

Church Buildings Team Bulletin March 2025

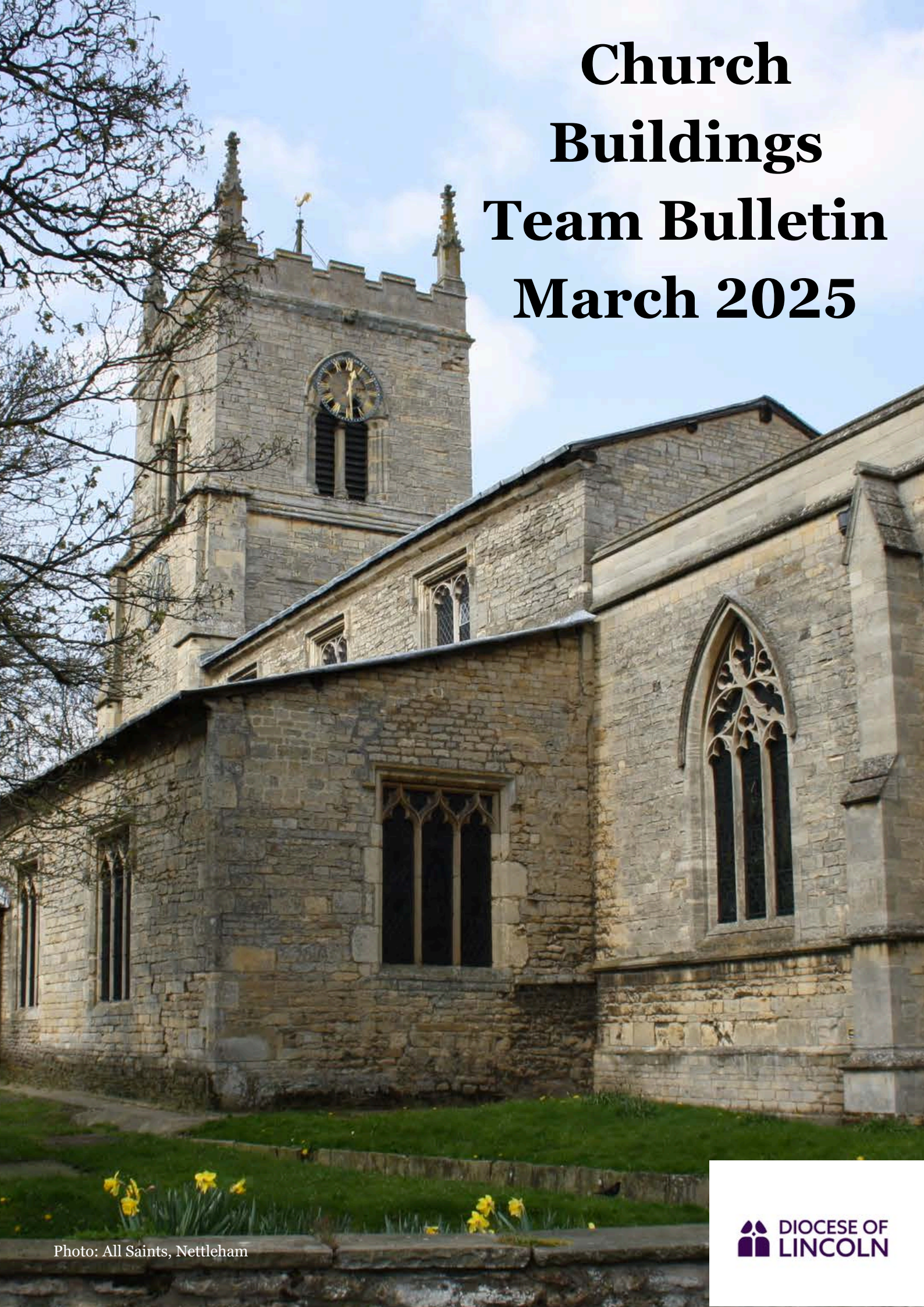


Photo: All Saints, Nettleham

Welcome

The daffodils are out and its starting to feel just a little like spring may be in the air. This edition of the Church Building Team Bulletin comes to you full of information designed to help you in the care of your building. Net zero carbon, wood-boring insects and even Ride and Stride in September get a mention. There is the usual information on grant givers and their deadlines as well as the tasks that you might look at to keep your building in tip-top condition. As ever, if we can help on a particular matter that you have then please do get in touch.

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Heritage Open Days Theme

The theme this year is Architecture - giving lots of scope for churches putting on events! The dates for this year are 12 - 21 September.

Headlines

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme survey

The Department of Culture Media and Sport are conducting a survey to evaluate the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS). As you may have read recently, the LPWGS has been extended to March 2026 but restricting the amount of VAT parishes can claim back in a year to £25,000.

