**Internet Connectivity in Church**

This pack is for PCCs looking to introduce internet connectivity into their church building. It aims to provide everything you need to begin planning for introducing an internet connection, with an introduction to your options, information on what diocesan permission, if any, is needed, and an application form for central funding.

Part 1 – Options for Introducing Internet Connectivity

Part 2 – What Permission is Needed

Part 3 – Diocesan Grant Funding & Application Form

Appendix 1 – Guidance for Church Buildings (November 2020)

Appendix 2 – Live Streaming Kit Information

Appendix 3 – Livestreaming and Internet Case Studies

**Part 1: Options**

There are three main possibilities for bringing internet connectivity into the church.

1. **Using a 4G or 5G phone signal (wireless)**

Using a phone signal for internet connection is usually the cheapest option available to churches. There are three different ways that this can be achieved:

1. Install broadband which utilises 4G phone signal. The benefit of this is a stable, constant Wi-Fi connection inside the church. This involves the installation of an aerial on the roof/tower which is cabled into the building in which it connects to a normal Wi-Fi router. So long as the cable is fed through an existing hole this work can usually be achieved under List B, without the need for a faculty. We can suggest providers if this is the best option for you.
2. Purchase a portable internet router, sometimes called a MiFi. This allows you to easily move your connection between buildings. The difference between Option A and Option B is that with the former (A) your internet is fixed to a single address whereas with Option B your service is not attached to a fixed location and will work wherever the router (MiFi) is located, as long as there is a strong enough phone signal.

Some notes:

If you are looking at option B, OfCom provide a “signal checker” service [here](https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/mobile-coverage) which shows the coverage from the “Big Four” main mobile network providers (EE, Vodafone, O2 and Three). There are two important things to say here:

1. Most other providers use one of the Big Four networks so if you do not choose a contract with the Big Four make sure you know which network your provider uses.
2. The OfCom signal checker shows indoor and outdoor signal strength but beware that the indoor strength may not account for the thick stone walling of older church buildings.

Some churches have **antennae/transmitters for mobile phone network providers** within, or on, the church tower. This option will usually mean a stable phone signal inside the church building but they are significant installations which require a faculty permission and a contractual licence between the PCC and network provider. Additionally, the network providers will usually see churches as a last resort, even in areas of low signal. More information can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/connectivity).

Additional information on wireless connectivity and some example providers can be found on the [Parish Buying website](https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/categories/phone-and-broadband/wireless-community-broadband).

1. **Boosting a Wi-Fi signal from another building**

Some churches have had success by boosting the signal from the Wi-Fi in their nearby church hall or office so that it can be used within the main church building.

This involves using a signal booster usually located inside the church building. The booster connects to the Wi-Fi in the hall or office and relays the signal inside the church building, allowing you to connect. It is very important to ensure that you have permission from your internet provider before you do this otherwise you may be in breach of the terms and conditions.

If you are interested in this option the first step is to talk to your current internet provider to understand their rules and the feasibility of boosting the Wi-Fi signal.

1. **Cabled broadband**

This involves adding a fixed-line broadband connection into the church building itself. Typically, broadband runs along landline telephone cables meaning you would need an [Openreach](https://www.openreach.com/network-services/providing-new-network) engineer to install a line. Some cable providers can offer an alternative, as can some fibre broadband specialists such as the Oxfordshire based [Gigaclear](https://www.gigaclear.com/home-broadband?utm_source=adwords&utm_term=&utm_campaign=Keyword+Mining&utm_medium=ppc&hsa_ver=3&hsa_kw=&hsa_src=g&hsa_cam=1446581929&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_acc=9558590911&hsa_mt=b&hsa_grp=60472952110&hsa_tgt=dsa-382145945653&hsa_ad=415756899764&gclid=CjwKCAjwlbr8BRA0EiwAnt4MTvC7hrK1JnSS3Ws5U8Yy5Hvh1WhKzhFazbI-61b5UBAne3cybXP6IxoC2z0QAvD_BwE).

This is the best option where it is available because it will provide the most reliable and sustainable internet connection and allow you to easily transfer between providers in the future.

You have traditionally needed to provide a postcode for the church building in order to have a fixed broadband line installed. Parish Buying (the national procurement service) have been working with Openreach to overcome this issue using the Unique Property Reference Number programme. You can read more about this [here](https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/images/documents/Problems_with_broadband_and_postcodes_2.pdf), as well as review the internet providers which have partnered with the national church.

