TOGETHER WE ARE

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUFFOLK

Together for God's creation

Our journey to Net Zero Carbon by 2030









cofesuffolk.org

Net Zero Carbon 2030



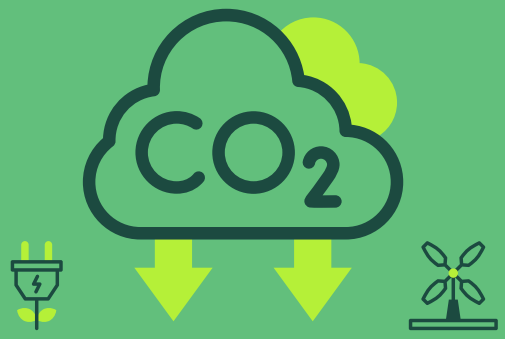
The Revd Canon Dr Mark Powley, Principal of St Hild College, summed this up in his reflections[1] on why achieving net zero is missional:

"In the wonder of our climate we see the glory of God, and in all the complex processes that support it we glimpse God's wisdom. To learn about this, and to be moved to care about it, is part of our worship – an overflow of thanks and praise.

Responding to the climate crisis is also an act of mission. It demonstrates the relevance of Christianity when the church's actions so far have fallen short. It models responsible discipleship.

It responds to human need. Quite simply, addressing climate change is something the Good Samaritan would do in our day, and other "Good Samaritans" around the world are already showing us how to do likewise. It is a response to injustice: it is our economy, and our churches, that have benefitted most from fossil fuel use, but it is the poorest societies who face the most tragic costs: drought, famine, fires, extreme weather events, resource insecurity and mass migration.

Because of all this, and simply because the earth is the Lord's, achieving net zero is an act of mission."



[1] Church of England, Theological perspectives, pg.4, "A theological perspective on net zero carbon."

Welcome

'God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good'.

(GENESIS 1:31A)

Dear friends,

It is my privilege to present this booklet to you. It sets out the key messages from our diocese's Net Zero Carbon Action Plan. These are the steps that our diocese will take between now and 2030 to reduce our climate impact, with the ultimate ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions.

Our plan has been shaped by both the principles of the Church of England Routemap to Net Zero Carbon 2030 and the diocesan vision of Growing in God. It provides us with a clear framework for action, ensuring that our plan is consistent with national guidance, rooted in good stewardship and aligned with the wider church's vision.

The action plan demonstrates the scale and nature of the changes required to achieve net zero. It is all too easy when faced with the enormity of the task before us to simply throw up our hands in despair and to ask what we can do as individuals, as parishes and benefices, or even as a diocese to make any material response to such a challenging issue. However, it is a matter of small steps. We need to remember that every time we make that adjustment to our lifestyle or recalibrate our energy output we are helping to reach our ambitious targets.

Of course, while we have estimated the financial costs of achieving net zero, it must be said that the plan does not represent a financial commitment to provide the funding that is required. Therefore, our ability to achieve net zero will be dependent on the availability of funding. Despite this, our action plan offers a roadmap to help inform decision making, maintain momentum, and encourage collaborative efforts across the diocese and beyond on our path to net zero.

The full plan is available to read on our website, please do have a look at the detail, click here. Let us join together to Care for God's Creation.

David Jenkins

Archdeacon David Jenkins

CHAIR
CREATION CARE WORKING GROUP









TOGETHER WE ARE

SAVING ENERGY BY REMEMBERING TO SWITCH OFF LIGHTS, HELPING OUR CHURCHES SHINE WITH CARE NOT CONSUMPTION



Working together to care for God's Creation

As Christians, we are called to live out our faith, even when what we do seems difficult and unpopular.

The Church of England is very clear that caring for creation is central to being a Christian in today's world:

" Care for God's creation is part of the Christian life. We honour the Creator when we care for creation. We show love to our neighbours when we care about the places they live, near and far. And we work for justice when we seek to tackle climate change and halt the loss of nature."

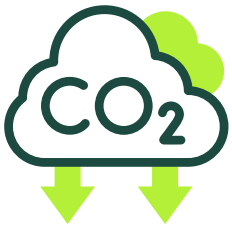
Creation care can become an integral part of the five marks of mission, enabling us to share the Christian faith within our communities and beyond. It's hard to avoid the negative impacts our lifestyles are having if we take seriously our commitment to respond to human need by loving service, to transform unjust structures of society, and to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The climate emergency

Over the last 100 years, the average temperature of the atmosphere near the Earth's surface has risen by about 0.9 degrees Celsius. Almost all climate scientists agree that global temperatures will continue to rise. By how much depends on us.

In 2015 almost every nation adopted the Paris Agreement, promising to reduce their carbon output as soon as possible with the aim to limit global warming to "well below 2 above pre-industrial levels" and to pursue "efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5."

