



# Archdeacons' Visitation News



## Dear Churchwardens

**We want to express our heartfelt gratitude to every Churchwarden across the Diocese of Derby. Your faithful service, often carried out quietly and largely behind the scenes, forms the heartbeat of parish life and makes a remarkable difference in the life of your church and the wider community.**

Churchwardens are the visible presence of leadership in every parish, caring for buildings, supporting clergy and lay teams, welcoming worshippers and visitors, and enabling mission and ministry in so many ways. Your dedication embodies Christ's call to love and serve, week by week, in towns, villages and urban centres throughout Derbyshire.

In this special edition of Visitation News, we celebrate the breadth of life and mission happening across our diocese. You'll read inspiring stories about how local churches are harnessing heritage, hospitality and welcome to engage visitors and share the story of our faith. These reflections remind us that opening our doors to all who seek calm, history or reflection is also opening the door to encounter God.

We also highlight the Lay Ministry Conference, a significant event designed especially for lay leaders - Churchwardens, PCC members, Parish Safeguarding Officers, Licensed Lay Ministers and volunteers of all kinds. This celebration of lay ministry brings together worship, networking, encouragement and inspiring speakers, and equips people to serve faithfully in diverse parish contexts.

Turning to community initiatives, you'll discover the remarkable story of football in Mackworth. A simple idea to bring people together to play football has grown into a vibrant weekly gathering that builds connection, fosters friendships, and opens doors for people to explore faith in informal and accessible ways. A beautiful example of how gospel love meets community need.

Another inspiring piece explores the Growing Hope partnership, a diocesan collaboration supporting children and young people with additional needs. This initiative strengthens church communities' capacity for welcome and inclusion and speaks powerfully to our diocesan priorities of growing younger, becoming more diverse

and challenging injustice. It offers training, resources and support that will help churches become more accessible and more deeply rooted in the communities they serve.

You'll also be encouraged by the account of parish based mental health support groups, where hospitality, listening and friendship create safe spaces for those navigating wellbeing challenges. These groups reflect the heart of Christian service, showing God's love in practical, relational ways that deeply impact lives.

Finally, the Racial Justice Project highlights how national funding is enabling churches and schools to work together to tackle racism and build cultural capital, extending pupils' experiences fostering empathy, respect and understanding among children and young people. This work helps young people see diversity as a strength and Christianity as a global faith and force for justice and kindness in their schools, communities and across the world.

Throughout all these stories is a single thread: churches serving faithfully, creatively and compassionately in their local contexts. We give thanks for your ministry, and we hope this edition informs, inspires and encourages you in the mission to which you have been called.

**Thank you again for all that you do, in service, in leadership, and in love. You are deeply appreciated.**



**The Ven  
Matthew Trick**  
Archdeacon of Derby  
City and South  
Derbyshire



**The Ven  
Nicky Fenton**  
Archdeacon of  
Derbyshire Peak and  
Dales



**The Ven  
Emma Sykes**  
Archdeacon of East  
Derbyshire

# Profiling Through Tourism



My knowledge of Derbyshire before moving here in 2024 was as a tourist visiting the Peak District and seeing the sites. In coming to the diocese as a parish priest and with a brief to work alongside others to boost churches' work in heritage, visitor engagement and mission to tourists, I've discovered the great range of stories and buildings we have.

Our churches are a huge opportunity, as across the diocese we attract hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. Many are drawn by architecture, history or just calm. In rural parishes visitors may be traditional tourists on holiday or out for the day. In urban places it is often celebrating the story and heritage of the local area through special events and targeted opening.

The 21st century is seeing a resurgence in pilgrimage which churches speak directly into. At its heart it is about welcoming visitors and helping them to experience the church and faith story in its richness. Those who open their churches during the day are testimony to people who "come and see". If, like me, you have a visitors' book and an opportunity for prayer requests, you will soon find out their story and what they felt in visiting. Thinking about visitors' needs makes churches even more welcoming, telling them about the history but also what we do and what we believe. To help, we're looking as a diocese to develop a toolkit of resources for parishes giving us all the opportunity to be more intentional in our welcome.

In some places, partnerships with tourist organisations, local groups, historical societies, and walking tours have opened new ways of accessing the church and helped the wider community feel included.

Parishes are discovering that tourism is about welcoming visitors through our doors but also boosts income. Many churches have opportunities to give through donation points and card machines, as well as small retail areas, catering for tech savvy 21st century visitors. In doing so they are bringing in revenue which helps us to care for the fabric of the building and the life of the parish.

Visitors may be prompted to come back for an event or service or want to know more about faith, whether in our parishes or when they return home – seeds being sown.

