

# Diocese of Chichester

## Guide to Net Zero Carbon Fundraising

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### **1. Introduction**

Thank you for your interest in Net Zero Carbon projects! Your commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship is crucial for creating a healthier future for our communities.

We hope this guide to fundraising for your Net Zero Carbon initiatives serves as a helpful toolkit, providing you with useful information and practical strategies to help you on your journey. Whether you’re just starting out or looking to enhance your existing efforts, this guide aims to empower you to successfully secure the funding needed to bring your projects to life. Together, we can make a meaningful impact in our quest for a more sustainable world.

### **2. Creating a simple fundraising strategy**

You don’t have to create a complicated fundraising strategy if you don’t want to, but having a clear and simple plan can be incredibly useful. A straightforward strategy helps ensure that all your stakeholders – whether they’re PCC members, congregation members or volunteers – understand your goals and the timeline for achieving them. This clarity fosters greater engagement and support, as everyone knows how they can contribute to your efforts. A well-defined strategy also enables you to measure progress, celebrate successes along the way, and adjust your approach as needed, making it easier to stay on track and reach your fundraising targets.

Follow these straightforward steps to develop a plan that suits your parish's needs and resources:

- a) Set clear goals - Define what you want to achieve. Set a specific fundraising target and a timeline for achieving it.
- b) Identify your audience - Determine who your potential supporters are. This could include congregation members, trusts and foundations, and community residents. Understanding your audience helps tailor your messaging and approach.
- c) Choose fundraising methods - Select a few fundraising methods that align with your goals and audience. Consider options such as:
  - ~ *Grant applications*: Research local, regional, or national grants related to your cause.
  - ~ *Individual donations*: Encourage parishioners to contribute through a dedicated fundraising campaign.
  - ~ *Events*: Host simple community events to raise funds and engage your community.
- d) Create a timeline - Develop a timeline for your fundraising activities. Break down each task into manageable steps, and set deadlines to keep yourself accountable.
- e) Develop your 'Case for Support' - Craft a compelling message that explains the purpose of your fundraising efforts. Highlight the impact the funds will have on your parish and the broader community. Use personal stories and data to make your case more relatable.
- f) Promote your efforts - Utilise various communication channels to spread the word about your fundraising campaign. This can include announcements during services, social media posts, newsletters, and flyers. Make sure to keep your audience engaged and informed throughout the process.
- g) Engage your community - Involve congregation members and local supporters in your fundraising efforts. Encourage them to share the campaign within their networks and provide opportunities for them to participate, such as volunteering for events or sharing their own fundraising ideas.
- h) Thank your supporters - Acknowledge and express gratitude to those who contribute to your efforts, whether through donations or participation in events. A simple thank-you note, public recognition, or follow-up communication can foster goodwill and encourage future support.

- i) Evaluate and Adjust - After your fundraising campaign, take some time to review what worked and what didn't. Gather feedback from participants and supporters to improve future fundraising efforts. Adjust your strategy as needed based on this evaluation.

### **3. Developing your 'Case for Support'**

A 'Case for Support' is the bedrock of all your fundraising. It is a clear, compelling statement that explains why your cause is important and why people or funders should contribute. It outlines your goals, the impact you hope to achieve, and how donors can make a difference.

The following is a general case for support that addresses both environmental sustainability and the Christian mission. It serves as a framework that your parish can customise to reflect its specific initiatives, values and community impact. Tailoring this case for support will ensure it resonates with your congregation and potential funders and highlights the unique contributions your parish is making towards achieving Net Zero Carbon goals.

#### The environmental need:

Climate change poses a significant threat to our planet, and achieving Net Zero Carbon emissions is critical for mitigating its impacts. By funding these projects, we take proactive steps to protect the environment for future generations. As a trusted institution in our local community, we are in a unique position to raise awareness about climate issues, promote sustainable practice, and encourage congregation members to adopt eco-friendly lifestyles. But we must lead by example to inspire and mobilise our community towards collective action, fostering a sense of responsibility for caring for creation.

