

July 2025

Connect

The bulletin for clergy, lay leaders and all who are the Church in the Diocese of Bath and Wells.



Safeguarding Audit results published

"Bath and Wells has developed a strong and positive safeguarding culture driven by committed leadership, engaged safeguarding personnel and effective strategies that personalise safeguarding and empower local communities."

The results of the independent review into safeguarding in the Diocese of Bath and Wells and Wells Cathedral have been published today. INEQE, who are in the process of evaluating the quality of safeguarding practice in all Church of England dioceses across the country, undertook the audit of Bath and Wells in March 2025.

The audit report is split into two sections: the first looks at the safeguarding provision of the Diocese of Bath and Wells, with the second focusing on Safeguarding in Wells Cathedral.

Bishop Michael shares his response below. You can find out more on the [Bath and Wells website](#):



General Synod

Synod members gathered in York early this month for a five-day summer group of sessions. After the formal opening and welcome, the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, gave the presidential address, calling for a return to the “deep waters” of faith — rooted in Jesus Christ, rich in tradition, and bold in hope.

On Saturday, Synod members turned to a motion from the Bishop of Hereford calling for a redistribution of Church funds. Under an amendment, put forward by Bishop Michael, the Church Commissioners were requested to allocate an amount equivalent to one per cent of their endowment annually to Diocesan Stipend Funds. Due to an amendment from the Bishop of Sheffield being agreed the amendment by Bishop Michael was superseded.

On Monday members later voted overwhelmingly to give final approval to a comprehensive redress scheme for survivors of Church-related abuse.

- [General Synod approves redress scheme for survivors of Church-related abuse](#)
- [Archbishop of York's Presidential Address to General Synod](#)



Young people speak to General Synod

Eleanor Motion and Alfie Rendell from Bath and Wells were among a group of young people who travelled to York to speak to synod members. Addressing synod Eleanor spoke about the impact of Movement on young people in our diocese and shared her own experience, "I realise how important it is that young people are given space to belong, grow and worship, not just serve. It's encouraging to see the church beginning to invest more intentionally in young people and young leaders."

Alfie joined the panel of a fringe meeting discussing the recent report from the Bible Society, '[The Quiet Revival](#)' which talks about Gen Z leading a turnaround in church attendance. He spoke about why it's important to listen to young people. "So many young people are passionate about the Church of England. Many young people have got no stability in life and the Church offers them something that is stable. We don't want a Church that changes its morality. We want something concrete."



Budget Consultation comes to a close

The last session of the Budget Consultation has taken place and work is now underway to review the feedback, ahead of September's Bishop's Council. As trustees of the Diocesan Board of Finance, Bishop's Council has the responsibility of agreeing the diocesan budget.

Jenny Hollingsworth, Diocesan Secretary, hosted all seven of the sessions which took place. She says, "I would like to thank people for showing up. It may seem a small thing to do that and ask questions, but this information forms the basis of what we try and do, how we invest for growth, and how we support each and every one of us across the diocese. I am hugely grateful to all the 129 people who showed up and engaged in the consultation, whether they turned up in person or online."

The resources shared during the consultation can be found on the [diocesan website](#), including:

- A copy of the presentation
- The Annual Review 2024
- Support Services explainer and contact sheet
- Diocesan video - which you can also view below



Diocesan Synod July 2025 - Called to walk together

Diocesan Synod, together with the Annual General Meeting of the Diocesan Board of Finance, took place on Wednesday, 9 July at Flourish House, Wells.

[You can find a report of the proceedings on the diocesan website.](#)

Generosity Week

There are lots of resources available online which your church might use during a Generosity Week. You may wish to use all the resources available or just a selection. This year's Generosity Week is Sunday 28 September - Sunday 5 October, but the resources can be used at any time.

[Find out more about the resources available.](#)

The next sessions of Money Matters also take place in the autumn. The sessions are run by the diocesan Giving and Funding team alongside the Finance team. A representative from Ecclesiastical Insurance will also be there to share insights and answer your questions.

[Find out more and sign up](#)

Grants available

Net Zero Carbon Quick Wins Grant

Churches in Bath and Wells looking to reduce their carbon emissions can still apply for a Net Zero Carbon Quick Wins Grant.

The funds are part of the Church Commissioner's £30 million commitment to bolster plans to achieve Net Zero Carbon emissions by the Church of England by 2030. Grants of up to £10,000 will be available to help PCCs across the diocese progress with small scale decarbonisation projects such as lightbulbs with LEDs, improving heating controls, under-pew heaters, infrared heaters and upgrades to electrical systems.

A number of churches have already been successful in accessing this grant funding and have implemented or are in the process of implementing their projects. But there are limited funds so don't miss out!

Fill in the [Grant Funding Application Form](#) or email sara.emmett@bathwells.anglican.org Bath and Wells Climate Justice and Environment Adviser, for more information.

Green Business Grants

The West England Combined Authority is offering [Green Business Grants](#) of up to £15,000 to install new products and equipment that will reduce carbon emissions, help cut utility costs and improve energy efficiency.

Around £250,000 has already been made available to Bath and Wells churches in the BANES council area. The grant also includes a free energy audit, so far 10 churches have received audits.

If you are interested in finding out more, or would like help to apply, please email dan.wills@bathwells.anglican.org Bath and Wells Net Zero Enabler.

Latest environment podcast out now

In the latest episode of Low Carbon, Higher Power, Dan sits down with Dr. Dave Bookless – theologian, A Rocha leader, and author of Planetwise – to explore how faith and sustainability go hand in hand.

From global mission work to prayerful activism, Dave shares powerful stories, hard-won wisdom, and why creation care is central to Christian discipleship.

[Listen now](#), watch on [YouTube](#) or search Low Carbon, Higher Power wherever you get your podcasts.

Important security alert

[People System Support](#), Church of England Central Services, have received reports of fraudulent text messages being sent to clergy claiming that they must submit their HLC return online or their stipend will be stopped.

Please be aware:

- People System Support do not send text messages regarding HLC returns or stipend payments.
- Not to click on any links sent via text message purporting to be from People System Support.
- Always log directly into your People System account.

If you have received such a text message, please report it immediately to: clergy.payments@churchofengland.org or to report.fraud@churchofengland.org.

More information can be found here on the [clergy resources section of the Church of England website](#):

Bath and Wells working in partnership with Sarum College

This autumn, the Diocese of Bath and Wells is piloting a partnership scheme with Sarum College. Sarum College has set aside a small number of places at a reduced cost on a number of short courses.

Licensed clergy, Readers and those who are registered as commended lay ministers, will receive an email outlining further information about the courses available through the partnership.

A greater selection of courses are open to others, but participants will need to self-fund. You can [view the full Sarum College short courses brochure via this link](#).

CCLA acquired by Jupiter Investment Management Group Limited

CCLA Investment Management, the UK-based investment firm that manages funds on behalf of the Church of England and others, is being acquired by Jupiter Investment Management Group Limited, subject to regulatory approval.

CCLA is currently owned by the investment funds that serve its three largest client groups: Church of England charities, other charities and local authorities. As part of the deal, CCLA will retain its branding, investment and client service approach, while benefiting from Jupiter's strength and resources. [Read more online](#).

Resources to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VJ Day.

On 15 August, we will mark the 80th anniversary of VJ Day, paying tribute to those involved in the end of the Second World War, as well as reminding us to pray and work for peace in our communities and in the world. You can find out more about the commemorations taking place [on the government's dedicated website](#).

How your church can take part

On [AChurchNearYou.com](https://www.achurchnearyou.com), there is the option to add an '80th Anniversary of VJ Day' tag to any services and events you may be planning.

A national two-minute silence will be also be held at 12 noon on Friday August 15. You can find out more about this in [an announcement from the Government](#).

Do share your stories of any events or services taking place, email comm@bathwells.anglican.org

New community of contemplation

At St Mary's House in Frome, something tender and hopeful is beginning to take root. Mary's House Community (MHC), a new Christian community based in the former rectory of St Mary's Church, is preparing to welcome its first residents. MHC is envisioned as a place for people who long to live more simply, more prayerfully, and more honestly, in community with others and in gentle connection with the world around them.

Rooted in a shared rhythm of contemplation, dialogue, and creation, Mary's House Community is a place for the spiritually curious, and those wishing to live in deeper connection with others. Daily prayer, shared meals, and local engagement will be held together in a rhythm that nourishes both inner transformation and outward love. [Read more about the plans for Mary's House](#) and how it is hoped to create the conditions for community, for friendship, reflection, and prayer to flourish in everyday life.

