

A route map for your whole church or organisation to respond to the climate emergency

www.climateemergencytoolkit.com

Contents.

- Introduction.
- Prepare.
- Declare.
- Impact.
- Frequently asked questions.
- Supporting organisations.
- + Final notes.

Welcome to the Climate Emergency Toolkit.

As the climate crisis accelerates, millions of lives are at risk. Christians around the world are taking urgent action, to love our neighbours, tackle the climate emergency and save lives.

The Climate Emergency Toolkit provides a route map to help all members of your church or Christian organisation respond to the climate emergency. Step by step, it contains simple but powerful actions that will equip every member to have an impact far beyond your own walls, and to influence the decisions of those in power.

The Toolkit is just that – a collection of lots of different tools you might want to use. We don't expect any one church or organisation to use all of them. As you work through the three steps of **Prepare**, **Declare** and **Impact**, browse the tools on offer and choose a selection which will most help your community take action. If you're looking for more ideas, we've also got a <u>blog on our website</u> which is updated with new relevant tools as they are launched.

Each church and organisation that declares or recognises the emergency shines a spotlight on the crisis, underlining its seriousness and the need for urgent action. Together, we can be a prophetic voice for change.

















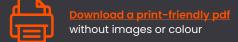
















Introduction.

The Toolkit contains three key steps for your church or organisation. You can take them in any order, whichever is most effective for your context.



Prepare.

Start the conversation about the climate emergency and begin planning your response.

Conversation is crucial. Take your whole church or organisation on a journey that helps them see responding to the climate emergency as part of their discipleship and worship. Make space for people to learn more, ask questions and share their reactions to climate change.

Gather a small team, or work with your existing justice/eco/green group, and keep the leadership of your church or organisation as informed as possible.

As soon as you are ready, draft a proposal for your governing body to make a declaration. This will help get your own house in order and should include schemes you are already using, such as Eco Church or Eco-Congregation.



Declare.

Recognise, declare or acknowledge an emergency in a way that engages your community and amplifies the need for leaders everywhere to act.

This is a critical step. Whether you 'recognise', 'declare' or 'acknowledge', the crucial part is making a clear, public and formal statement that communicates that your church or organisation understands the urgency of climate change and will not be silent in the face of injustice.

For your statement to have integrity, it also needs to include a commitment to future action. As part of your declaration, commit to a timeframe for making a plan of action to reduce emissions and have an impact.

If you're already working through Eco Church or Eco-Congregation, you might find starting with Declare will be most beneficial for amplifying the need for action and building momentum for your existing work.



Impact.

Support and empower everyone in your church family to champion climate action wherever they already are, and to pray for change.

When it comes to influencing decision-makers, churches and Christian organisations have a powerful voice. Not only are we involved in and committed to our local communities, but our membership represents the full breadth and diversity of society.

What's more, by considering everyone's circle of influence, we can help schools, businesses, charities and neighbourhoods engage with the climate emergency, and we can connect with local climate groups and campaigners, sharing our hope and partnering for lasting change.



Prepare.



Prepare.

Start the conversation about the climate emergency and begin planning your response.



1. Get leaders on board.

Consult your leadership team early in the process and engage them as much as possible. If they're unsure or unclear about the climate emergency, check out our resource below to bring them on board.

Tools

- + How to talk to your leadership
- + Burning Down the House research
- + Evangelical Alliance research

2. Build a team.

Gather a group who are willing to pray for and pursue this process. Try to reach beyond those normally involved with environmental issues and bring together different gifts, skills and influence.

Tools

+ A guide to building your team

NOTE: You may already have a justice/green team at your church and you may already be working through Eco Church or Eco-Congregation. That's great! These projects complement one another and can easily be combined.

3. Prepare together.

Many people feel under-informed about climate change and as a team it's important you go on this journey yourselves too: praying, learning, lamenting and acting.

- Basic introduction: <u>Tearfund's climate</u> <u>factsheet</u>
- How to pray for climate change from 24-7 Prayer and Renew Our World
- Listen to voices and stories from the frontlines of the climate crisis together
- Invest in your <u>Carbon Literacy</u> as an organisation
- More indepth learning: <u>Church of England</u> <u>Environment Programme</u>

Prepare.

Start the conversation about the climate emergency and begin planning your response.



4. Bring your congregation with you on the journey.

A crucial part of this journey is discipling those in our organisations and churches. Plan a discipleship/education journey with your leadership team, perhaps launching with a climate-themed Sunday or encouraging small groups to work through a creation care series together.

