



The Climate Change Glossary

An A-Z of the words and abbreviations you need to know - as we work together to care for God's creation



The Church of England's ambitious Net Zero Carbon by 2030 campaign aims to equip, resource and support all parts of the Church to reduce carbon emissions from the energy used in its buildings, schools and through work-related transport by 2030.

Climate change hits hardest on the poorest countries and poorest people of the world. Meanwhile, the widespread destruction of the natural world is a crisis for creation.

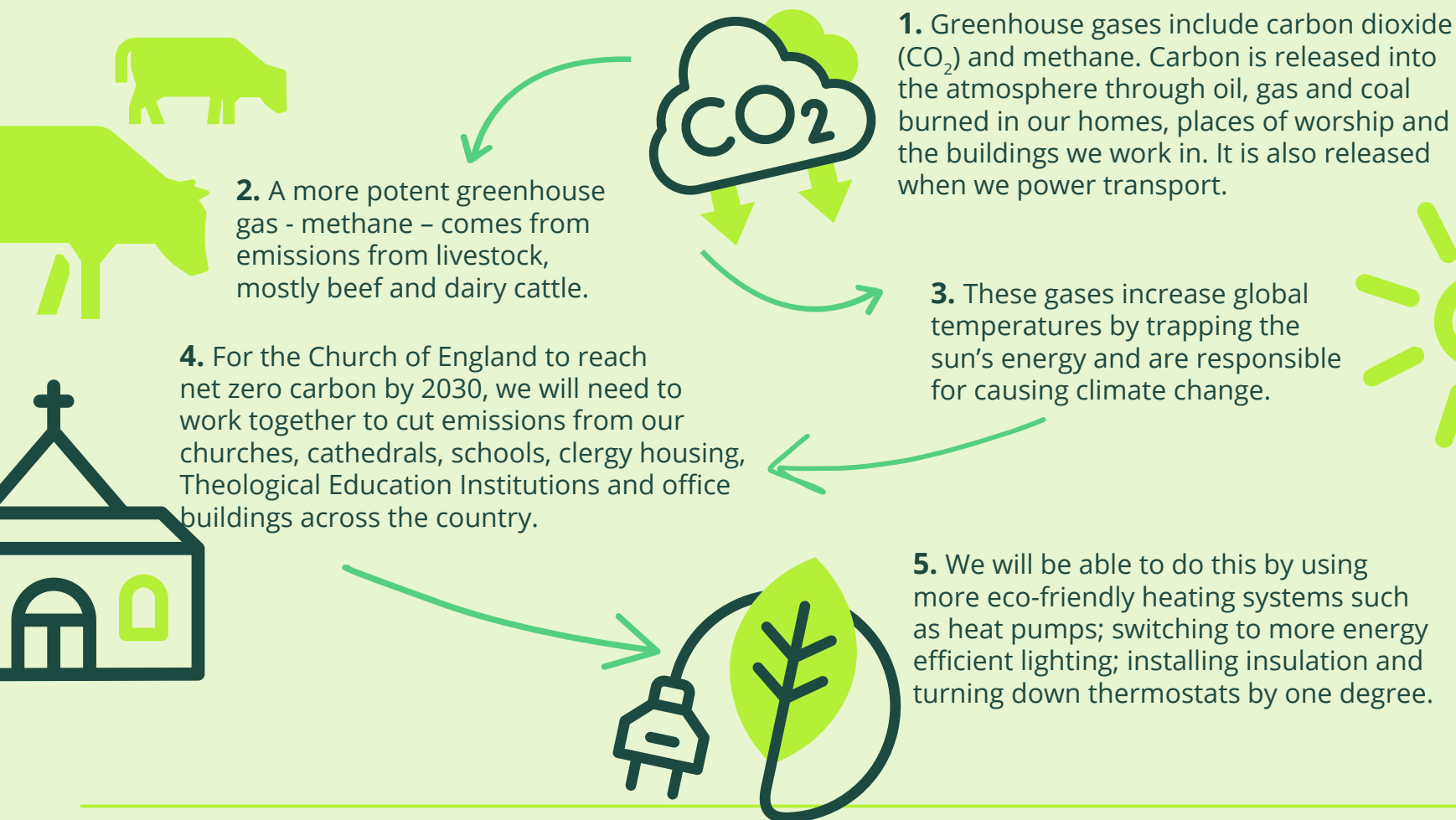
Responding to the climate crisis is an essential part of our responsibility to safeguard God's creation and achieve a just world.

