



and today by the Benefact Trust.

A £1.5 million grant that will help a group of churches pay for items such as solar panels and heat pumps has been announced today by the Benefact Trust.

The grant-giving charity will provide additional support over two years to up to 60 ‘demonstrator’ churches who in turn will lead the way in inspiring and encouraging other churches to achieve net zero carbon emissions.

Under the plans, £750,000 of additional funding will be allocated to support a group of churches this year with a further £750,000 pledged for 2025.

The grant from the Trust is in addition to £3.8 million allocated by the Church of England for funding and technical support to help demonstrator churches make as much progress as possible towards achieving net zero carbon by the end of 2030, in line with the Church’s Routemap to Net



Helen Gray, Benefact Trust Director, said: “Last year, we developed our grants programmes so that we could help organisations to make a greater impact in society.

"In 2024, we've focused our funding even further, with strategic grants that tackle key issues.

“This grant towards the Church of England is our first strategic grant that focuses on climate. It’s a privilege to partner with Church of England, who have bold and impactful plans, as we make significant steps in our commitment to tackling climate change.”

The Bishop of Norwich, Graham Usher, who is the Church of England’s lead bishop on the environment said: “I am hugely grateful to the Benefact Trust for this generous grant that will help the demonstrator churches achieve their goal of Net Zero.

"These 'demonstrator' churches, representing many different types of community and situations, aim to inspire and encourage others to see that achieving Net Zero is possible and within their grasp.

“My prayer is that through this transformative programme the Church of England will demonstrate leadership as we face the challenges of climate change.

“By taking practical action we show God's love for creation as well as ensuring that our buildings are fit for our worshipping life and service to local communities."

Julian Atkins, Net Zero Programme Director for The Church of England, said: “This is great news and we’re delighted to partner with the Benefact Trust to deliver the Demonstrator Churches Project across the country.

“Through our national Net Zero Carbon Programme we are providing financial support to dioceses and parishes to help them in making progress with their net zero plans.

"The Church of England is committed to reducing the carbon emissions from our buildings, as caring for God’s creation and reducing the impact we have upon our planet are fundamental parts of our Christian mission.

“The funding which Benefact are providing will help us deliver a wide range of net zero projects and help us move closer towards our goal.

“We look forward to a fruitful partnership together and sharing the stories of the churches taking part as the year progresses to ensure we can share learnings and encourage other churches across the country to kickstart their own local net zero projects.”



The announcement comes after a two day conference was held in Gloucester bringing together more than 60 people from 35 dioceses along with other denominations to share expertise on the Net Zero Carbon Programme.

The conference also saw the launch of a new video which highlights just a few of the many local net zero carbon projects which are being delivered. The examples from Manchester Cathedral, Portsmouth Cathedral, St Deny’s Church, Southampton and Brunswick Parish Church in Manchester City Centre show what is possible. The film also includes schools in Gloucester and Accrington in Lancashire.

Notes to editors

The Demonstrator Churches project allows for churches nominated by their Diocesan Advisory Committees (DACs) to apply for two grants from the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon Programme. The grants are either Stage 1 (preparatory) to help develop a net zero project, along with hands-on fundraising support from expert charity consultants, or Stage 2 (capital works) as projects reach the implementation stage.

The Benefact grant will help churches that apply for Stage 2 Capital Grant funding. Currently this allows for churches to apply to the Net Zero Programme for up to a maximum of £50,000 towards the cost of a well-developed project, where the necessary permissions are secured, and the church has raised 50% of the funding. The Benefact funding will mean that successful churches could receive up to a further £36,000 towards the costs of eligible works.

The network of Demonstrator Churches will share what they have learned more widely with dioceses and parishes so that all Church of England churches can learn from their experiences, the project case studies and from champions who are local and relevant to their own circumstances.

Find out more about the [Demonstrator Churches Project](#).

About Church of England's Net Zero programme

The Church of England's ambitious Net Zero Carbon Programme aims to equip, resource and support all parts of the Church to reduce carbon emissions from the energy used in its buildings, schools and through work-related transport by 2030.

[Read the Routemap to Net Zero Carbon](#).

Watch the new [net zero video](#).

About Benefact Trust

Benefact Trust is one of the UK's largest grant-making charities its funds are derived from ownership of the Benefact Group - a specialist financial services organisation.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/press-releases/benefact-trust-announces-ps15-million-churches-achieve-net-zero-goal>