

Church Buildings Team Security Update September 2024

Very sadly, we have been made aware of some recent incidents of theft and criminal damage at some churches across the Diocese and our prayers are with the communities affected. With these events in mind, we are taking the opportunity to reiterate the advice offered by the police and church insurers, and to offer our support to anyone concerned.

Most incidents occur when the church is unoccupied, and it is therefore recommended that churches are unlocked and open to visitors and volunteers during daylight hours. The presence of people in the church is a good deterrent to those with criminal intent and it is helpful to have a visible presence in the church or churchyard for as much of the day as possible, or for local parishioners to make frequent, irregular visits throughout the day. Portable items and any items of value should be locked away when not in use. We also recommend taking this opportunity to update your church inventory to include detailed descriptions and information on all items in the church, accompanied by plenty of detailed, clear photographs. Templates of this document can be provided on request, and we suggest keeping digital copies to facilitate swift information sharing in the event of any theft.

If an incident does occur, you should report this to the Police as a '[heritage crime](#)'. Using this term can help the Police to correctly log the incident, and can aid their investigations. You should also inform the Archdeacon, your insurers, and the Church Buildings Office.

If you have any concerns, or would like further advice on security, please contact the Church Buildings Office, who will be able to support you. Please also note that some security measures may require faculty permission.

You can contact the Church Buildings Office by emailing: dac@exeter.anglican.org or phone 01392 294 945