

# SUSTAINABLE BUILDING PROJECTS

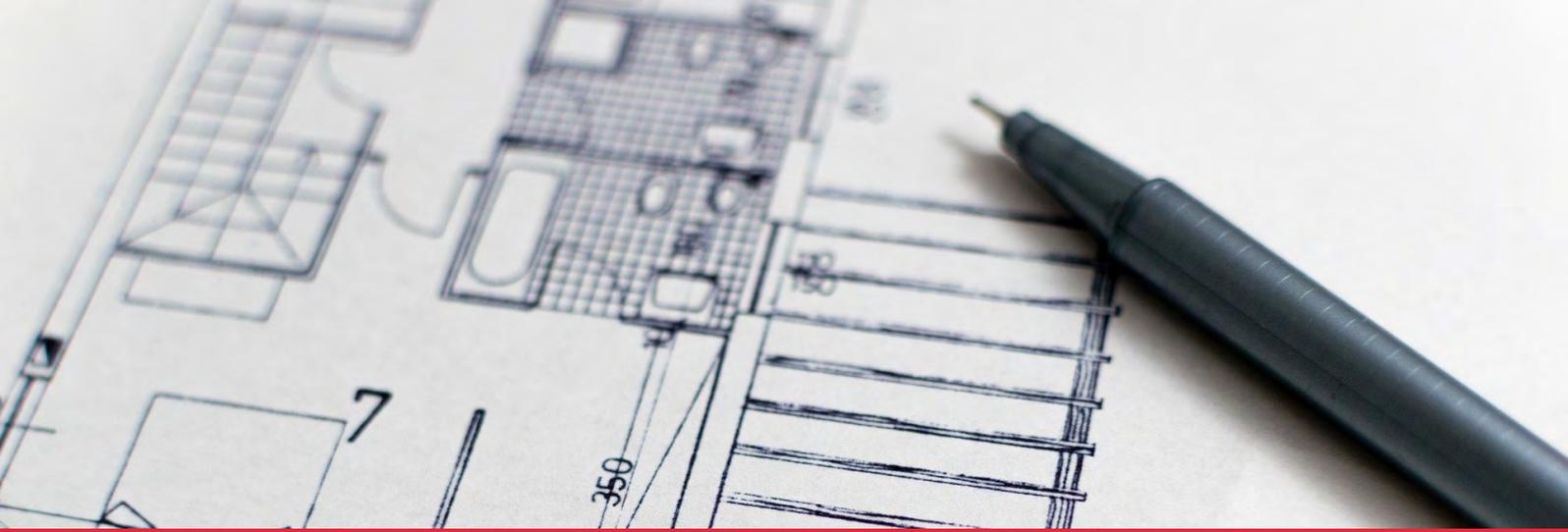
BUILDINGS

**ECO**  **CHURCH**  
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT



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## BUILDINGS

# Sustainable building projects

### WHY?

We may be able to change our buildings so they operate in a way which is more carbon neutral, but what about the actual work needed to do this? Or the waste we create along the way?

It's important to think about the process of how we do building works as well as the end result. Fossil fuels, natural materials (biomass), metals and minerals are used in most building projects. Where do they come from? What is the carbon impact of their creation or extraction? What about their transportation to your site? How is biodiversity impacted by this project?

### HOW?

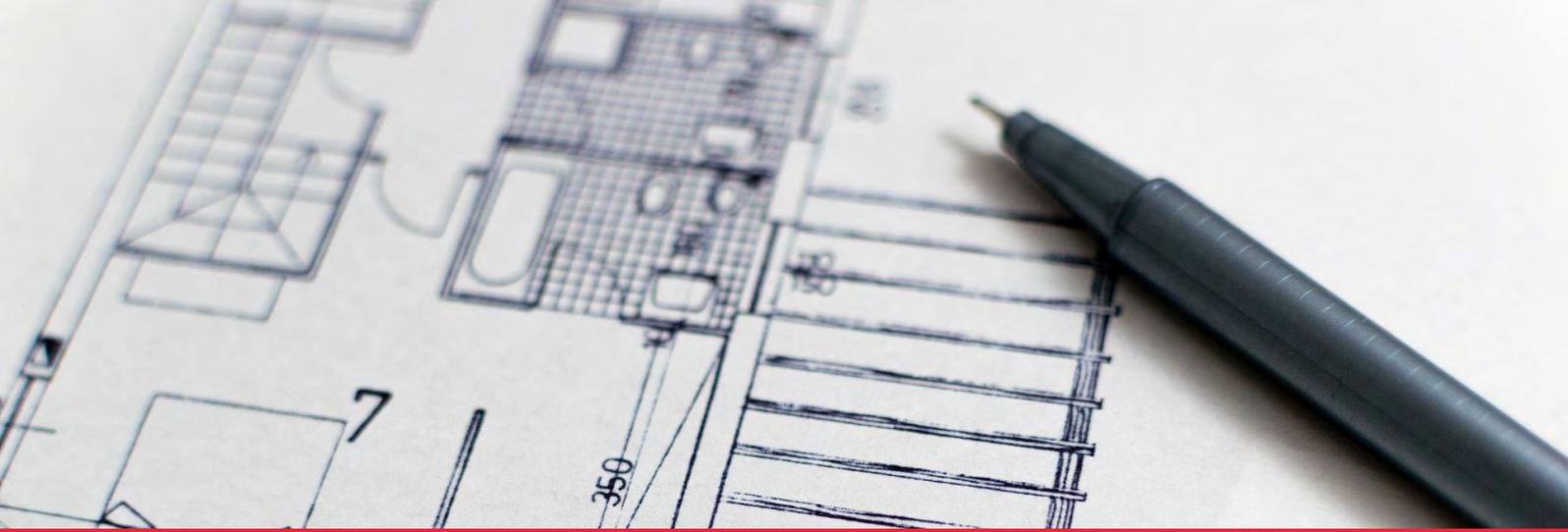
A major building project is a pretty daunting prospect so 'Church Build' has put together a guide to help equip churches to make the best use of their buildings for God's glory. This free and comprehensive toolkit makes helpful background reading to provide a route map of how to approach such a project: <http://www.churchbuildingprojects.co.uk/>

<https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/building-advice/managing-building-projects>

Heritage churches have more complications. Any building project needs to both be useful for people, protect the building and make carbon efficiencies. You will need to weigh up the perceived harm to the building against the public benefit of the desired changes. These two registers will help you find an appropriately qualified conservation architect: <https://www.aabc-register.co.uk/>

<https://www.architecture.com/working-with-an-architect/conservation-register>

In the 1990s the UK's first green rating system was launched – the 'Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method' (BREEAM). Following the UK's lead, other countries have since established their own systems: <https://www.breeam.com/>



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BREEAM-licensed assessors offer third-party certification of the environmental impact of a building or project, both the end product and the process. BREEAM is mainly aimed at entities much larger than individual churches so may not be specifically appropriate in your context, but their principles of sustainability for social, environmental and economic impact are pertinent.

Keep these BREEAM principles in mind as you meet with architects and the advisory team. Ask questions ranging from energy to ecology, to ensure both the future building and the process are as environmentally sensitive and sustainable as possible. You might like to consider:

- Improved health and well-being for the occupants (air quality, lighting, heating/cooling)
- Lower running costs in the future
- Carbon emissions reduction
- Design durability and resilience against climate change (flooding, pollution, ambient temperature, natural disasters)
- Ecological value and biodiversity protection (on-site disturbance, impact off site, fragmentation)
- Sourcing of materials and supporting the circular economy (i.e. reusing materials rather than the historic take-make-waste approach of many buildings projects)

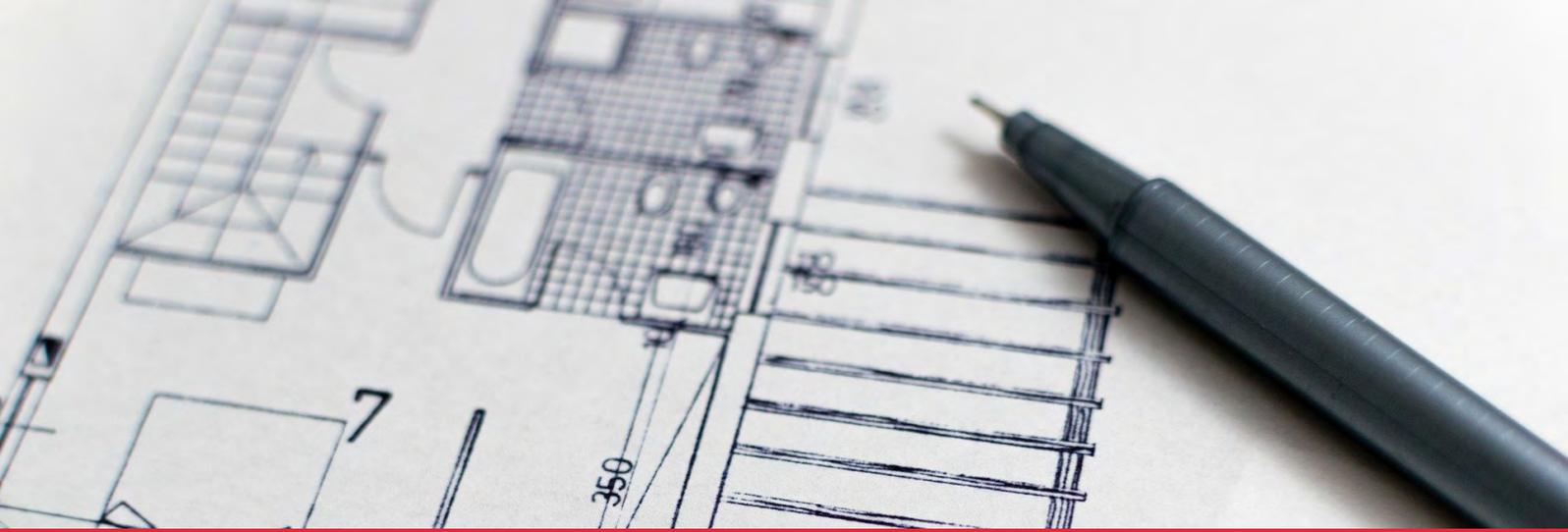
### LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

Principles of BREEAM on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/85454159>

BRE – Climate Resilience in the Built Environment: <https://vimeo.com/361771182>

UK Green Building Council on climate change: <https://www.ukgbc.org/climate-change/>

The Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association has produced a couple of resources about sustainability and church projects: <https://www.easa.org.uk/index.php/resources/sustainability-net-zero-carbon>



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The Church of England makes faculty applications publicly available which can be helpful for discovering the actions of churches similar to yours: <https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/churches>

Users and stakeholders of BREEAM have contributed to an extensive centralised library of guidance and best practice: [https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/BREEAM\\_Wiki](https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/BREEAM_Wiki)

### CASE STUDIES

St Pauls in St Albans explain how they chose materials to reuse and recycle wherever possible: <https://sustainablestalbens.org/2020/09/24/our-eco-church-journey-st-pauls-church-st-albans/>

### STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Taking action on this topic will contribute to these UN Strategic Development Goals:

