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**THE HOUSE OF GOOD**



© explorechurches.org

**User Guide**

# The social and economic value of your church



© Simon Jenkins



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**NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST**

**Yours for good.**

# 1

## Welcome

**From foodbanks to youth groups, churches across the UK provide a growing number of essential services for people in urgent need. We've long seen the power of churches to bring communities together and help them thrive. But up to now, we've never been able to measure it.**

In 2020-2021, our ground-breaking report **The House of Good**, using HM Treasury methodology, showed that the annual social and economic value of church buildings to the UK is worth around £55 billion.

We produced **The House of Good** to help to show Government and leaders in the church and heritage sectors why church buildings are important for society and for local people. You can find out more at [www.nationalchurchestrust.org/houseofgood](http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/houseofgood)

Since **The House of Good** was published, many churches have told us that they would like a local version which would allow them to calculate the value of the support they provide for local people; either directly themselves, or by allowing community organisations to use their building.

One of the benefits of doing this is that central and local government, church and heritage organisations and funders of church buildings will be more aware of the value of church buildings, **including yours**. This will allow more churches to remain open, in good repair and being used for a wide range of community, religious and cultural activities.

We realise that your church is important in many ways beyond the social and economic value indicated by this tool. We would like to be able to calculate many more things, but at present we are unable to. So, whilst this tool is an important indicator of the social and economic value produced by your church, it does not tell the whole story.

This guide will help you use **The House of Good: Local**. You may find it easier to print it off. We have included spaces to enter in data about your church so that you have it available in one place when you are using the calculator.

### Here to help

We are here to help you with this project and are able to assist you in any way that you need. You can contact us at [houseofgood@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:houseofgood@nationalchurchestrust.org).

Understanding more about any challenges that you face will be of help to us, so please let us know how you get on and if there is anyway we can help.

**The House of Good: Local** has been developed with the generous support of the **Benefact Trust**.



## 2

# About The House of Good – local calculator

**The House of Good: Local** works out the social, economic and wellbeing value of your church by using information about how much your church spends and earns on the running, staffing and hiring out of your building; on how many people use and benefit from some of the community support activities you run and host, on the number of people who volunteer at your church and the number of worshippers.

It does this by using financial data and also by converting a range of information into monetary equivalents. This results in a figure that shows, in financial terms, the value of your church.

Part of this involves converting wellbeing impacts into monetary equivalent values. These conversions are in keeping with those recommended in the July 2021 HM Treasury Green Book supplementary guidance on wellbeing.

So, for example, the yearly wellbeing value per person of someone successfully recovering from drug/alcohol dependency has a lower bound value of **£11,517**. Taking part in a community group is worth around **£1,200** per year, per person in wellbeing benefits. Full information on **The House of Good** is available on our website [www.nationalchurchestrust.org/thehouseofgood](http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/thehouseofgood)

This is how the UK Government works out the value of a range of social and economic activities. The valuation **The House of Good: Local** will show for your church is likely to be an **underestimate** as we do not measure every aspect of your church and its contribution to society.

We have designed the **The House of Good: Local** to be as simple as possible to use. But you will need to find a range of data and other information. This is described in detail on the following pages.

Once you have all the data and information, completing **The House of Good: Local** calculator should take under 30 minutes.



## 3 Setting up your account

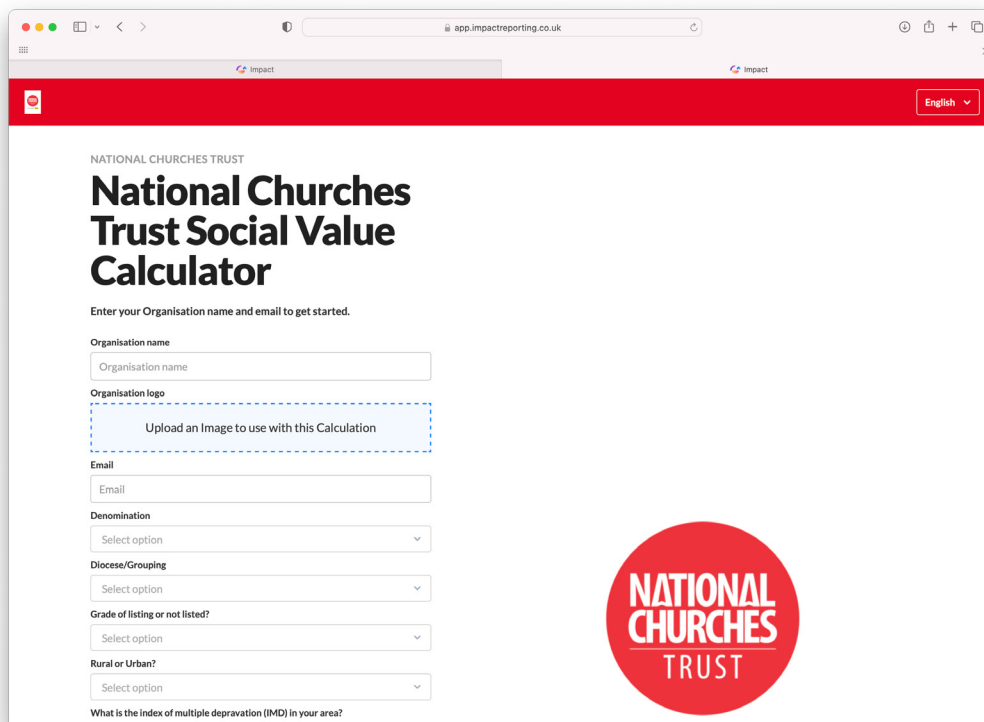
You can access **The House of Good: Local** calculator at:  
<https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/localcalculator>