By focusing on our building's environmental sustainability, we can enhance our outreach into our local community by ensuring our building is cost-effective to maintain. Investing in energy-efficient upgrades and renewable energy sources, we will be able to lower our utility costs, enable us to allocate more resources towards community programmes and services. This financial stability will allow us to remain open longer, expand our outreach initiatives, and provide essential support to those in need, strengthening our role as a vital community hub.

#### The theological need:

The fifth mark of mission states that as Christians, we are 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth'. It recognises that environmental issues and the state of the earth are not just the responsibility of scientists, ecologists, conservationists or so-called 'eco-warriors'. They are an integral part of what it means to live as followers of Christ, bearing witness to our belief that we are intertwined with one another, and the world God has created.

As followers of Jesus, we are commanded to love God and to love our neighbours as ourselves. To love God is to love all that he has made and created, and to love our neighbours as ourselves is to ensure that our actions and decisions are a force for good, not harm.

Acting for the good of creation is a key way of showing our love for God and our neighbour.

## **4. Fundraising**

There are numerous funding opportunities available to support initiatives, each with their own benefits and requirements. However, for parishes looking to implement Net Zero Carbon projects, the most effective avenues to focus on are grant funding and fundraising from individuals.

### **4.1. Grant funding**

Grants from trusts and foundations and local authority grants are a great way to secure bigger amounts of funding for capital projects, like building renovations or equipment purchases. Many grants focus on supporting long-term, impactful projects, making them ideal for covering significant costs that might be hard to raise through donations alone. Securing a grant can ensure your project's success and let you focus on delivering its benefits to the community. The application process can take 6-9 months, so it's not a quick fix for financial needs. Most grants are aimed at specific projects, not general operating costs.

#### **Project costs vs operating/core costs**

Core costs are the running costs of your organisation. This is the money you need to make its work happen. These are also called overheads, running costs or operating costs, and include things like utilities, salaries, rent etc. Generally speaking, it is extremely difficult to get funding for these types of costs.

Project costs, on the other hand, are the costs for a specific project which has a beginning and end date, and, in the context of Net Zero, can include things like energy audits, but also 'capital' project costs, such as retrofitting, equipment like LED lightbulbs, or other costs associated with equipment or your building.

When funders talk about project costs, they aren't just thinking about the physical objects you might need; they can also include contractors attached specifically to your project, such as a fundraising consultant, project manager etc, surveys, feasibility studies, design work - it all depends on the funder.

When you are thinking about designing a project, think about all the things you will need to make it happen and include a budget line for each of them. You might be surprised at what you are able to access funding for.

Identifying possible grant funders requires a strategic approach rather than a blanket appeal to all available options. Start by reviewing the database in Appendix A to find potential funders whose priorities align with your parish's goals. Prioritise two or three grants where you feel your project closely matches their funding interests. This focused approach increases your chances of success by allowing you to tailor your applications more effectively. Additionally, be mindful of grant application periods, as many funders have specific windows for submission that regularly close and open. Some grants may offer rolling applications, allowing you to apply at any time. Stay vigilant and maintain a calendar to track these important dates if you can, ensuring you never miss an opportunity to secure funding for your initiatives.

Understanding funding requirements is key to a successful grant application. Each opportunity has its own rules and priorities, so make sure your project aligns with them. For example, some funders will prioritise impact in the local community, where others will be more interested in a demonstration of your environmental impact. Early in your proposal, clearly state your goals, who you'll help, and what you hope to achieve. This shows funders your project is realistic and worth supporting.

A strong proposal is like a roadmap for positive change. Start with a clear executive summary that explains your mission and how your project benefits the community. Tell your story—highlight your past successes and how this new project continues that work.

Include relevant data to back up your plan, for example from your EFT or an energy audit, if you have had one. Show how you'll achieve measurable outcomes, and explain the need for your project with a review of what's missing in current efforts.

Your proposal should cover all the basics: what you'll do, how you'll do it, and what resources you need. Set clear, achievable goals and lay out a timeline for your project's completion.

An evaluation plan helps funders see how you'll measure success, and a sustainability plan shows how your project will last beyond the grant period. For example, can you demonstrate how you will refer back to baseline data from a previous EFT? Can you show how you will measure the reduction in your carbon footprint? How you will track how your energy bills are decreasing?

