

Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Report for Diocesan Synod November 2023

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Steve Collins, Deputy Diocesan Secretary

1. Background – a reminder

1.1. Why are we doing this?

There are all sorts of very good secular reasons for the Net Zero Carbon (NZC) agenda which are well rehearsed and widely supported. The foundation of *our* 'Why', however, is deeply theological and rooted in our faith. At the heart of Christian discipleship is relationship: with God; with each other; and with creation. Caring for creation honours each of these relationships. First, it honours the God who loved creation into being and made human beings in his own image to care for it. Secondly, it honours other people - for it is a common home and our abuse of creation is increasingly causing devastation in other people's experience of it. Thirdly, it honours the gift itself - which Scripture reminds us reflects God's handiwork and which we wish pass to on to our children's children.

As we implement our Diocesan NZC Strategy, it will make significant contributions to our wider the vision of a Transforming Church, Transforming Lives. Our NZC Strategy will contribute to our aspirations for:

- ~ Growing Disciples: engaging with NZC can enable us to both deepen our understanding of how we encounter God in worship, prayer and through the outworking of our everyday faith. Many of our parishes are also finding it also i) increases the number of people involved in their core leadership as it brings into play passions and skills not previously mobilised; ii) increases the way in which they can reach out through mission activities to people currently outside of their church and present the gospel in a way that is highly relevant to key issues faced by our world today.
- ~ Growing Diversity: Climate change and the journey towards NZC is particularly important for younger people. By engaging in NZC we are better able to engage with, and actively involve, young people from our surrounding communities and from our Church of England schools.
- ~ Growing Community: Our NZC strategy enables us to build on the community partnerships of our parishes, chaplaincies and schools, many of which were developed throughout the pandemic.

1.2. National and Diocesan commitments

The National Church of England NZC commitment

General Synod voted in February 2020 for the whole of the Church of England to achieve Net Zero Carbon (NZC) by 2030. The vote recognised that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation and a fundamental injustice.

The Synod asked for a plan to be made, setting out how to get to Net Zero Carbon. That plan of action, called the Route map, was approved by General Synod in July 2022. The Route map acknowledged that *'the 2030 target is hugely ambitious, but the process is as important as the target. Every month or year that we delay our progress towards NZC will lead to suffering and even death for our human neighbours and the rest of God's creation.'*

The Diocese of Guildford's NZC commitments

In its meeting on 14 November 2020, the Guildford Diocesan Synod agreed to create an action plan for NZC by 2023. In 2022, the diocese employed a consultant to create a NZC strategy and plan to achieve NZC by 2030 which was then agreed by Bishop’s Council on 17 October 2022.

The Diocese’s strategy “Transforming Church, Transforming Lives” was refreshed and approved by Synod in March 2022 and included NZC as a specific strategic area of work.

1.3. Outline of the approved Diocesan NZC Strategy

The Strategy can be summarized at a high level as follows:

- By 2030: Address ‘scope 1 and 2’ emissions:
 - ~ Energy use of our buildings - churches, halls, cathedrals, schools, offices
 - ~ Work related travel
- After 2030
 - ~ Purchasing, waste, water, contractors, IT, air-conditioning gases.

Not in scope

- ~ Commuting, congregational travel, staff and clergy family lifestyles, church members' emissions, school buildings over which the Church has little influence.

What is meant by ‘Net Zero Carbon’ emissions is described below



1.3.1. Workstreams

The strategy set out various foci of work which are now being referred to as ‘workstreams’:

Schools Workstream

Following the completion in mid-2022 of 41 Estate Decarbonisation Plans with a grant from the Government Low Carbon Skills Fund, the DBE applied for funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) for NZC-related work with 41 Voluntary Aided (VA) schools. The DBE was awarded £3.7m of PSDS funding and has identified 21 schools where ageing boilers will be replaced by air source heat pumps.

The work included in the strategy for this workstream can be summarised as:

- Implement the PSDS funded work and review the impact of these projects.
- Consider whether to seek additional funding to deliver further work to reduce the carbon footprint of VA schools
- Explore funding options for all Multi-Academy Trusts including The Good Shepherd Trust.