You will find it easier to use the calculator if you prepare the information needed before you start to use it. But you will also be able to add information as you go along by saving the calculator and adding more information later. There is no requirement to login or logout.

### Setting up your account for The House of Good: Local

Once you have accessed the calculator the first thing you will need to do is to enter some general information about your church.

It may be more helpful for you to use your church email address if you have one, so that the information can be more easily shared. However, any email address will work.



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'National Churches Trust Social Value Calculator' interface. The page has a red header with the 'Impact' logo and a language dropdown set to 'English'. The main content area features the title 'National Churches Trust Social Value Calculator' and a prompt: 'Enter your Organisation name and email to get started.' Below this are several input fields: 'Organisation name' (text), 'Organisation logo' (with a dashed blue box and the text 'Upload an Image to use with this Calculation'), 'Email' (text), 'Denomination' (dropdown), 'Diocese/Grouping' (dropdown), 'Grade of listing or not listed?' (dropdown), 'Rural or Urban?' (dropdown), and 'What is the index of multiple deprivation (IMD) in your area?' (text). A large red circular logo for 'NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST' is positioned in the bottom right corner of the form area.



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## Setting up your account (Continued)

This includes: the denomination your church is part of (if that is not listed please select N/A), the diocese or grouping your church is part of (if that does not apply please select N/A), the index of multiple deprivation (IMD) of the area where your church is located (if you do not know, please select Unknown) and if your church has received a grant from the National Churches Trust.

If you do not know your IMD value, you can find it on these websites:

**Wales:** [apps.dataunitwales.gov.uk/welshindexofmultipledeprivation/](https://apps.dataunitwales.gov.uk/welshindexofmultipledeprivation/)

**Northern Ireland:** [deprivation.nisra.gov.uk/](https://deprivation.nisra.gov.uk/)

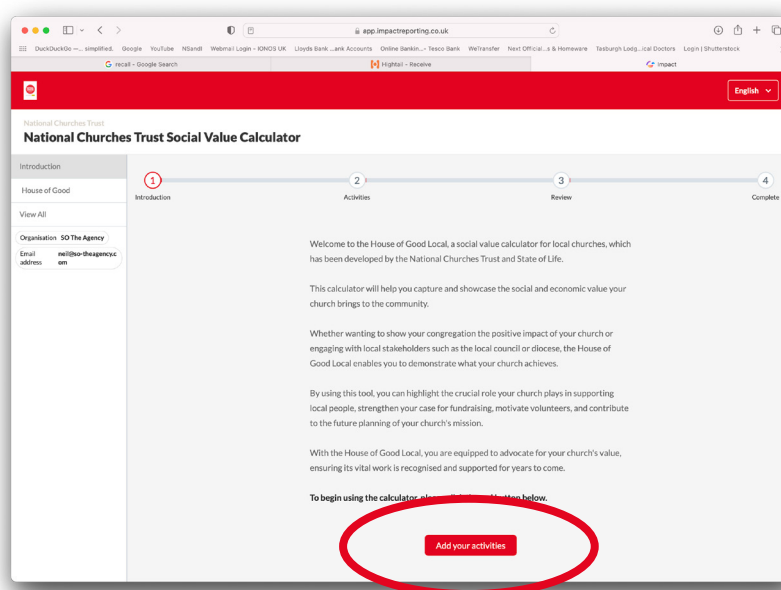
**England:** [imd-by-postcode.opendatacommunities.org/imd/2019](https://imd-by-postcode.opendatacommunities.org/imd/2019)

**Scotland:** [www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020v2-postcode-look-up/](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020v2-postcode-look-up/)

Once you have done this, please click the **red Start** button. You will be taken to a GDPR and Privacy policy agreement form. The data generated will support the work of the National Churches Trust, helping to enhance grant-making, fundraising, and public outreach efforts for all Christian churches. Any personal information you provide will be held securely in accordance with our privacy policy and the Data Protection Act 2018.