Tools

- Sample sermon from the Climate Emergency Toolkit team
- Climate justice order of service from Christian Aid
- Encourage home groups to use the <u>Christianity & climate change film series</u> with Professor Katharine Hayhoe
- For home groups or as a sermon series:
 Operation Noah's <u>'Tenants of the King'</u>
 Bible studies
- Develop a sermon series and group study using <u>Planetwise by Dave Bookless</u>
- Ideas for children: <u>Planet Protectors</u> <u>by Paul Kerensa and Ruth Valerio</u>

5. Write your proposal.

Produce a clear proposal for your governing body, covering why you should declare an emergency, what the key areas for reducing your emissions are likely to be, and what declaring an emergency would commit you to.

Tools

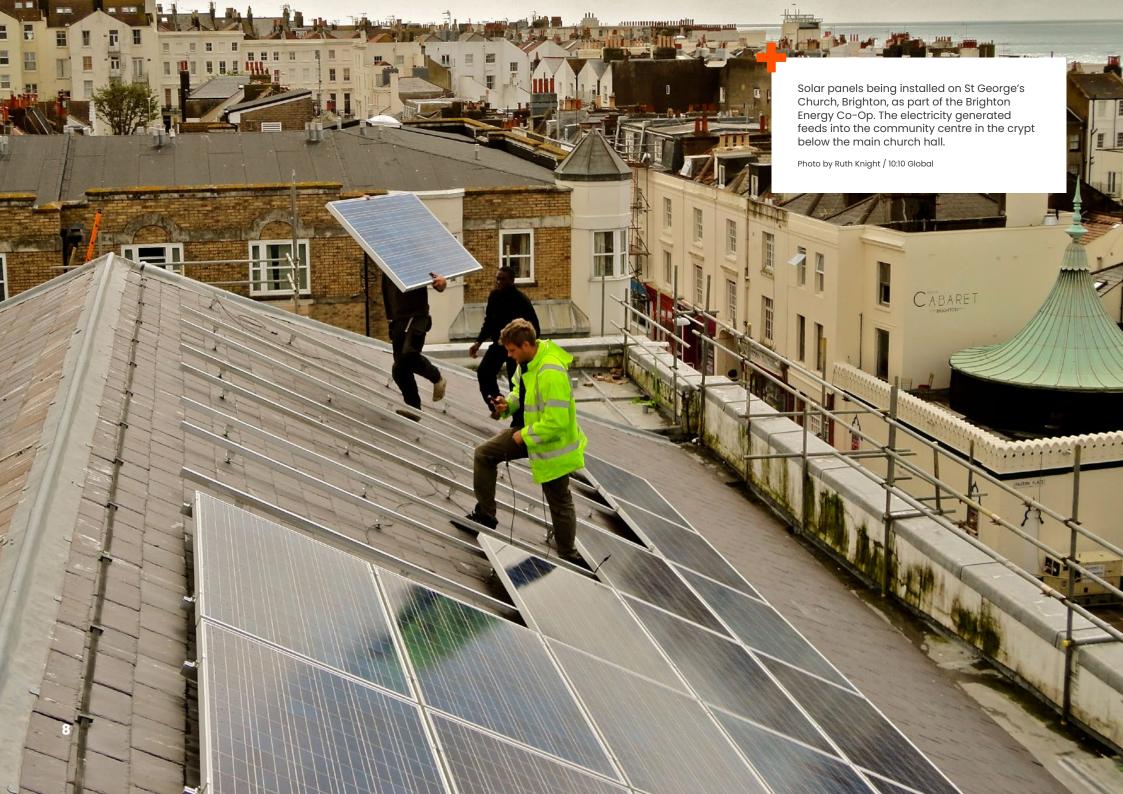
+ Template proposal

NOTE: Let us know that you're on the journey info@climateemergencytoolkit.com

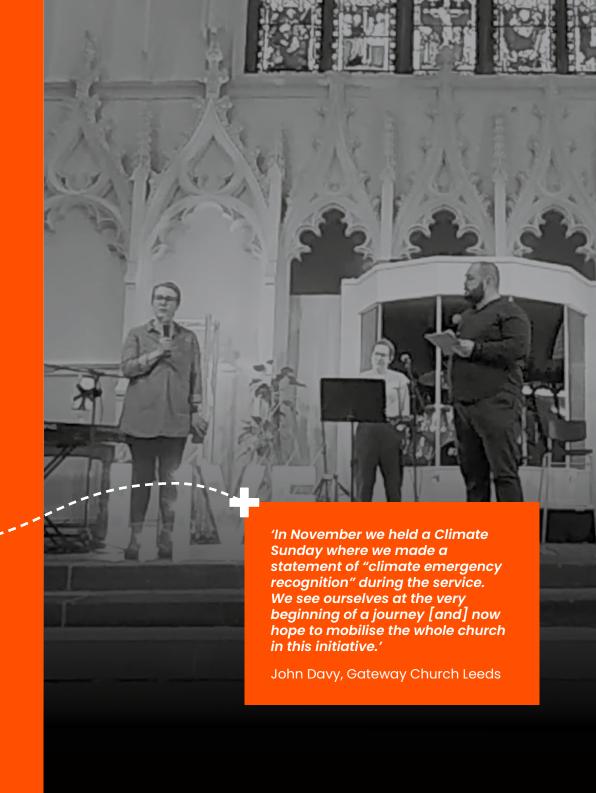
6. Get ready...

At this point, you're ready to move on to the Declare step!









Recognise, declare or acknowledge an emergency in a way that engages your community and amplifies the need for leaders everywhere to act.



What is a declaration?

A declaration is a clear, public and formal announcement. By declaring or recognising the climate emergency, you're communicating to your members and wider community that your church or organisation understands the urgency of climate change and commits to taking action. It also invites your community to join you on that journey.

- It's a clear announcement to make sure everyone in your congregation or organisation is aware and invited to play their part.
- It's a public announcement, perhaps in a Sunday service, on your social media, through a press release or via an email to other churches and local institutions.
- It's a formal statement from your governing body – whether that's your eldership, PCC, members, trustees or other form of leadership team.

