



**Towards Net Zero 2030
Toolkit and Checklist**

Foreword

The trees of the field shall clap their hands. (*Isaiah 55:12*)

The connection between our scriptures, God's creation and the climate emergency in the world is something that challenge us every day in our worship, in our prayers and in our daily lives.

Communities across the world are living with the devastating impacts as changes take place in the environment around them, with those least responsible for the climate and ecological crises being affected the most. Food becomes harder to produce, sea levels rise and drought hits – to name just a few of these impacts; these are not imagined threats of the future, these are things happening now to our brothers and sisters across the world. As part of God's creation and as part of the body of Christ we have a responsibility not only for what happens on our doorstep but also for what happens to the whole of God's Creation.

The Scottish Episcopal Church, along with partner churches and environmental groups, has committed to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030, to help limit the changes to the environment and to begin to restore the balance in Creation.

For the last few years, the Church in Society Committee has been working hard to help us all to discover ways of achieving this goal. Building on this work, the newly established Provincial Environment Group will provide continuing support to Dioceses and Charges as they engage with the task facing us all.

I am delighted to commend this initial part of the Toolkit of ideas and suggestions. The congregations and individual members of the church are often anxious about what it is we need to do and how we get started on this vital journey; this material begins to give us a roadmap of the journey ahead and I ask you all to engage with the Toolkit without delay and begin to make real change now.

People of faith are also people of hope, we believe in the hope of salvation, the hope of God's love and care for us and for this planet. Difficult as some of the changes may be, they are also signs of hope, each step on the road will bring hope to ourselves, to others, and to all of God's Creation.

+Mark Strange: Primus

The Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus

Introduction

In 2020, the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, recognising the climate emergency which the planet is facing, called for the whole church to work towards a target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. The Church in Society Committee worked with commitment and diligence to develop an action plan and, the following year, the Synod endorsed ten points of guidance and a programme of actions to help the Church on the way to becoming a cleaner, greener church, and put in place structures to support, resource and encourage us along the way.

The necessary changes encompass almost all aspects of our church: not only our buildings where we use the energy created from the burning of fossil fuels, but in every area of our life, work and worship. We need to transition to renewable alternatives as fast as we possibly can. We do not underestimate the challenge, but there are many steps we can take which will make a difference and we need to plan now for the bigger challenges can be met within the desired timeframe. It has to be done step by step and needs to cover church lands, buildings, halls, offices, and rectories, transport and church activities. Each church's plan of action will be unique to their situation, but some **points of guidance** can be recommended to all:

Ten Points of Guidance (first endorsed and commended by General Synod 2021)

- A. Seeking to **reduce energy use** in all our buildings and moving from oil/gas to electricity where possible
- B. **Changing from fossil fuel to electric** heating and renewable energy solutions such as heat pumps and solar power on our properties
- C. Using **less polluting forms of transport**, electric or hybrid cars, car sharing, wherever possible walking or cycling. Using online meetings often, but balanced with our need for human contact and Christian fellowship
- D. **Purchasing, food and waste**: using fairly traded, environment- and animal-friendly products in kitchens, offices. Reduce, reuse and repair where possible. Reducing waste by composting and recycling. Reduce paper use
- E. **Investment**: considering changing your church or diocese investments to avoid supporting companies extracting or burning fossil fuels on a large scale
- F. Developing **biodiversity and conservation** schemes in our land
- G. **Worship**: promoting care for God's creation through our preaching, liturgy, worship and prayers. Sharing good practice with each other
- H. **Education**: promoting learning within our churches and dioceses about climate action and care for God's creation
- I. **Community**: Work with others in our local community, and for global justice for vulnerable societies most affected by climate disruption
- J. Seeking **expert advice**, practical help, and funding possibilities

With so much work to do, it can be hard to work out where to start. The checklist below breaks down the necessary actions into manageable steps which can be built upon progressively and realistically. There are many small tasks that can be easily accomplished – indeed, many churches will find that they are doing them already. It is intended primarily for congregations, but dioceses, provincial bodies and individuals may also find the checklist helpful.

The Provincial Environment Group has been established by Standing Committee in November 2021 to support and enable the SEC to work towards the 2030 target. It will set out a strategy for a consistent and integrated approach across all levels of the SEC – province, diocese and charge. It will also consider how to support the church in addressing and responding to other environmental concerns, such as the loss of biodiversity. The toolkit below will be developed further as information and resources improve, and as good practice emerges. As the Group receives information from dioceses and congregations, a picture of the church's carbon footprint will emerge against which we can begin to measure progress towards the 2030 goal. Other tools will follow over the coming years.

The toolkit includes a list of resources which users may find helpful. We are not alone on this journey – many other denominations, faith groups and organisations are travelling a similar path, and we travel together in hope and solidarity, sharing resources and good practice.