In brief

- Simon Baker has announced he will be stepping down as the DAC Chair in December. We are very grateful to Simon for the work he has undertaken during his time with us. In the meantime, we will be looking to appoint a new chair before Simon leaves at the end of this year.
- Two new chaplains have been appointed to Hinkley Point C. The Lead and Night chaplains will join the team of chaplains who support workers at the site near Bridgwater. Chaplaincy provision at Hinkley is a partnership between EDF and Somerset Churches Together, with the funding provided by EDF. Andrew Hillier will become the Lead Chaplain of the multi-faith team in November. Heather Culshaw has been appointed as Hinkley's dedicated Night Chaplain. [Read more about Andrew and Heather](#).
- [Ripple Effect](#) has new Harvest resources for churches, including a quiz, an all-age service and fundraising top tips. The resources focus on the story of Jeanne. Find out more about Jeanne's story and how you can support families like hers by downloading the [free Harvest resources](#).
- St. Peter's Church, Portishead, is hosting its bi-annual meeting on ethical issues. The next session is on social media, self-esteem and mental wellbeing with Katharine Hill, Director of Care for the Family. Monday, 20 October, 19:30. Contact: David Tyers 01275 840 245 or david.tyers@gmail.com for more information.

If you have news to share, tag us on your social media channel or [email the Communications team](#).

Learning to make a difference

Pupils at Holy Trinity Church School in Yeovil have been learning about the work of international development agency [Christian Aid](#) and have raised more than £500 to support the charity's work on tackling poverty.

Sarah Blake, Collective Worship and RE Lead at the school explained: "Each term, we hold a Spirituality Day with a different theme. Our most recent one focused on the inspiring work of Christian Aid. Every class at Holy Trinity planned a fundraising activity with ideas ranging from a danceathon to sponsored chores at home. Together we raised an amazing £505 and I am incredibly proud of our children."

Saying goodbye

After 21 years of ministry in Winsmoor Benefice, Revd Geoff Wade said goodbye with an open-air service in a field, with views over the Benefice.

Geoff said, "They say that time flies and everyone agreed that this incumbency certainly had, particularly as the start of the service saw a fly past from a Royal Navy Wildcat helicopter which circled the field, much to everyone's delight (thank you RNAS Yeovilton)."

After which there was an opportunity for members of the church community, family, and friends to give thanks for his ministry.

Moving Up Celebrations

Nearly 3,000 children and staff from 96 Church of England schools in Bath and Wells took part in the Moving Up Celebrations. The celebrations, which took place at Bath Abbey, Wells Cathedral and Taunton Minster, are for year 4 and year 6 school leavers as they transition from primary to middle or secondary school.

They offer pupils the opportunity to celebrate the next step on their education journey, and to share that God will be journeying with them.

Each celebration began with children from each school processing with their banner to a resounding fanfare. There were also opportunities to chat and moments to reflect and pray. [Find out](#)

Commemorative window appeal

Bath Abbey has launched a fundraising campaign appealing for donations to create a new stained glass window, which will commemorate the Bath-born Saint Alphege. With 40% of funds already raised, The Friends of Bath Abbey is seeking to raise an additional £90,000 to create the new stained glass window. It will be designed by Bath-based artist Neil Ireson, and will celebrate the life of Saint Alphege, who was born in Bath in 953, became Abbot of Bath Abbey in the early 980s and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1006.

The new stained glass window will be situated in the Abbey's Saint Alphege Chapel, a sacred space where many of Bath Abbey's thousands of

Nurture Hub supports pupil's wellbeing

Bishop Michael officially opened and blessed the brand-new Nurture Hub at Christchurch Primary School in Weston super Mare.

The Nurture Hub is a dedicated space designed to support the emotional and social wellbeing of its pupils. It represents a significant step forward in the school's commitment to inclusive education and pupil wellbeing.

Designed as a safe, welcoming environment, the Hub will provide targeted support for children who may be experiencing emotional challenges, helping them to build resilience, confidence, and positive relationships.

Head teacher Kerry James said: "The Nurture Hub will allow us to offer

[more about the Moving Up Celebrations.](#)

You can also listen to the Go Team's Andy Levett talking about the celebrations on the BBC Sunday programme this weekend at 08:10. Listen live or catch up on [BBC Sounds.](#)

international visitors seek sanctuary to pray for their loved ones, for the wider world, and for peace.

Read more about the plans for the new window the appeal. <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/news/bath-abbey-launches-fun...>

tailored support to children who need a little extra help to thrive, both emotionally and academically. We were deeply honoured to have Bishop Michael bless this space and share in our vision for nurturing every child."

Diocese of Bath and Wells

The Diocese of Bath and Wells Flourish House, Wells
United Kingdom

Our mailing address is:

comms@bathwells.anglican.org

Copyright © 2025 Diocese of Bath and Wells Diocesan Board of Finance, All rights reserved.

[Unsubscribe](#)