Why Declare?

The language of 'emergency' has gained a lot of traction over the past few years because it communicates both the scale and urgency of the climate crisis.

Making a declaration, or formally recognising the emergency, unites us with a growing movement of citizens, councils, businesses and organisations who are doing the same. It publicly communicates our commitment to pursuing justice and loving our global neighbours who are already facing the worst of the climate emergency.

Recognise, Declare or Acknowledge?

Some churches will choose to 'declare' an emergency as this is language commonly used by councils, businesses and governments. Others will prefer to 'recognise' or 'acknowledge' the emergency, emphasising that their role is to recognise the validity of the science and the crisis at hand. What's crucial is making a statement that leaves people in no doubt about the situation we're facing, and engaging them in meaningful, empowering action as a result.

Words and action.

As well as writing and publicising a statement, we need to commit to turn words into action if our declaration is to have integrity.

You don't need to finish drafting your accompanying plan of action before you declare, but include a sentence in your declaration that says you'll have written a plan within a certain timeframe.

Churches and Christian organisations in the UK are recognising the climate emergency. Click to view a map of those who have declared a climate emergency using the Toolkit.

Recognise, declare or acknowledge an emergency in a way that engages your community and amplifies the need for leaders everywhere to act.



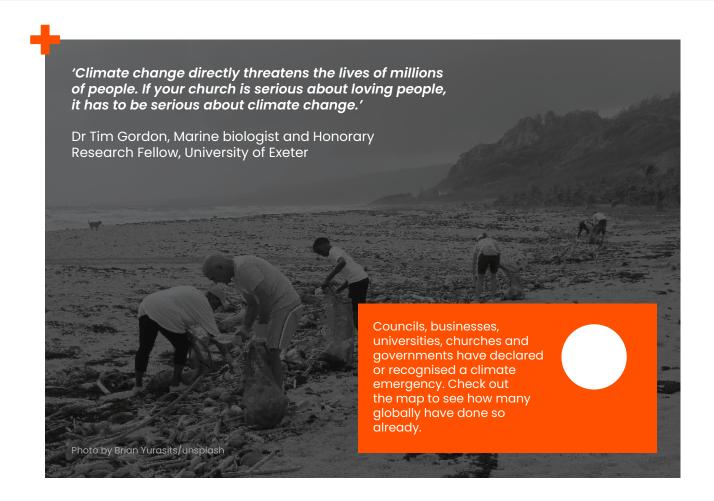
A. Make your declaration.

Have a look at our template and discuss with your team and leadership how your church or organisation can make your declaration in a way that's clear, public and official.

