

 THE CHURCH



...ing to pay energy costs, it was announced today.

The Energy Costs Grant will be distributed to dioceses to enable them to help Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) cover the increased cost of heating and lighting church buildings this winter.

Dioceses will also be able to use some of their fund allocation to make additional targeted hardship payments for clergy and other employed ministers to cover household bills, in particular energy costs.

The new funding comes after £3 million was made available earlier this year by the Church of England for dioceses to distribute to clergy and lay ministers facing particular hardship because of the cost of living crisis.

The Energy Costs Grant is accompanied by [information](#) aimed at helping churches to become more energy efficient and reduce their carbon footprint.

John Spence, Chair of the Archbishops' Council Finance Committee, said: "The Government has announced welcome support for non-domestic energy users including voluntary sector organisations such as PCCs.

"But in spite of this our churches still face the challenge of significant rises in their energy bills over this winter, and that is why we are announcing the Energy Costs Grant which will be in addition to Government support.

"We will keep the situation under close review throughout the winter. We hope that this new fund will provide some reassurance to churches and worshipping communities."

Alan Smith, First Church Estates Commissioner, said "The £15 million fund will help churches to remain as centres of worship and pastoral care and will also make a key difference in helping churches to continue opening their buildings for vital practical support for their communities over the winter through social action such as food banks.

"The Church Commissioners are glad to be able to work in partnership with the Archbishops' Council and dioceses to support the work of parishes in the communities they serve."

**More information:**

- The additional resources will supplement existing discretionary funds held at diocesan level and other sources of financial support for clergy facing financial challenges. This is addition to the £3 million ministry hardship funding made available earlier this year.
- This new grant scheme has been funded by the Church Commissioners from savings in other categories of expenditure.

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