

CHAPTER

9

ENSURING YOUR PROJECT IS SUSTAINABLE

TEAM PRAYER

Father God, grant us the wisdom to care for the goodness of your creation. We thank you for creating humankind according to your likeness. Help us, like you, to see the goodness of creation. Help us to remember that we are part of a greater whole, and that we have a duty to care for the earth, not just for ourselves. Help us to live in balance rather than conflict, to treat the material world with care and gentleness, and to conserve and nurture the things around us.

Amen

Sustainability is about the long-term future of a project. It is important that any alterations you make to your building continue to work for your community long into the future.



Sustainability is most commonly used with particular reference to the environment, however, from a project point of view; there are other sustainable aspects you need to consider:

- economic
- organisational
- social
- environmental

Funders will expect to see evidence that you have thought about all of these aspects, taken action and set in place appropriate mechanisms for the long term.

CASE STUDY

ST PETERS CHURCH, PETERSTOW, DIOCESE OF HEREFORD, COFE

www.peterstowvillage.co.uk/church.html

and you can watch a Youtube clip of the opening here

www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YGplvupRjY

Population: 444 (2011 Census)

This village had been using their community hall for community events, but it had become derelict and was not on main drainage so it was proposed to move community events into the Grade II* church.

Two questionnaires were organised and the project brought church and community together to develop a project that would meet both their needs. The project development took five years, including raising the funds, agreeing the design and obtaining all the necessary permissions.

In 2008 a bid to the Big Lottery Fund was successful and the village found itself with £103,000. Kitchen and toilets were installed at the west end, the pews were removed and replaced with comfortable chairs creating space for the residents of Peterstow to use as a village community centre while leaving the east end of the church in its original form, but in a better state of repair. Opened in 2009, it has been a wonderful asset to the village and “we now have a medieval building fit for the twenty first century” said Barbara Gratton, one of the members of the Peterstow Community Project. The ‘village hall’ space created is managed by a hall committee made up of 50% PCC and 50% representatives from other village organisations, which works well. One of the most successful activities is the fortnightly lunch club, which provides a hot meal for many of the older, isolated people in the community. The church continues to be used for variety of community activities, including arts and cultural events, whist drives, meetings, and providing refreshments at after life events and family events.

Interestingly the church is now used by the parish council for their meetings, and the **Neighbourhood Plan** has been co-ordinated from there. The questionnaire had a response rate of 85% - and the church has been able to include a series of questions about the church and its role in the community. Responses clearly indicate that the church is now seen as a key community asset and a leading organisation which contributes to an improved quality of life in the village. The church feels that the project has removed barriers between the worshipping and wider community. The congregation is stable and while it’s not growing substantially, it is holding its own. The PCC are in no doubt that the project contributed to the sustainability of the church building, but also to the financial sustainability of the worshipping community.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Many funders give financial support for ‘capital’ projects – those that require refurbishments or structural changes to buildings, or the purchase of specialised equipment. They may even pay for some other setup costs such as marketing and training. They may not help with the day-to-day running costs such as utility bills – and if they do, it will be for a limited period of time – or for longer-term costs such as maintenance and the replacement of equipment.

To support your capital project, a section of your business or action plan needs to look at this **day-to-day financial future**. You’ll need to demonstrate that once your project is up and running, you can estimate what the regular running costs will be and what steps you will take to generate enough income to cover them. (See Chapter 13).

A common way to generate an income is by charging a fee to hire out your new community space, but you need to set that at an acceptable level. There’s no point charging a fee so high that community groups or other potential users can’t afford to pay it. It is a good idea to find out what other community buildings in your area charge for equivalent facilities so that you don’t under or overcharge.

Hiring or leasing parts of your building

If you intend to share space with other users, the agreements you have with them will vary depending on the scale of use. This can range from another organisation using part of the building for long periods of time or installing a permanent structure, to regular or one-off lettings or hiring. If the former, then a lease or licence may be required, both of which will need the relevant permission from your denomination. Check with your relevant building advisers at Diocesan, District, Synod or national level at an early stage and certainly before you enter into any commitments.