Tools

- + Our guide for a declaration
- Examples from other churches
- + Green Christian template declaration
- + Editable poster & images for your website or social media

Once you've recognised the emergency, let us know by emailing info@climateemergencytoolkit.com and we can add you to the map of churches in the UK who've already done so!



Recognise, declare or acknowledge an emergency in a way that engages your community and amplifies the need for leaders everywhere to act.



B. Making a plan.

For your declaration to have integrity, it also needs to include a commitment to future action. Commit to a timeframe for making a plan of action as part of your declaration, and then regroup with your team, and with your leadership, to plan your next steps.

Given we're in an emergency, we encourage you to think big! Whatever you add to your plan, make sure you identify some 'SMART' goals with your leadership team, agree some key milestones and identify initial key steps to get things moving.

Once you're up and running, review your plan on a regular basis, perhaps every six to twelve months, to celebrate your progress and identify areas where you can increase your ambition.

We've split the plan section into two parts, to help you consider the many actions it could include.

1. Plan to walk the talk.

As well as inspiring change in the systems and structures around us, it's important to live with integrity, and to glorify God with our own – and our churches' – actions. Part 1 of making a plan is considering how to walk the talk by reducing the emissions of your church or organisation.

You might want to set a target, eg becoming carbon neutral by 2030, reducing emissions by ten per cent a year, or achieving the Silver Eco Church award by a certain date. For lots of help and support, sign up or continue working through Eco Church and/or similar schemes.

2. Plan to have an impact.

The environmental emergency we face is driven by the damaging ways our society and economy function. Part 2 of making a plan is thinking about how to address this. We need more than just individual action: we need everyone playing their part, speaking up and influencing the circles God has placed us in.

The tools to help you have an impact are outlined in the next section of the Toolkit, Impact.

Tools

 Click here to download the <u>Template</u> <u>planning document</u>



Recognise, declare or acknowledge an emergency in a way that engages your community and amplifies the need for leaders everywhere to act.



Tools for 'Walking the talk'

Reducing your carbon footprint

- Measure your emissions with the 360 carbon calculator. (Church of England churches also have access to the Energy Footprint Tool in online parish returns.)
- Begin or continue your journey with <u>Eco Church</u>, if you're in England or Wales, or <u>Eco-Congregation</u>, if you're in Scotland or Ireland, and set targets for reaching awards.
- Use <u>The practical path to net zero carbon</u> for churches two-page guidance to identify actions your church can take.
- + Calculate the cost of offsetting emissions you can't avoid with Climate Stewards.

Helping all members make lifestyle changes

 Use the <u>Creation Care survey</u> with your congregation.

Move your money

- Encourage your church or organisation to divest from fossil fuels: read the <u>step-by-</u> <u>step guide from the Bright Now</u> campaign.
- Find an ethical charity bank account for your church.

Switch to renewable energy – church and homes

- Churches: Citizens UK's Fair Energy Campaign
- + Homes: Big Clean Switch

Some church denominations offer their own schemes: find out if yours does!

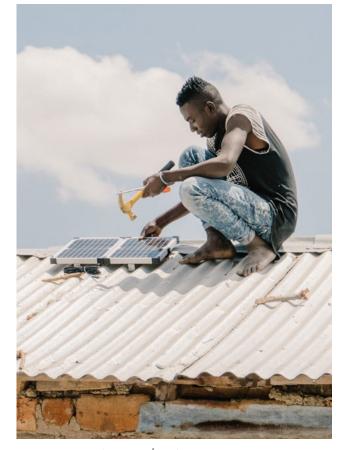


Photo by Toby Lewis Thomas/Tearfund





-impact.



Support and empower everyone in your church family to champion climate action wherever they already are, and to pray for change.



As part of making your plan of action, work with your team to discover how each member of your church or organisation can use their influence: upwards, outwards, alongside and together.

Climate change will only be addressed effectively by action at every level: international bodies, national and local governments, all the way down to individuals. We need to have with us as many voices, talents and experiences as possible: everyone taking action where they are, in their workplaces, schools, communities and constituencies.

Pick a few ideas from the lists on the following pages to introduce to your members and include in your plan. In the months and years to come, keep coming back to these lists of tools to find more ways for your church or organisation to inspire positive change beyond your walls.



Support and empower everyone in your church family to champion climate action wherever they already are, and to pray for change.



