

(2) ACTION on Energy (v2)



Saving Creation
Diocese of Leeds

Energy usage is one of the major contributors to climate change. It is also a significant cost to schools. Reducing energy waste can reduce these costs, as well as reducing the school's carbon footprint.

ACTION 1 → AUDIT YOUR ENERGY USE

'Information is power', the saying goes. It is the same with carbon reduction. Knowing your starting points enables you to target your action and know when you are making a difference. It enables you to demonstrate this success with hard evidence, which can energise everyone to want to do more.

ESSENTIAL – please complete this first option (a) so that we have accurate information from all our schools

- (a) Complete the annual [C of E Energy Footprint Tool](#). This is a simple tool, which gathers information about your energy use. You will need to input some data, but it is all information you will have to hand or is easy to gather. By completing this tool, you also give us the information to plan our support and actions as a diocese. Follow this link for the video [Schools Energy Footprint Tool – Instruction for Use](#). You can also get support from buildings (beth.maclean@leeds.anglican.org) or admin (shakira.anderson@leeds.anglican.org) colleagues.

Other measuring tools – once you have the information, why not use it!

- (b) [Energy Sparks for Schools](#) have an online analysis tool to help school reduce their energy usage. Once data is inputted its bespoke analysis can make suggestions as to what you can do to save energy.
- (c) The Eco-Schools Carbon Emissions Calculator look at all aspects of your school's carbon footprint. [See Action Sheet 1 – Getting Started for more information]



ACTION 2 → SWITCH TO A GREEN TARIFF for energy supply

Education Buying

- This is a relatively simple

step and one that can have a huge impact on your school's carbon footprint.

Green tariffs

A green tariff for Electricity means that some or all of the electricity you buy is 'matched' by purchases of renewable energy that your energy supplier makes on your behalf. These could come from a variety of renewable energy sources such as wind farms and hydroelectric power stations. Some green supply tariffs are also nuclear-free.

A green tariff for Gas may include carbon offsetting, to balance the impact of the gas purchased, and green gas (biomethane) from renewable sources.

For example: registering for free with an organisation like [Education Buying](#) can access their help to find your school a suitable green tariff.

- For those schools who have traditionally purchased their energy through the Local Authority and want to keep doing so - now is the time to put the pressure on. Local Authorities have targets for reducing their carbon emissions as well, so if they are not already offering a green tariff provider, they should be! It will be in their interests too. If schools or groups of schools begin to demand this, it could encourage them to make it available more quickly.

ACTION 3 → IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Investing in ways to use energy more efficiently not only reduces the school's carbon emissions, but also has an added benefit to schools - using less energy costs less and so saves you money.

There are two main elements to this area of action:

1. **Reduce energy usage and waste**

This can be done by ensuring everyone is aware of their own energy usage in school and shares the commitment to reducing this where possible. It is about instilling in everyone good habits around energy usage and limiting it where possible. The simple actions of turning off lights or computing equipment when not in use, switching off heating systems when not needed etc can add up to significant improvements.

[Less CO²](#) is one organisation that supports schools in developing this approach.

Here is an example of their work:

“Thornhill Primary School’s crack squad of student eco-warriors keep energy wastage to a minimum with their spot checks on whether lights and appliances have been left on in the classroom.”



2. **Reduce energy waste**

There are many ways to make a school more energy efficient. These include, for example, a better boiler, better insulation, energy efficient lightbulbs etc. These do cost money but will often pay for themselves in the long term. Knowing what areas you need to improve can help you develop a building improvement plan that can be actioned over the long term. This will enable you to take on bigger projects, such as replacement windows or a new boiler. Speak to our Building Team (beth.maclean@leeds.anglican.org / kevin.matthew@leeds.anglican.org) for advice and support. Government grant schemes, when available, to support major works can provide funding for large projects, but these grants are not easy to get so speak to the Buildings Team about how to proceed.

ACTION 4 → **INVESTIGATE SOLAR PANELS**

As well as reducing our energy use and wastage, there is also a way that schools can become energy producers. Many schools do not investigate this because they assume that it will be difficult and time consuming to organise. However, there are now companies that are set up to significantly reduce the work involved.

Example of a provider:



Organisations like [Solar for Schools](#) aim to take much of the hard work and risk away from schools. They manage the project throughout, enabling schools to achieve the benefits of solar panels, without the hassle and the cost.

*“From initial review to long term management and climate literacy provision, we work with schools, councils, diocese and trusts to make solar power possible at **no risk to the school**. We can also source grants and funding so schools don’t have to invest a penny. In a growing number of cases, it is still possible to go solar **at no cost to the school** and in some cases financial savings over time can be significant.”*

Here is one example of a school who have successfully worked Solar for Schools: Otley All Saints C of E Primary School

‘After many years of trying unsuccessfully to have solar panels installed at school, I am delighted that this partnership between Otley Energy and Solar for Schools has finally made the project a reality. Ann Flaherty (Solar for Schools) and Andy Boyle (Otley Energy) were brilliant at providing prompt responses to any concern or query, which allowed the project to be agreed within a short timescale. Just when we thought the deadline of the end of March was achievable, Covid-19 intervened and the school was closed. But Solar for Schools were not to be deterred, and work continued despite the closure. However, as lockdown procedures tightened, the crew contracted to install the panels were forced to return to their homes in Ireland, leaving the work half completed. Incredibly, Ann Flaherty was able to engage a replacement crew more local to the school, who successfully finished the project just before the deadline was reached. Now we have a wonderful set of efficient solar panels, and with the school building closed, they are already generating power that is feeding back into the National Grid.’

Ian Thompson-Smith, Headteacher

IMPORTANT: If you are planning to proceed with solar panels, you **MUST** speak to the diocesan Buildings Team (beth.maclean@leeds.anglican.org / kevin.matthew@leeds.anglican.org) first to ensure you have all the correct permissions etc.

ACTION 5 **EDUCATE**

By educating children about sustainable energy we stand the best chance of influencing their behaviour long term. There are many great sources of educational material to educate children and young people about sustainable energy. Here are some examples to check out are:

