

GETTING STARTED NOT READY TO SET UP A NEW PROJECT?



Is your church not ready to start a completely new project? Fear not, there are many options for you to play a small part in pre-existing work, or commit to just a one-off piece of action. This page brings them together to make it easier for you to consider your options.

ENGAGE WITH THE PLANNING SYSTEM



Engaging with the planning system is something that every church, diocese, district or synod can do. Consultation processes often get heated, with a NIMBY (not in my back yard) attitude prevailing. Responses get polarised, and it can be hard to get constructive feedback even though this is crucial to seeking solutions. At their best, churches can offer something different. Churches should see this as part of their mission, speaking into the issues affecting their communities, to stand up for the common good and prioritise the vulnerable. Through this, we can model a new way of being church.

The amount of time required for this is relatively minimal, and there's no commitment – you can respond to as many or as few as you like. It's great if you're knowledgeable about your area and about planning and housing, but there'll be people replying with very little knowledge at all, so don't worry too much about this. Check out [our advice](#) on engaging in the planning process.

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HELP AN EXISTING HOMELESSNESS CHARITY



There are all sorts of ways that churches can help homelessness charities without much commitment. Have you got money to commit, but not time? Donating, fundraising, or even leasing a house to a charity, can make a real difference. Have you got a bit of time? Charities which provide supported accommodation often need people to befriend or mentor their residents, and they may need volunteers to do maintenance or gardening. Many of those living in supported accommodation are still struggling financially, so charities often appreciate donations of toiletries or food. Get in touch with them, and talk through what they need and what you could provide to see how you can help. Check out our case study on One Roof Leicester to see how churches help them.

SEND VOLUNTEERS TO AN ADVICE SERVICE



You may not be able to set up an advice service yourself, but churches, and other local groups will sometimes partner

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with another provider such as Citizens Advice. Do your congregation have an appetite to help, but not the time to establish a service yourself?

REACH OUT INTO NEW HOUSING



Engaging with new housing doesn't have to be an ongoing commitment. The more work you do, the better, but don't be put off getting involved if you can't commit long term. Your work could be as basic as leafleting, or it could be providing a welcome pack for those who move in, including advice on local issues and an invitation to come to your church. For more information see our guide on engaging with new housing.

LEND YOUR VOICE TO LOCAL HOUSING CAMPAIGNS



You don't necessarily have to set up – or even join – a campaign, as there may be existing campaigns which are looking for names to add to their supporters' list. Doing something as small as reaching out if you share their aims could help to give clout to an existing campaign.

MAKE IT CLEAR THAT YOU'LL STAND WITH YOUR CONGREGATION

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Sometimes, just lending the church's support to a member of the congregation who has an issue with their landlord or the council can make the difference – it provides accountability. This doesn't have to be a general service or a regular occurrence, but making sure people know that the minister or another member of the congregation is happy to write or sign letters on their behalf, or go with them to meetings, can make a big difference.