Finally, provide a realistic budget that outlines how the funds will be used.

By addressing these key points, you'll create a strong, focused proposal. Funders want to support projects that meet real needs and have a lasting impact, so show how your work will benefit the community both now and in the future.

For an example of a case for support and grant funding application for energy audits, see Appendix B.

## Grant application template: things to think about from the Charity Excellence

### Framework

- ~ Who does your organisation support and where?
- ~ Write a short statement describing your organisation and the services/support it provides. Why are you best placed to deliver this project?
- ~ Why is your project/activity needed?
- ~ What makes funding your project so urgent and/or important?
- ~ Clarify any key dates and, if applicable, how long your project will last.
- ~ Describe what your project will involve, how it will be delivered, where and/or by whom, including any partners.
- ~ Outcomes are the difference your project will make – list these, including who will benefit, the numbers, and how big an impact this will have on them.
- ~ Will there be other benefits, such as impact on the wider community, helping you make the activity sustainable, or creating best practice that will be shared?
- ~ How will you know/measure that your project has been a success and how will you report that to the funder?
- ~ What amount are you requesting? If it's only some of the funding you need, write 'a contribution of...'. Clarify where will the rest of the funding come from.
- ~ Provide a simple breakdown of what you will spend this on and the amount for each item.
- ~ Is there anything else that will make your bid really compelling? For example, have you won any awards such as Eco Church? Have you received any other grants towards projects in this area?
- ~ You can also include quotes from your service users, with their informed consent, to demonstrate your current impact. How have you made a difference to their lives?

#### **Top tips**

Successful bids are usually:

- ~ Succinct: grant funders get a lot of applications!
- ~ Compelling: make your case clearly. Why should they fund you and not somebody else?
- ~ Urgent: there is a lot of competition for funds at the moment. Very roughly, a 'cold' ask, i.e. to a funder that you don't have a relationship with already, currently has a success rate of around 10%. Why does your project need to happen now?
- ~ Emotionally engaging: people give to people, so tell your story in an engaging way.

## 4.2. Fundraising from individuals

Individuals within your congregation and local community can be a vital source of funding for your project. By reaching out to those who share all or part of your values and vision, you can build a strong base of support from people who are personally invested in the success of your initiative. Community members are often eager to contribute, whether through small donations, fundraising events in your community, or larger gifts, because they can directly see the impact of their support. Engaging your congregation also fosters a sense of shared responsibility and ownership, turning your project into a collective effort that strengthens community bonds while helping achieve your goals.

A Short Guide to Relationship-Based Fundraising from Individuals:

- a) Build genuine connections: Fundraising from individuals starts with building authentic relationships. Get to know your supporters personally—understand their values, interests, and motivations. This will help tailor your approach and make them feel valued.
- b) Communicate regularly: Keep potential donors engaged with regular updates about your work. Share success stories, challenges, and how their support can make a difference. Transparency fosters trust and deepens relationships.
- c) Involve donors: Encourage involvement beyond financial support. Invite them to events, volunteer opportunities, or project tours. This strengthens their connection to your cause and makes them more likely to give.
- d) Tailor ‘asks’: Personalise your fundraising asks based on the donor’s interests and giving capacity. Be specific about how their contribution will impact the community and align with their values.
- e) Show appreciation: After receiving support, promptly thank donors and show them the tangible results of their contribution. Ongoing gratitude helps nurture long-term relationships and repeat giving.
- f) Create a sense of community: Foster a sense of belonging by recognising donors as part of your mission. Keep them informed and engaged, making them feel like partners in achieving shared goals.

Relationship-based fundraising is about more than money—it’s about building lasting, meaningful connections that lead to long-term support.

## 4.3. Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is ideal for one-off capital projects as the most successful crowdfunding campaigns have clear and identifiable goals.