Vicarages and DBF property Workstream

Up to the end of 2025

- Reduce the overall footprint of DBF property portfolio by disposing of surplus property;
- Optimise the thermal efficiency of our current properties – glazing & insulation;

- Educate occupiers to be environmentally aware and expect that LED lighting, Smart technology (to control boilers i.e. Nest), and green energy (where it is within the price cap) will be adopted by default;
- New build vicarages will be built to be as close to NZC as practicably possible;
- Use the EPC and Quinquennial Projects to help identify suitable 'pilot' properties where solar panels and air source heat pumps could be installed.

From 2026

- Install commercially viable low-carbon heating technologies in vicarages and the remaining investment properties.

Parishes (Church buildings and halls)

The approach involves the diocese supporting parishes in areas such as:

- Advising on value for money and lowest cost solutions with maximum impact
- Finding sources of funding
- Expertise & sharing good practice
- Procurement
- Project and contract management
- Monitor and Evaluation of project impact
- Communications and training.

Guildford Cathedral

The approach involves supporting the Cathedral in:

- Procuring an energy consultancy to develop a site-wide energy masterplan
- Commissioning such a plan and delivering the plan.

The Cathedral site is sufficiently large and varied to consider a NZC Strategy on its own – or with integration with a potential neighbour's / University of Surrey energy system.

Church House Guildford Office

The approach involves work to reduce emissions from work related travel and ensuring planning for the move of CHG to the Cathedral site appropriately takes into account NZC thinking.

The Energy Footprint Tool (EFT)

Over the life of the NZC strategy implementation, the Energy Footprint Tool (part of the national Parish Returns platform) will be the principal means for measuring the baseline emissions and then our progress towards the 2030 target of Net Zero Carbon. The EFT collects emission data from across all the main carbon emitters in our diocese, namely:

- Our Church of England Schools
- Our Parishes (their buildings)
- The Cathedral
- Vicarages and other DBF residential properties
- The CHG office and our DBF work related travel

1.3.2. Human resources

The approved strategy set out the following additional staffing that would be required to implement the required work:

- Net Zero Programme Manager (0.5 FTE)
- 2x Net Zero Project Managers (2x 1 FTE), one for Schools, one for Parishes & DBF property
- Existing Volunteer Support – Diocese Environmental Officer (DEO)
- Existing Departments’ management oversight

2. Progress to date in 2023

2.1. Leadership, Governance and Communications

In January 2023, oversight for the NZC Strategy implementation was transferred from Peter Harwood (Director of Mission) to Steve Collins (Deputy Diocesan Secretary). It was agreed at that point that Steve would allocate one day per week on average to provide strategic leadership and oversight to the strategy implementation.

The existing NZC Working Group¹ continued to meet during the spring whilst a new governance framework was being thought through to support the delivery of the strategy. A proposal for a new NZC Steering Group (as a sub-committee of Bishop’s Council) and Project Steering Groups for the major workstreams was approved by Bishop’s Council in August. The new Programme Steering Group and Project Steering Group for the Schools workstream are up and running in September.

A draft NZC Communications Strategy has been prepared and is currently being further refined after discussions with the new Bishop of Dorking now that he is in post, bearing in mind his key role of being a champion for environmental issues.

2.2. Funding

In November 2022, Diocesan Synod agreed to make an annual allocation (£40,000) towards the implementation of the NZC Strategy from the total Parish Share receipts across the diocese.

Clearly, additional funds are required to implement the strategy. A ‘core resource budget’ has been set up for staff and operations costs, and seed funding for supporting those parishes among top 30% carbon emitters to access consultancy. The following funds have been secured to enable this budget to be balanced over the period to the end of 2025:

- A total of £127k from the National Church NZC ‘Capacity Building’ funds
- £180k from the Diocesan Mission Fund.

Having a balanced ‘core resource budget’ positions us strongly over the next two years to be able to leverage further funding for parishes and facilitate linkages to technical advice and other services required by parishes, as well as support vital work to build knowledge and influence attitudes on NZC.