If you have experience of using the Scheme in the past, please fill in the survey as this will help the Government understand how the LPWGS has made a difference to our places of worship and that without it, repairing our churches would be even harder than it is now. The survey takes 15 minutes to complete.

The extension of the Scheme beyond March 2026 is not guaranteed. Having your say will help decision makers. If they do not know about your experience, they are missing out.

The survey can be found here:

<https://harlowconsulting.welcomesyourfeedback.net/s/listedplacesofworshipgrantscheme>

The deadline is Tuesday 25th March.

New Online Faculty System Roll Out Postponed

Further to our mention of this last time, we have now heard that the roll out of the new Online Faculty System has been postponed to later this year. As soon as we have any more information, we will let you know.

What to do about woodboring insects - prevention and cure.

A common question that we often get asked is about 'woodworm' and the chemical treatments used to control it. Perhaps a better way of looking at the problem is why are these insects there in the first place? In terms of church buildings, the two common species of wood boring insects are the common furniture beetle (*Anobium punctatum*) and the deathwatch beetle (*Xestobium rufivillosum*). The former normally causes damage in sapwood of softwoods used for roof timbers, pew platforms, furniture and wall panelling. The latter tends to infest oak, usually because it is a common building material but they can also be found in elm, walnut, chestnut and beech. They damage both sapwood and heartwood which can cause severe structural failure in ancient roofs.

What should be remembered is that these species evolved in the high humidity of the forest floor amongst dead and decaying timber. Therefore, it should be of no surprise that in historic churches they thrive on damp or partially decayed timber and in areas where there is high humidity and a lack of ventilation.

The best defence against these insects then is to ensure that there are no roof leaks, gutters and downpipes are functioning correctly and not allowing water ingress into walls - timber touching or built into damp walls is especially vulnerable. Improving ventilation through opening doors and windows in the warmer summer months and maintaining some ventilation in the winter months when condensation is more of a risk through the increased use of heating is also very beneficial.

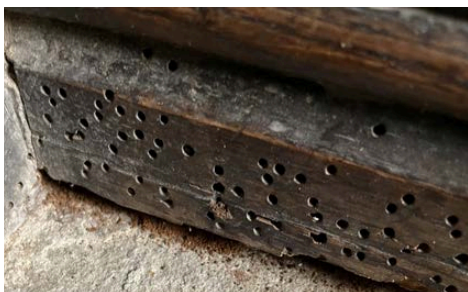


Photo: Historic woodboring insect holes

Most research indicates that chemical treatments rarely eradicate an infestation, and it must be remembered that the chemicals used are not only toxic to the insects they are also harmful to occupants and beneficial species such as spiders which are often underestimated when it comes to pest control.



Photo: Historic common furniture beetle damage on a medieval church chest

Do remember beetle holes may have been present in some churches for centuries and can be evidence of a much earlier infestation now inactive. The best way to confirm an active infestation is to look for frass or fine dust which has come from the holes. Any new holes will have this evidence. New holes also tend to look cleaner and have sharper edges than older ones. Another way to identify an active infestation is to block holes with a dab of furniture polish or place a piece of card over the affected area. Any emerging beetles will then make a visible hole. In an active infestation beetles will emerge between April and June.

If you think your church building has a problem with wood boring insects, please speak to your inspecting architect or the Church Buildings Team for further advice.

News, Events and Resources



West Lindsey Churches Festival

Keep an eye on the [website](#) for further details of this year's festival which takes place on 10-11th and 17-18 May

Camino Ingles Pilgrimage Route - can you help?

The Friends of Finchale Camino are looking to establish the Lincolnshire part of a pilgrimage route from Finchale Priory, near Durham, to eventually connect with the St James' Way at Reading, which goes all the way through to Southampton.

The Finchale Camino featured on Songs of Praise in August 2024

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m002268d>

and the Friends also have a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/people/The-Finchale-Camino-Ingles-Durham-a-pilgrimage-way/100078892004046/>

They have got the route mapped as far as the Humber Bridge, but now need help to map the Lincolnshire leg. It is hoped to make use of the Viking Way and the established, if a little neglected, Queen Eleanor Crosses Way. To enable them to do this the group is looking for enthusiastic local people who might check sections of the proposed route to assess ease, suitability and to help seek permissions to post signs along the route, to attach those signs and to ensure that a trail route is developed that is safe, clear and unambiguous. Having people with 'boots on the ground' locally is a great help in assessing that sections of a route are workable and walkable!

If you think you can help in any way, contact Keith Taylor via thefinchalecamino@gmail.com



Love your Burial Ground Week/Churches Count on Nature 2025 registration now open!

Love your Burial Ground Week/Churches Count on Nature 2025 will run from 7th to 15th June this year, and registration started on 17th March.

Even if you have taken part before, do please register via the [Caring for God's Acre website](#) so that your event can be added to the listing and map.

It looks like it will be another great year of history talks, picnics, bioblitzes, recording events and photography competitions!

Caring for God's Acre Corvid (rooks, crows, jackdaws and ravens) Spotters Guide

As we emerge into Spring, we will hear more bird calls, including the distinctive sounds of the corvids as they begin to nest, very often in or near our churchyards.

But can you tell your rook from your crow? Caring for God's Acre have produced a [spotters guide](#) to help you.



Save the date - Ride and Stride Saturday 13th September

Start your planning. Funds raised are split between your church and Lincolnshire Churches Trust.

Net Zero Carbon Team

Why Completing the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) Matters for Your Parish

The Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) is a vital resource for parishes looking to reduce energy costs, secure grant funding, and contribute to a more sustainable future. By recording key details about buildings across the Diocese, with a focus on energy use, the EFT informs diocesan strategy and supports the creation of customized Action Plans tailored to each parish's unique context. A well-planned approach to carbon reduction ensures that efforts are both effective and appropriate, with the EFT acting as the first step in this journey by helping understand your Parish.



One of the primary benefits of completing the EFT is the ability to identify **cost-saving opportunities**. By highlighting where energy is being wasted, churches can take targeted action - whether through switching to a more efficient heating system, upgrading existing facilities, or making small behavioural changes that lead to significant savings over time. These improvements not only reduce financial strain but also help future-proof church buildings.

Additionally, many **funding and grant opportunities** require clear energy data as part of the application process. A completed EFT strengthens applications, increasing the chances of securing grant funding for projects such as renewable energy installations, heating upgrades, and other improvements.

Beyond financial benefits, the EFT plays a key role in environmental responsibility by helping initiate the process of **caring for creation**. This commitment to sustainability aims to also enhance the comfort and usability of church spaces, making them more welcoming for worship and community activities.



The Net Zero Team on a recent site visit to Lonthorpe: St John the Baptist

The Net-Zero Team is dedicated to guiding parishes through this process, offering technical expertise, **site visits**, grant application support, liaising with the DAC, and assisting with project workload management. By completing the EFT, parishes take a crucial step towards financial resilience, sustainability, and ensuring their church remains fit for future generations.

For any help / information about the EFT process or anything Net Zero please contact George Davies:
Phone: 07809 521995
Email: george.davies@lincoln.anglican.org



Recommended Monthly Tasks (From SPAB's Faith in Maintenance calendar)

March

- Check that eaves, gutters and downpipes have not been damaged by frost. Look for cracks and leaks in rainwater goods.
- Clear parapet and valley gutters of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally. Take care in icy conditions.

April

- Check the roofs for frost, snow and wind damage. Look for signs on the ground like broken bits of slates and tiles.
- Check for splits and cracks in areas of flat or sloping sheet roofing. Inspect lead flashings and mortar fillets at chimneys for signs of decay.
- Clear leaves and debris from gutters and rainwater pipes regularly. Cast iron gutters may also require repainting.

May

- Regularly clean out gully and drains to make sure water flows freely away from the building.
- Make sure that windows and ventilators are operable so that the building can be ventilated. Lubricate door and window ironmongery and check security of locks.
- Have the boiler serviced, bleed radiators and ensure that the frost thermostat is operational.
- Clear away any plant growth from around the base of the walls and in particular from the drainage channel.

Risk Calendar

Taken from *Ecclesiastical Insurance's Church Risk Calendar*, where more information can be found..

March - Ladders

- If using ladders or stepladders check that they are right for the job, free from defects and used properly, being appropriately positioned and secured.

April - Tree management

- Trees form a natural part of the landscape and bring many benefits. However, they can present a number of hazards as they age and careful management is needed.

May - Events

- Events are a great way to engage with the wider community and raise vital funds. Larger events or unusual fundraising activities can present additional risks. These may need to be properly managed to ensure everyone remains safe and your event is a success.

Check out the proformas at [Ecclesiastical Insurance](#).

Grant News

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

It has been announced that the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme will be extended for 1 year. This scheme enables those caring for listed churches to claim back the VAT on repairs and some other capital project work. The fund has been capped at £23 million pounds for the year. Places of worship will not be able to claim more than £25,000 in any one year. The scheme receives around 7,000 applications a year, of which more than 70% are for £5,000 or less.

Parishes with outstanding VAT claims should put their claims in before the end of March 2025, to ensure that they have access to the full amount of VAT in the next financial year if required.