There are a number of crowdfunding platforms which are useful for this kind of donation-based campaign; the most well-known are JustGiving [Online fundraising donations and ideas - JustGiving](#) and GoFundMe [GoFundMe | The #1 Crowdfunding and Fundraising Platform](#). Do not forget to factor in fees for using the platform into your budget, though; JustGiving charges a fee of 2.9% + 35p for every donation, and GoFundMe charges 2.9% + 25p per donation, although they also include an option for your donor to add the platform fee as an addition to their donation.

There are also matchfunding initiatives on some crowdfunding platforms, such as Crowdfunder; you can check to see if your project is eligible at their website. [Match Funding | Get +Extra Funding | Crowdfunder](#) This is a form of corporate social responsibility or local authority funding whereby any donations your raise will be matched from one of their appropriate funding pots. Currently the [Aviva Community Fund](#) is quite a good prospect.

#### How to run a crowdfunding campaign:

Easyfundraising has an excellent guide on how to run your campaign. Crafting a story or message for your fundraising page is key. Their advice is:

- ~ Give people the *why*. This is the crux of your message. You need to state the ultimate reason for the existence of your campaign, but also the pressing concern of why it's important to donate right now.
- ~ Tell a story that people can relate to. Detail the impact of your campaign in human terms and what the effect of inaction is. You want people to identify with your campaign and understand exactly how their donations will help your mission.
- ~ Share the impact of donations and the work that's already being done.
- ~ Use emotive language to make a connection with potential supporters and get them to buy into your campaign.
- ~ Showcase your fundraising target, inform potential donors of how close you are to your goals and explain how any donations, big or small, can help you get there.
- ~ Use engaging photos, videos and infographics to highlight the issues around your cause and showcase data about the difference that fundraising can make.

You can find more information from them here: [How to Create a Winning Crowdfunding Strategy - easyfundraising](#)

You can adapt the case for support that you use for grant applications for your crowdfunding campaign, but it will be important to make it shorter and snappier, with

more of a focus on people. Images and videos will also help – they don't have to be fancy, a smart phone will be fine! Sharing your campaign on any social media platforms you might use or through any e-newsletters you send will be very important for raising awareness.

One key tip for a crowdfunding campaign is to time any donations you know about carefully. If you know you have a small group of people who are willing to donate, it is useful for them to donate as soon as your campaign goes up online; this encourages other people to join in with donating.

A crowdfunding campaign will help with grant applications, too. Often grant-making bodies don't want to bear the sole cost of a project and want to see that you are proactively reaching out to your community and doing your own fundraising activities to support your project too.

## **5. How the Diocese can help**

The Diocese is eager to know about your Net Zero Fundraising needs and plans. This will enable us to:

- ~ Link you (through our Net Zero Carbon 'Community of Practice') with other parishes who have experience of fundraising so that they can share the lessons they have learnt.
- ~ When appropriate, provide you with a 'statement of support' so that donors can be sure that what you are proposing has the support of, and is coherent with the wider aims of the Diocese.
- ~ In the case of crowdfunding efforts, the diocese can publicise what you are doing to help you reach a wider audience.
- ~ See if there are ways that we can link different parishes together in a 'consortium bid' if there are some donors who would find such a bid more attractive than bids from individual parishes. Where there is 'added value' of working together like this, the diocese may be able to provide additional fundraising expertise to help the consortium of parishes to bring together a combined grant application.

## **6. Further resources**

**Charity Excellence Framework:** [Charity Excellence - Find Charity Funding, Free Help & Resources](#)

They have an AI bunny who can help you put together a grant application; but remember, AI still can't do what humans can! So use this as a guideline and tailor it to suit you. They also have a funding finder, but most of the potential funders you need will be on the appendix attached to this guide. They also have useful How To videos, such as [How To Apply For Charity Grant Funding \(youtube.com\)](#)

## **Get Grants: [Get Grants | Grant Fundraising Training & Support](#)**

They have a number of free training sessions on all aspects of fundraising: [FREE Introduction Workshops - Get Grants](#) as well as a number of paid-for services from professional fundraisers. I have never used them so I don't know how effective they are, but their free training sessions are useful if you are looking to increase your fundraising activity or just want to know more about how fundraising works.

