



Caring for Creation - Towards Net Zero Programme of Activity

Diocese in Europe May 2022

Context

In February 2020 the Church of England General Synod set a goal for the Church to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The Motion stated *That this Synod, recognising that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation, and a fundamental injustice,*

. call upon all parts of the Church of England, including parishes, BMOs [Bishop Mission Orders], education institutions, dioceses, cathedrals, and the NCIs [National Church Institutions], to work to achieve year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently examine what would be required to reach net zero emissions by 2030 in order that a plan of action can be drawn up to achieve that target;

(b) request reports on progress from the Environment Working Group and the NCI's every three years beginning in 2022 and;

(c) call on each Diocesan Synod, and cathedral Chapter, to address progress toward net zero emissions every three years.

The Diocese in Europe addressed the challenge of Caring for Creation in detail at its Synod in 2018 and chaplaincies have worked hard towards becoming Eco Churches. As at May 2022, 8 chaplaincies have achieved the bronze award from A Rocha, and one silver, and the Diocese and Bishop's Offices have also been awarded Bronze Diocese status.

At Diocesan Synod in December 2021 the work of the Net Zero Working Group was endorsed in a debate which ended with the unanimous approval for this motion: *This Synod pledges to devise and promote a programme of activity across the Diocese so that the Diocese in Europe is in line with the General Synod's pledge 'to work to achieve year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently examine what would be required to reach net zero emissions by 2030'. This work to be led by the Net Carbon Neutral Working Group and reported to Diocesan Synod in June 2022*

Both the updated Care for Creation policy and the programme of activity to be discussed are the outcome of the considerations over the past 6 months.

Introduction - Programme of Activity towards net zero

The Diocese in Europe supports and contributes to the Church of England goal of net zero by 2030.

The activity programme has drawn upon the areas of action and milestones in the National Routemap (draft, as per consultation early 2022). Additional targets, areas of action and activities are expected to be added in future phases.

The programme of activity contributes to the realisation of the Care for Creation Policy.

Scope

The Church of England national Environment Working Group have developed a definition of what is in scope for the net zero 2030 target and this was updated in September 2020 after national consultation. The key activity areas to be addressed in net zero 2030 scope as defined by the Church of England are energy use in buildings, and work-related travel.

The first phase activity programme for the Diocese in Europe follows this lead in having its main focus on these same areas. However, as more information is gathered on relative areas of activity and carbon footprint in the Diocese, it is expected this scope will be expanded in future plans.

It is noted that while lifestyle-related carbon emissions are not currently included in the nationally defined scope for the church's net zero 2030 target, (and not a primary focus of the Diocesan programme below) this is an area where it is vital to support each other on our common and faith-led journey. The Eco-church programme is a particularly useful framework to enable congregations to engage with lifestyle issues more closely.

Phase 1 activity programme below covers activities commencing in 2022 through 2024. Further phases (additional areas and activities) will be added in future years.

Obstacles & challenges

It is recognised that the following challenges will need to be confronted :

- Awareness raising and motivation to support prioritisation of lower carbon strategies
- Resources - financial resources, expertise, and human resources will be required, difficult to quantify on a Diocesan level
Competing agendas - chaplaincies are faced with many requirements and important issues; alongside which the urgency of reducing carbon footprint needs to be addressed

The Diocese in Europe also has some specific characteristics compared to dioceses in England in working towards net-zero. These include :

- Relatively low 'ownership' of buildings, with many chaplaincies sharing and/or renting premises (church, offices, accommodation etc)
- Diversity of national contexts, including availability of energy alternatives, national standards etc.
- Distance - wide geographical spread with low density of churches results in high travel requirements for church representatives and congregation members

Facilitators & enablers

The following factors will support the Diocese in its activities towards net zero milestones

- Availability of good practice examples, success stories shared across the Diocese through communications channels and specific events
- Tools, including from expert team at National level
- Diocesan Staff member(s) with Net Zero support role (envisaged).
- Diocesan Net Zero Working Group
- European Green Deal provides a supportive framework at top level Europe, (if not yet always reflected in more local policy or non-EU countries)
- Diocese in Europe EU Climate Pact commitment
- Eco-Church award engagement which is growing in awareness, action and momentum, and where significant progress has been made in the Diocese



Measurement and oversight

Progress on the NZ programme of activity will be reported regularly to Synod and Bishop's Council and updated on an annual basis to reflect improved information, resources available and continuous improvement.

The Net Zero Working Group will make proposals to the Bishop's Council for further development of the NZ programme of activity, and means to implement it.

The House of Laity and House of Clergy of the Diocesan Synod will each be represented in the Net Zero Working Group.

At current Phase 1, there is not enough data to determine a complete range of targets for emissions reduction (and therefore to what extent offsetting may be required).

Data collection and development of future actions and interim targets will therefore continue alongside the immediate engagement in activities which clearly contribute towards net zero.