The most significant achievement on funding was the successful bid for £3.7M of PSDS funding with an accompanying 15% client contribution funded from the School Condition Allocation (SCA) funding. Salix (the grant provider) confirmed the allocation on 27th March 2023.

¹ Originally set up to support the development of the NZC Strategy.

2.3. HR resources

The recruitment of a NZC Programme Manager has been a priority. Unfortunately, despite much investment of time, we experienced two unsuccessful recruitment rounds in the spring and early summer. As part of our funding discussions with National Office in the summer they recommended we held off further recruitment rounds until we were in a position to recruit jointly with one or more neighbouring dioceses. We had already reached out to other dioceses in the South East and discussions at that point were advancing with Chichester and Portsmouth. We have since agreed a shared job description and person specification with them and, after an interview process with panel members from Guildford, Portsmouth and the National Church, Steve Collins was appointed to start in the Programme Manager role from 1st February 2024. This role will be shared on a 40%/40%/20% basis between Chichester, Guildford and Portsmouth respectively.

The recruitment of a Project Administrator to support the PSDS Schools Project has also been a high priority. After three previous unsuccessful recruitment rounds, we had encouraging interviews for the role in September and made an offer to a candidate who started at the end of October and is beginning to settle into the role.

Over recent years we have been blessed by an extremely dedicated volunteer, Alison Moulden, who worked as our Diocesan Environmental Officer (DEO), promoting NZC. Unfortunately Alison stepped down from this volunteer role in March but was able to return as a consultant in July and August to work to help with the annual Energy Footprint Tool submissions across the diocese.

At the beginning of December, Andy Wells joined us a volunteer, offering one day per week initially, and has provided valuable support with the PSDS Schools Project administration and National Church Demonstrator Project.

We were also supported by two other consultants:

- Ebert Spreeth (in the spring of 2023) who helped put in place some key systems and background thinking for the delivery of the NZC strategy.
- Amy Jimenez Bedrock who has worked with the Communications Team on specific NZC comms and the overarching NZC Comms Strategy.

2.4. Schools Workstream

The DBF (through the DBE) has entered into a contract with a specialist project consultant company, Re-Energise who will act as the overall project managers for the delivery of the 21 projects.

Part of the Salix funding is allocated for this purpose, so no DBF or DBE funding is used to pay for project management. ReEnergise currently report to DBE officers on a monthly basis with fortnightly meetings to ensure the monitoring and tracking of progress against the individual projects.

So far, ReEnergise has completed the 'pre-design works' for the projects and they are currently managing the applications to the electricity Distribution Network Operators (DNO) to ensure that there is enough capacity to provide power to the schools who will be receiving air source

heat pumps. They have also begun the work on tendering for the supply of the air source heat pumps.

In August, 75% of our Church of England schools submitted their 2022 data for the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT). Whilst this was lower than the 100% submission rate we achieved last year, the quality of the data submitted this year was much better (actual energy usage compared to generic estimates) and the data was submitted by the schools themselves (rather than by our DEO, as was the case last year). This data will improve the credibility of our baseline carbon emissions estimates and enables us to better track the impacts of our work with schools in the years to come.

2.5. Vicarages and DBF residential properties workstream

The DBF Property Team has continued its ongoing programme of maintenance, some elements of which will reduce carbon emission, including improvements to insulation and the installation of double glazing. This work is financed by the existing annual DBF property budget.

The vicarage for All Saint’s Woodham (located in Woodham Way) has been identified as a pilot property for NZC works as part of a wider renovation following the retirement of the previous incumbent. After consultations with technical experts, the specific NZC improvements include

- ~ external cladding
- ~ new window frames and double glazing
- ~ roof insulation
- ~ installation of solar panels

By the end of 2023 we expect to have completed a further 60 Quinquennial Surveys on vicarages and other DBF residential properties. These surveys provide valuable information to help us identify work needed in each property to move towards NZC.