## **National Church**

Has resources for fundraising for a capital project, such as renovating your church building, which are also applicable to any Net Zero projects you are considering. [Raise the funds | The Church of England](#)

The toolkit available to download is very useful (although it should be added that no professional fundraising consultant should offer to work on commission based on funds raised; this is not considered best practice by the Fundraising Regulator and I would not recommend working with a fundraising consultant who suggests this).

## **National Heritage Lottery Funding**

If your church is listed or on the at risk register, Heritage Lottery might be an appropriate funder for your capital project. Although they will not fund projects which are solely Net Zero as there must also be a heritage/conservation element to your project, there are many ways to incorporate Net Zero initiatives into these kinds of projects and this will strengthen your application, as one of their key investment principles is climate sustainability. A Heritage Lottery application is very in-depth, but they regularly run free webinars on how to apply for funding and have local offices with engagement teams to support you. You can book your place on a webinar here: [The National Lottery Heritage Fund event tickets from TicketSource](#).

## **Sussex Community Foundation**

Sussex Community Foundation is a great starting place to look for local grants, either from their main grants, which have Acting on Climate as one of their priorities, or specialist funding, which is usually geographically specific. They are very contactable and happy to offer advice for funding applications. [Home - Sussex Community Foundation](#)

## **Your local Voluntary Action group**

Voluntary Action exists to support local charities and voluntary organisations with advice on governance, fundraising, community development, and hosting networks and forums to connect local organisations. There are a number of Voluntary Action organisations or their equivalents across Sussex:

**Mid Sussex:** [MSVA Services | Information, guidance and resources](#)

**Hastings:** [Hastings Voluntary Action | Supporting the community in Hastings!](#)

**Eastbourne/Lewes/Wealden:** [Home \(3va.org.uk\)](#)

**Arun and Chichester:** [Voluntary Action Arun & Chichester - support for charities \(vaac.org.uk\)](#)

**Rother:** [Home | Rother Voluntary Action \(rva.uk.com\)](#)

**Adur & Worthing/Brighton & Hove:** [Home Page - Community Works](#)

**Crawley:** [Delivering community action for local charities and groups \(crawleycommunityaction.org\)](#)

**Horsham:** delivered via the District Council [Voluntary Sector Support | Horsham District Council](#)

**Resource Centre Brighton and Hove** is a similar organisation which has a host of useful resources (not just Brighton and Hove specific) [Resource Centre | A really useful place for community groups](#)

## **Appendix B: Case for Support/Grant Application Template Example: Energy Audits**

### **Introduction:**

[Church Name] is a [historic and] beloved landmark in [location], serving as a focal point for our community and a centre for worship, fellowship, and outreach activities. As custodians of this heritage, we are committed to ensuring its preservation and sustainability for future generations.

### **The Need:**

Our church building, like many historic structures, faces challenges related to energy efficiency and sustainability. Securing funding for an energy audit represents a pivotal step for [Church Name] as it will allow us to strategically prioritise future capital works through data-driven decision making, identifying high impact projects, and developing a long-term financial plan that allocates resources effectively towards sustainable capital works, maximising cost savings and operational efficiencies.

We have completed an Energy Footprint Tool and...

We are engaged with A Rocha Eco Church...

The PCC is engaged with net zero carbon...

These are the services we provide to the community...

As stewards of this treasured asset, we recognize the importance of reducing our environmental impact and optimising energy use to lower operational costs. This ultimately means that funds can be used where they will be best placed to support our local community, providing frontline services/evangelising/mission/community support [depending on the funder's/parish's priorities]

We are supported by the Diocese of Chichester/by the National Church of England...

### **What is an Energy Audit? Why does it matter?:**

An energy audit is a crucial first step towards achieving these goals. It involves a survey of church which provides a comprehensive assessment of the building, its current energy use and its usage patterns, and provides the church with recommendations on how it can be more energy efficient, provide a sustainable and comfortable environment to support its continued use, and move towards net carbon zero. / These improvements not only contribute to environmental stewardship but also enhance the comfort and usability of our church facilities.