If the temperature rises over 2 degrees, the impact could be extreme and difficult to cope with. There are likely to be more extreme weather events (e.g. heat waves, floods, tropical storms, etc.) and sea levels will continue to rise. These effects will become more likely and will have a bigger impact when they happen.



TOGETHER WE NURTURE THE WORLD AROUND US



St Andrew's Church, Bredfield, completes eco-friendly heating and lighting projects

The church room project was made possible through the Church of England's Quick Wins grant — a scheme that supports small-scale environmental upgrades — and additional support from the Bredfield Town Lands Charity. The project included the installation of modern electric panel heaters, offering responsive, zoned heating and replacing the old LPG system completely and the replacement of all internal and external lighting with energy-efficient LED units, improving visibility while dramatically reducing electricity consumption.

The project to transform the main church was awarded a grant from the Church of England's Give to Go Green fund. This programme operates as a match funding initiative, requiring parishes to raise the same amount of funding locally in order to receive the grant.

The project included the removal of their condemned pew heaters, and installation of new, energy-efficient under-pew electric heaters, each individually controlled to allow flexible, targeted heating of only the areas in use, and replacement of all interior lighting with low-power LED units, which use only around 10% of the energy of the previous fittings.



Together, the projects will cut annual energy use by over 1,000 kWh and eliminate all direct fossil fuel uses – important savings for a small parish that support the Church of England's 2030 net zero goal.

Achieving Net Zero Carbon

Our diocese has produced an action plan that sets out the Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich's response to the climate emergency.

It demonstrates our commitment to the motions of both the Church of England General Synod and Diocesan Synod to achieve net zero carbon by 2030. The action plan focuses on the actions the diocese can take to reduce carbon emissions in the areas it has a significant degree of influence or control over.

The planning principles of the Church of England's Routemap to Net Zero Carbon 2030 have been adopted in the creation of this document and highlights how our net zero carbon ambition can contribute to the diocese's mission of "Growing in God." The action plan envisions our diocese using less energy from cleaner sources, travelling sustainably and only offsetting carbon emissions that we cannot reduce.

The action plan focuses on the carbon emissions that are in scope of the Church of England Routemap. These are the operational carbon emissions from the energy used in our buildings and work-related travel.

Other sources of emissions are likely to come into scope after 2030, but these are not considered in this document.

Our aim is to reduce net carbon emissions across the diocese to 10% of their baseline level, subject to the availability of resources to deliver, with residual emissions offset to reach net zero.

To achieve this will require a combination of reduced energy use through behavioural change and installation of energy efficient technologies, decarbonisation of heating, on site renewable energy generation, use of renewable energy tariffs and increased use of sustainable transport.



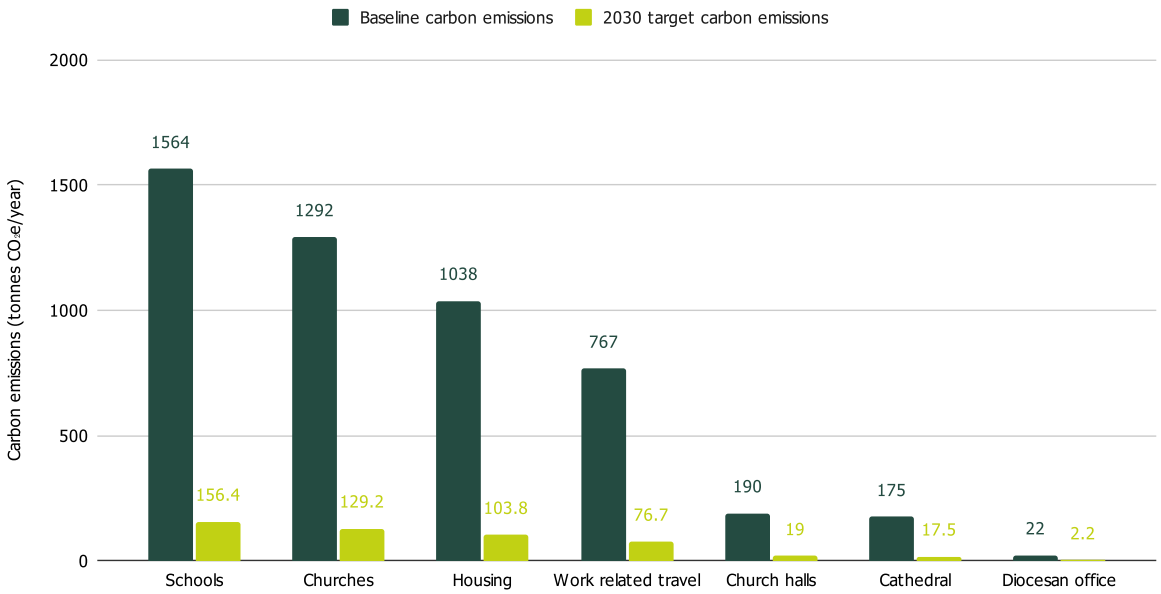




New LED lighting and under pew heating, part of the 'heat the people not the church' energy saving idea

Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich baseline and target carbon emissions

The chart below shows the diocese's current carbon emissions, with 2023 emissions used as a baseline, and the 2030 emissions target for each area within the scope of the action plan.