1. Upwards

As a church, you can influence leaders and decision-makers, people with power, to make significant change. This could include: senior leaders in your network of churches, association or diocese; leaders in your local area, such as mayors, the council, your local politicians; and even the UK Government.

Consider brainstorming your 'upward' connections and planning how you will engage each of them. You could share the journey you have been on as a congregation with them, encouraging them to be more active too. Or find others to partner with locally to campaign and petition decision-makers (see the 'Together' section).

- Influence your MP or council. Hope for the Future has specific support for faith groups
- Influence your church network or denomination to divest from fossil fuels. Consider joining Operation Noah's Bright Now campaign
- + Add your church to the list of supporting organisations for the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill
- See how your council scores and ask them to take more action:
 Council Climate Plan Scorecards
- Learn more about campaigning to make change:
 Christian Aid's Campaigns toolkit
- Support campaigns to influence governments and businesses with <u>Christian Aid</u>, <u>Tearfund</u>, <u>Operation Noah</u>, <u>Green Christian</u> and other campaigning organisations
- Organise <u>'The Influence Course'</u> from Christians in Politics, for your church or organisation to learn how to do 'upwards' influencing well

Support and empower everyone in your church family to champion climate action wherever they already are, and to pray for change.



2. Outwards

Each member of your Christian community has been placed in their home, community or workplace as a beacon of light. As a church or organisation, you will be connected to many other businesses, schools, groups and organisations through your staff and congregation. Consider how you can support those in your church to champion climate action where they already are, and encourage the church to pray regularly for them.

- + A playbook for business from B Lab UK
- + Influence your workplace with Make My Money Matter
- + Sustainable office guide from World Wildlife Fund
- Taking action in schools: <u>'Net zero carbon schools' webinar</u> and <u>Let's Go Zero</u> initiative
- Green Your Money with ECCR by rethinking where we bank, our spending and pension
- + 'How to have a climate change conversation' Climate Outreach
- + <u>'Climate change-proof your workplace'</u> Trades Union Congress
- Introduce a semi-regular slot in your service for people to share testimonies of how they've inspired others to care for creation

Support and empower everyone in your church family to champion climate action wherever they already are, and to pray for change.



3. Alongside

Consider those you serve alongside, and who you can stand alongside in prayer.

From other local churches to groups who use your church, from suppliers to mission partners, your church or organisation serves alongside so many others. Identify ways you can encourage them to take action, by sharing your declaration and plan.

When you engage with other local church schools, churches or Christian organisations, could you ask them to begin their own journey through the Toolkit too?

For this section, also consider how you can stand alongside your global neighbours – and all of creation – in prayer. Commit to praying regularly as a church for people around the world who are impacted by the climate emergency, or who are caring for God's creation in inspiring ways.

- + <u>'Having good climate conversations'</u>, a TED Talk by Christian climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe
- + Consider your suppliers with ECCR's Ethical buying guide for churches
- Britain Talks Climate: a toolkit for engaging the British public Climate Outreach
- + 'Inviting others to campaign' Christian Aid
- + Sign up for fortnightly SMS prayer updates from Tearfund
- + Pray and Fast for the Climate

Support and empower everyone in your church family to champion climate action wherever they already are, and to pray for change.



4. Together

There are likely to be many local community groups advocating for climate action in your area, and even groups in other local churches who would love to connect with you and work together. Partnering with local climate groups can bring mutual benefits, and bolsters community efforts to bring about change.

Working together can help your church find meaningful ways to campaign and take action locally while bringing extra numbers, support and influence to those campaigning tirelessly already. We can strengthen one another as we seek to create change together.

Tools

+ 'Engaging with the local community' - Eco Church resource

Examples of organisations and networks that might have local groups in your area:

- + Map of Transition Towns
- + Friends of the Earth
- + Greenpeace
- + Local Extinction Rebellion (XR)
- + Christian Climate Action
- + Repair Cafés
- + Green Christian
- Search online for 'local environment groups in X' and pop in your local area. This should bring up some great suggestions for who to reach out to.



Frequently asked questions.



+ Is it really a climate emergency?

As temperatures continue to rise, people living in poverty are already facing devastating consequences of our changing climate. Rains are less reliable and droughts, floods and storms are becoming more frequent and extreme. These changes are destroying farmland, spreading disease and pushing people back into poverty. For our global neighbours, this is already a very real emergency.

In 2021, 195 countries came together to sign the Glasgow Climate Pact, committing to stop the global average temperature from increasing by more than 1.5°C, based on the average temperature before the industrial revolution, and to 'phase down' fossil fuel use.