## **The Impact:**

- 1) **Cost Savings:** Implementing energy efficiency measures identified through the audit will lead to reduced energy consumption and lower utility bills, allowing us to allocate more resources towards our community and ministry programs.
- 2) **Environmental Impact:** By reducing our carbon footprint, we demonstrate our commitment to sustainable practices and environmental responsibility, aligning with both local and national environmental goals, as well as the Church of England's/ the Diocese of Chichester's target to become net zero carbon by 2030.
- 3) **Preservation of Heritage:** Improving the energy efficiency of our historic building ensures its continued preservation, safeguarding its architectural integrity and cultural significance for future generations.
- 4) **Community Engagement:** This initiative provides an opportunity to engage our congregation and local community in environmental stewardship efforts, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and pride in our church's sustainability efforts. This can then be rolled out into the wider community.

## **Our Plan:**

We seek [amount] in funding to cover the cost of a professional energy audit conducted by [trusted energy assessment provider]. This audit will assess our building's current energy usage, identify inefficiencies, and recommend cost-effective improvements.

A particular characteristic of the audits is that they provide the local parish church with *impartial* advice. The auditors have understanding of the pros and cons of a wide range of environmentally options (e.g. heat pumps vs electric infrared heaters) and well as particular experience of church buildings (e.g. relating to their historic value and planning processes).

The Church of England is working with several specialist firms which have demonstrated good understanding of the complexities of church buildings and have been through a process of quality control with regards to the service they provide. The CofE has a set approach and template for audits which has been developed over the last few years and applies learning from previous audits over that period. In Chichester/[this church], we would use one of these audit firms after going through a competitive selection process.

After the audits, the findings and recommendations will be analysed by [a NZC technical specialist] with a good understanding of working with churches to identify commonalities across the churches, aiming to find:

- ~ Potential economies of scale in delivering recommended capital works;
- ~ Potential synergies in fundraising for capital works;

- ~ Opportunities for sharing learning between parishes through the NZC Community of Practice that is being set up and facilitated by a volunteer in the Diocese.

As part of this process the technical specialist would follow up with the allocated contact in each parish to understand their response to the audit, and how they intend to follow up on implementation of the recommendations, bearing in mind their available resources.

This analytical work is essential to provide a concise action plan (agreed between the parishes and diocese) for follow up on the implementation of the audits' recommendations, including:

- ~ What can be implemented (and when) with existing resources;
- ~ Fundraising and communication actions to attempt to secure additional funds needed for capital works.
- ~ Actions relating to accessing and sharing technical expertise and learning (parish to parish; external technical expertise to parishes)

This ensures the sustainability and feasibility of future steps on our path to net zero carbon, ultimately leading to significant cost savings, allowing us to balance our resources to maximise impact, both in our net-zero carbon strategy and in supporting our community's welfare.

### **Next Steps:**

By generously funding these crucial stages in our process, [Grant Funder] will empower us to effectively proceed with the subsequent steps in our overall strategy:

#### 1) Prioritise the Implementation Recommendations:

The audit report enables the church to understand how they can best reduce their energy costs and carbon emissions over time and will typically identify:

- ~ Nil / low cost 'quick wins' which can be implemented relatively easily
- ~ Guidance on any more significant cost investments which may be necessary, taking into account the context of the church building and how it is used.
- ~ Approximate costs for the above with corresponding longer term savings in running costs and carbon emissions.

From the audit findings, we will therefore be able to develop a tailored plan to implement recommended energy efficiency measures. This may include upgrades to lighting, heating systems, insulation, and the installation of renewable energy technologies where feasible.

2) Monitor and Evaluate: We will establish a monitoring framework to track energy savings and evaluate the impact of implemented measures, ensuring accountability and transparency to our supporters and community.

**Why Support Us:**

[Grant funder]'s support for our energy audit initiative is an investment in sustainability, community resilience, and the preservation of cultural heritage. Together, we can ensure that [Church Name] remains a vibrant and sustainable hub for worship, community activities, and outreach for generations to come.

By supporting [Church Name] to fund an energy audit, [grant maker] is not only helping us improve our building's efficiency but also contributing to our mission of serving the community and protecting our heritage. Together, we can make a meaningful impact on both our local environment and our congregation's ability to fulfil our ministry and outreach goals.

**Project Budget:**