



Parishioners we need your help for an environmental project.

The project described below grew out of the theme for the Diocese of East Anglia in 2009 which was "Caring for God's Creation" when Bishop Michael encouraged all parishes in the Diocese to develop environmental strategies to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Also last year the previous government issued a White Paper (15th July 2009) and then legislation proposing to turn Britain into a low carbon economy by investing in sustainable energy technologies including solar photovoltaic and wind turbines

As a result of the Diocesan and government proposals the parish Finance and Buildings Committee (F&BC) decided to explore the feasibility of solar photovoltaic technology to provide electricity for the church, hall and presbytery and a grant was sought from the Community for Sustainable Energy Programme (CSEP) to conduct a study. The study was completed in December and confirmed that the use of solar photovoltaic panels on the south facing aspect of the hall roof was feasible to reduce the carbon footprint and energy costs of the buildings and would link in to the existing single phase electricity system.

On 1st April 2010 the former government introduced a "Feed-In Tariff" (in line with the previous White Paper and legislation on making Britain a low carbon economy). The new tariff will pay the church a sum per kWh for the electricity used by the church, and any surplus electricity exported to the National Grid will also earn a smaller sum per kWh. This has the potential to be both cost saving on the energy costs of the church and to generate an income stream for the parish. It also will have a significant effect on reducing the carbon dioxide emissions currently generated by the church.

The capital cost of the solar photovoltaic project is £20,000.

In light of the above a grant was sought from CSEP to fund 50% of the capital costs and a final decision on the award being granted is awaited.

A planning application has been made to Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) for permission to install solar panels, via a roof mounted frame, to the south facing aspect of the hall roof and again a decision is awaited. Included in the planning application is a request to amend a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) which incorporates all of the trees in the car park. It is requested that the TPO be amended to permit the felling of the single sycamore tree which stands in the centre of the car park to the south of the hall, as the sycamore tree casts shadow on the hall roof, and any shadow reduces production of electricity to the full solar panel, and not just the area where the shadow is cast.

The F&BC recommend the project to all parishioners and users of the hall, and the scheme has the full support of Bishop Michael.

In order to meet the cost of the project the parish will have to borrow from the Diocese and pay interest for the period of the loan. Parishioners could assist by



making interest free loans over either 3 or 5 years. The loan would be repayable in full after 3 or 5 years, or sooner if urgently required due to changes in personal circumstances.

(Similar assistance with interest free loans was very successfully received 9 years ago when seeking funds to build the church hall.)

If you would like to know more about the project, or offer an interest free loan, please contact the Parish Office in the first instance.

Finance and Buildings Committee.