

To: Headteacher and Chair of Governors of Voluntary Aided Schools within Hereford Diocese

By email

7th October 2026

Dear Colleagues

SCHOOL CONDITION ALLOCATIONS (SCA) 2027/2028

I hope you have all had a positive start to the new academic year.

As we approach the annual School Condition Allocation (SCA) bidding round, this is an ideal time to review your school's estate planning documentation and ensure it reflects both your educational priorities and long-term aspirations for the school.

The Department has published updated guidance on good estate management which should be reviewed and can be found on this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools/good-estate-management-for-schools-gems-what-s-new>

Fundamentals of good estate management

The [fundamentals of good estate management](#) section helps you see at a glance the key requirements. It's been reviewed and refreshed to reflect changes to the rest of the guidance.

Hereford Diocesan Board of Education (VA Schools)

To manage your estate strategically, you should have documents outlining your:

Estate Vision

Your estate vision should set out your plans for your school buildings and estate for the next 5 to 10 years.

It should:

- describe how the estate will support the educational vision and strategy of your organisation
- cover the next 5 to 10 years
- be prepared in consultation with relevant stakeholders (particularly any landowning parties)
- be signed off by your board

Estate Strategy

Your estate strategy provides the detail on how you will achieve your estate vision.

It should:

- explain how you will carry out the estate vision
- cover the next 3 to 5 years
- identify projected funding for estate development
- outline anticipated outcomes and improvements to deliver the education strategy
- be signed off by your board
- be reviewed alongside the estate vision.

Asset Management Plan

Your asset management plan is the working document that informs operational day to day activities on the estate.

It should:

- set out the actions needed to achieve the estate strategy
- cover up to the next 2 years
- include data and information about the estate
- detail the work necessary to maintain the estate
- be signed off by your board
- be aligned to the estate vision and strategy.

These documents should be shared with and approved by your governing board and reviewed regularly to ensure they remain aligned with the school's priorities and future plans. Please submit copies of your Estate Vision, Estate Strategy and Asset Management Plan to the DBE as part of your SCA application.

Your policies and procedures should ensure buildings support the provision of a safe environment for children and staff, and comply with all relevant regulations, including, but not limited to, those related to health and safety, fire safety and the control and management of asbestos.

Develop a clear understanding of your estate and maintain it through a planned programme of works, informed by up-to-date condition data and cost estimates.

Investment should be prioritised on keeping school buildings safe and in good working order by tackling poor building condition, building compliance, energy efficiency, and health and safety issues. This grant does not cover sufficiency (Basic Need) or expansion projects.

Please also consider the Church of England's ambition for schools and churches to achieve Net Zero Carbon. As part of your estate planning, we encourage you to identify opportunities to reduce carbon emissions and incorporate sustainable technologies wherever possible. We ask that this is reflected within your Estate Vision and Strategy, with all projects seeking to minimise their environmental impact and contribute towards carbon reduction where practicable.

There are no restrictions on the number of applications per school however you will need to demonstrate that projects submitted are stated as the highest priority within your Condition Survey (as applicable to the relevant year) and likewise reflected within your Asset Management Plan or Heat Decarbonisation Plan.

Conversely, if you are not prioritising the highest-priority projects identified in your condition survey or heat decarbonisation plan, please explain the rationale for this decision. We will also need to understand how these issues are being addressed and any risks associated with delaying or not undertaking the recommended works.

Please ensure Governors have got sufficient funds to cover the 10% contribution to all schemes you apply for.

Unfortunately, applications will not be considered without receipt of full list of documents as set out in the Application Form 2027/28 (attached).

Please submit your applications and relevant documentation by **27th November 2026** to sarah.beard@hereford.anglican.org

If you would like to discuss contents of this letter or specifics in relation to your school, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Beard

Diocesan Deputy Director of Education

Here is a list (with links) of the most significant areas extracted from the gov.uk website for your convenience:

Tools and checklists

Tools to help schools and responsible bodies manage their school buildings and land.

[Benefits of strategic estate management \(PDF, 687KB\)](#)

[Self assessment tool \(XLSX, 101KB\)](#)

[A guide to strategic estate documents \(PDF, 872KB\)](#)

[Good estate governance \(DOCX, 871KB\)](#)

[Top 10 estates checks for boards \(PDF, 634KB\)](#)

[The information you need to know about your estate \(ODT, 871KB\)](#)

[Introduction to condition surveys \(PDF, 610KB\)](#)

[How to begin estate performance management and benchmarking \(DOCX, 907KB\)](#)

[Tips to reduce energy and water use in schools \(PDF, 610KB\)](#)

[How to prioritise maintenance \(PDF, 671KB\)](#)

[Maintenance risk based tool \(XLSX, 195KB\)](#)

[Compliance tracker \(XLSX, 104KB\)](#)

[Estate projects checklist \(DOCX, 871KB\)](#)

[Estate management competency framework \(PDF, 887KB\)](#)