Temperatures have already climbed by 1.1°C and our emissions are still increasing year on year, which could lead to catastrophic impacts. Even 2°C of warming could mean 2.9 billion people being exposed to deadly extreme-heat events every five years.¹

To limit warming to 1.5°C we now need to cut emissions by between eight and 15 per cent every year. Without an urgent change of direction, we are heading towards a climate with more severe droughts, storms, heatwaves,

floods and wildfires, and towards a world where pandemics and biodiversity collapse are far more likely. This is now a climate emergency.

+ Why should we get involved – as Christians and churches?

As Christians, we know 'the earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it' (Psalm 24:1).

We're called to act justly and to love our neighbours. This is God's good creation, but the way we've exploited it is already pushing people back into poverty and risks the collapse of society as we know it.

As churches and Christians in the UK, might we have been called for such a time as this? Together we can speak up, live prophetically and protect the lives of millions of people already at risk from this crisis.

Like you, we believe the church is God's Plan A for his mission in this world. We can play a crucial role in society, serving our communities and speaking up for justice. We, the church, are the largest community organisation on the planet and together, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we can play a crucial role.

+ What kind of organisations can do this?

We've designed this Toolkit to serve local churches in the UK. As more and more of us as churches recognise the emergency and make a plan for action, we'll create a real momentum for change.

But this Toolkit isn't just for churches: the key steps of Prepare, Declare and Impact have been designed with flexibility in mind. No matter the size, shape or structure of your organisation, you should be able to take this Toolkit and adapt it for your own situation, whether you are a church network, denomination, diocese, church school, theological college or a Christian organisation. Collectively, as the people of God, we can speak up and take action on this global crisis together.

+ How do I get started?

Tackling the climate emergency can't be done alone. We want to support you along this journey and would encourage you to build a team within your church, school or organisation to help too.

You've already downloaded the Toolkit, which is a brilliant start. As a next step, we would suggest you talk with your church's or organisation's leadership and gather a team of people willing to work on this with you. Then head back to the introduction and discuss with your team where to go from there.

¹ https://www.tearfund.org/stories/2021/10/why-1-5-degrees-the-crucial-climate-target-explained

Frequently asked questions.



+ How does this relate to other initiatives we are involved with?

The Toolkit is designed to help organisations make a step change in their response to the climate emergency. Churches that already have sustainability plans, or are pursuing Eco Church or Eco-Congregation awards, can incorporate declaring an emergency into this process.

Declaring an emergency and making a clear action plan should help focus attention on the crucial issue of lowering emissions.

This Toolkit also aims to help mobilise individual Christians to influence their households, local communities and workplaces. This isn't just about the sustainability of Christian communities: it's about inspiring each other to be a beacon for change wherever God has put us.

+ Can we reach zero emissions?

The exact target you set should be determined by your governing body. In order to recognise the climate emergency in a meaningful way, the target will need to be substantial and the timescale urgent. It could mean emissions reductions, or it could be more focused on moving your finances, empowering your congregation or partnering with the community.

As a guide, the Church of England and the Church of Scotland share an ambitious goal of 'net zero' by 2030, and the UK Government has pledged to reduce emissions by 78 per cent by 2035.

• What does it mean to 'adapt' to the changing climate?

Climate change is already causing significant issues globally, but this is now increasingly being felt in the UK too. A realistic action plan could also include preparations for further changes in the coming years as the emissions of previous decades take effect.

Adaptation measures could include:

- Make sure climate change impacts are on your organisation's risk register.
- Consider the risk of flooding at your church building, overheating in the summer, overtopping of the gutters during extreme rainfall, and stonework damage due to the foundations swelling and shrinking. Can you take practical actions to reduce the impact, such as moving your fusebox higher up? This guidance may help.

• Make plans to respond with compassion and hope to rising climate anxiety. What could a pastoral team provide for the community as anxiety mounts or when impacts hit?

Arrange some community conversations about climate resilience. Consider how your local community might be affected by:

- higher temperatures
- more extreme weather conditions, including flooding
- a rise in food prices or food-chain problems
- migration following environmental disaster
- power shortages/energy insecurity

Adaptation planning is good stewardship of resources. Research also shows that naming these issues now can help people acknowledge the need to take action.

Supporting organisations.

The Climate Emergency Toolkit has been put together in collaboration with several organisations, as well as activists and church leaders.



