



 DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells
Living and telling the story of Jesus

Caring for creation

Our journey to becoming a net zero diocese

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“While what we are already doing across Bath and Wells to care for creation is something to be proud of, I really hope we can continue to build on it.”

Bishop Michael



Introduction

I am so proud to see how we are caring for creation as I visit churches, schools and chaplaincies across our diocese. It is fantastic to see the change we can make when we set our minds to it. Such change has not come about by accident, it is the result of intentionality, enormous amounts of hard work, determination and focus by a lot of people. I thank all those who have made this happen, for their engagement, and interest and conviction and passion. But why, as God's people should this be a matter of such importance in our lives of faith, in our lives in the world, in all that we are? The fifth mark of mission of the Anglican Communion is to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

It is a wonderful aim to have, a great mark of mission to have, but why? Why as Christians should we be saying, “yes, this is a core part of our faith and belief. We are absolutely committed to it.”?

When I am asked about this, I start by saying that a really important part of Christian theology is that ‘matter matters’. We are made of material, parts of all that is around us. Not only is this who we are, it's who God chose to become. In the first few verses of John's Gospel it says:

“In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him and without him not one thing came into being.”

We believe in the Word made flesh and Jesus becoming one of us. Becoming part of our world and made out of 'stuff'. It is therefore central to our faith that matter matters. And therefore we need to take care of it.

The scripture also reminds us that it is not all about us! It is not just human beings that get to praise God or worship God – it is everything. Psalm 148 is about all matter, all creation, having its part in praising God, just as much as we have our part.

“Praise the Lord, from the earth, sea monsters, and all ocean depths, lightening and hail, snow and clouds, strong winds that obey his command. Praise him, hills and mountains, fruit trees and forests.”

It's extraordinary to have all that diversity saluted and recognised and spoken of as praising God. Matter matters, and all matter praises God.

Christian theology also tells us that all this wonder around us, all that we love, all that we value will have a part to play in the future that will be at the end of time. It won't all be chucked away, it will be remade. Revelation, Chapter 1, Verse 5 says “See I am making all things new.”

Yes, all this world around us will be made anew at the end of time, but the newness

that is made will be made from what is here now. Therefore, what is here now matters. That is why we should we strive to care for creation. While what we are already doing across Bath and Wells to care for creation is something to be proud of, I really hope we can continue to build on it. It would be great if we can get to a 100% return rate for our Environment Footprint Tool and to see more churches engage with Eco Church, which seems to capture so much of what we need to be talking about and doing.

I would also like to see us think internationally. One of the things we have been talking about with our Zambian link dioceses, is looking for the areas of common interest. If you talk to people in Zambia about climate change you will see that their concerns are far more present than ours – they're focused on the flooding they are seeing, the drought they are experiencing and the impact climate change is having on food security.

Finally, let's not hide our light under a bushel. We are doing great things to care for creation, as you will see as you read through this document. Let us think how our efforts can encourage work across our wider communities. We have a voice, we have examples to share, and we can make a difference more widely.

Bishop Michael

The diocesan-wide picture

10,000 = 2,000

tonnes of CO₂ per annum

return flights LHR-SYD

Our 555 churches, 236 clergy houses, 2,720 acres of glebe land, 181 schools, and diocesan offices produce 10,000 tonnes of CO₂ per annum, the equivalent of 2,000 return flights from London Heathrow, to Sydney, Australia.





“To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.”

The Anglican Communion's 5th mark of mission

Eco Church

Eco Church is a programme run by A Rocha UK to equip churches to care for creation. Eco Church provides a framework to support churches, and their leaders, to take practical action on caring for God's earth, through the Eco Church survey.



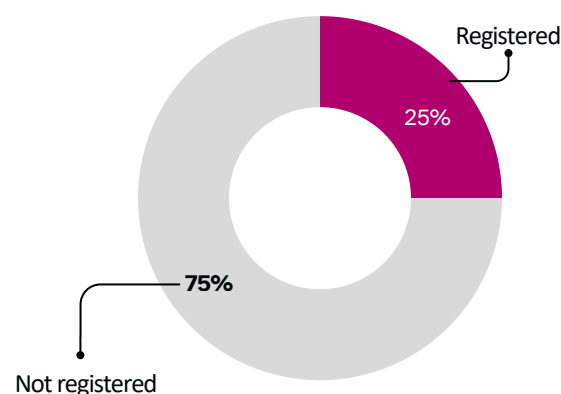
The Eco Church survey is a free online tool encompassing all areas of church life broken down into: worship and teaching; buildings and energy; land and nature; community and global engagement; and lifestyle.

The survey helps you assess your church's progress and guide you to take further action as you work towards a bronze, silver or gold Eco Church award.

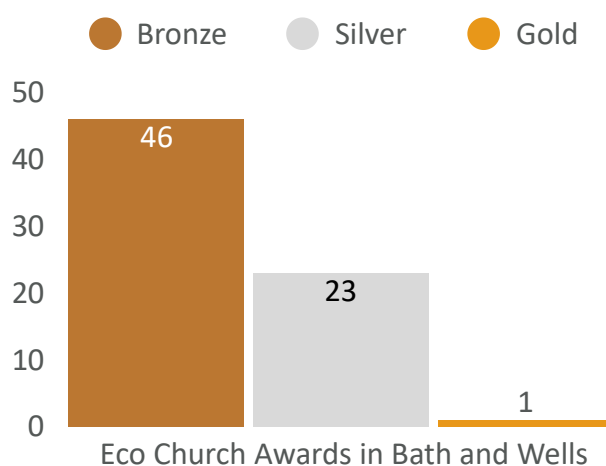
Sara Emmett, Environment and Climate Justice Adviser says, “I want to encourage all churches across our diocese to join us on the Eco Church journey. It is a really helpful process to help us achieve small but important steps to make a difference for the benefit of the church, its community and, of course, our beautiful and precious planet.”

