

## FAQ's

### **In a large, draughty church building, what affordable steps can be taken to make the building warmer and more energy efficient?**

*The first step is to get the basics right and the National Environment Team have done a series of webinars to help with this, in particular the "[Housekeeping and Quick Wins](#)" one. Some suggestions from this are to check and monitor your energy bills & meter readings, change all lightbulbs to LEDs and optimise your existing heating system. Next, you can get an energy audit done, which will help identify specific improvements for your church. Parish Buying offers some [subsidised](#) ones annually. Finally, the "[Practical Path to Net Zero](#)" checklist helps guide churches through a range of actions.*

### **Why does the Church of England have a 2030 target, rather than 2050 in line with the Government? Should we not wait and see what new technologies develop to support the move to net zero?**

*The motion to reach Net Zero by 2030 was passed by General Synod in 2020. Originally a resolution was brought with a target date of 2045, and it was an amendment brought by a member of Synod to bring it forward to 2030. So, it was the elected representatives at Synod who voted for this for two reasons. Firstly, this is a matter of our faith and our response to the calling to safeguard God's creation. Secondly, we are in a climate emergency, and we cannot take 20-25 years to respond, we need to act now.*

*There are likely to be new technologies which develop over the coming years that we can make use of. However, that does not mean we should do nothing while we wait for them to appear. Firstly, they could cost significant sums of money- so start to plan for this. Secondly, there are smaller, still meaningful, actions to take in the meantime- changing to LED bulbs, draught proofing, switching to a green energy provider and so on. Finally, every gram of carbon saved over the next eight years is important- so let's get on with what we can do now, and we can consider new technologies as they arise.*

### **Is there a recommended free, simple building energy use calculator?**

*There are two recommended calculators. Firstly, the [Energy Footprint Tool](#) (EFT), run through the online Parish Returns System. This is the tool we as a Diocese, alongside the National Research and Statistics Team, will use to monitor reductions in carbon emissions.*

*However, the EFT isn't open for data submission all year round so an alternative is the [360 carbon](#) calculator, designed with churches in mind.*

## **How do we manage potential conflicts between achieving net zero and building heritage issues?**

*Firstly, we are working to reduce these conflicts. The DAC is increasingly supportive of environmental and net zero focused projects, particularly where churches engage with the DAC early on for advice. The DAC can hold site visits and has a range of expertise on the Committee who can provide preliminary advice.*

*There have also been recent [changes to the Faculty](#) rules, most of which make it easier for churches to make net zero adaptations. These new rules will come into effect on 1 July 2022.*

## **Is there a checklist to work through that moves towards net zero?**

*Yes, the "[Practical Path to Net Zero](#)" is designed for churches to work through, starting with easier, more affordable actions and moving up to more complex work, such as installing heat pumps.*

## **Can solar panels be put on churches? Can they be put on listed churches?**

*Yes, solar panels can be installed on both listed and unlisted churches, or other buildings such as church halls. Although Ecclesiastical Exemption means Listed churches don't have to get Listed Building Planning Permission for internal works, it is required for works altering the outside of a building.*

*As with many building projects, the advice is to discuss plans with the DAC (and the Local Planning Authority where necessary) early and get preliminary advice.*

*You can read about other churches who have installed solar panels [here](#).*

## **What can we do collectively to make sure our efforts are as effective as possible?**

*Firstly, share information, experiences and resources with one another. If you've installed solar panels, tell other churches about it. If you have a wildflower area in your churchyard, show others how you created it. Whether your experience is positive or not, share it constructively so others can learn from it. If you would be interested in writing a case study for the Diocesan website on something you've done, email Anna on [environment@carlisle-diocese.org.uk](mailto:environment@carlisle-diocese.org.uk)*

*We should also look outside the Church- you could work with the local school, a local charity (such as Cumbria Wildlife Trust) or the local community on a range of projects. The ripple effect of encouraging others to act means the reduction in emissions extends far beyond the church walls.*

### **What are some examples of using renewables in churches?**

*Nationally, there are [case studies](#) showing a variety of churches who have installed renewables. In the Diocese, Pooley Bridge St Paul has solar panels and Ings St Anne & Mungrisdale St Kentigern both have heat pumps.*

### **Does the Diocese have a budget for reaching net zero? Are there other funding sources, such as grants, for churches?**

*The Diocese is currently planning the budget for the coming years and net zero will be considered in this. We will also consider possible partners in this work, such as Community Benefit Societies or B Corps, who may not offer funding but could offer reduced costs for installation of renewables. Obviously, before any such partnerships are shared with churches or schools, the Diocese needs to do due diligence to ensure the partnerships are suitable for all involved.*

*Churches are still likely to need to raise significant sums themselves- there's advice on [fundraising for environment projects](#) from the National Church and there is also a series of [webinars on fundraising](#) you can catch up on.*

### **What's the role of the Eco Church scheme in reaching net zero?**

*The [Eco Church](#) survey and resources are designed to equip churches to express their care for God's creation. The survey covers 5 key areas: Worship & Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community & Global Engagement and Lifestyle. The scheme has broader aims than just reaching net zero carbon emissions, but absolutely has a part to play in the net zero by 2030 target. The [survey](#) provides a useful framework of actions to help get churches started in this work.*

### **What is the impact on travel- should we insist on only using public transport or electric vehicles?**

*The reimbursable travel of Diocesan clergy and staff is included in the Net Zero by 2030 scope. There will be several ways we encourage sustainable travel. Firstly, with the Government's ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030, there is already the incentive for people looking to replace their cars to consider making the switch.*

*Secondly, the National Environment Team are looking into other ways to encourage switching, including possible loan or salary sacrifice schemes. The Diocese will also consider other ways to reduce travel, including continuing to hold some meetings online.*