

The Church of England's General Synod has set new targets for all parts of the church to work to become carbon 'net zero' by 2030.



At its February 2020 meeting, members voted in favour of a revised date encouraging all parts of the Church of England to take action and ramp-up efforts to reduce emissions.

A motion approved today called for urgent steps to examine requirements to reach the new target, and draw up an action plan.

An amendment by Canon Prof Martin Gainsborough (Bristol) introduced a more ambitious target date of 2030, fifteen years ahead of the original proposal.

The motion follows the launch of the Church of England's first ever Green Lent (#LiveLent) campaign for 2020, featuring 40 days of prayers and actions to encourage care for God's Creation.

The Church of England has also announced an energy footprinting tool for parishes to calculate their carbon footprint.

Following the debate, the Bishop of Salisbury, Nick Holtam, the Church of England's lead bishop on Environmental Affairs said:

"Synod has set an ambitious target for the whole Church of England to respond to the urgency of the Climate Crisis.

"To reach Synod's target of 2030 will not be easy, and requires each of us to hear this as an urgent call to action.

"But this is a clear statement of intent across the Church and to wider society about our determination to safeguard God's creation.

"This is a social justice issue, which affects the world's poorest soonest and most severely, and if the Church is to hold others to account, we have to get our own house in order.

“There is no serious doubt that climate change is happening, and that people are causing it, so it is very encouraging that Synod is grappling with one of the most urgent issues of our time.”

“We will now need to work out a plan to ensure we do everything possible to meet this target.”

**The final motion approved was as follows:**

*That this Synod, recognising that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God’s creation, and a fundamental injustice, and following the call of the Anglican Communion in ACC Resolutions A17.05 and A17.06;*

*(a) call upon all parts of the Church of England, including parishes, BMOs [Bishop Mission Orders], education institutions, dioceses, cathedrals, and the NCI’s [National Church Institutions], to work to achieve year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently examine what would be required to reach net zero emissions by 2030 in order that a plan of action can be drawn up to achieve that target;*

*(b) request reports on progress from the Environment Working Group and the NCI’s every three years beginning in 2022 and;*

*(c) call on each Diocesan Synod, and cathedral Chapter, to address progress toward net zero emissions every three years.*

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