This is a glossary of the common terms and phrases associated with the Church of England's Environment Programme, climate change, climate science and our net zero carbon work across the country.



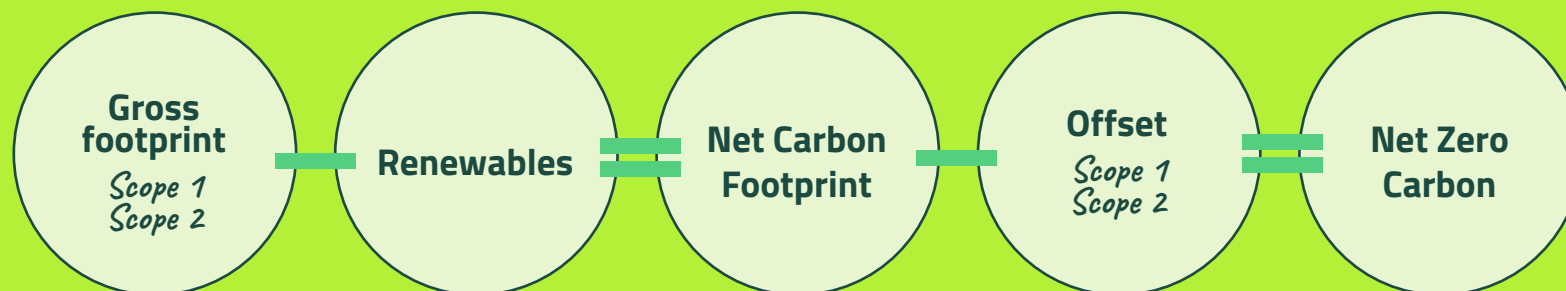
What is net zero carbon?

The term net zero carbon means no longer adding to the total amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.



How will we achieve net zero carbon?

The Church of England defines Net Zero Carbon as the reduction as far as possible of **all in-scope carbon emissions** (from the oil, gas and electricity we use in our buildings and petrol and diesel transport) and the **removal of an equivalent amount of carbon** from the atmosphere for the remaining in-scope emissions by use of accredited offsetting schemes.



For the 2030 target, the gross carbon footprint of the Church is from the in-scope emissions, defined in the **'Routemap to Net Zero Carbon'**. From this, electricity from **renewable sources** and **100% 'green' biogas** can be removed, to leave the net carbon footprint. To achieve net zero carbon, an amount equivalent to these remaining emissions – the 'net carbon footprint' – will need to be removed from the atmosphere by valid offsetting schemes and / or by exporting 'spare' electricity to the grid from solar PV panels on our buildings.



