



Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham DAC

Net Zero Carbon: Guidance for Churches and Church Buildings

BACKGROUND

In July 2022, General Synod endorsed a national **'Routemap to Net Zero Carbon'**. This is the vehicle by which dioceses can achieve net zero carbon. It sets out key milestones for the various parts of the diocese including schools, cathedrals, diocesan offices, and churches and defines how the national Church is contributing to these milestones.

In October 2023, Diocesan Synod approved the Southwell and Nottingham Net Zero Carbon Action Plan based on the Routemap.

Churches now applying for an energy related faculty (such as heating, lighting, insulation etc.) are required to demonstrate their Net Zero Carbon commitment. This will demonstrate to the DAC and then the Diocesan Chancellor, what efforts are being made to help sustain the church building towards a carbon zero future.

HOW?



The first step is for churches to measure their energy use, using the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT). Last year only 65% of churches recorded their energy usage but all churches need to do so. **In 2026, National 'Quick Win' funding will be dependent on having completed the EFT.**



Complete any 'quick wins' on the building that may seem small but can have a big effect on energy use (see list later in this document).



Then take simple steps to reduce energy use following the Practical Path to Net Zero (PPTNZ).



Energy Audits (costing about £500) can help identify where best to focus attention.



Switch to a renewable source as soon as this becomes possible.



It is important to plan ahead for boiler replacement by having an action plan for decarbonisation, including the EFT and having a PP2NZ.



As part of 'Caring for Creation' all churches are strongly encouraged to become EcChurches with [Eco Church A Rocha](#)

THE FACULTY PROCESS & PERMISSIONS

The revisions to the Faculty Jurisdiction from July 2022, added and amended items within List A and List B, (these are works that may be undertaken without a faculty subject to specified conditions. List A works can be done without authorisation, but List B works come to the DAC and are then approved by the Archdeacon ([see A & B Lists](#)).

'List B' projects to which the net zero guidance applies must include an explanation as to how the applicants, in formulating the proposal, have shown due regard to that guidance in the proposal sent to the Archdeacon. The same will apply to any works that require a full faculty application when the proposal is sent to the Diocesan Chancellor.

Failure to submit the supporting Net Zero documentation will result in delays with the approval process, so please include the EFT data and the PPTNZ checklist.

The revisions to the A and B Lists have been designed to encourage parishes to not only think about Net Zero and their commitments to reducing their carbon footprint, but to enable beneficial changes to the way they heat and care for their church ([see CofE website](#)).

THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW

All churches should be working towards Net Zero Carbon following the Diocesan Net Zero Carbon Action Plan ([see here](#)).

Things you can do immediately, to help keep warm AND move towards Net Zero:



Maintain your roof and gutters to prevent damp.



Fix any broken window panes.



Insulate pipes, pumps and valves.



Draught-proof the building.



Install automatic timers for lights and heating.



Upgrade and improve the lighting to LED lamps and fittings.



Install a smart meter to measure the energy you use.



Buy heated cushions for pews.

Things you can plan to do in the near future, using your PP2NZ:



Complete the [heating checklist](#) to help everyone understand the current situation and begin planning.



Switch to 100% renewable electricity (seek out a Green Energy provider).



Improve heating controls by optimising heating settings and/or improve the efficiency and longevity of the existing heating system; reduce background heating hours or the temperature.



Add insulation to loft areas and cavities.



Consider secondary or double glazing (UPVC should be a last resort).



Consider solar panels.



Use energy saving devices (e.g. for water cisterns or Savawatt).



Change the heating system to a new non-solid fuel option (e.g. infrared wall/ceiling panels, under pew heaters, or electric boiler).

GRANTS AND FUNDING

Use the links below to find out more about potential grants and funding you could apply for:



[Cornerstone | The Church of England](#)



[The Church of England | Grants and Funding](#)

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