Describing climate change as an 'issue of inter-generational justice', Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury, announced the winners of the Church Times Green Church Awards at a ceremony at Lambeth Palace on 16 October.
The ecumenical awards, which were last held ten years ago, attracted 117 entries in five categories. Winning entries included a church in County Durham that has involved over 1000 young people in guerrilla gardening and a church in South London that is building a new church hall made out of straw bales.

In a message to the finalists, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "Responding to climate change is an essential part of our responsibility to safeguard God's creation. Meanwhile, to love our neighbour - particularly, in this case, our neighbour whom we may never meet but who lives daily with the profound threat posed by this moral crisis - is at the core of what it is to follow Jesus Christ.

'The dedication and devotion of those shortlisted for the Green Church awards is extraordinary and their recognition well deserved.'

Ruth Knight, Environmental Policy Officer for the Church of England said: "The awards have two objectives: to celebrate the remarkable efforts made in recent years by individuals and congregations to offset the damage being done to the earth; and to set good examples before others who might be inspired to follow suit."

Bishop Nicholas addressing the finalists said: "you are all significantly important people in church and community."

Paul Handley, the Church Times editor, said: "What the entries told us is that environmental concerns are a key element in the way ordinary churches plan for the future. Churches are now significant players in the campaign to fight the effect of climate change and to use God's creation wisely."

The awards were sponsored by the Church Times, the Church of England’s national environment programme, Shrinking the Footprint, Good Energy, the Levy Restaurant chain, and Ecclesiastical Insurance.

Winners

**Green Building Award** - St Wenn, Bodmin, Cornwall. A small, rural church that partnered with the next door school to install and share a biomass heating system. Most of work was done by volunteers. Bishop Nicholas said: "It is a beautiful example of the pastoral mission of the parish church being care for the community and the members of the community caring for and becoming the parish church."

**Biodiversity Award** - St James’, Finchampstead, Berks. Volunteers converted scrubland into a biodiverse churchyard extension and garden of remembrance. The land was transformed into a wildlife haven, including bat boxes, bee hotels and wild flowers. The judges praised the wide range of small measures and community engagement.

**Green Congregation Award** - St John's, Shildon, Durham - Shildon Alive! Guerilla Gardening Team. The congregation started this project in 2014, counteracting decline in community engagement and increase in vandalism. Over 1000 young people have been involved in planting in 70 locations. The scheme also has two community gardens, a food waste scheme and gave out 300 bags of fresh fruit in 2016.

**Green Champion Award** (shared equally by all those shortlisted): Martyn Goss (diocese of Exeter); Br Hugh Cobbett SSF (Hilfield Friary); Victoria Gilbert (St Catherine's, Burbage); Suzanne Dalton (St Chad's, Far Headingley); Judith Allison (St John's Methodist Church, Settle).
Green Futures award - Holy Trinity, Tulse Hill, London - described as an innovative church hall building using only recycled material which engaged with the entire community. The project will be the first straw-bale church building in Europe and the largest straw-bale building in London.