Using the toolkit checklist

The first element in the Toolkit is a checklist table, which users are invited to complete to help understand where action has taken place and where action should be prioritised or engaged with. Groups can mark what changes they have already made and note new changes they can make that will make a difference – even the smallest action will help! Completing the checklist now and doing it again after a while will help keep a record of where changes have happened and will help users see the extent of the changes they have made.

The suggested actions are grouped under different subheadings; individuals may want to lead on a particular subheading within a larger eco group.

One crucial action is to calculate a carbon footprint and carry out an audit of current energy use, using the designated Energy Footprint Analyser (EFA), and therefore this comes first in the checklist. There are other existing tools which people may find helpful, such as the following:

Zero Waste Scotland <https://energy.zerowastescotland.org.uk/> provides free support and advice to organisations looking to reduce consumption and waste.

360° Carbon <https://360carbon.org/> is an online tool which helps calculate the carbon footprint of a church or organisation.

Eco-Congregation Scotland <https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/> has lots of advice and suggestions for congregations – on energy use, liturgical resources and much more.

There are lots of other resources, many noted at the end of the document, but users can feel free to look at other options and help the Provincial Environment Group to gain knowledge. The Provincial Environment Group will continue to update the list and share helpful material.

Toolkit Checklist

	Task	All to do
	<p>Calculate the main elements of your carbon footprint by using the new Energy Footprint Analyser (EFA) developed by the Provincial Environment Group at the Scottish Episcopal Church. Use this simple tool to calculate the carbon emissions associated with energy usage in your church, and additionally create a baseline that enables you to track this over time. Please send your 2021 calculation to PEG using the tool by Wednesday May 25th.</p> <p>You can download the tool from the SEC website here. Please note: You MUST download the free Adobe Acrobat DC Reader application to use this tool. The tool must be opened in this application.</p>	

	Tasks	Done	Could do now	Consider in medium or long term
A.	Reduce Energy Use and Improve Energy Efficiency			
A1	Insulate all buildings – e.g. church, rectory, halls - including walls, lofts, roof spaces, floors and central heating and water pipes, where possible.			
A2	Reduce draughts with curtains, insulation strips on doors and windows and by repairing cracked or broken windows or replacing with double glazing, maintaining appropriate ventilation.			
A3	Refurbish radiators ; add ‘smart’ thermostats to better control where and when you need heat.			

A4	Audit the various uses of your buildings to plan when they need heating and for how long.			
A5	Install low energy lighting , such as that provided by LED.			
A6	Install movement sensors on lights that are only needed periodically, such as hallways, stairs, and bathrooms.			
A7	Buy energy efficient electrical equipment (A++) when it needs replacing. Make sure appliances are never left on standby.			
B. Move from oil and gas to alternative heating sources, which may require a longer term plan				
B1	Familiarise yourself with the document “Sources of guidance to churches on heating of buildings” and other property information from the SEC found here .			
B2	Get a qualified person or organisation to do an energy audit in order to suggest areas of improvement .			
B3	Switch to green energy tariffs			
B4	Replace oil and gas boilers with heat pumps and/or solar power .			
B5	Where replacement of oil and gas boilers are not yet feasible, consider hybrid heating systems .			
B6	Look out for grants and community-based funding schemes to help finance changes.			
C. Reduce transport emissions				
C1	Encourage walking, wheeling and cycling , use of public transport and car sharing (where appropriate).			
C2	Provide bicycle racks and shelters and where appropriate charging points for electric cars.			

C3	Normalise meetings online where appropriate, recognizing the need to balance this with in-person meetings to ensure flourishing of people and communities. However, please note that online video communication platforms such as Zoom/Microsoft Teams do increase carbon footprint, especially with video enabled. Footnote link: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2020.105389			
D.	Purchasing, food and waste			
D1	Consider what and why you buy to reduce waste and eliminate single use plastic, e.g. refillable cleaning products, buy in bulk where possible, use recycled and recyclable office materials. Fair trade, local suppliers, etc.			
D2	Refuse items that are unsustainable, such as single use plastics and carrier bags. Reduce your paper use and use sustainably sourced, eco-friendly paper and office products.			
D3	Reuse or repurpose surplus items and repair broken items. Consider hosting a repair café. Share larger items or skills with other groups or churches.			
D4	Make recycling bins easily accessible for paper, card, plastic, glass and food.			
D5	Consider how you can save water . Treating and heating water is an intensive process.			
E.	Investment			
E1	Follow SEC policy and guidelines on divestment and investments found here			
F.	Promote biodiversity and conservation			
F1	Use your grounds to encourage biodiversity , such as planting native flowers, shrubs and trees, creating a wildlife hotel and leaving some			