Applications can be made via: <https://listed-places-of-worship-grant.dcms.gov.uk/> Please get in touch with the Church Buildings Team if you have any further queries: churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org

Conservation Grants

Applications are now open for the expanded £5million conservation grants programme from the Cathedral & Church Buildings Department. This has been made possible by a five-year partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Grants are available to support the conservation of special features in church, including bells, clocks, organs, stained glass, wall paintings and monuments. The expanded programme allows them to make grants towards building repairs of up to £25,000 that are linked to the conservation of an object. Bids for specialist surveys and help for existing recipients' conservation projects to reach completion will be considered for funding as well. A press release with more information can be found [here](#) and details about the grant application process can be found [here](#).

Minor Repair and Improvement Grant and Quick Wins Grant

Both grant schemes continue to be popular, so if you are thinking of applying to either of them, get your application in soon, as funding is given on a first come first serve basis and may run out before the later part of the year.

Both grants have to be used by December 2025. For an application pack, please contact the team at churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org. The next deadline is 2nd June.

Living alongside bats in churches grant

The next round of the Living Alongside Bats in Churches grant is now open and will close at 9am on the 28 April. These grants are especially intended to help churches who are facing another summer of lots of cleaning get the help they need. Grants can be awarded for:

- Pew covers
- New hoovers
- A telescopic brush
- Specialist cleaning
- Bat detectors for future events (in addition to cleaning equipment)

A requirement of the grant is that the church holds a positive community event inspired by nature. Examples of these include:

- Local schools having a bat day
- Several bat walks/evenings with local bat groups
- Bat inspired flower show
- Community event making pew covers

Part of the grant can be used toward the costs of the event. Applications and more information are [online](#). If you have questions about the scheme please contact the Bats in Churches adviser, [Hazel Tocock](#)

Grant Information

Where to start

Please get in touch with the team to discuss which grants to apply for and when. We can help you come up with a funding plan for repairs and new facilities.

You can register with this website for free to search for grant funding:

Charity Excellence Framework:

<https://www.charityexcellence.co.uk/>

The Voluntary Centre Services and Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service host a free web-based funding information service. For further information visit their webpage:

<https://lincolnshirevolunteering.org.uk/find-funding/>

Organisations can sign up to a regular funding newsletter here: <http://eepurl.com/hWu2Vn>

Grants with no deadlines

Benefact Trust The Barron Bell Trust The Beatrice Laing Trust The Bernard Sunley Foundation Church Buildings Council Conservation Reports The Clothworkers' Foundation Garfield Weston Regular Grant The Hobson Charity Ltd John Warren Foundation The Kochan Trust Lincolnshire Churches Trust National Lottery Community Fund: Awards for All National Lottery Community Fund: Reaching Communities Fund National Lottery Heritage Fund: £10,000 to £250,000 Tesco Community Grants

Share your grant news and sources

Please do share your grant news, good and bad with us. We know that parishes starting out on a project find it really helpful to hear what others have done elsewhere. Help us to build the network across our Local Mission Partnerships.

Upcoming Grant Deadlines

March	
31st	Churchcare Bells and Bellframes
31st	William and Jane Morris Fund
April	
1st	Bicker wind farm Laceby Solar Farm Community Fund
7th	Sleaford REP Community Power Churchcare Clocks
15th	National Churches Trust medium grant Wolfson
30th	The On Organ Fund
May	
2nd	The Leche Trust
14th	FCC Communities Foundation
30th	Marshalls
June	
1st	Grange Wind Farm (nr Tydd St Mary)
2nd	Churchcare - Organs
9th	Churchcare Books and Manuscripts Churchyard Structures Monumental Brasses and Decorative Metalwork Monuments Plate Textiles Wooden Objects

Key Dates

The DAC agenda dates and meeting dates for the next four meetings can be found below. Please get in touch with Steven or Peter for further information.

Meeting Date	Agenda Close
Thursday 1st May	Thursday 17th April
Thursday 5th June	Thursday 22nd May
Wednesday 2nd July	Wednesday 18th June
Thursday 4th September	Thursday 21st August



Contact Details

Please contact the team if we can help with any church building related query.

Steven Sleight, DAC and Pastoral Secretary, steven.sleight@lincoln.anglican.org
01522 504069

Peter Duff, Assistant DAC and Pastoral Secretary, dac.assistant@lincoln.anglican.org
01522 504045

Matthew Godfrey, Historic Churches Support Officer, matthew.godfrey@lincoln.anglican.org
01522 504048

Fran Bell, Church Development Officer, fran.bell@lincoln.anglican.org
01522 504018

Contributions and Suggestions Please

Have you got a good news story about your church building, carried out a project, found grant funding or have something you'd like to share? We would like to include your contributions in future editions. If there is a subject you would like us to cover, let us know and we will see what we can do. Email the team via churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org

Church Photographs

It would be really helpful if you could share your photographs of churches with the Church Buildings Team. Whilst we have an archive, they are not as up to date as they could be. Clear pictures through the seasons of the exterior as well as key items and facilities in the interior are always useful. Get in touch with the team via churchbuildings.team@lincoln.anglican.org