

The Church Commissioners for England has published its 2022 Stewardship Report which articulates a revised responsible investment strategy focussed on three key systemic risks: climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and social inequality.

“The challenges posed by climate change, nature loss and social inequality are complex, so it is vital that companies and investors work together to combat these risks, which are affecting our world today,” said Alan Smith, First Church Estates Commissioner. “Our integrated approach to responsible investment aims to affect real change in the wider economy through engagement and partnership working.”

To help further embed this policy across the portfolio, the Church Commissioners has introduced new policy leads for Net Zero, Social Issues, and Real Assets sustainability, each tasked with producing and implementing new strategies as well as championing integration of sustainable practices across the Church Commissioners’ diversified portfolio.

Collaboration is a core part of the Church Commissioners’ approach to responsible investment. In 2022 the Church Commissioners evolved its approach to place greater emphasis and focus on addressing systemic risk. Instead of addressing stewardship issues solely on a company-by-company basis, the Church Commissioners now seek to take action through involvement in collective initiatives, engaging with our managers and interacting with policy makers.

The 2022 Stewardship Report shares success stories from the 2022 reporting period including the development of a deforestation policy, the successful issuance of two bonds including a sustainable bond, and the publication of research into its historic links to transatlantic chattel slavery.

During 2022, the Church Commissioners was the first asset owner to become an ally of the Task Force on Inequality-related Financial Disclosures (TIFD), and also was recognised at the British Private Equity & Venture Capital Association’s (BVCA) Annual Excellence in ESG Awards, receiving a special recognition for the category ‘LPs of all sizes’.

The 2022 Stewardship Report has been filed with the Financial Reporting Council (FRC).

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