All agreements should cover costs and set out clearly what is expected from you hiring out the venue and your users. This should include details such as what party is responsible for cleaning, locking up, timings etc.

Inform your Insurance Company if you are changing the nature of the use of your building, especially if you will be hiring out space to external users. Your insurance company will be able to offer guidance about hiring out space in your buildings to outside users as well as advice on running functions. (See also Chapter 4).

Ensure that you take account of inflation e.g. the cost of hire should rise every so often to help you meet rising costs associated with looking after the building. Keep an eye on what other facilities in your area are charging, but be realistic, being the cheapest may get you business, but you still need to cover your costs.

Consider the long term. The work you have done today may need repairs in ten, or twenty years’ time. What steps are you going to take to create a financial reserve to cover these costs and any unforeseen circumstances?

ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

This is about developing the right structures for managing any new activities in the long term. There is a difference between **project management** and ongoing **facility management**.

You may have already planned for a different management structure/organisation to manage the new facility as opposed to the one that developed the project.

Whether the PCC or a separate Community group managed the project, it may well be appropriate for the **same group** to continue managing the new facility and activities. However, you may find that **different people** within the group have better skills and abilities for doing this, rather than relying on those same people involved in the project management. Some may decide they want to stand down at this point and you need to ensure you identify which skills you will require for this next stage.

Ensure that the right mix of people continue to be involved in decision-making i.e. a good balance between church and community, paid staff, volunteers and users. You need feedback from all these groups to ensure you pick up on problems and suggestions for improvements in good time. (See Chapter 3).

Whatever you do don't let your project be dependent on one person who then collapses with exhaustion.

Planning for succession

Make sure that knowledge is passed on and that arrangements are in place if a key person moves on. Encourage people to take on new responsibilities so that experience and the necessary skills are not concentrated in only one or two people.

CASE STUDY

ST HELEN'S, GRINDLEFORD, DERBYSHIRE, DIOCESE OF DERBY, COFE

www.grindlefordshop.co.uk // www.achurchnearyou.com/grindleford-st-helen

Population: 909 (2011 Census)

St Helen's, Grindleford's parish church, stepped into the breach when the village, in the Hope Valley within the Peak District National Park, lost its last village shop, post office and butchers some years ago.

Since the summer of 2015 after four years of persistent fundraising, there is once again a shop and cafe in the village selling general provisions now based in the former choir vestry in St Helen's. The church's offer of rent-free space made it possible and enables it to continue as it is able to pay all other running costs including utilities.

The Grindleford Community Shop and Café is open from Monday to Saturday from 9am to 6pm and on Sundays from 12 to 4pm and caters for locals, tourists and many walkers. And, the church is committed to the shop staying with the priest-in-charge, the Revd Jude Davis saying: "We feel that we have more credibility in the village and people see us as part of the community, rather than aside from them".

In June 2017, the shop signed another five-year lease agreement with the church having celebrated its third birthday. It serves about 250 customers a week with particular favourites including freshly baked daily bread, tea and cakes (mostly home-made).

Thanks to the shop people, who would not normally enter a church, are familiar with the building and support it. One of the shop's founders and co-manager, Sarah Batterbee, pointed out that without it, the village might have gone the way of some other villages and become a "soulless commuter community". She said Grindleford was



a particularly supportive village and reaching the shop's third birthday in a solvent state was cause for celebration as in most business plans that meant "it stood a good chance of succeeding".

While the shop has a number of volunteers, it also has two paid co-managers following the Plunkett Foundation's advice that "you need somebody who will be prepared to go in whatever the circumstances".

St Helen's now serves as a place of worship; a venue for village meetings, concerts, exhibitions and lectures; a place to mark the transitions in life: baptisms, marriages, funerals, and to remember loved ones; and is open every day for peace, quiet thought and prayer. A wheelchair ramp assists with access to the church, it has a disabled accessible toilet and there is also limited disabled parking within the churchyard.

It also offers a small kitchen/tea point in the porch (offering regular afternoon tea parties for older residents) and its flexible seating allows the nave – able to seat 100 people - to be used for a variety of fundraising and community uses including the Centenary Roof Appeal at St. Helen's (CRASH!). There are also plans to organise a coffee shop drop in for younger people and GraveTalk cafes for older people.

Worship too is united with members of the small Methodist community joining the St Helen's congregation and a Methodist minister or lay preacher taking a service at least each quarter. The Revd Jude Davis says there is also an increased attendance at Christingle and carol services.

CASE STUDY

PETERCHURCH, DIOCESE OF HEREFORD, COFE

www.hubcommunity.org

Population: 1,091 (2011 Census)

St Peter's is an impressive 12th century Grade I listed building which stands in the small village of Peterchurch situated in the Golden Valley in South West Herefordshire. The area is very rural with many families feeling isolated with few opportunities to interact socially and a lack of access to public services.



Herefordshire Council were looking for ways to deliver children's services in the area when they approached the Hereford Diocese and expressed an interest in using St Peter's. At the time the church had no facilities and the Local Authority offered £20k towards the cost of putting in a toilet. From that initial conversation, a vision developed and a partnership was established between the local authority and the church, and the whole community backed the idea of using the church for activities.

The project to refurbish the interior involved freeing up space by removing the pews and installing environmentally-friendly underfloor heating, a lift, lighting, toilets, kitchen, consulting room and a new mezzanine floor with access into the bell tower to provide an additional room.

The project was finished at the end of 2009 and is an exemplar of extended church use and partnership working.

The project has met several objectives and addressed several needs of the community: a long-term use for an underused community facility and resource, ensured the sustainability of a major heritage building now in regular daily use, helped address the issue of access, increased service delivery from the church centre, created a greater sense of community cohesion and people working together to address their own needs, improved access to cultural activities through the facility provided in the library and an improved performance space, and improved quality of life for families and young children.

In recent years with the withdrawal of Surestart funding, the project has had to reinvent itself and the use of the building to ensure a sustainable income. They have developed a range of new activities including a good neighbour scheme, a community café that is run on a social enterprise commercial basis and a Food Assembly. They also engage through Twitter and Facebook.

VOLUNTEERS

Keep your volunteers on board and inspired over the long term. Volunteers need good leadership and management. It is important that they don't become bored or overstretched and you need to continually encourage new volunteers to join the project.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The whole reason for undertaking this project is to solve a community need. As well as demonstrating that your project will solve the problem, you also need to introduce a system that allows you to continue consulting the community about its needs in the future.

After the launch you still need to regularly review whether and how you are achieving your aims. Projects and activities may need to change over time as they adapt to changing circumstances, such as new competing facilities or changes in the population, which may no longer correspond to your initial community research. Changes can bring both opportunities and challenges. It could be that a school which has been using your church closes, or another local facility providing a meeting space is forced to close.

If your project enables a crèche to operate for a couple of mornings a week, that's great for local mothers and babies. But in a few years' time, (while hopefully, new mothers and babies will now be using the crèche facilities), what will you need to do for those original babies who are now a few years older and need nursery places or after school clubs?

What steps are you taking to ensure that you include the views and wishes of everyone in the community? How are you trying to reach out to disadvantaged groups in your area?

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

“Finding one solution to fit all churches is impossible. Instead each church must aim to strike the right delicate balance between encouraging use of the building, energy efficiency and conservation”.

www.churchcare.co.uk

If you are about to undertake any building works, make sure you have looked at the most energy efficient option and thought about sustainability - whether repairs or re-ordering, routine maintenance or if you are thinking about installing new lighting or heating. Many funders are increasingly looking at this element when assessing applications and in almost all denominations there is strong theological backing about caring for the Earth.

Consider these aspects:

- The materials and products you use to refurbish buildings. Try to use the most environmentally-friendly products possible while also using energy-saving products. If you're refurbishing a building, this is the ideal time to install such infrastructure. If you're installing a toilet, can you use a grey-water system that uses rainwater to flush the toilet for example?
- BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method) sets the standard for best practice in the environmental performance of buildings. www.breeam.com/resources

It assesses the building's performance in areas like energy use, pollution, water consumption, and material usage. However, the age and construction methods of our churches mean that it may not be possible to attain BREEAM standards.

Historic England has advice on how to save energy in historic buildings.

www.historicengland.org.uk/research/current/conservation-research/energy-efficiency

Cadw has also produced a renewable energy guide for historic buildings.

www.cadw.gov.wales/docs/cadw/publications/Micro_gen_booklet_EN.pdf

Always aim to achieve the highest environmental standards possible. Make this clear to your architect, when they're composing their detailed brief.

- Consider the life expectancy of the proposed new facilities. While they can be more expensive, it may be more cost-effective to go for longer lasting materials.
- Where are you sourcing the materials for your project? Can they be sourced locally?
- Can you re-use any existing materials or equipment? If not is there anywhere you can recycle them locally, perhaps via Freecycle?
- Where will your contractors come from? Employing a team of contractors from the other side of the county will increase the carbon footprint of the work as they travel to and from the site every day.
- Using LED bulbs is one of the easiest ways to improve the energy efficiency of a project.

- Decisions on heating. Look at efficiency, greenness, meeting conservation requirements and how to determine the most effective heating systems depending on different uses within a church building e.g. regular use, mixed uses, heating of different spaces within a building or infrequent, irregular use. In an historic church, any system will need to be aesthetically unobtrusive. You can find detailed guidance here

www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/CCB_Choosing-the-right-heating-system.pdf

and also here

www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/our-views/environment-and-climate-change/how-you-can-act/sustainable-buildings and scroll down to section headed

'What about heating'

Over the last few years, many churches have successfully installed underfloor heating, in places such as All Saints Hereford and St Peters, Peterchurch (see page 169), but this might not be the right option for every church. Underfloor heating works best where the church is used regularly and does not have a historic floor. If underfloor heating is considered to be the best solution for your proposed project, but it would mean disturbing the historic fabric, then it is essential that discussions take place, at a very early stage, with all interested parties to see if agreed measures could overcome this. Raised pew platforms or under pew heating can be cheaper less intrusive alternatives. SPAB has produced a document to highlight considerations that should be borne in mind by those contemplating whether or not to install underfloor heating in a historic church. Heating in Churches: a cautionary note on underfloor heating can be found here

www.spab.org.uk/advice/heating-churches-cautionary-note-underfloor-heating

there is also guidance on **ChurchCare** here

www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/CCB_Under-floor-heating.pdf

- Do you want to think about generating your own renewable energy? The **Church of England's Environmental Campaign** website offers advice and case studies on a range of options from solar panels to biomass boilers to wind turbines. www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/our-views/environment-and-climate-change/how-you-can-act/sustainable-buildings
- What will be the environmental impact while the project is taking place? For example, what steps will you take to reduce noise pollution while builders are carrying out your refurbishment? Will the noise affect those in the church and neighbouring properties too?
- Don't neglect the environment around your building, improving the biodiversity of any church land or local growing projects are great ways to engage the community.

Environmental Sustainability is an ongoing responsibility. The building's operation should be as environmentally friendly as possible, so do review sustainability frequently. Does the latest technology offer new solutions?

You'll see that there is a close link between Environmental Sustainability and project costs. Locally sourced materials, locally sourced labour, solar panels and grey-water recycling systems may cost **more** money now (although costs are falling), and increase the project's overall costs. However in the long term investing in energy efficiency and generation is likely to save you money through reduced energy costs. So, it is important that a balance is struck. Increasingly, funders are taking their own environmental policies more seriously. They realise that they have a role to play, so some funders are prepared to offer **higher grants** for projects using environmentally sustainable products and services.

Value for Money

The cheapest quotes may not necessarily offer the **best value** for money. So while a local firm of builders may not be the cheapest, they may be the best choice because they won't be travelling so far to do the job. They'll also be on hand to undertake any future repairs.

Employing a local building firm has an additional sustainable economic effect because the grant money is more likely to be spent again in the local community.



Solar Panels at St Anne's Church, Highgate
© PowerUP North London

Following a successful conference at Wakefield Cathedral in December 2018 on sustainable heating and lighting, the resources are now available on the Diocese of Leeds' website www.leeds.anglican.org/dac/sustainability

CASE STUDY

NEW BRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTRE, DIOCESE OF HEREFORD, COFE

www.communionarchitects.com/project/21st-century-event-space-herefordshire

St. Andrew's is a Grade 1 listed building in one of five very small parishes in the Bishopstone group.

The need for a community centre for the parishes in this isolated part of Herefordshire had been identified in the **Parish Plan** and after extensive public consultation St. Andrew's was felt to be the best location. The newly completed conversion, now called the New Bridge Community Centre, and run by a Community Association, involved taking the fixed pews out of the nave. The chancel and sanctuary were left as they were for Sunday services. There is a kitchen, toilet and a small room for private meetings and consultations and all areas are accessible to the disabled. The conversion was designed to make the building energy and waste efficient, to use local materials and suppliers, and to leave as small an environmental footprint as possible.

CASE STUDY

ST ANNE'S, HIGHGATE, DIOCESE OF LONDON, COFE

www.highgateneighbourhoodforum.org.uk/community-energy-project-in-highgate

www.saintanneshighgate.co.uk

www.powerupnorthlondon.org

Population: 11,632 (2011 census for Highgate)

A Grade II listed church in Highgate, St Anne's teamed up with a community group and won planning permission to install solar panels on the slope of its roof.

Designed and built by builder architect William Cubitt in 1853 on commission by Anne Barnett, St Anne's is a lively parish with a mixed congregation of all ages, a strong children's church and feeds into St Michael's Church of England School in Highgate.

Reverend Andrew Meldrum, vicar of St Anne's on Highgate West Hill since 1999, worked with Power Up North London (PUNL), backing their plans to place 60 solar panels on the slope of its roof. He was keen that savings generated by the panels would help to fund community lunches, a youth project and more daytime activities at the church where poet Sir John Betjeman was baptised.

PUNL is a community energy company formed in 2014 by three local Transition Town groups, to develop renewable energy installations supporting the local community and help the fight against climate change.

PUNL raised £30K through a Community Share offer - and St Anne's will benefit from discounted energy through a power purchase agreement with PUNL. Parishioners and members of the local community also benefit from a small return on their investment and it was felt the

scheme was a positive mechanism for developing new relationships between the church and local inhabitants who were given the opportunity to invest for social and environmental benefit.

The St Anne's installation will provide an estimated 16,500 kWh of clean energy per year, equating to 8,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions – twice the energy consumption of the church. Any surplus funds will go into a Community Energy Fund, for the use of local community projects.

While there were some concerns the panels would spoil the view of the 1850s church from Hampstead Heath, local officials granted permission after recognising the scheme's social and environmental benefits.

More than 100 people wrote in to support the project, including Highgate's Green Cllr Sian Berry. She said: *"By allowing the church to set an example of generating green energy for the community, the overall benefit to the borough, which has large numbers of buildings suitable for solar panels... could be very large."*

The church hosts a busy social calendar and also has its own shop in Swain's Lane, selling bric-a-brac, books, jewellery and antiques. All proceeds go towards the work and upkeep of St Anne's church and it's manned by volunteers.