Tearfund

Tearfund is a Christian charity with more than 50 years of experience working directly, and alongside local partners and churches, around the world. We believe that poverty is not God's plan, and an end to extreme poverty is possible.

A Rocha UK

A Rocha UK is a Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world and committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment.

Christian Aid

Christian Aid exists to create a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. We are a global movement of people, churches and local organisations who passionately champion dignity, equality and justice worldwide.

The Church of England Environment Programme

We enable churches to fulfil their calling to nurture and care for God's creation, encompassing worship and teaching, reaching net zero, land and nature, community action, ethical investment and a strong faith voice.

Eco-Congregation Ireland Eco-Congregation Scotland

Eco-Congregation is an ecumenical programme helping churches make the link between environmental issues and Christian faith, and respond with practical action in the church, the lives of individuals, and in the local and global community.

Eco Church

A Rocha UK's award scheme for churches in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth. The free online survey and resources equip churches to plan and take action across the whole of church life.

ECCR

Working towards a world where money is used to shape a fairer, greener future for all. We help Christians connect their faith with finance - making ethical choices with their own banking, pensions and spending; and speaking out for economic justice.

The Evangelical Alliance

We are an alliance of evangelicals sharing the gospel, lifting voices of hope, and building unity as together we make Jesus known. We're made up of hundreds of organisations, thousands of churches and tens of thousands of individuals, joined together for the sake of the gospel.

Green Christian

We are a community of ordinary Christians from all backgrounds and traditions who believe the gospel is for all creation. Inspired by our faith, we work to promote social change through prayer, living simply, public witness, campaigning and mutual encouragement.

Hope for the Future

Hope for the Future is a climate charity which works to equip communities, groups and individuals across the country to communicate the urgency of climate change with their local politicians.

The John Ray Initiative

The John Ray Initiative (JRI) is an educational charity with a vision to bring together scientific and Christian understandings of the environment in a way that can be widely communicated and lead to effective action.

Operation Noah

Operation Noah is a Christian charity working with the church in the UK to inspire action on the climate crisis. We work with all Christian denominations and support interfaith work on climate change. We are faithmotivated, science-informed and hope-inspired.

Renew Our World

We are a global movement of Christians – in Australia, Brazil, Germany, India, Ireland, Malawi, Mozambique, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Tanzania, UK and Zambia - campaigning to make the world more fair and sustainable.





























Final notes.

Well done for making it through the Toolkit! We hope you've found it a useful guide.

If you're planning to use the Toolkit with your church or organisation, or are already doing so, then we would love to pray with you and talk more about how to make the most of your journey through the Toolkit.

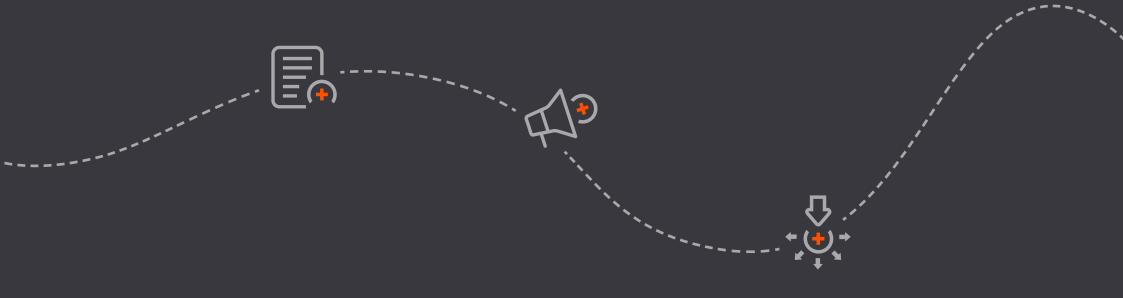
Get in touch via our website or email us at info@climateemergencytoolkit.com

The Climate Emergency Toolkit and accompanying website have been produced by Tearfund, in partnership with a broad coalition of organisations, activists and church leaders.

We are grateful for the vision and time of Billie Anderson, Hannah Bowring, Seren Boyd, Helen Eldridge, Luke Harman, Howard May, Jemima Parker, Mark Powley, Kiran Rai and Jack Wakefield.



www.climateemergencytoolkit.com





info@climateemergencytoolkit.com

© Tearfund 2022

Published by Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE, United Kingdom

A company limited by guarantee. Registered Charity No. 265464 (England and Wales) Registered Charity No. SC037624 (Scotland)