



to address the climate crisis and fund important work in their communities.

The Church of England is currently marking the Season of Creation which includes a focus on environmental protection.

Larger buildings including Gloucester and Salisbury Cathedrals already host solar panels. Gloucester Cathedral first installed panels in 2016, while Salisbury installed them in 2020.



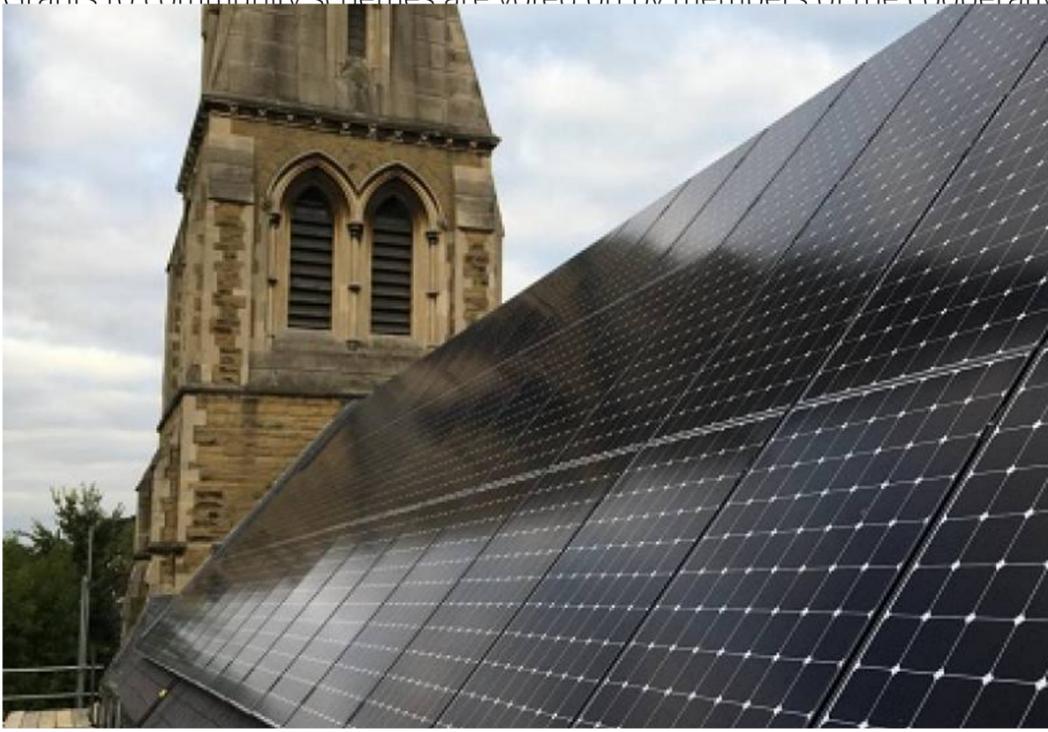
erected.

St John's in Old Trafford, Manchester, installed 39 panels on the side of its Edwardian building in 2015.

Since then it has produced 60,000 kilowatts of electricity – more than enough to power the church hall with the rest sold to the National Grid as part of the Government's Feed in Tariff (FiT) scheme.

The money raised has not only helped support the church but also fund community projects through work an initiative called the St John's Sunshine Cooperative.

Grants to community schemes are voted on by members of the cooperative. These included beehives in an allotment and food support for



Power Up North London

“Churches can't and, perhaps shouldn't, do these things on their own,” said the Revd John Hughes, the Rector of St John's.

“Running our parochial renewable energy as a cooperative has enabled us to work with a wider cross section of our community. It's been a great a *FiT* in more than one sense.”

Other environmental initiatives in the parish include opening its gardening space to green-fingered locals.

Speaking recently on the BBC's Songs of Praise, Revd Hughes explained: “In church on Sunday I will try to nurture the Christian Faith in all those who want to hear the Word.

“But our grounds can do it every day of the week. So, alleluia to that!”



Elsewhere, the church of St Peter's in Petersfield is also reaping the rewards of a solar switch.

The parish, in the Diocese of Portsmouth, installed 27 solar panels in 2016 and has since reduced its heating and electricity bills by £6750.

Additionally, St Peter's makes a further £600 a year from selling the electricity it generates.

A Fairtrade church and a bronze award-winning Eco-Church, through the Christian charity A Rocha, St Peter's has also made its churchyard more biodiverse including using recycled tyres as owl boxes.

"Now the environment wins, the church wins and our finances wins," the vicar, Canon Will Hughes, said. "I can't think why everyone doesn't do it!"

- The Church of England is currently marking the Season of Creation. Innovative Harvest Festivals have been celebrated across the country amid Covid-19 restrictions.
- The Church of England's General Synod has set targets for all parts of the church to work to become carbon 'net zero' by 2030.

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