After you have clicked on the **grey agree** button you will be taken to a welcome page.

To then begin using the calculator, please click on the red **Add your activities** button at the bottom of the page.



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# Completing The House of Good: Local

**Once you have started the calculator, there are nine pieces of information that you can add. These are listed as section A to I.**

You can save the form and return to continue completing the calculator at any time. You will be sent an email with a link to your form, which is unique to your church.

Information on each of the nine sections is given below.

## **General information about your church**

**Sections A to C are for general information about your church.**

### **A. Total number of attendees at your main service on a typical Saturday/Sunday**

This is the total number of people who worship regularly at your church each week on a Saturday or Sunday. If your church holds more than one service, please enter the total for all the services.

**You can enter the number here to use later.**



# 4

## Completing The House of Good: Local (Continued)

### B. Average annual church expenditure

The second thing you will need to do is to enter is the total amount of money you spend each year on the running of your church. That includes running costs like heating and electricity and any employment costs for staff or clergy. Do please include any regular building maintenance costs, **but do not** include any one-off building costs such as major repairs or installing new facilities. Do not include the running costs of any mission work you undertake that takes place beyond your church building, but you can include the costs of any staff involved in this work.

We ask for your church's annual expenditure because it helps balance the benefits you bring against the costs you incur. How much you spend represents your cost of investment.

On the benefit side, this spending supports local businesses, creates jobs, and generates income for workers. Economists measure this economic contribution using Gross Value Added (GVA), which reflects how your church's financial activity boosts the local economy.

You can enter the number here to use later.

### C. Total number of regular volunteers in a year (people who volunteer at least once a month)

This can include people who volunteer for community activities that your church organises or who volunteer for community activities run by outside organisations, such as Scout groups, regular musical events or foodbanks. Include the number of people who volunteer in **any** capacity, not just those who volunteer to help with community activities. This could be people who look after the building, who help with financial matters or who assist with religious activities or education.

Volunteering can include those who help to organise or take part in a church service including lay readers, bell ringers and those helping in a children's service. The key is to record the number of volunteers who come in on a regular basis rather than just as a one off or occasionally.

If you do not know the exact number, please give as accurate an estimate as possible.

The same person should only be counted once. For example, if you have one volunteer who helps out in the garden and making hot drinks, count them under the activity they spend more time doing. So, if you have regularly each month 2 volunteer gardeners, 1 volunteer cleaner, and 3 volunteer fundraisers the answer would be 6 volunteers a month.

You can enter the number here to use later.

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# 4

## Completing The House of Good: Local (Continued)

### Information that is specific to activities and support services that take place in your church or church hall

**Sections D to I are about activities and support services that take place in your church or church hall.** Your church does not have to organise or run all the activities – you can add information about any activities or support services that are run by outside organisations that use your building for free or that hire out space to use. You will probably need to spend some time gathering the details you need. This may involve speaking to people who use your church to run events and activities. Your church does not need to have all the activities that **The House of Good: Local** calculator measures for it to work. You may also include activities that your church leads on that happen outside of the church building, provided they are covered as part of your expenditure.

Some of this information may be easy for you to gather. Other information may be harder to find. It is also possible that in some cases you cannot find the information at all. If you find it difficult to find the information, you can make **the best estimate**.

The specific activities or support services that you can enter are:

#### **D. Total number of people who participate in a choir or a music group regularly (at least once a month)**

This is the total number of people who used your church for singing or music over the last year. This could be, for example, the number of people who are members of a choir, who play the organ, or members of the community who are musicians who use your church for rehearsals or concerts.

You can enter the number here to use later.

#### **E. Total number of people who attend drug/alcohol support sessions regularly (at least once a month)**

This is the number of people who have attended drug or alcohol addiction support services held in your church regularly over the last year. These could be run by an organisation such as Alcoholics Anonymous.

You can enter the number here to use later.

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## Completing The House of Good: Local (Continued)

### F. Total number of people who use a food bank regularly (at least once a month)

This is the number of people who used your church to visit a foodbank or other food poverty services such as food pantries regularly over the last year. These could be a foodbanks that your church runs or that are run by organisations such as the Trussell Trust.

You can enter the number here to use later.

### G. Total number of people who attend the mental health support sessions regularly (at least once a month)

This is the number of people who used your church to take part in counselling or mental health support in activities held in your church regularly over the last year. This could be any counselling run by outside organisations who use your church, or any activities you run to help people with issues such as bereavement, domestic abuse or loneliness.

You can enter the number here to use later.

### H. Total number of young people who attend a youth group regularly (at least once a month)

This is the number of young people who have taken part in youth groups or activities held in your church regularly over the past year. This could be a youth club, sport groups or organisations such as Scouts or Brownies. Do not include activities for very young children such as nursery schools or classes).