2.6. Parishes workstream

The Bishop’s Study day in February (titled ‘Creation, Climate and Carbon) focused on the theology of creation care and provided a practical taster session on carbon literacy. Approximately 120 clergy from around the Diocese attended. This was an effective way of reaching a large number of clergy with key messages to impact knowledge, attitudes and practices on NZC. However, a significant number of our clergy did not attend so the challenge remains to ensure they are reach by, and make time to reflect on key messaging.

Arocha’s Eco Church initiative is an important tool in our NZC strategy for inspiring parishes to adapt creation care practices, which include in practices related to NZC. So far during 2023, there has been a 10% increase in number of parishes achieving Eco Church awards (see table below).

Year	Type of award			Total
	Bronze	Silver	Gold	
2022	49	20	1	70
2023	53	23	1	77

At the Church Warden's training morning on 4th November around 60 Church Wardens attended two workshop sessions on Eco Church. This provided opportunities for learning which will hopefully increase the number of parishes involved in the initiative, but also some useful feedback for Church House that can be taken on board to improve the support provided to parishes.

In mid-August, the National Church office announced the launch of the 'Demonstrators Project' in recognition of the urgent need to quickly establish exemplar projects distributed around the country to 'show the way for others'. These churches need to both inspire ("change is possible") and inform ("this is how it is done").

The project will offer the following packages of support:

- Stage 1 Preparatory support to around 70 parishes - a tailored package of technical support and advice, plus fundraising support;
- Stage 2 Capital grants to around 60 parishes capital grant of up to 25% of the project cost, helping them to implement works which move them fully or mostly towards net zero carbon.

Following the launch by the National Church, the Deputy Diocesan Secretary and DAC Secretary immediately promoted the project through the Parish Brief and through existing contacts we had with parishes that we were aware were already planning NZC work. We received application forms from 23 parishes and undertook a rigorous scoring exercise, based on the National Office criteria, shortlisting 5 parishes whose applications were then submitted to the National Office by the 30th September deadline. We hope that 2 or 3 of these will be accepted into the project by the National Office, although their decision will not be known until March 2024.

In 2022, Guildford Diocese achieved the highest parish EFT submission rate of any diocese in the country (72%). This year we managed to improve on this by achieving an 86% submission rate thanks to the hard work of our consultant, Alison Moulden, and the efforts of many parishioners who, often with Alison's help, submitted their parish's annual energy use data. This means we are probably the best placed diocese in the country with regards to our baseline data on parish carbon emissions.

2.7. CHG office workstream

We are currently in the process of reviewing our green electricity supply contract for the CHG office with the intention of continuing with a green tariff. The EFT submission was completed for the office and the DBF work-related travel. We have also begun to explore options for an electric vehicle leasing scheme to reduce emissions from both work and employees' personal travel.

The process of disinvestment from fossil fuel companies has been completed with the DBF selling its remaining shareholdings in such companies.

As part of the project for the move of the CHG office from the current rented property in the Surrey Research Park to the Cathedral site at Stag Hill, we are considering how best to use the limited budget to ensure the refurbishment and extension of the Education Centre building at Stag Hill reflects our NZC aspirations.

2.8. Cathedral workstream

The team at CHG has established a much closer working relationship on NZC with the Cathedral during 2023. The Cathedral Director of Operations is now an active member of the NZC Steering Group.

The Cathedral leadership has approved the setting up of their own NZC Project Steering Group taking into account the wider Diocesan governance structure agreed by Bishop's Council. The Cathedral is also putting together an application to the National Cathedral Sustainability Fund to employ a part time NZC Project Manager.

3. Ongoing challenges

The delay in recruiting key staff strategy has been the most significant limiting factor so far in the implementation of the strategy. This has been compounded by the fact that neighbouring dioceses interested in collaborating with us by sharing the Programme Manager role have been significantly behind Guildford in terms of the development and approval of their own strategies.

Although the baseline data we have gathered through the EFT is much more extensive than most other, if not all, dioceses, there are still gaps in the data which place some limitation our ability to identify the where to invest to get the best possible return on investment (in terms of reduced carbon emissions). The gaps in data probably also correlate with low levels of awareness, ownership and passion for the NZC initiative.

Going forward, a major challenge will undoubtedly be accessing the necessary funding for the significant NZC investment needed, especially for parish buildings, vicarages and other DBF residential properties.