It is an exciting time with lots of experience around and huge potential as we tell our historical and faith story in new ways across our diocese.

**Rev'd Mark Griffin**



## Lay Ministry Conference

**This September the Diocese of Derby is hosting its inaugural Lay Ministry Conference that is specifically designed for Lay Leaders.**

This is a fantastic opportunity for Churchwardens, PCC members, Parish Safeguarding Officers, License Lay Ministers (Readers), volunteers – indeed anyone involved in lay leadership or ministry within their church to come for a day of celebration, worship, networking and encouragement.

We are delighted that we will be joined by Rt Rev Sophie Jelley, Bishop of Coventry and Episcopal Lead for Lay Ministries, as our keynote speaker for the day. There will also be a series of workshops on a variety of themes to further equip you for your leadership role in your church context.

**The conference is on Saturday 12th September 2026 starting at 9.30am and running until 4pm, at Cliff College, Cliff Lane, Calver, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S32 3XG.**

Lunch and refreshments will be provided, as will a light breakfast on arrival. It is going to be a fantastic day!

For further details and to book your place, please visit:

 [bit.ly/layministryconference26](https://bit.ly/layministryconference26)

Please share the invitation and these details with your leadership teams and your congregations.

## Football in Mackworth

**The evening football in Mackworth, Derby, has grown significantly since its launch three and a half years ago. The project began with the aim of providing young men with a regular opportunity to meet and play football. It now draws up to 48 participants each week.**

Before football began we could not even get 10 people together to play five-a-side, but we prayed and then invited and St Francis Monday Night Football started in May of 2022 with only 10 people. The sessions have become a reliable point of connection for local young adults. What started with a small number of attendees has developed into a consistent community where people feel welcome and supported. The environment allows individuals to build friendships, become physically fitter and speak openly about the challenges they are facing.

The football sessions have also opened the door for people to explore Christian faith in more structured ways. Many of those taking part have chosen to attend Alpha, which provides space to discuss topics related to Jesus, church, and belief. Trust is forming naturally through the weekly gatherings. One local member who

joined the football group, came to Alpha and then gave his life to Christ, was baptised and now is on the Diocese Youth Ministry Experience Scheme.

The project is now being highlighted across the wider church, as an example of the impact local community initiatives can have when they respond directly to local needs. By using football as a starting point, the team has created a familiar and accessible setting for people who might not otherwise attend church services or events.

Due to the continued growth of the Mackworth group, plans are already underway to begin a second football focused church community in Derby. The new project is scheduled to launch at the end of 2026 and will follow the same model of using sport as a way to bring people together and encourage conversation about life and faith.

We would love you to pray for the volunteers and participants involved, as well as for the planning of the new community. We would love for this to continue to expand and provide a positive presence across the area, so that a demographic who have traditionally been absent from many churches will encounter Jesus.

**David Stuart**  
St Francis, Mackworth



## Growing Hope Partnership



Growing Hope, a charity which supports children and young people with additional needs, was awarded £600,000 by the National Church's Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (SMMIB) in December 2025, to expand their offer of training and support for churches. Their funding application was based on supporting more

than 800 churches across five partner dioceses over three years with free or low-cost training, audits, and resources.

We're pleased to share that the Diocese of Derby is one of those five partner dioceses, and we will now be actively working with Growing Hope to shape the detail of our partnership, and to work out the best ways to share this opportunity with churches.

When churches become more accessible to children and young people with additional needs, they become more accessible to everyone. When churches grow younger, they grow in general.

This partnership will make the Diocesan Outcomes real and tangible in local churches, helping them to invite young people and their families to become disciples of Jesus and to deepen their relationships with God. This is a way of challenging the injustice that churches have sometimes struggled to welcome those with additional needs, and of practically serving the needs of local communities by becoming more accessible than ever.

As a Parish Support Team, we are committed to pursuing these Outcomes in ways which pay attention to the Diocesan Priorities, and our work with Growing Hope is a great example of this. Many of the new disciples that result from this initiative will be younger. Diversity in congregations will grow as they welcome many who are neurodivergent or disabled. Statistically, children and young people with additional needs are disproportionately present in lower income communities.

We are delighted to share this joyful news with you, and if you would like to be among the first to hear how this partnership develops, please email [GrowingYounger@derby.anglican.org](mailto:GrowingYounger@derby.anglican.org)

**Sam Frith**

Director of Strategy & Engagement



## Mental Health Support

One of the best things about being part of a church community is our longevity.