“I am proud of all the hard work being done around the diocese on Eco Church, which seems to capture so much of what we want to talk about. It would be lovely to see that more widely adopted and acted up across the diocese.”

Bishop Michael



Currently 25 per cent of churches in Bath and Wells are registered with Eco Church.





And the gold goes to..!

Congratulations to St Michael's, Flax Bourton who, in October 2025, became the first Bath and Wells church to be awarded a gold Eco Church Award. Revd James Harris, Rector, said, "Assessors praised our evident creativity and genuine passion for care of Creation and the authentic way this work threads through all of our worship, mission and governance, as well as connecting with the wider community and bringing different generations together. They also noted the variety of innovative projects — from our nature lending library and seed exchange to our planned for infra-red Halo heating system, creative prayer and worship, and vibrant events where the whole community get involved."



Debbie shares the results of a recent Bio Blitz event at Keinton Mandeville at this year's Diocesan Celebrating Creation Service.

Start small

That's the advice from Debbie von Bergen, from Keinton Mandeville Church, which is working towards a silver Eco Church Award after achieving bronze in 2024.

She says, "Just do little bits at a time. Don't try and jump off into an enormous big think, like changing the heating all at once, because that's quite daunting. But things like planting a few crocus bulbs to extend the pollinator season don't take too much time or effort, and they'll be there forever once you've done it."

"We know that many more churches are already doing diverse and inspiring things to support Creation Care and we encourage each of you to explore the pathway. Do not be daunted by the questions - whilst there are a fair few, being registered means you can address each one at your own pace, find what works for your church and community and celebrate many small wins."

Sara Emmett

Environment & Climate Justice Adviser



Did you know?

The Diocese of Bath and Wells has Bronze Eco Diocese status and is aiming to turn that into a silver by 2027.



Next steps

To get started on your Eco Church journey, simply register your church on the Eco Church website and start a survey.

Once you've started a survey, you can log in and update it any time.



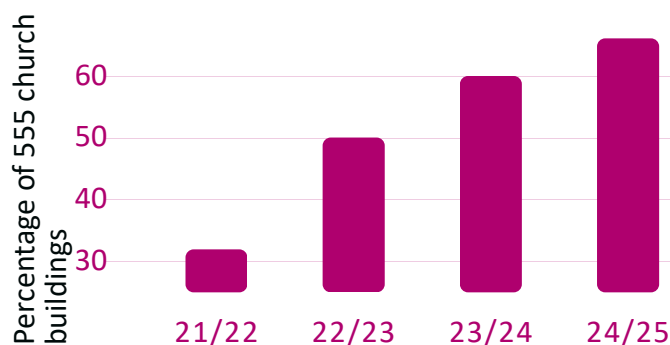


Energy Footprint Tool

In order to achieve our target of being Net Zero by 2030, we need to track our progress by measuring our energy use. For our churches, the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) is key to achieving that.

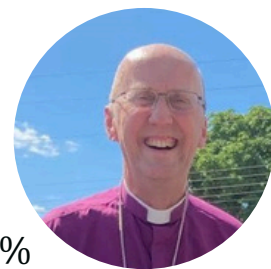
The EFT is a quick and easy carbon footprint calculator, completed each year as part of the annual parish returns. It records how much energy churches use and automatically converts that into an estimate of carbon emissions (CO₂e).

EFT return rates for Bath and Wells



“It is great that we have 65% of our churches completing our Energy Footprint tool, but it would be fantastic to get to 100%. That could be a game changer because it would give us the data to enable us to speak with authority.”

Bishop Michael



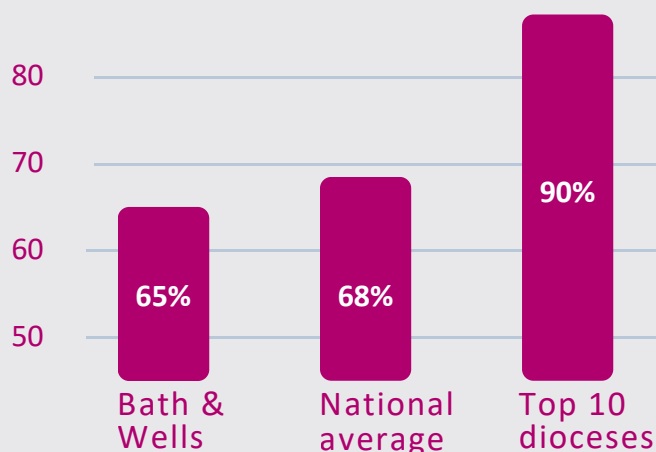
How do we compare?

“This year’s return rate gives us the most accurate picture yet of our diocesan energy use, costs and carbon emissions. Other dioceses are ahead of us, with ten registering a 90 per cent return rate this year. We are determined to catch up and meet the challenge that Bishop Michael has laid down.”