CASE STUDY

BUCKLAND BREWER METHODIST CHURCH, NORTH DEVON

www.bucklandbrewerparish.org.uk/local-services/buckland-brewer-community-shop

www.bucklandbrewerparish.org.uk // www.wesdeven.weebly.com/buckland-brewer-community-shop.html

Population: 777 (2011 census)

Buckland Brewer is a village near Torrridge, Devon. “A friendly store” with over 1000 products on sale, the Buckland Brewer community shop operates from the vestry of the Methodist church - and has done since 10th December 2012. The shop premise is leased from the Methodist church at a market rent.

Primarily staffed by volunteers it offers a range of goods including a wide variety of local produce, and services for parts of six days a week and prepaid for newspapers can be picked up on Sunday mornings. It is the first Methodist church in England to host a village shop.

The idea came about when the previous village shop closed in 2009. A village committee identified the church, in the centre of the village, as a potential site and chapel members were keen.

After some discussion in the church, a 10-year lease was drawn up. This meant the shop was independent of the church within agreed parameters. It was ratified at local, district and Connexional level in the Methodist church.

The Church funded the building work while the Shop Committee raised funds to open, equip and operate the shop and provide new disabled access and a decking area. The Plunkett Foundation, Village SOS, Community Council Devon, Torrridge District Council and the Arthur Rank Centre were all involved. The Church raised the necessary £25,000 needed through grants and the shop committee raised a similar amount through grants and a local share issue.

Buckland Brewer community Shop Limited was set up as an Industrial and Provident Society to provide the legal entity to manage the shop using a community co-operative model. They raised some of the funds from a community Shares Scheme.

The committee see the main benefits as being firstly that a beautiful historic building, which was underutilised, is used daily during the week and secondly that the shop serves as a hub for the whole village.

It is seen as providing a vital service and a social meeting place but Treasurer Gill Willett admitted the shop underwent some ‘wobbles’ in 2016. “We found we couldn’t pay a manager and keep our stock levels up so now it is all on a voluntary basis. Because of that we dropped our opening hours to 9am to 1pm and then from 3 to 5pm in the afternoons. Although our customers do seem to have adapted and I don’t think business has dropped.”

The village is five miles from the nearest town and the shop’s biggest seller by far is milk, followed by bananas... “We now have about a dozen volunteers and try to ensure nobody does more than about two hours a week,” she said.

The Chapel too plays host to various social events in the village with a Youth Drop In on Thursday; Snooker Club on a Wednesday & a Parent & Toddler Group (part of the Village Under 5 Group) on Fridays.

TOP TIPS



- When estimating any future day-to-day costs work closely with your PCC. Look at their accounts, which may provide useful guidance as to what expenditure you can anticipate. Remember that installing an improved heating system may **reduce** running costs.
- Ask your architect about environmental options and how they fit with local authority guidelines.
- Economic, Environmental and Social sustainability must work hand in hand. There's no point using a new environmentally friendly product within your project if it isn't sustainable. Don't use a new woodchip boiler if you'll find supplies of woodchips difficult to come by.
- Liaise with your local Community Development Officer (who may be employed by your Local Authority, Local Strategic Partnership or nearest Voluntary Action) about social inclusion techniques.
- Liaise with the local Agenda 21 Officer about local environmentally sustainable solutions.

CHAPTER 9 CHECKLIST 

Does your business/action plan consider the economic sustainability of your project?

What steps are you taking to ensure that your project is socially sustainable?

Have you checked that your project achieves the highest environmentally sustainable standards it is capable of?

Have you taken steps to minimise detrimental effects on the local environment during your project works?

Have you sought all the available advice from the relevant websites and your local authority's Agenda 21 officer?

FURTHER RESOURCES

Building Calculator

This innovative tool from **Locality** uses whole life costing methodology (a technique employed by the private sector) and applies it to the community sector – the first time this has been done! It will help you assess the future costs of the building you own or are considering taking on – including its repair, maintenance and other operating requirements.

www.locality.org.uk/our-work/assets/building-calculator

Total Facilities Management by Brian Atkin and Adrian Brooks (Wiley-Blackwell 2015, ISBN 978-1-405-18659-9) offers a comprehensive treatment of what facility management means to owners, operators, tenants, facility managers and professional advisors, as well as containing advice on how facilities can be better managed from a number of perspectives.

