**Energy Audits FAQ – 2024**

* **Should I wait until the non-LED lights have blown before replacing them?** It's advisable to replace most lights with LEDs as soon as possible. The exception is lights which are used rarely such as boiler room lights.
* **What are the benefits of switching to LED lighting in our church?** LEDs have an extremely long lifespan relative to every other lighting technology (including fluorescent lights). New LEDs can last 50,000 to 100,000 hours or more. The typical lifespan for a fluorescent bulb, by comparison, is 10-25% as long at best (roughly 10,000 hours). Switching to LED will reduce your energy costs due to their efficiency and long lifespan
* **Do I need to change existing lighting fixtures to accommodate LED bulbs?** Some existing fittings can take a new bulb, however for example when changing a tube light a new fitting is usually required. If LED bulbs can't be directly swapped into existing fixtures, modifications or rewiring may be necessary to ensure compatibility. LED bulbs often require different electrical setups, typically needing lower voltage and consuming less power than incandescent or fluorescent bulbs. When getting a quote for new LED lighting the installer and supplier will be able to tell you when you need a new fitting.
* **How can I draught-proof wooden church doors on a stone door frame?** Traditional methods work best for wood against stone. Materials like hessian dipped in wax, copper strips, cork, and felt are effective. An experienced joiner skilled in heritage trades can restore the door, likely replacing materials that have worn away over time. Be sure to consult with Emma Bakewell for approval.
* **We can’t afford to implement all the recommendations within the report. What should the church do?** Start with low-cost, high-impact actions such as installing LED lights and draught-proofing,. The £10,000 Diocese grant can be used for any of the recommendations in the report.
* **We have a church hall. Can the grant be spent on the hall?** Yes, the Diocesan grant can be used for recommendations in both the church and hall reports. It can be allocated entirely to the hall, the church, or split between the two.
* **Should I wait for my boiler to break?** It is highly advisable to have in place a ‘Heating Resilience Plan’; a plan for what to do if your boiler suddenly breaks and also a plan to start work on replacing it ahead of when it's expected to fail. It is disruptive and expensive to have heating fail in winter when you don’t yet have an alternative in place. If you have a gas or oil boiler, plan to replace it as soon as possible. If immediate replacement isn't financially feasible, develop a plan to decommission it by 2030. Remember that the quicker you move off fossil fuels, the quicker you are reducing carbon, every tonne makes a difference between now and 2030.
* **What if our boiler breaks?** Replacing an oil or gas boiler with a like-for-like option will no longer pass faculty. This is an opportunity to upgrade your heating system and reduce carbon emissions. The PCC should consider how the building is used and plan for sustainable heating. Temporary heating solutions might be necessary during this transition, and we have guidance documents available [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N4glc-f5C8TmTqE6VqbM4SafzzpfcbPa/view?usp=sharing)

**What other funding is available?** Additional grant opportunities from other organizations can be found [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/14wzaUgcMN8r03-nzK3hN4nnMoahEr6Xt/view?usp=sharing).

* **The costs in our report are far too high, we won't be able to raise that amount. What can we do?**

The report will usually include the costs to provide electric heating for the whole church. But you may be able to provide heating for just one section, or just a few pews which will enable you to hugely reduce your fossil fuel use. Think about getting costs for pew heating on just enough pews for your average number of congregation. Heated cushions are very cheap way to provide heat, they may not be quite as comfortable as big and expensive radiant heating systems, but many churches use only these and are very happy. Talk to us to discuss your options for making changes within your budgets.

* **Can we talk to the Diocese before we implement our plans?** Absolutely! The Diocese offers report surgeries, both online and in person, at locations in Bristol, Swindon, and Chippenham. These sessions are a great opportunity to discuss the report and develop an action plan. [Book time with Kit Connell: Surgery for Church Reports](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Foutlook-sdf.office.com%2Fbookwithme%2Fuser%2F0979ada5b8e34060a6d2786c0609d450%40bristoldiocese.org%2Fmeetingtype%2F0aoZr0i7pUGvCZtpwCjiaA2%3Fanonymous%26ep%3DmCardFromTile&data=05%7C02%7Ckit.connell%40bristoldiocese.org%7C7244bc7ffe8c4b668c9908dc83c07f45%7Cf8c358527f41448ba8a1cc11796cead8%7C0%7C0%7C638530109992856228%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=rxCgQhUzKW2folw%2BIZOq8%2FhyotlDVx9IujUCXvgIhZ4%3D&reserved=0)
* **Can we put EV charging units in our church car park?** If the church owns the car park, you may qualify for the Central Church of England’s EV Charging Unit initiative. The first step is an expression of interest which you can do here; [Parish Buying - EV Charging](https://parishbuying.org.uk/categories/net-zero-2030/45-categories/net-zero-2030/358-ev-charging).
* **Do we have to upgrade to a 3-phase supply?** This depends on the recommendations in the report and the church's long-term plans. Contact the Diocese to discuss your specific situation.
* **We are having infrared heating installed, do we need to insulate?** Improving insulation is always beneficial and essential before heat pumpsminstalations. For infrared heaters, insulation is less important as they are designed to heat the person and not the space.