Dan Wills

Net Zero Adviser

EFT return rate 24/25



What does the EFT tell us?

Our churches and halls have an estimated carbon footprint of around 2,400 tonnes of CO₂e per year, an average of 4.2 tonnes of CO₂e per year per church. For churches that have completed the EFT, an 8 per cent reduction in emissions over the past few years has been seen.

Carbon footprint

2,400

Estimated carbon footprint of church buildings diocese-wide in tonnes of CO₂e



4.2

Average carbon footprint/
church in tonnes of CO₂e

8%

Reduction in emissions
amongst active participants

Energy consumption

Collectively, our churches spend over £1 million each year on energy, consuming around 7 million kWh from gas, electricity, and oil. While 47% of churches still rely on fossil fuels for heating, that number is falling steadily as more parishes switch to cleaner, low-carbon alternatives.

£1,000,000 +

spent per annum on energy

7m

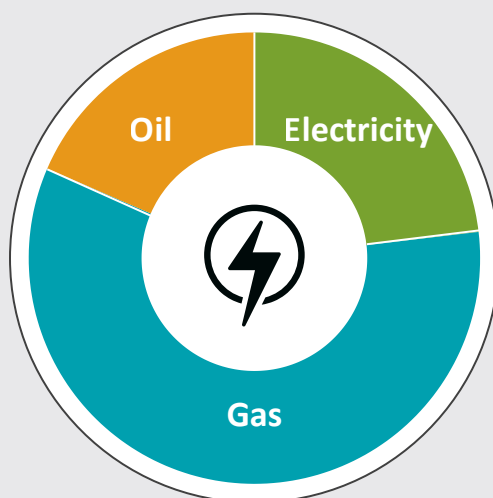
kWh per annum (all energy)

47%

reliant on fossil fuel heating

Where our emissions come from

53%	Gas
25%	Electricity
20%	Oil
2%	Other



Fact check

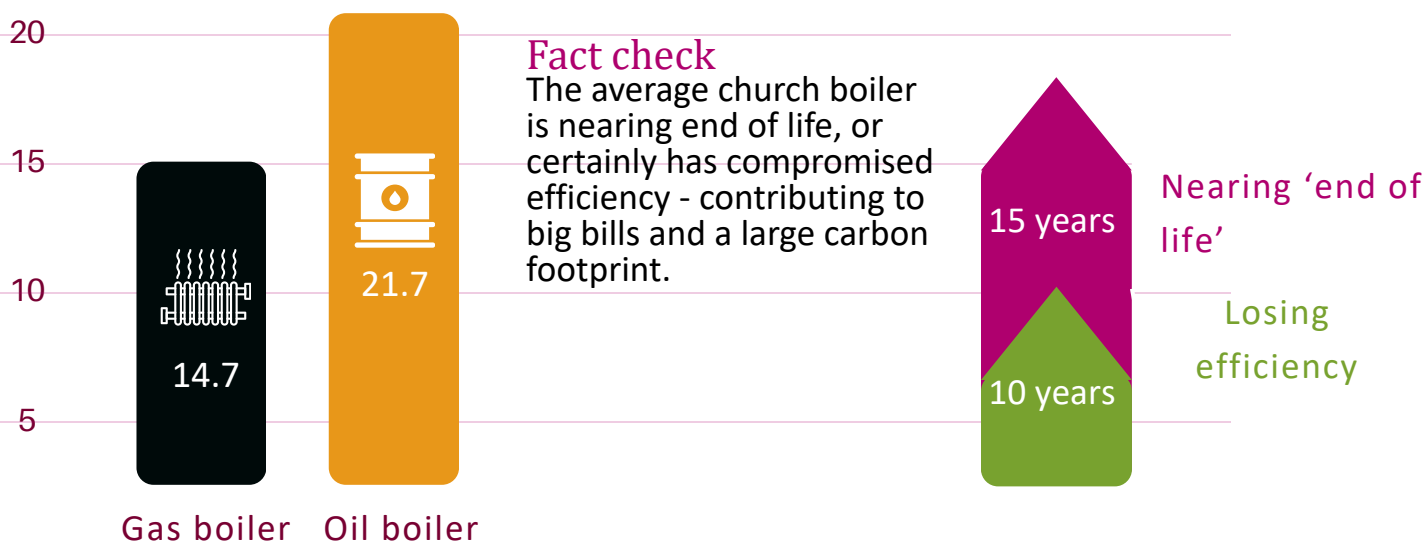
Diocesan church emissions would fall by 25% if all our churches moved to a green electricity tariff - and they often work out cheaper.

Next steps

Contact our environment team for our list of green suppliers and see if this is an option for your church?

Boiler age

Average age (years) across the diocese



Fact check

The average church boiler is nearing end of life, or certainly has compromised efficiency - contributing to big bills and a large carbon footprint.

Next steps, if your boiler is over 10 years old

1. Complete EFT for your church.
2. Get in touch with the Environment team so they can see if you can join the Net Zero Project Pipeline and transition away from old, ineffective space heating systems and towards sustainable, electric, localised heating.

The benefits of completing the EFT

“Yet another form to complete for the diocese! What’s the point?”

Churches may be forgiven for asking that question when the call goes out to dig out energy bills and complete the Energy Footprint Tool form, along with the annual Parish Returns, but in fact it offers many benefits, for individual churches, as well as the wider diocese - and in turn our planet.