You can enter the number here to use later.

### I. Total number of people who attend a community group regularly (at least once a month)

The final category covers any other sort of community activity that takes places in your church. This needs to be an activity that brings people together in an organised way and as part of a group. That could be for a warm space, a lunch club, toddler/parent groups, bereavement groups, cooking classes, advice groups, regular meetings of external clubs and societies or other social or community activities that your church organises.

You can enter the number here to use later.

#### Next:

Once you have added all the figures that are relevant to your church, please click the **Save and Review** button in the bottom right hand corner of the screen. You will then be taken to a summary page, which includes full details of the calculations and a pie chart.



## 5 So, what is the value of your church?

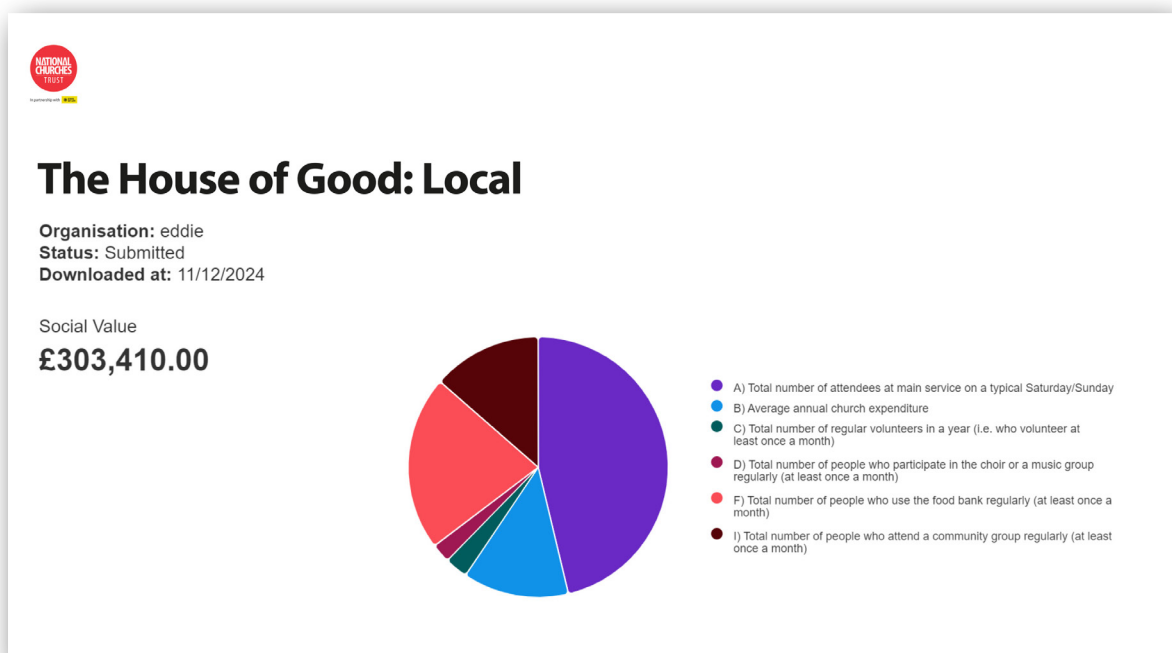
The final stage is then to click on the **Next Download** button in the bottom right hand corner of the screen.

To see the total annual social and economic value of your church you have two options.

1. The Download PDF option will provide a document that shows you the total annual social and economic value of your church. You will also see a summary of exactly how the total figure was calculated.
2. The Download CSV option will show you a valuation in a spreadsheet of the information you have entered by category and showing the total annual social and economic value of your church. The CSV is an added extra in case you find it helpful to have the data in a more cut and paste format.

There is no right or wrong monetary figure for the value of your church. Some churches may register a higher figure than others, but this may reflect where a church is situated or what sort of community activities it is able to run.

While State of Life provides assurance of the House of Good: Local, churches take responsibility for their 'inputs' to the model and the use of their reports.



# 6

## What to do with the information

We hope that you find the total annual social and economic value of your church interesting and useful.

- You may want to tell your congregation about it so that they are aware of the contribution it makes to the local community or use it as part of your annual report to the parish.
- You may wish to share the information with your denomination, other local churches and with your local council or MP.
- You may also find it useful for fundraising purposes, for example if you are making a funding application.
- The information could also make a positive story for the local media.

However you use the information, we think this is the first time individual churches will be able to show the value they bring to society, and in particular the welfare and wellbeing they create for local people.

### Here to help

We are here to help you with this project and are able to assist you in any way that you need. You can contact us at [houseofgood@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:houseofgood@nationalchurchestrust.org)



Ballintoy Church of Ireland church © L Mcilveen