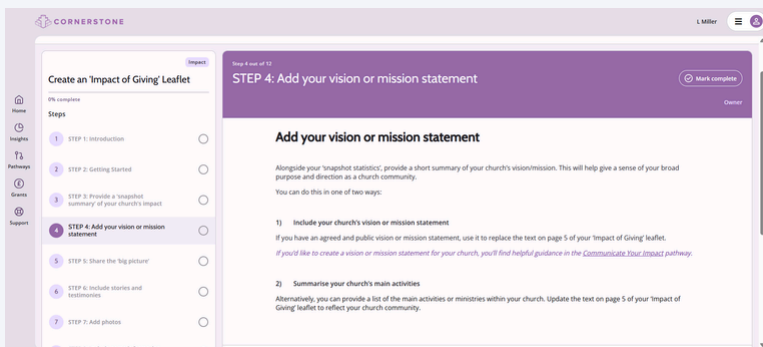
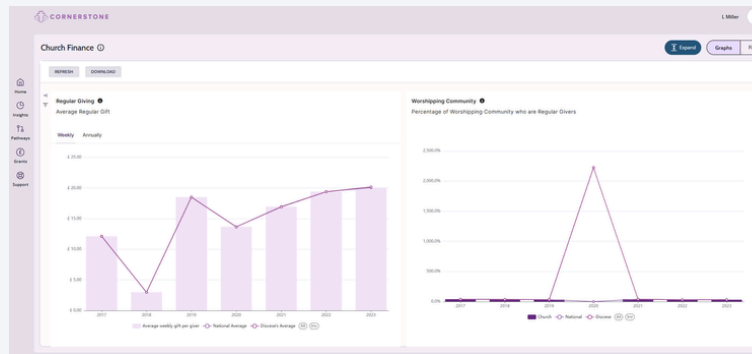
www.givingingrace.org/gather-data

Cornerstone

Cornerstone is a new online learning platform developed by the National Giving Team, to support churches in all aspects of giving and generosity. A free-to-use tool, Cornerstone provides clear, step-by-step practical actions to grow giving and develop a deeper understanding of generosity.

Insights

Using Parish Returns data, Cornerstone identifies different types of giving and shares comparisons with other churches both in the same diocese and nationwide.

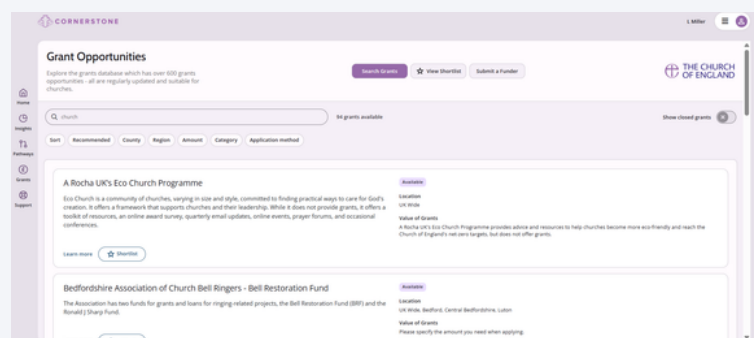


Pathways

A Pathway takes a single topic and breaks it down into steps, none of which take longer than half an hour. Templates and links to videos and instructions are provided.

Grants Database

All churches have completely free access to over 600 grants. This searchable, filterable database is updated weekly and is the biggest range of grants currently available to churches.



To gain access to the platform, contact the Resources Team.

Resources Team Contact information:

resources.team@liverpool.anglican.org | 0151 705 2108

liverpoolcofe.org/talking-money/cornerstone/

Parish Safeguarding Dashboards

What are Parish Dashboards?

Safeguarding Dashboards were developed by Clearly Simpler Limited for use within the Church of England. Safeguarding Dashboards make safeguarding administration simpler for everyone.

Who are they for?

For a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and incumbent, the dashboard is the place to record progress in meeting safeguarding requirements in the Parish and identifying areas of further development for working towards the national safeguarding standards in your parish. (NB they are not a place to record any personal data of any individuals).

For the Diocese, the Dashboards are used as part of our identification of areas of support for Parishes, quality assurance process and parish annual inspection visits.

How do I access it?

Access to Safeguarding Dashboards is by invitation only. If you are a new PSO or incumbent and need access to update your Parish, please email your request to deborah.doran@liverpool.anglican.org

Advice and Support

Diocesan Safeguarding Team

Mick Murphy, Acting Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor
mick.murphy@liverpool.anglican.org | 07376431466

Technical Support with the Dashboard:

www.safeguardingdashboards.org.uk/support



Thank you

It is your hard work that is reflected in the data.
Together, we we are committed to:

- Introducing people to Jesus
- Deepening discipleship
- Developing Christian leaders
- Working for justice

We are asking God for a bigger church to make a bigger difference with more people knowing Jesus and more justice in the world.

When we get accurate data, we can paint an accurate picture of our missional impact, provide support and training where needed to help us meet our goals and ambitions.

**Thank you for all that you do to the work of His glory,
in the Diocese of Liverpool.**