Diocesan-wide benefits

Data collected allows the:

- tracking of diocesan-wide emissions year-on-year
- monitoring of the progress towards the net zero goal
- production of accurate diocesan-wide reports.

Benefits for churches

- ✓ Access to diocesan net zero advice, saving on professional fees, and support and practical support to reduce the church buildings’ carbon footprint.
- ✓ Potential to reduce energy bills.
- ✓ Data to share with grant funders to open the door to new funding opportunities for energy-saving or renewable projects.

150 church visits by the Net Zero Adviser and Church Buildings Adviser, offering heating/energy advice.

25 subsidised energy audits and heat decarbonisation plans completed - for some of our largest carbon emitters.

£20k in energy bill reductions for churches that have received advice, the equivalent of 100tCO₂e saved.

£50k in professional fees avoided as a result of the package of advice offered by the advisers, from energy/ heating reports, to pre-application advice for faculties and local planning authorities, as well as fundraising assistance.

43 church net zero projects in the pipeline, or completed. From introduction of localised heating, under-pew heating, heated pew cushions - to solar panels, as well as space heating technology, such as heat pumps.

Fact check

If all these projects are completed over the next few years, and all churches switch to a green tariff, church carbon emissions could be reduced by £35%.

Church net zero projects

6 completed projects	£150k capital investment	-20 tCO ₂ e	tCO ₂ e = tonnes of carbon equivalent
5 underway	£340k capital investment	-27 tCO ₂ e	
10 in permissions stage	£420k capital investment	-40 tCO ₂ e	
32 in early development	£1.9m capital investment	-375 tCO ₂ e	

A further 40 churches are investigating net zero project options

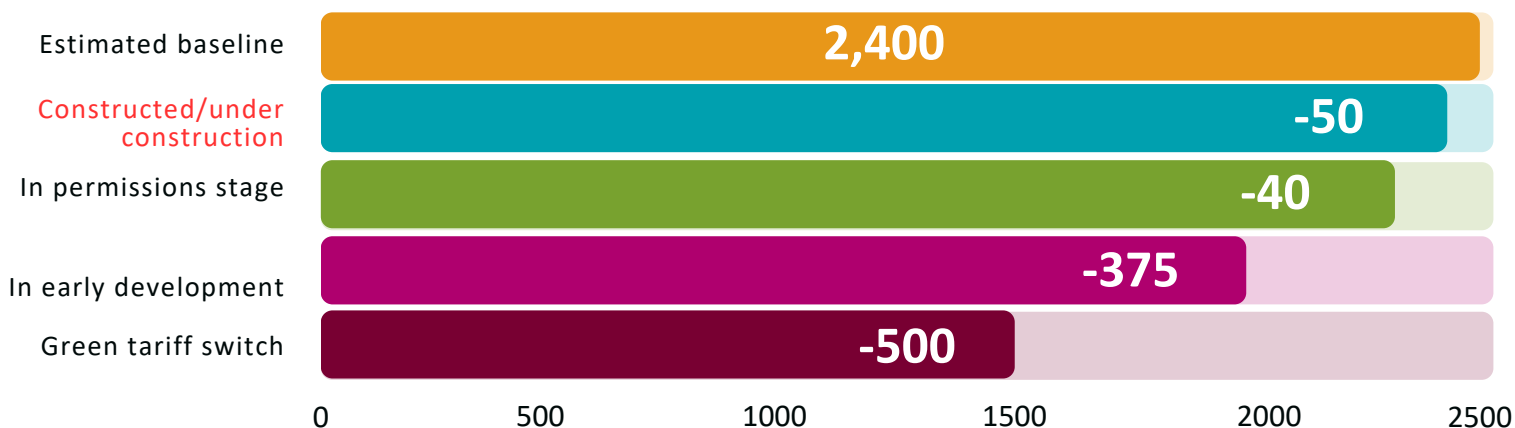
Diocesan first for St Mary's, Limington

When the ageing gas boiler at St Mary's, Limington, failed, the PCC sought an energy efficient heating solution that didn't take hours to pre-heat. They became the first church in the diocese to install infrared heating, replacing inefficient pew heaters with ceiling-mounted panels that direct warmth onto the congregation. Installed over six years ago, the system has cut energy use and emissions.

John Langdon, Churchwarden at St Mary's says, "It reflects our Christian duty to care for God's earth while also keeping worshippers warm."



Potential emissions reductions (In tCO₂e)





Infrared offers green solution

When St Mary's, Bishops Lydeard decided to replace their old gas boiler and cast-iron radiators, they explored options that would be cheaper, reduce energy consumption and help them to move closer to achieving net zero. They considered the heating as part of their overall environmental aims. The infrared system they chose provides instant warmth, efficient, ideal for the large Grade I listed building, and has reduced fuel consumption by around three quarters.

Want to be part of the change?

Complete your EFT, let us know what's going on in your church!

It's very straightforward to complete the EFT

1. Before you get started, get hold of your energy bills for the previous year and identify your energy use, either in Kilowatt Hours Used (kwh) or cost.
 - Optional information that you can also collect ready to input include the details of your energy supplier and whether you have single or three-phase electricity.
 - You can also input any travel data for church employees. You will need to estimate the number of miles travelled for work [by your church employees] or the cost of miles they travelled by public transport in the last year.
2. Log into the Parish Returns' system at parishreturns.churchofengland.org and click the 'Enter your data' button.
3. Locate the 'Energy Footprint' button and click 'Enter your data' and input all the data you have collected.
4. Sit back and wait for your certificate detailing your carbon footprint and a thank you for Bishop Michael to arrive, safe in the knowledge that you have made another contribution to help us achieve our Net Zero target.
5. Display your certificate on your noticeboard, along with any other work you are doing in your church to care for creation.



Did you know?

We are making changes to make it easier for our churches to get permission for net zero projects for our historic buildings.

- There is a new diocesan heating and renewables policy soon to be adopted by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), the body that supports parishes with expert advice on caring for church buildings and undertaking projects.
- Further changes are planned aimed at reducing the amount of back and forth between parishes and the DAC.
- Bath and Wells is also pushing for national changes to the faculty jurisdiction.

Churchyards & biodiversity

Did you know?

Churchyards are often the oldest enclosed piece of land in a parish and many still support a rich variety of wildflowers and wildlife, having remained unscathed from the loss of habitats due to changing land management practices.



Our churchyards (and even buildings!) are safe havens for a wealth of species, sometimes rare and protected ones.

Sara Emmett, Climate Justice & Environment Adviser for the Diocese of Bath and Wells says, "Our churchyards form a network of pockets of space for nature within the heart of our communities and for our communities. They are vital for species and habitat survival as well as for people to connect with our world. Every churchyard that supports nature in its care and management is contributing to this bigger picture and even the smallest actions make a difference."

Wilder Churches

Back in 2021, the Diocese of Bath and Wells joined up with the Somerset Wildlife Trust to offer Wilder Churches, a series of online and in-person training sessions for anyone interested in taking action for nature in their local churchyard, other church land or burial ground.

Pippa Rayner from the Somerset Wildlife Trust says, "We have been absolutely delighted with the response to Wilder Churches, we have had an amazing reaction. What's been rewarding is that people have been finding habitats they never knew were there. We have also been approached by the Somerset Botany Group who wanted to offer surveys for communities, which was great. They got around a lot of sites and found some amazing things, which was absolutely fantastic and just shows why churchyards are such special places."



Priddy Church
(Photo credit: Somerset Wildlife Trust)



Encouraged on their eco journey

St James', Taunton is just one of the churches across Bath and Wells that have benefited from Wilder Churches. They said, "The sessions provide excellent advice, information, and encouragement." Visit stjamestaunton.org/eco-church to find out more about their creation care activities.



Somerset
Wildlife Trust

Next steps

Not taken part in Wilder Churches yet? It's not too late to join in!

The Wilder Churches training session videos are available to view on the Somerset Wildlife Trust website.

Visit somersetwildlife.org/wilder-churches to view the videos, and find other helpful resources to support nature on your church land and inspiring stories from across Bath and Wells.



Clergy housing

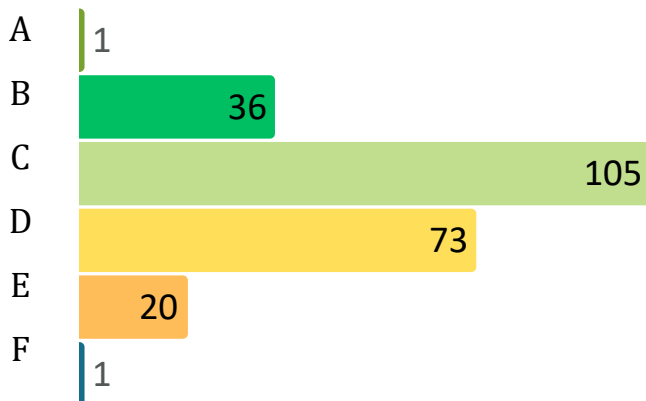
As well as having to consider the carbon footprint of our churches and offices, the Diocese of Bath and Wells has to consider the properties it owns to house its clergy.

Owain Wynne, diocesan surveyor says, “People may be surprised to learn that reducing the carbon footprint of our clergy housing portfolio is actually the biggest net zero challenge for our diocese. Our properties range from small and modern homes, to sprawling older ones – and everything in between.

“In order to be able to reduce the carbon footprint of our property portfolio it is important to have an understanding of our properties’ energy efficiency. All our properties have been reviewed and now have Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), which is a useful starting point.”



Clergy Housing EPC ratings - 2024



EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) ratings operate on a scale from A to G, with A being the most energy efficient and G being the least.

Did you know?

The Diocese of Bath and Wells manages a property portfolio of 236 houses.



Where possible, the Property team deploys the capital repair budget and grant funding in ways that support low-carbon outcomes, such as improving energy efficiency, selecting sustainable materials, and aligning with net zero objectives. This approach ensures that expenditure on the residential portfolio not only addresses immediate maintenance needs but also seeks to contribute to long-term environmental stewardship.

Making a difference

The Property team:

- has secured grant funding to carry out 27 detailed heat decarbonisation surveys for a cross section of properties, which are far more detailed than EPCs.
- has secured funding to carry out 20 property retrofitting surveys to help create a detailed plan of the work and investment needed in order to reduce the property's carbon footprint.
- is targeting available funds towards properties that have an EPC between D-F.
- is carrying out 'quick win' projects, which all add up and make a difference.
- is continuing to explore further grant funding opportunities to help with more costly improvements.

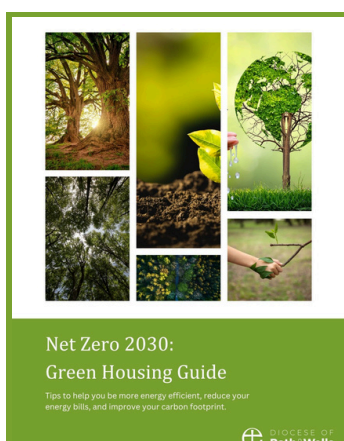


Net zero transformation

Thanks to a national church grant, Nunney Rectory in Frome is now close to being a net zero carbon house, following an energy efficiency and decarbonisation project undertaken by the Property team using part of a £54,000 Housing Demonstrator Grant from the Archbishops' Council.

The project took a whole-house approach, addressing insulation, ventilation, energy generation, and heating systems. A solar panel system was installed, as was an EDDI Hot Water Diverter (a smart solar power diverter that uses excess energy from solar or wind panels to power homes). The old oil boiler was removed and replaced with a modern, fossil-fuel-free heating system, helping to cut carbon emissions dramatically.

The property's EPC rating went from E to B, a dramatic improvement.



Next steps

Check out our Green Housing Guide for useful tips to reduce your carbon footprint. Developed for our clergy households, it contains lots of useful tips for anyone who wants to improve the energy efficiency of their home, and reduce their household bills in the process - all the small steps we make together will make a difference.

bathandwells.org.uk/clergy-housing





Glebe land

Across Somerset in the region of 2,720 acres of land is owned by the Diocese of Bath and Wells. While in total it covers an extensive area, in practice there are over 230 separate parcels of land spread all over the diocese, of all shapes and sizes and occupied by a varied cross section of tenants.

The diocese manages the land to provide an income for the diocese to help continue the delivery of mission and ministry of the church, and do so in as an environmentally conscious way as possible.

James Millard, Head of Property and Glebe explains, “Much of the land we own is rural or very rural and is, by nature, a very low carbon producer. We do what we can to manage the remainder of the portfolio so it is as carbon neutral as possible, with the cooperation of our tenants.

“With land parcels ranging in size from 0.2 to 184 acres, in rural settings, villages and towns, this is no easy task. In the current financial climate, we are also seeking to manage our land portfolio to support income generation. We seek to integrate environmental responsibility into our management processes whenever opportunities allow.

“While we do at times sell land for commercial or residential development, we also seek out opportunities which offer an environmental benefit, such as a recent sale to Natural England of land in Moorlinch, which provided a valuable bridge between two pieces of their land to support local wildlife and their environment schemes. We also seek to rent out land to tenants who manage their land in a carbon-efficient way and support them with any environmental improvements or initiatives they seek to put in place.”

Glebe land survey 2025

Glebe land tenants were asked to participate in a management survey to gain valuable data into how land is managed - the results were encouraging and highlighted what an impact even smallholdings can have on protecting the biodiversity and habitats across Somerset and BANES.





Cambridge University Bee Survey

When the diocese was approached by Cambridge University's Department of Zoology to enquire if we would give permission for them to survey parts of our land for pollinating insects, we were delighted to help. The survey is underway and we hope to share more about the project in due course.



"It would be great to be able to say that we manage our land in a carbon negative way, and it is not an impossible goal.

"It will take time and significant investment, but it is important to aim high if we are to achieve our Net Zero goal."

James Millard

Head of Property and Glebe

Looking forward

- Grant funding is being sought to maximise the positive environmental impact of what is termed 'marginal unproductive' land. These very small, awkwardly placed or shaped land parcels offer no commercial benefit, but they may be able to offer small environmental benefits, for example, through considered planting of trees.
- The diocese is looking at how church land could be used for capturing carbon, offsetting any carbon we may produce as a diocese.





Schools

The Diocese of Bath and Wells has 181 schools, the majority of which are academies, with the remainder maintained by Somerset local authority.

19 of these maintained schools are voluntary-aided (VA) schools, which means the diocese receives funding from the Department for Education for their building maintenance. Of our academies, 43 schools are operated by the Bath and Wells Multi-Academy Trust (BWMAT). In terms of reducing the diocese's net zero target reductions, the Education team's actions are focused on the VA and BWMAT schools only.

Claire Hudson, Assistant Director of Education and Dan Wills, Net Zero Advisor (MSMD team) are working together to create a Critical Pathway to Net Zero for those schools it has direct responsibility for, but also thinking about how to support church schools the diocese doesn't have direct responsibility for.

Claire says, "This academic year, we are focusing on delivering our first Net Zero VA school, as well as working with colleagues in the BWMAT."

"We want to develop ways we can work on net zero projects with schools effectively, mindful of the stress and demands that they are already under. While we are exploring ambitious ways to help schools reduce their energy consumption - such as identifying schools that could qualify for community energy schemes or help to fundraise for solar panels - we are also looking at some simple ways to support them – whether that is environmental projects in line with the school curriculum or advice and guidance for caretakers."



"We know that our most significant environmental impact comes from inspiring our school communities to take action. The combined influence of our school communities is exponentially greater than just addressing the buildings, so we are working to engage our students and their families on eco initiatives."

Claire Hudson, Assistant Director of Education.

School champion growers recognised by RHS

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School, Tintinhull is one of the top five green schools in the UK. The little school, which lies 4 miles west of Yeovil, has been appointed by The Royal Horticultural Society as a Growing Champion School alongside four others across the country.

In October 2025 they achieved the Level 5 – Outstanding Award from the RHS Britain in Bloom: South West in Bloom! This prestigious recognition reflects the dedication, creativity, and community spirit that went into making their school grounds truly flourish.



Looking ahead

Claire says, “We know what we need to do to make major changes and we are in a good position to move on these projects as soon as we can secure the necessary funding. In the meantime, we will continue making progress in small, but important ways.”

These actions include:

- Reviewing VA schools, taking into account the existing fabric of the building, the rurality of the school and the levels of poverty in that community, in order to identify one or two Net Zero pilot schools.
- Setting up a Focus Group, drawing in members of the Diocesan Board of Education, and interested parties, to work with diocesan staff on delivering our critical pathway.
- Working with Environment team colleagues to deliver diocesan priorities, not just schools.
- Offering support to schools who need to put an Environmental Action Plan in place.



Kilmersdon Church of England Primary School has created a security hedge which not only keeps the children safe, it also helps protect and support the environment, reflecting their vision to care for and manage God's creation.

Education department's Critical Pathway to Net Zero statement

Based on John 10:10 'I came that they may have life, life in all its fullness' and the Church of England Vision for Education, Critical Pathway to Net Zero is a faithful response to God's call to care for creation.

It reflects the department's objectives of enabling human flourishing and providing the highest quality education in sustainable church schools and acknowledges that sustainability not only helps the environment, but also supports wellbeing, equity, and opportunity. In this way, the education department can help to transform communities through positive action, fully aligned with the diocesan vision and strategy.

The department's ambitions are:

- All church schools are sustainable, viable, and flourishing.
- Pupils, staff and communities are equipped to be stewards of creation.
- Sustainability is embedded in curriculum, ethos, and leadership.

Although many of the steps on the critical pathway will be practical, prayer, reflection and celebration will be embedded in the process, ensuring milestones are celebrated and thanks given.



Did you know?



New research has found that 9 out of 10 Christian teenagers surveyed by Tear Fund are concerned about climate change, but just one in 10 believe their church is doing enough to respond to the climate crisis.

Read the report at tearfund.org



Sharing our eco message

Over the past year, our Environment team has continued to build momentum in promoting Net Zero and wider environmental awareness across the diocese.

As well as getting the eco message out in person, in our parishes, they have been working to get the message out wider, with a dedicated social media presence on Facebook, Instagram and X, but also with a dedicated podcast, Low Carbon, Higher Power.

In-person engagement and parish support

The environment team has participated in Deanery Synods and local meetings, offering presentations and Q&A sessions to clergy, staff, and church members. These sessions have consistently generated follow-up enquiries – the team now receive several questions and requests each week from parishes keen to learn more or take next steps on their eco journey.



Deanery Eco Champions

Are you interested in helping other churches reduce their carbon footprints and leave a positive mark on the environment. For the little commitment you would be giving, the positive impact is huge.

Find out more about what's involved at bathandwells.anglican.org/deanery-environment-champions.



facebook.com/environment-bath-wells
facebook.com/groups/bw-ecochurch



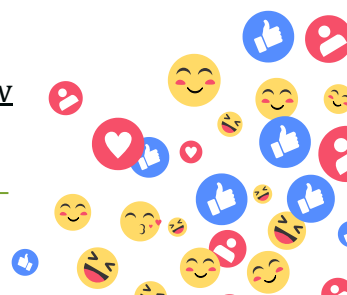
youtube/@environmentdbw



Instagram/environmentdbw



x.com/environmentdbw





Low Carbon, Higher Power

This year has seen the launch of, Low Carbon, Higher Power, a podcast hosted by Net Zero Adviser, Dan Wills and featuring a guest active in caring for creation - both within and beyond the church.

To date, six episodes have been released, with guests including:

- Bishop Michael, sharing the diocesan vision for sustainability
- Bishop Graham Usher, the Church of England's Lead Bishop for the Environment
- Experts from organisations such as A Rocha International, Inspired Efficiency and Climate Stewards

Available on all major podcast platforms, you can also find it on our diocesan website at bathandwells.org.uk/low-carbon-higher-power or YouTube: youtube.com/@EnvironmentDBW

Alternatively, keep an eye on the environment teams socials for snippets from the shows.

Looking ahead...

In the next year the Environment team is planning to:

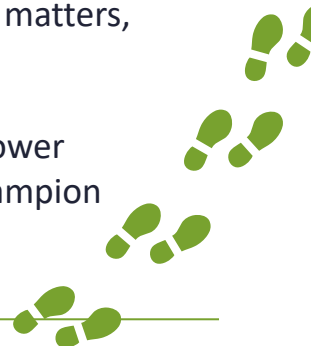
- release more episodes of Low Carbon, Higher Power, continuing to highlight inspiring voices and practical advice
- Expand their reach on social media, using storytelling to encourage action
- Offer new training and resources to support parish eco initiatives
- Build further partnerships with national and local environmental organisations



Next steps

Keep up to date with all the eco news and stories from across the diocese.

- For dedicated news on environmental matters, sign up to receive the Eco Newsletter
- Follow the team on social media
- Listen or watch Low Carbon, Higher Power
- Consider becoming a Deanery Eco Champion
- Got an eco story to share? Email comms@bathwells.anglican.org





Funding our journey

In order to achieve the long term financial and environmental benefits of being a net zero diocese by 2030, up front investment is required. In a challenging financial climate, for the diocese and parishes, external funding has been sought to supplement the available diocesan funds.

Jenny Hollingsworth, Diocesan Secretary/CEO says, “We have been honest from the outset that our ambition to be Net Zero by 2030 is only limited by what we can do financially. It has been vital therefore to maximise the external funding we can secure and to use that wisely.

“Securing hundreds of thousands of pounds in grants to date has allowed us to make some excellent progress against what is a very ambitious target.

“Ten years ago, if we had said what we could have achieved in our net zero journey to date, I don’t think people would have believed it. We should not underestimate what we have achieved so far, and what we can achieve in the future with the right funding, allied with ambition. We have seen a change in our attitude to moving to net zero, a change in our culture led by volunteers in our parishes. That is something we should be proud of and must continue.”



Jenny Hollingsworth
Diocesan Secretary/
CEO

For our churches

Approximately £300,000 in funding for church building net zero projects has been secured from the national church, and local and mayoral authorities.

£58,000 net zero quick win grant funds

For projects such as LED lighting overhauls, heated pew cushions, under pew heating, infrared heating and enabling upgrades such as electrical supply upgrades.

£68,000 demonstrator grants

Three of our churches were eligible for demonstrator grants. Two investigatory grants of £18,000 and a capital project of £50,000.

20 subsidised energy audits

Which has enabled the identification of quick wins and opened the door to capital funding. Six churches were immediately eligible for a £3K grant to pay for Net Zero related professional fees and ‘quick win’ projects.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



Taunton Minster puts its green grant to good use

Taunton Minster has been awarded £18,000 as part of a Demonstrator Grant to help it move towards becoming a net zero carbon church. The funding is part of the Church of England's national programme to help churches cut their energy use and move away from fossil fuels.

Being a demonstrator church also provides the opportunity for Taunton Minster to share their learnings, helping to inspire and support other churches across Bath and Wells, as well as those in neighbouring dioceses.



For our schools

National church funding has allowed us to carry out heat decarbonisation plans for our schools, a project that is well underway.

For clergy property

Nunney Rectory has been successfully retrofitted to achieve near net zero performance, supported by a £54,000 grant from the national church. Delivered in budget, plans are now being finalised to extend this approach to additional clergy properties, reinforcing our ambition for the sustainable transformation of the portfolio and providing a replicable model that can inform and encourage similar initiatives across the diocese."



For professional support

Dan Wills, our Net Zero Adviser, has been employed thanks to a grant from the national Church. His professional support to both churches and diocesan teams has been instrumental in advancing our carbon reduction ambition/efforts. Dan's expertise has also delivered significant financial savings for churches across the diocese by reducing the need for external consultancy services.

Looking ahead

The key source of funding for our net zero work has been the Church of England, with the diocese securing over £500,000 in grants over the past three years.

The current funding period is drawing to a close and future funding levels are to be determined. To ensure we continue our momentum towards our net zero target, additional funding opportunities beyond the central Church are being actively explored.



Contacts



Environment team

Sara Emmett, Climate Justice & Environment Adviser
Tel: 01749 588913 Email: sara.emmett@bathwells.anglican.org
Contact Sara to find out more about sustainability, biodiversity and reducing your environmental impact and taking environmental action.

Dan Wills, Net Zero Adviser

Tel: 01749 685117 Email: dan.wills@bathwells.anglican.org
Contact Dan for help to reduce your energy bills and your carbon footprint.



Church buildings

Mark Lidster, Church Buildings Adviser
Tel: 01749 685135 Email: mark.lidster@bathwells.anglican.org or use the contact form available on bathandwells.org.uk/church-buildings-and-churchyards to contact Mark for support with your church buildings.



Clergy housing and glebe land

James Millard, Head of Property and Glebe

Owain Wynne, Diocesan Surveyor/Property Manager

Tel: 01749 670777 Email: property.helpdesk@bathwells.anglican.org
Contact James for glebe land queries. For support in relation to clergy housing, please contact Owain or email the property helpdesk.



Net zero schools

Claire Hudson, Assistant Director, Education

Tel: 01749 685277 Email: claire.hudson@bathwells.anglican.org
Contact Claire for school-related eco queries.



For further contact details please go to: bathandwells.org.uk/contact-us

Useful links

Eco Church.....	eco-church.arochoa.org.uk
Somerset Wildlife Trust.....	somersetwildlife.org/wilder-churches
Energy Footprint Tool.....	bathandwells.org.uk/eft
Diocese of Bath and Wells environment pages...	bathandwells.org.uk/environment
Green Housing Guide.....	bathandwells.org.uk/clergy-housing

All statistics correct at time at time of print (October 2025)



A prayer for creation

Written by Sonny and Findley,
St Margaret's Church of England CEVA Primary School,
Tintinhull

Dear God,

We thank you for the environment and the
wildlife that populates it.

Help us to continue saving the environment and
keep the flowers blooming.

We are proud to have things such as bug hotels,
wildflower meadows, trees and grass.

Help us to make things greener and cleaner.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living and telling the story of Jesus