

Diocesan Synod 24 June 2023

Church Heating Workshop Notes

Presentation by Oliver Clarke, Diocesan Heating Advisor

1. If your existing heating is working OK, or is electric then stick with it. However, if it is fossil fuelled, plan what you intend or would like to do and research it, so that you can move quickly when necessary.
2. The main Net Zero Carbon energy source is Green electricity, refer to Ofgem for suitable suppliers.
3. Recommendations for Infrequent Use Churches (no more than 1 to 2 uses per week).

For churches with pews: electric under-pew or pew-back heaters, the exceptions to this would be small churches one of the following:

1. Very low attendance
2. Heritage pews,
3. Insufficient electrical supply to the church i.e. 60 amp single phase.

In these cases, heated cushions might be more appropriate.

For churches with chairs: heated cushions, or infra-red heaters either wall-mounted or chandelier style (see electrical supply note).

Where damp is a problem then background heating needs to be taken into account.

4. Recommendations for Frequent Use Churches (4 or more uses per week including weekdays)

Possibly electric under-pew or pew-back heaters as above. Alternatively underfloor heating via a heat pump. This would be quite an expensive option as considerable reordering might be necessary and is more suitable for open plan churches with seats and particularly if the floor is in need of replacement.

Existing radiator heating which works well can be fed from a heat pump with a buffer vessel and temperature boost facility. A heat pump installation serving fan convectors. Combined heat & light chandeliers can work well in some instances with high ceilings, but additional supplementary lighting may be required in some areas of the building.

For flexibility of use hybrid solutions combining different types of heating to suit varying uses of the building can be effective in keeping running costs to a minimum.

5. Overall Conclusion

Every church is different, so start thinking and planning soon. Seek advice via the DAC This can be arranged by e-mail correspondence initially, possibly a phone conversation and if necessary, a visit from the Diocesan Heating Adviser.

Q & A Session

There was discussion on:

- The effectiveness of overhead infra-red heaters – good when you are sitting under them, but need careful design to get a uniform spread of heat.
- The role of the DAC, faculties and Archdeacon-approved List B changes.
- The importance of heating solutions meeting the individual church's needs.