

## Looking toward Carbon NET-Zero and Forthcoming Changes to the Faculty System

We are already well into 2022 and the move towards the Church of England target of Carbon Net Zero by 2030 is becoming increasingly more important. International events will increase the burden and costs as we all endeavour to meet this target. However, we need to try and keep our focus and improve the drive towards reducing our carbon footprint.

Nationally, there will be amendments to the Faculty system. The aim being to reduce the regulatory burden for works that shift the church towards net-zero carbon. These were approved by General Synod on 9 February. The rules will now be laid before both houses of parliament, before enactment. The rules are due to come into force on 1 July. The motives behind these rule changes are:

- (a) to encourage behaviour that will move churches towards net-zero carbon
- (b) to make the permissions route more straightforward for proposals that are most likely to reduce carbon;
- (c) to increase the strength of the case needed for a parish that has a proposal that will commit it to producing additional carbon well after 2030, for example, installing a new oil boiler;
- (d) not to put into the rules matters better dealt with by guidance.

For example, the amendments will remove the current provision for the like-for-like replacement of a boiler that uses a fossil fuel supply; such work will instead require a faculty.

Every faculty application will require an explanation of how the applicants have had due regard to the guidance in relation to Net-Zero and any environmental implications. Our Diocesan Chancellor has already implemented this change and has requested a document to illustrate any impact on carbon footprint and/or production of a carbon audit.

The new regulations will give due regard to all areas relating to this commitment to 2030, so please give particular consideration to these areas:

- Draught proofing doors and windows
- Insulating heating pipes
- Use of low-energy lighting
- Replacing boilers with non-fossil fuels
- Consider roof insulation where appropriate
- Use of soft furnishings: kneelers, cushions and carpet runners
- Electric Vehicle Charging points
- Solar Panels
- Electric Heating

*Please note that the like for like replacement of gas and oil tanks will no longer be permissible under List B and will require a full faculty from July 2022.*

All architects have been requested to highlight and advise on any areas that your church building could be improved, in relation to its environmental impact, within the QI report.

Unfortunately, we are all too aware of the sharp rise in energy prices as a result of international tensions. Affecting us both at home and at church. Don't forget simple approaches to reducing energy usage. Such as switching lights and equipment off when not needed. Also, review your heating strategy, when it comes on and goes off and your

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thermostat settings. One church has just done this and discovered that they were heating the church at night when it was not needed, mistakenly thinking that the organ needed it! They are therefore currently testing a 45% reduction in heating times. Heating can be turned off 30 minutes before the end of a service and the church will take some considerable time to cool down.

More detailed information on energy saving ideas for churches are covered in these guidelines; <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Energy%20-%20Economic%2C%20Environmental%20and%20Efficiency%20%20Guidelines.pdf>

Although energy companies have stopped offering discounted deals to encourage switching, if you are switching or taking out a new contract don't forget to use it as an opportunity to ensure that energy is generated from renewable resources or charged on a green tariff. This helps in reducing your carbon footprint

For further help and advice on all these matters consult with your church architect, the DAC and the DAC Heating Adviser and the Diocesan Environment Officer. Please also take a look at the wide advice available on the internet especially through the Parish Buying website and the various webinars run through the churchcare website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/webinars-getting-net-zero-carbon#na>

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