**Part 2: What permission is needed?**

The Diocese of Oxford has recently made legal changes to make obtaining permission to enable the introduction of internet connection and equipment to stream services as easy as possible. Please read the attached Appendix 1 for advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC).

If you have any queries about what permission, if any, is needed for the works proposed at your church please contact the DAC team for advice by emailing dac@oxford.anglican.org

**Part 3: Funding**

Thanks to a generous private donation the Diocese is able to provide grants for introducing internet connectivity/Wi-Fi into the church building.

The criteria are as follows:

* Applications are open to any PCC, DCC or equivalent within the Diocese of Oxford
* Grants will only be given for costs associated with introducing internet connectivity into a church building\*
* The primary focus of these grants is for the introduction of an internet connection therefore we won’t fund:
	+ Livestreaming equipment
	+ Churches which already have Wi-Fi
* Grants are up to a maximum of £1,000 per PCC however benefices may submit one application form for multiple PCCs
* Grants will be for a maximum of 75% of the total cost of the project
* Grants will not be given to introduce connectivity into non-consecrated buildings (except where these are owned by the PCC and regularly and frequently used for worship)
* Grants will not be given for audio-visual (AV) equipment except where it is essential to introducing internet connectivity into the church building
* Grants will not be given for AV equipment upgrades
* Funds will only be released once List A/B or faculty permission (as required) has been obtained.

\*This can include the fees for your initial contract. For example, if you are contracted to pay ongoing connection fees of £20pcm for 24 months, you can add £480 (20 x 24) to your application as part of the total project cost.

**Internet Connectivity Grants** Application Form

# Section 1: Who is making this application

*Office use only*
Appl No:

Church, deanery or chaplaincy making this application.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Parish/benefice/chaplaincy |  |
| Deanery |  |

Details of the main contact person connected with this application (this is the person we will use to contact and discuss your application).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Address |  |
| Post code |  |
| Telephone number |  | email |  |
| Role |  |

# Section 2: Applying for internet connection

If you are applying for funding towards a livestreaming kit please skip to section 3.

|  |
| --- |
| Please tell us how you are planning to use your internet connection |
| *Internet connection will help us to …* |
| How are you planning to introduce the internet connection (which method)? |
|  |
| In what ways do you expect internet connection will help you become a more Christ-like church, for the sake of God’s world? |
|  |
| Please say how this project ties in with your wider strategy or plans: |
|  |
| Name of your preferred provider/contractor (if known): |
|  |
| If relevant, has permission (faculty or List A/B) been secured?If permission has not yet been given please indicate where you are in the process of applying |
|  |
| When do you expect work to begin? |
|  |

# Section 3: Costs

Please note that grants may be up to 75% of the project or £1,000, whichever is lower.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grant requested: | £ |
| What is the *total* cost of the project? | £ |
| What will the money be spent on?*Please detail the costs of each stage of the project and highlight where you intend to utilise a grant. For the purchase of a livestreaming kit please itemise each piece of tech you are planning to buy.* |
|  |
| Please tell us how you are funding the rest of the project cost. |
|  |

# Section 4: Bank Account Details

Grants will be made by BACS transfer: please provide details of the account to which money should be paid.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Treasurer |  |
| Telephone |  | Email |  |
| Account name |  |
| Sort code |  | Account no |  |

# Section 5: Completing your application

Before you sign and date this application, note that by signing you agree to provide an end of Project Report. You may also be invited to share your learning with others engaged in similar projects in the Diocese of Oxford. All monitoring and reporting feedback is compiled by the Diocese to assess the impact of grants awarded. Grant funding is to be spent as indicated in Sections 2/3 and any unspent money must be returned to the Diocese of Oxford. Your project may also feature in our promotional material (our Communications team will be in touch with you if this is the case) and from time to time, the Diocese of Oxford will publish a list of those parishes and deaneries in receipt of grants.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Signature of clergy lead (e.g. incumbent, area dean) |  | Role |  |
| Print name |  | Date |  |
| Signature of Lay leader(e.g. warden, lay chair) |  | Role |  |
| Print name |  | Date |  |

Send your completed form to the Generous Giving Adviser, Joshua Townson, by email joshua.townson@oxford.anglican.org or post a hard copy to: Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1GF.

*This document version (6) was published on 5th December 2022. Details correct at time of publication.*