Abbreviation (where applicable)	Term	Definition (where applicable)
APCM	Annual Parochial Church Meeting	This is a meeting which takes place in parishes each year to receive reports on changes to the electoral roll, general parish activities and financial matters. It also elects new members to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and to deanery synod every three years.
ASHP	Air Source Heat Pump	Extract heat from the outside air to heat your home and hot water ¹ .
	Articles of Inquiry	An annual set of questions from the Archdeacon to Church Wardens to help the Archdeacon provide the support needed by parishes.
	Biodiversity	A wide range of living organisms, such as animals and plants, in an environment. Biodiversity is essential for ecosystems to survive. Our churchyards are a haven for wildlife and plant life. We estimate that 10,000 of our 16,000 churches have churchyards. It's a precious resource which can make a huge difference to the biodiversity of the UK.
	Biomass boilers	Work in a similar way to a standard gas boiler to heat your home and hot water using a renewable energy source such as wood pellets as fuel ¹ .
	Carbon footprint	A measure of the total amount of greenhouse gas generated by our actions.
CEAN	Church Energy Advisors Network	
	Climate justice	This describes putting people and communities most vulnerable to the impact of climate change at its heart, rather than a purely scientific one
CO₂	Carbon Dioxide	The most common greenhouse gas
CO₂e	Carbon Dioxide equivalent	A measure, usually in tonnes of gas emitted, indicating the global warming effect of the mass of GHGs in terms of what mass of CO ₂ would produce the equivalent effect.
CWI	Cavity wall insulation	Cavity wall insulation.
DAC	Diocesan Advisory Committee	A committee which gives advice to the Diocese about faculty applications.
DBE	Diocesan Board of Education	A statutory body which is responsible for Church of England schools and academy trusts in each Diocese.
DBF	Diocesan Board of Finance	The charitable company which holds the financial assets of a Diocese.
DEC	Display Energy Certificate	Shows the energy performance of public buildings.
DEO	Diocesan Environment Officer	
EASA	Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association	
	Eco Church	A Rocha UK's award scheme for churches in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth.
EFT	Energy Footprint Tool	The Energy Footprint Tool is an online tool which churches around the country enter their utility bills to calculate their carbon footprint.
ELMS	Environmental Land Management Scheme	Government schemes to reward environmental land management.
	Embodied carbon	The CO ₂ e associated with the manufacture, installation, use, maintenance and disposal of a product or building, assessed by LCA.
EPC	Energy Performance Certificate	An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) tells you how energy efficient a property is.
EV	Electric Vehicle	
EWG	Environment Working Group	
EWI	External wall insulation	External wall insulation.
	Fabric First	The concept of addressing the condition and thermal performance of a building's fabric to reduce energy consumption prior to installing fossil fuel free heating and self-generation.
	Faculty	Making almost any physical change to a church building, contents or churchyard requires permission. Permission is granted by the Consistory Court of the Diocese, and is called a Faculty.
GHG	GHG protocol	Provides the most widely used greenhouse gas accounting standards, allowing companies and organisations to robustly and consistently measure and report their GHG emissions. GHG Protocol .
	Greenwashing	Disinformation produced by an organisation to present an environmentally responsible public image.
	Green tariff	100% renewable electricity defined here or gas (defined as green gas and carbon offsetting).
GSHP	Ground Source Heat Pump	Extract heat from pipes that are buried in the ground to heat your home and hot water ¹ .
	Heat Decarbonisation Plan	A plan for decarbonising building heating systems, often required for applicants for Public Sector Decarbonisation Schemes.
	Heat network	Provide heat or cooling from a central source and distribute it to multiple customers in a building or across several buildings ¹ .
	Hybrid Heat Pumps	Combine heat pump and standard boiler technology to heat your home and hot water. Use of smart controls help optimise the system based on cost or efficiency ¹ .
H	Hydrogen	Hydrogen can be one of the greenest forms of energy, depending how it is produced. Blue hydrogen - from splitting the hydrogen and carbon dioxide from fossil fuel natural gas, with the CO ₂ captured and stored. Green - uses renewable energy to drive electrolysis to split hydrogen and oxygen from water. Pink - uses nuclear energy to drive electrolysis to split hydrogen and oxygen from water ² .
	Hydrogen boilers	Work in a similar way to standard gas boilers to heat your home and hot water but use hydrogen gas rather than natural gas as fuel. This technology is not commercially available in the UK and is dependent on the extent to which hydrogen could replace natural gas in the gas grid ¹ .
HVO	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oils	A biofuel made by the hydrocracking or hydrogenation of vegetable oil. HVO is widely marketed as a sustainable solution to fossil fuels, but there are concerns suggesting serious issues that need to be addressed before committing to HVO , particularly its full traceability and carbon footprint claims.
