

How we can help you

You may have responsibility for the property of your church or congregation.

You may be thinking that our approach could provide a solution for the property problems you may face; or you may not be sure, and would like to find out a bit more.

Either way, we will be happy to come and speak to you. We will look at the property and give you an initial assessment of whether we think there is potential for affordable housing, among whatever your congregation's needs are.

We have met many church people of all denominations across the country, sitting down with them to discuss whether the programme could offer them a solution. The needs of each church vary, but issues are often the same: properties are underused, not fit for purpose, in need of extensive repairs or land is lying idle. And there is often a crucial need in the community for affordable homes for people who are homeless or living in unfit or expensive accommodation.

We will be happy to come and speak to you, to look at your land or buildings and give you an initial assessment of whether we think the programme could work. We have published a handbook, *Make It Happen*, which has been praised for the clarity with which it opens up the mysteries of housing development to non-specialists.

The book, like our hands-on advice, starts by clarifying the needs of the congregation. It sets out issues like who makes the final decision of the future use of property; the listed building status; and planning consent. We keep things confidential, with the congregation in control of how quickly things move forward. If you decide to take things further, we can develop a project management plan, identifying key stages and what needs to be done and when.

While we provide initial advice and information freely, if you would like us to undertake detailed work with you to progress this approach and deliver affordable housing, there will be a cost. To ensure that we have the funds to continue and develop, we charge a fee that is agreed on a case by case basis. This is in line with other professional services that add value and produce tangible results.

We're not saying this approach is for everyone and every church building but we believe it should be considered. Our job is to help people do this. It can be a challenge, but so is doing nothing. It can take time, but time passes anyway. It may not be for you, but at least you will have tried.

The invaluable work the people of our churches have always done to help others clearly shows we can overcome challenges and achieve the seemingly impossible. Give us a chance to help you consider whether our property programme approach can find a solution for you.

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