The Church of England has been ranked second globally in an industry survey of Responsible Investors, with two leading figures working in ethical engagement for the Church also praised for their contribution to sustainable investment.
Combined work by the Church Commissioners for England and the Church of England Pensions Board scooped 2nd place in the category of asset owners that contribute most to sustainable investment and corporate governance.

Adam Matthews, Director of Ethics and Engagement at the Church of England Pensions Board was awarded 2nd place. Head of Responsible Investment at the Church Commissioners for England, Edward Mason followed closely behind him in 5th place in the category of “industry professional that has made the most positive contribution to sustainable investment.”

The IRRI (Independent Research in Responsible Investment) Survey 2019 is drawn up from submissions by industry peers and is an annual analysis of the economics and dynamics of the global sustainable investment and corporate governance sector.

Commenting on the rankings, Adam Matthews, Director of Ethics and Engagement at the Church of England Pensions Board said: “The past year yielded some highly positive interactions for us around climate change, fossil fuels and corporate governance with a stand out being the commitment by Shell to set carbon emissions targets linked to executive pay. This follows investor engagement by the Church of England Pensions Board, on behalf of Climate Action 100+.

I’m delighted that our sustained collaborative activity in the field of responsible investment is being noted by fellow industry professionals.”

Findings of the IRRI Survey were based on submissions from more than 900 respondents across 44 countries that were distilled into 20 rankings. Overall engagement by the Church and the Climate Action 100+ campaign were frequently identified in responses.

Edward Mason, Head of Responsible Investment for the Church Commissioners for England said: “It is so heartening to have the work of the two Church of England funds (Church Commissioners for England and the Church of England Pensions Board) recognised by peers working in the industry in this way.

“The increase in ranking from last year when our joint efforts were placed at 6th globally shows that the efforts of the Church of England to help lead an effective response to climate change and to press energy and mining giants to move forward are making an impact on the global Responsible Investment community.”

Loretta Minghella, First Church Estates Commissioner said: “It is encouraging that the dedication of Edward Mason and the Church Commissioners on climate change and governance issues has been noted by the Responsible Investment community as we and other asset owners work together to encourage companies to align their strategies with the Paris Climate Agreement goals.”

Clive Mather, Chair of the Church of England Pension Board said: “To have our Head of Ethics and Engagement ranked so highly and making such a positive contribution to sustainable investment globally, is a tribute to the tenacity and determination of Adam Matthews and his team. Working in close collaboration with the Church Commissioners and other asset owners, they have proven time and time again that the Church is able to leverage its influence and bring about real change in the companies we are all invested in.”

For additional information on the industry rankings click here.