Hiring out your building

The ACRE Network has county-based village hall advisers who provide an information and advice service for those who manage village halls and other rural community buildings. This includes advice on making buildings more energy efficient. Their model hiring agreement for village halls provides a comprehensive agreement and all the information you need to consider when hiring out your hall.

www.acre.org.uk/our-work/village-halls

Ecclesiastical has guidance on planning events and on letting church premises at

www.ecclesiastical.com/churchmatters/churchguidance/churchhealthandsafety/hiringofchurchpremises/index.aspx

and Methodist Insurance here

www.methodistinsurance.co.uk/products/church-shield/index.aspx

Volunteers

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (Volunteering England merged with NCVO in 2013) is now the national volunteer development organisation for England. You can find guidance on managing your volunteers and investing in them at

www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering

The **National Lottery Heritage Fund** provides good practice guidance on recruiting and managing volunteers

www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/volunteering-guidance

The **Government** has also produced guidance on volunteers including placements, rights and expenses. It includes links to where you can find volunteers. www.gov.uk/volunteering

Your local authorities may also have guidance and policies around volunteering and managing volunteers.

Environmental Sustainability

Find out if your diocese or equivalent has an environmental officer who can advise you. There may also be a bulk procurement of 100% green energy opportunity that you can opt into.

Approach your local authority and ask to speak to their **Agenda 21** officer who will be able to offer advice and guidance.

Information on increasing the energy efficiency of your church, renewable technology and other environmental issues can be found on the **Church of England's** national environmental website. You will also find information on Government support and other possible funding for energy projects. There are also toolkits, guidance on how to undertake energy audits and best practice case studies covering issues from heating, to boilers, from lighting to waste and recycling, and transport to renewable technology. It also provides contact details for Church of England Diocesan Environment Officers.

www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/our-views/environment-and-climate-change/how-you-can-act/sustainable-buildings

The **Carbon Reduction Project** is enabling the **Methodist Church** to assess its carbon footprint and bring about a reduction in carbon emissions in line with the national goal for 2050. You can find resources and guideline to help small, medium-sized and large churches take practical steps to reduce the amount of energy they consume.

www.methodist.org.uk/mission/climate-change/carbon-reduction

The **Methodist Church** has provides very useful information on renewable energy. www.methodist.org.uk/media/457787/solar-panels-guidance-0612.pdf and www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/property/handbook/energy-saving

The **United Reformed Church** has a section on its website setting out its commitment to sustainability and information for its churches. This is in joint working with the Baptists Together, the Methodist Church and the Church of Scotland.

www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/environment

Quakers can download guidance, and the Sustainability Toolkit on how your Meeting can respond to the Quakers' commitment to becoming a low carbon and sustainable community and read about what others are doing.

www.quaker.org.uk/resources/directory-of-services/sustainability

Eco Church is the successor to Eco-Congregation (in England and Wales only) and offers an award scheme for churches in England and Wales that want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth. They also offer resources for congregations on how to live sustainably and address environmental issues through their life and mission www.ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk. In Scotland, **Eco-Congregation Scotland** is the Christian environmental organisation www.ecocongregationscotland.org.

The **Energy Savings Trust** gives 'impartial, accurate and independent advice to communities and households on how to reduce carbon emissions, how to use water more sustainably and how to save money on energy bills'. www.energysavingstrust.org.uk

The **Church of England** and the **Church in Wales** have set up the **Parish Buying** website which details national negotiated deals on everything from paperclips to photocopiers. It also includes a negotiated 'national level affinity deal' for 100% renewable energy tariffs. These tariffs can be found on the new website at www.parishbuying.org.uk

An increasing number of organisations can advise and support community groups seeking to create their own renewable energy. Find one that is local to you. One example is **Shareenergy**, a not-for-profit organisation that helps communities find, build and own renewable energy generation. www.shareenergy.coop