IWI	Internal wall insulation	Internal wall insulation.
JECBS	Joint Employment and Common Services Board	Has accountability for NCI policies, budgets, finance and high-level decisions on general staff matters.
LED	Light-emitting diode	A lower energy lighting option than incandescent bulbs.
LETI	LETI standard	Targets as defined by LETI for retrofit projects which include heat demand and U values. LETI (London Energy Transformation Initiative) is a voluntary network of over 1,000 built environment professionals, working together to put the UK and the planet on the path to a zero carbon future.
LCA	Lifecycle Carbon Assessment	LCA gives a true picture of a building's carbon impact on the environment by assessing the carbon emissions resulting from the materials, construction and the use of a building over its entire life.
MAT	Multi-Academy Trust	An academy is an independent state-funded school whose funding comes straight from the central government instead of a local authority. A multi-academy trust (MAT) is a group of academies in partnership with one another.
NIB	National Investing Body	The Church of England's National Investing Bodies (NIBs) includes the Church Commissioners, Church of England Pensions Board, and CBF Church of England Funds (managed by CCLA).
NCI	National Church Institutions	Support the mission and ministries of the Church and are comprised of seven separate legal entities as a common employer.
NZC	Net Zero Carbon	A balance between the amount of GHG emitted to the atmosphere and the amount removed from the atmosphere.
PSPB	Priority School Building Programme	A Government programme which addresses the needs of schools most in need of repair.
PCC	Parochial Church Council	A body which, with the minister, steers the life of the church in its mission, witness and service in the parish.
PSDF	Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund	A Government funding initiative which provides grants for public sector bodies to fund heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures.
	Practical Path to Net Zero	A two page document which give practical tips for churches to reduce their carbon emissions.
PV	Photo-voltaic	Solar panel to generate renewable energy.
QI	Quinquennial Inspection	Every five years, a church building must be inspected by a suitably experienced and qualified professional, appointed after consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee. They will help make sure the building is kept in good repair.
REGO	Renewable Electricity Guarantee of Origin	A scheme which provides certificates for the proportion of electricity sourced from renewable energy
RdSAP		A reduced data version of SAP and the calculations behind Energy Performance Certificates.
	Retrofit	The retrospective upgrading of a building to enable it to respond to the imperative of climate change.
RGGO	Renewable Gas Guarantee of Origin	Electronic 'certificates' which are issued, transferred, and retired within the Green Gas Certification Scheme Registration Database.
	Routemap to Net Zero Carbon by 2030	The Routemap is a plan for how the Church of England can be net zero carbon by 2030. It was approved by General Synod in July 2022.
SAP	Standard Assessment Procedure	The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the UK Government's National Calculation Methodology for assessing the energy performance of dwellings.
	Scopes	Scopes defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (Scope 1 - direct emissions from combustion of fuels like oil and gas, Scope 2 - indirect emissions from the generation of electricity, and Scope 3 - other indirect emissions from sources that the organisation does not own or control).
	Solar thermal panels	Capture heat from the sun to provide hot water, typically in a storage tank ¹ .
TEI	Theological Education Institution	A Church of England theological school where all students prepare for future ministry, lay and ordained.
	VA school	A Voluntary Aided school is a state-funded school in England and Wales in which a foundation or trust (usually a religious organisation) contributes to building costs and has a substantial influence in the running of the school.
	VC school	A voluntary controlled school is a state-funded school in England and Wales in which a foundation or trust (usually a Christian denomination) has some formal influence in the running of the school. These schools have less autonomy than voluntary aided schools, in which the foundation pays part of any building costs.
	Whole House retrofit	The concept of treating the whole house as a system when planning a retrofit and thus ensuring that any action taken does not preclude another action at a later date. It also means that actions which may affect other aspects of the dwelling's performance are properly considered to ensure that they do not result in any unintended consequences.

Wider terms used in The Church of England: [Glossary | The Church of England](#)

¹ Definitions from Annex 1 of HM Government – [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#)
² Definitions adapted from p26 of [British Energy Security Strategy](#)





Net Zero Carbon 2030

This document has been prepared by the Church of England Net Zero Programme team.
If you have any questions, please email nzcprogramme@churchofengland.org



churchofengland.org/about/church-england-environment-programme