

Solar Panels

Many churches and halls have roofs suitable for solar panels and have car parks suitable for solar car ports, producing electricity (PV – photovoltaic). Funding is available from [CARES](#) for these and batteries to increase the savings and income.

<https://localenergy.scot/funding/cares-community-buildings-fund/>

It is common that local residents do not have off-street parking, so they could charge overnight in parish car parks with CCTV and a phone App used to pay for charging, keeping the car park clear for parish use during the day. These could be low-cost domestic chargers, starting with one charger to test the market, but preparing trunking for future installation may be wise to meet possible future demand.



Possible Funding

Local Energy Scotland have local Development Officers to assist parishes with technical aspects and applications

[Find your local contact](#)

<https://localenergy.scot/local-contacts/>

[Business Energy Scotland](#) provide interest free loans with up to 75% cash-back. They will require a free report which may recommend insulation that will be of little benefit if a building is just heated when used an hour a day.
<https://businessenergyscotland.org/smelan/>

[Scotland's Churches Trust](#)

<https://www.scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk/other-help/>

[SCVO Funding Scotland](#)

<https://funding.scot/search>

[National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/news/how-well-help-secure-future-uks-places-worship>

Some parishes have had success in obtaining grants from local authorities when emphasising energy efficiency and the wider community benefits that they will deliver.

More information has been given to your Diocesan Property Department so please do not hesitate to contact them about installers.

<https://bcos.org.uk/Care-of-Creation-Office>

Parish Guide to Reducing Energy Costs and Carbon Emissions



Bishops' Conference of Scotland
Care of Creation Office



Introduction

This Parish Guide aims to ensure that your parish buildings (church, house and hall) have more efficient energy use, lower costs, reduced CO₂ emissions and, if possible, ways of gaining much-needed income.

Included in this leaflet are various methods to adapt your buildings, Scottish Government funding opportunities to cover the cost, and examples of products and links to [case studies](#).

<https://bcos.org.uk/Care-of-Creation-Office>

With all potential projects, it is important to discuss with your Diocesan Property Department as early on in the process as possible.

Presbyteries can technically be treated as any other house and should be eligible for such funding.

Quick Wins

Initially, it is worth thinking about some no-cost and low-cost 'quick wins' that may be possible:

Fit thermostats in rooms and check the thermostat and timer settings on heating systems regularly.

Insulate exposed pipework and fittings in plant rooms.

Consider installing motion sensors on lighting circuits to automatically switch off lights in unoccupied areas.

Other Initiatives

Replace conventional and fluorescent bulbs with LED bulbs as they are more efficient, cost less to run, and are typically longer lasting.

When replacing appliances, e.g. refrigerators, consider choosing energy-efficient appliances, as the extra capital cost may well be quickly repaid in lower running costs.

Consider installing induction hobs, especially where gas hobs are currently used and replace gas ovens with electric ovens. This may allow the removal of gas meters, saving the cost of the standing charge. Removing gas connections might reduce insurance costs.

Heating Churches & Halls

Background heating should be avoided where possible. Churches and halls that are used for less than 4 hours a day are unlikely to benefit from insulation unless background heating is needed.

For small churches and halls—If radiators are in good condition and provide effective heat, consider replacing a domestic-style boiler with a domestic heat pump. This should cut carbon emissions by 75% and, if flow temperatures are low, may cost less to run. Air-to-air heat pumps will typically cost less to run unless background heating is needed.

For large churches and halls - Where boilers, gas radiators or gas blowers need replacing, the capital cost of an air-to-air heat pump system (aircon) with a 7-year warranty is likely to be comparable to replacing gas systems, many with a 1-year warranty. Heat pumps typically cut carbon emissions by about 75% and tend to cost less to run.



Air-to-air heat pump installation in Sistine Chapel, Rome