Rev'd Canon Bryony Taylor



The church in which we offer our weekly Mental Health support group, 'Safe Space Clowne,' was built in 1138! The church has been around for a long time serving the community. We started our group in 2018 when we realised that there was nowhere for people to gather safely for mutual support locally. Many mental health groups rely on short-term funding and come and go. We know that we can consistently be here for people – we only close 2 Tuesdays a year – Christmas and Easter, the rest of the time, people know we are there for them.

The premise is simple: offer hospitality and a listening ear. It doesn't cost much money and yet what the group offers is invaluable to those who attend. Some come just for a few weeks, perhaps after a bereavement. Some come every week knowing that it stops them slipping into a deeper depression. We chat and share, we sometimes play card games or do jigsaws, we spend time together listening to each other.

What we have found is that through offering simple hospitality with no judgement has resulted in people coming to faith. Many of those recently confirmed in our church came to faith through first being made to feel welcome at Safe Space.

The group session on a Tuesday offers what I call a 'soft entry point' into the life of the church. The session takes place in the church building: coming through the door is always the biggest obstacle (I've always joked we should make stickers for people!). Once inside people find a welcome and friendship and begin to ask more about why we do what we do. Safe Space has become the front line of mission for our churches and is a way we can tangibly serve the community.

I would encourage any church that has tea and coffee making facilities and a warm room and some volunteers to consider starting a mental health support group, we've found it encouraging both for ourselves and those we serve, and we are known in the community as Christians by our love (John 13:35).

**Rev'd Canon Bryony Taylor**

# Racial Justice Project

**We are pleased to share that just under £250,000 has been awarded by the National Church's Racial Justice Unit to fund a three-year project working with schools and churches in the least diverse parts of our diocese.**



The project will focus on helping children and young people build empathy, curiosity, and respect for people from different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, and to experience the global nature of the Church.

Much of the work will take place in schools in East

Derbyshire and especially along the M1 corridor, as well as through online activities for rural schools. Many children in these areas have limited opportunities to meet people from different cultures or backgrounds. This project will help address that gap through school sessions on racial justice and Global Majority Heritage cultures, intercultural events and trips including to some of our more diverse churches in the diocese, and online activities that connect young people in Derbyshire with children and churches in our partner dioceses of Kolkata and Burundi.

This project will help children see how Christian faith connects with justice, kindness, and respect for others. By learning together and building relationships, young people will be encouraged to see diversity as a strength and to recognise unfairness when they encounter it.

Schools and churches will be supported to work closely together as part of the project. Strong relationships will help make sure activities are well planned, welcoming, and safe. The voices of children and young people will also be listened to carefully, helping us understand what difference the project makes over time.

This project is mainly focused on the Diocesan Outcome of "Challenging injustice", and it pursues this in a way which pays attention to the Diocesan Priority of "Growing more diverse". By investing in children and young people in the least diverse parts of the diocese, we hope to see lasting change in schools, communities, and the life of our churches.

If you would like to learn more about this project or get involved, please email [Sam.Frith@derby.anglican.org](mailto:Sam.Frith@derby.anglican.org)

**Sam Frith**

Director of Strategy & Engagement



## Save the Dates Churchwarden Training 2026

**Saturday 26th September 2026**  
**St Barnabas Centre,**  
**Danesmoor, S45 9BU**

Churchwardens from across the Diocese of Derby are warmly invited to a morning of worship, inspiration, and shared learning. These supportive events are designed to bring churchwardens together to reflect, connect, and grow in their ministry.

Further details, including booking, are available on the Diocese of Derby website.

 [www.derby.anglican.org](http://www.derby.anglican.org)

# Home insurance for clergy, church workers and volunteers

- ▶ Exclusive discounts available<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Award winning claims and risk management team<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Voted Which? Best Buy three years running (2023-2025)
- ▶ Knowledgeable and friendly customer services team



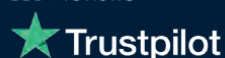
Our home insurance is **designed for you**  
because **we understand** you need more.



Rated **Excellent**



500+ reviews<sup>4</sup>



Get a quote today from the most trusted  
home insurance provider<sup>3</sup>



**0345 777 3322**



**household@ecclesiastical.com**



**ecclesiastical.com/home-insurance**

<sup>1</sup> Minimum premiums apply. <sup>2</sup> Risk Management Team 2024 CIR Risk Management Awards & Gracechurch UK Market Claims Service Quality Outstanding 2026. <sup>3</sup> Fairer Finance Home Insurance customer experience rating, spring and autumn, 2015-2025. <sup>4</sup> Trustpilot reviews – 534 between 1 February 2023 – 4 February 2026