Action plans and overcoming challenges

Individual action plans have been created for each business area, which together form a holistic approach to achieving net zero.

These action plans have been created to ensure our diocese achieves the milestones laid out in the Church of England Routemap. Each plan has been broken down into phases forming a logical sequence, with subsequent phases building upon the work completed in each previous phase.

Particular focus is given to the three largest sources of emissions within the diocese – schools, churches and clergy housing.

The Challenge

The action plan acknowledges that there are numerous challenges to achieving net zero, and identifies the key barriers to progress as resources, technical challenges, energy pricing and competing priorities. The practical solutions and mitigations that can be taken to overcome each of these barriers are presented.

See how St Mary's Church, Hadleigh earned their **Eco Church Bronze Award**



TOGETHER WE NURTURE THE WORLD AROUND US





Gold Eco Award for St Mary's Church, Haughley A Carbon Negative Church

St Mary's, Church, Haughley, is the 4th church to receive the Gold Eco Church award in Suffolk. The Award is given by A Rocha UK, and reflects commitment to walk in step with nature and put creation care at the heart of what they do.

The team have worked over several years to increase the biodiversity of the churchyard and other areas in the village; this has resulted in identification of sixty plant species normally dormant but now visible in uncut areas of the churchyard, enhancing the number of swift and owl boxes in the village, and identification of over ninety bird species locally. They also produced local nature walk footpath maps and is very proud that their Land Management Plan and Plan for Nature has been identified as a nationally leading exemplar by A Rocha UK.

Solar panels were installed on the South Aisle roof, and they are signed up to a renewable electricity tariff, making the church net carbon negative. The church is a Fairtrade Place of Worship, committed to Earth Hour, Plastic Free July, and Fairtrade Fortnight, and runs a monthly children's active service called 'Pizza' which entails an Eco-Church activity at every service. The Church of England Primary School in the village is, with the church's support working towards the Christian Aid 'Global Neighbours' School Award. St Mary's works closely with Haughley Nature Watch, the Parish Council, and the Parish Biodiversity Group, and has held a major community exhibition of Haughley wildlife photographs.



The Eco Church group have ambitious plans to continue churchyard development, for example with a wildflower meadow area and a sensory garden.

TOGETHER WE ARE

GROWING GREENER WITH THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND **GIVE TO GO GREEN** INITIATIVE, MATCHING EVERY GIFT TO CARE FOR CREATION.



What next?

The Diocesan Environment Group have been given responsibility for monitoring and reporting on our progress against the actions in this plan to the strategic programme board, Bishop's Council, Diocesan Synod, and the Church of England Net Zero Carbon Programme Board.

The Diocesan Environment Group will also be responsible for an annual review of this document, to ensure that it is regularly updated to align with changes in best practice and to reflect any future modifications to our approach.

This document sets out an ambitious yet realistic approach for the diocese to reduce carbon emissions from now to 2030 and beyond.

It demonstrates that, despite the significant challenges the diocese face, there are actions that can be taken now, and in the future, to make sustainable progress towards net zero carbon and show our commitment to care for creation.

Demonstrator House
Becoming Net Zero in Walsham le Willows

Download your copy of the extensive and detailed action plan here.

TOGETHER WE NURTURE THE WORLD AROUND US



Church community raises over £23,000 through the 'Give to Go Green' scheme

The Church of England in Suffolk is taking part in the Give to Go Green campaign, which sees the national CofE match any money raised for eco projects – and is urging more churches across the county to join up.

The community of St Peter and St Paul Church in Pettistree has raised a total of £23,910, including match-funding and gift aid, to revamp and update its parish room, which was built in the churchyard in 1891. The building is being fully insulated and a ramp installed for disabled access.

Churchwarden Martin Corrall said: "The idea is for it to become a useful community resource and bring it into the 21st century. It is sometimes easy to feel powerless in the face of climate change, but our church and its community enthusiastically embraced the recent opportunity of Give to Go Green and its matched funding. The objective, to reduce our carbon footprint and make the parish room a warmer, cheaper to heat space for the wider use of the community, was simple to understand and very well supported."

For every £1 a church raises during the scheme's window, the Church of England will match it. The scheme is completely digital, run through the online contactless giving platform 'Give a Little'.

THIS IS WHO WE ARE. TOGETHER.

We commit to cherish God's creation for generations to come

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUFFOLK













