Programme of activity

Towards Net Zero in the Diocese of Europe - Phase 1 Activity Programme (2022-2024)

Focus - energy, buildings, work-related travel

This plan to be reviewed and extended on an annual basis, including with additional areas of activity

DO = Diocesan Office DBF = Diocesan Board of Finance
 NZWG = Net Zero Working Group
 AD = Archdeaconries CHAPS – Chaplaincies
 BS – Bishop’s Senior Staff

Activity	Target date	Ownership	Link to CofE routemap* milestones	Notes
1- Diocese				
1.1 Provide an annual carbon emissions report to Diocesan Synod	2023	CHAPS/DO	4.1.1	<i>Based on information from chaplaincies submitted with financial returns 2022. Initial report likely to be incomplete due to Synod / returns timing .</i>
1.2 Provide a costed plan to carbon net zero to Diocesan Synod, including detail on changes required	2023	NZWG / DO	4.1.2	<i>Information gathering exercise to be initiated second half of 2022 1st report likely to be incomplete, as unlikely to have full info from chaplaincies. An evolving exercise.</i>
1.3 Develop, implement and keep updated a communication strategy to churches in Diocese	2022	DO / NZWG	4.1.3	<i>Based on existing communication channels, including dedicated section on website, raise awareness of NZ priority, tools and support, good practice examples.</i>
1.4 Survey of Diocese clergy property to include energy-relevant questions.	End 2023	CHAPS/DO	4.1.4	<i>This will enable clearer understanding of next actions required re energy efficiency measures etc. and enable planning of further activity re properties.</i>
1.5 Diocesan offices measure and report on carbon emissions, and develop net-zero carbon plans.	2023	DO	4.6.1 & 4.6.2	<i>This includes buildings and Diocese-related work travel.</i>
1.6 Diocese expenses policy updated to encourage sustainable transport options	2023	Bishop’s Council/BS	5.3.3	<i>Includes expense policy guidelines for chaplaincies as well as DO policy. Travel offsetting options will be explored, and rationale for in-person meetings examined, and resulting guidance shared.</i>
1.7 Seek resourcing opportunities for supporting activities in DiE towards net zero.	2023 and ongoing	DO / NZWG		<i>In liaison with National Church Institutions and offering support to fundraising at local level in Diocese, as well as seeking to put in place human resource as support to chaplaincies.</i>

2- Chaplaincies					
2.1	All churches / clergy which are able to choose their own provider move to 100% electricity renewable tariff if available.	2023	Chaplaincies	4.2.4 & 4.4.1	<i>This option is unlikely to be available in all locations.</i>
2.2	Churches report annual energy consumption (target 90% completion 2023), supported by webinars and advice.	2023	Chaplaincies / NZWG	4.2.5	<i>Existing EFT can provide a useful basis for discussion on energy consumption and energy-saving behaviour etc, even in contexts where the building is not church-owned: adaptation will be considered.</i>
2.3	All churches with competence over their buildings review lighting systems and install energy efficient lighting (including e.g. LEDS, motion sensors)	2024	Chaplaincies	4.2.11	<i>Earlier than proposed target under National Routemap (draft) but this is considered to be an early (feasible) win.</i>
2.4	Chaplaincies measure and report annually on their carbon emissions (church premises, accommodation, offices, travel), supported by webinars and advice.	2023	Chaplaincies / NZWG	5.3.1	<i>This can be done with EFT /carbon360 tool, designed for use by churches. This will provide chaplaincies with important data for further planning and action. NZWG to explore and provide guidance on tools</i>
2.5	Chaplaincies make net-zero carbon plans, supported by webinars and advice	2023	Chaplaincies / NZWG		<i>Carbon360 is a relevant tool developed for churches: there may be other similar localised tools.</i>
2.6	Churches engage with Ecochurch award programme; register, review requirements, make and implement action plan for relevant target level	2023	Chaplaincies / NZWG	4.2.8	<i>The EcoChurch programme encompasses Worship and teaching, Stewardship of Buildings and Land, Lifestyle and Global and community outreach. It is a useful starting point for engaging congregations on personal aspects of carbon emissions reduction.</i>
2.7	All chaplaincies appoint an LEO	2022	Chaplaincies		<i>Important first step towards action and to enable networking & reporting.</i>

3- Archdeaonries				
3.1	Establish network of chaplaincy climate/env contacts in each archdeaconry, including mentoring e.g. with EcoChurch award holders supporting other chaplaincies.	2023	AD / NZWG	<i>Climate / environment contacts do not need to be experts or have all the answers, but help to channel information and champion change at local level, and feedback to DO/NZWG on support/resources needed.</i>
3.2	Annual induction/training day for chaplaincy climate/env contacts	2024	AD / NZWG	<i>Based on a common framework, but most relevant at Archdeaconry (not Diocese) level</i>
3.3	Care for Creation session on each Synod agenda to enable discussion of progress and mutual support	2023	AD	
3.4	Each Archdeaconry appoints an Archdeaconry Environment Officer	2022	AD	<i>Guidance on the functions of this role will be provided. Key support to networking and engagement.</i>
3.5	Continued support and follow-up of chaplaincies for actions towards carbon reduction	2023	AD/NZWG	<i>Archdeaonries will be essential in facilitating information flow and support to chaplaincies, and liaison with NZ Working Group</i>
4	4-Governance and support for net zero programme of activities			
	<p>The Net Zero Working Group (NZWG) will meet regularly to support implementation and review of this programme of activity, including through development and sharing of relevant tools and resources.</p> <p>The NZWG will include Diocesan Synod representatives (clergy and lay), and will report to Bishop’s Council on a regular basis. Bishop's Council and Synod will consider reports on progress in implementing this programme of activities and will adopt recommendations as necessary to facilitate achievement of the targets.</p> <p>Archdeaconry Environment Officers will meet with NZWG as an ‘extended group’ formation every quarter, to facilitate sharing to and feedback from Archdeaonries.</p>			

Notes

- 'churches' includes Cathedral and Pro-Cathedrals

* - references as per [draft version routemap](#) as consulted to Feb 2022