	areas of grass long.			
F2	For smaller areas, plant flower tubs along the frontage of the church or car park.			
F3	Consider erecting bird/bat boxes .			
G.	Worship - Be the Church in action			
G1	Embed care for God's creation in all of the Church's life, and through our preaching, liturgy, worship and prayer.			
G2	Celebrate the Season of Creation (1 September - 4 October) through services, liturgy teaching and events (SEC Liturgy).			
G3	Hold an annual climate-focused service on Climate Sunday , to explore the theological and scientific basis of creation care and climate action, to pray, and to commit to action.			
G4	Pray for change – many creative resources are available for praying for God's earth, and for justice for the most vulnerable.			
G5	Plan a pilgrimage – an opportunity for people to reconnect with God and nature.			
G6	Young people and Children - explore with young people their insights and commitment to change, and encourage the adult church community to listen. Help young people to network with others.			
G7	Join Eco-Congregation Scotland to share in and learn from the collective wisdom of many other Scottish churches seeking care for God's creation and climate action.			
H.	Education			
H1	Explore the wide range of educational and theological materials around climate change and Christian ecological responses. Lent and Advent Groups offer opportunities to respond in spiritually creative ways to the climate crisis.			

I.	Be the Church in community			
I1	Form an eco-group in your church as a starting point to discuss this toolkit and to engage with the SEC over the longer term			
I2	Engage with other churches and local community groups on climate issues; explore how you might work together, share skills and encourage one another.			
I3	Promote local environmental initiatives through the church magazine, posters, notices, and prayer.			
I4	Host public events , such as talks and workshops on climate issues, or offer your space for others to host events.			
I5	Follow the work of others – Tearfund, Christian Aid and the Joint Public Issues Team all have resources to help participation both in and out of church.			
J.	Seek Expert Advice, Fundraising options			
J1	Refer to expert organisations such as Zero Waste Scotland and Energy Savings Trust			
J2	Prepare in advance your carbon footprint for energy audit in preparation for funding applications			

Checklist completed by:		Date of Vestry meeting to which checklist results will be reported:	
Date completed:			

IDENTIFYING NEXT STEPS

A) Priority Actions

Identify the next step for those actions that could be done now. Which should take priority? Who will be responsible for taking these forward? By when?

Action	Who's responsible?	Target date for completion	Date of review by vestry
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

B) Further Actions

Identify the next step for actions which could be considered in medium or long term.
Who will be responsible for exploring these? By when?

Action	Who's responsible?	Target date for completion	Date of review by vestry
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

C) Feedback

We would welcome feedback on this toolkit and your suggestions and contributions.
Please email environment@scotland.anglican.org with your comments

Helpful Tools:

The SEC [Vestry Resources](#) page has useful information on buildings, processes and potential funding streams

Audits, Energy and Recycling

[Scotland's Taking Action](#)
[Zero Waste Scotland](#)
[Energy Action Scotland](#)
[Carbon Footprint tool](#)
[Repair Cafe](#)
[Waterwise](#)
[Carbon Conversations](#)

Climate Change and Gender Justice

[SHE Changes Climate](#)

Biodiversity

[A Rocha](#)
[Nature Scot](#)
[Community Woodlands](#)
[Greenspace Scotland](#)
[Woodland Trust](#)
[Scottish Wildlife Trust - helping wildlife at home](#)

Further Engagement and Reading

[Christian Aid](#)
[Joint Public Issues Team](#)
[Tearfund](#)
[An Ecotheology Bibliography](#)
[Stop Climate Chaos](#)
[Christian Climate Action](#)
[Climate Assembly Scotland](#)
[Operation Noah | A Christian response to climate change](#)
[Peers for the Planet](#)
[Sustainable Development in Historic Faith Buildings](#)

Liturgical Resources

[Season of Creation](#)
[Climate Sunday](#)
[Scottish Episcopal Church](#) - Liturgy for Season of Creation
[Sustainable Preaching](#)

Prayer Resources

[Pray and Fast for the Climate](#)

[24-7 Prayer](#)

Join Others Locally and Around the World

[Eco-Congregation Scotland](#)

[Green Christian](#)

[The Church of England](#)

[The Anglican Communion](#)

[European Christian Environment Network](#)

[Transition Network](#)

<https://joyinenough.org/>

<https://uk.bookshop.org/books/regeneration-ending-the-climate-crisis-in-one-generation/9780141998916>

<https://acen.anglicancommunion.org>

Local Action

[Our Place](#)

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The Scottish Episcopal Church

21 Grosvenor Crescent, Edinburgh, EH1 2 SEE, Scotland
www.scotland.anglican.org | environment@scotland.anglican.org