4. Expectations for the next 12 months

4.1. Programme Staff and core work of the CHG Team

A Programme Manager has now been appointed on a shared basis with the Dioceses of Chichester and Portsmouth, due to commence in post on 1st February 2024. In the meantime, the Deputy Diocesan Secretary will lead the recruitment process for the Diocesan Environmental Office and a Project Manager. These two new roles will have the following functions:

Diocesan Environmental Officer (DEO)

- ~ Advise parishes and facilitate Eco Church initiatives (a key enabler of the NZC strategy)
- ~ Revive, coordinate and grow a Deanery Network of volunteer Eco Church and Net Zero champions/change advocates.
- ~ Be a "Champion and enabler" for the Energy Footprint Tool.
- ~ Deliver (personally, and with support of volunteer network if possible) 'Carbon Literacy' training (training to clergy on climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental theology of the Fifth Mark of Mission).

Project Manager

- ~ Assist parishes with the preparation of their NZC Action Plans and support the delivery through a combination of practical advice and signposting of resources.
- ~ Support monitoring and reporting on progress against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and other diocesan milestones.
- ~ Working closely with the Head of Property:
 - Support the production of a prioritised delivery plan for clergy housing.
 - Support reporting progress on activities and milestones.
 - Stakeholder management.

The NZC communications strategy will be implemented with additional support from an external consultant when the CHG Comms Team does not have sufficient in-house capacity.

The NZC team will continue to provide support to NZC aspects of the CHG office move project.

4.2. Parishes Workstream

In addition to the work by the DEO to build good awareness of, and passion for NZC among key parish and deanery stakeholders, our plans for the next 12 month include:

- Ongoing support for the National Office Demonstrator Project, including any further application rounds.
- Providing 'seed funding' and linkages for parishes to access the necessary technical expertise for developing their NZC plans. This support will especially target the top 30% of emitters in the diocese.
- Developing links with other potential external funding sources for parish NZC projects.
- Developing relationships with suitable consultancy firms with NZC expertise, and linking them with parishes.

4.3. Vicarages and DBF residential properties Workstream

By the end of 2024 we expect to have completed all the remaining Quinquennial Surveys on vicarages and DBF residential properties we will be retaining for the long term. The level of data we then have on all our residential properties, together with a new property management system, will enable us to better implement and track the work on our properties and its impact on carbon emissions.

The Property Team will complete the capital investment works at vicarage in Woodham Way, and we will continue to gather data from the property to maximise the learning from this pilot project. The recruitment of a NZC Project Manager will enable us to analyse learning from our own pilot, and other emerging learning, so that we are better placed make sound investment decisions post-2025 when we aim significant increase the pace of our installation of new NZC technologies on residential properties.

4.4. Schools Workstream

Over the next 12 months the pace of the Schools PSDS implementation will increase considerably with the installation of the vast majority of the new heat pumps in the participating schools. During 2024 we will gather learning from this experience, and look for

new opportunities for funding similar work in other schools, hopefully submitting new funding proposals in response to those opportunities.

4.5. Cathedral

We will continue to collaborate with and support the Cathedral team as they develop and implement their own NZC plans.

4.6. Monitoring, Learning and Reporting

Although we have a detailed 'Anchor Plan' which sets out in chronological order the main activities in the NZC strategy implementation, we need to define some core SMART² KPIs to track and report on the most important 'milestones contributors' towards our NZC 2030 target. We hope to utilize infographics to make our reporting more attractive and motivational for key audiences.

A carbon emissions report (covering data from 2020, 2021 and 2022) will be made available to Diocesan Synod when the National Office's Research and Statistics team has completed its analyse of the data provided from parishes, schools, the Cathedral and CHG Guildford in our most recent Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) submissions.

Having a NZC team in place will enable us to participate more meaningfully in NZC learning networks, within and outside of the Church of England, locally, regionally and nationally.

As we gather more learning during 2024, an important task will be to check the key assumptions made when originally developing the NZC strategy, potentially feeding findings from that task back into a revision of the strategy.

² Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound