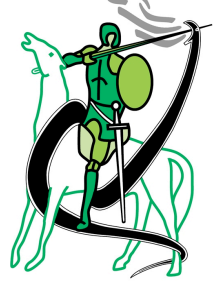


## Media release and Invite

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You are formerly invited to a media launch and official 'switch on' on:

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2011, 11:00am**

Embargoed until 11:00am Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February

**Newbury church takes first steps to reducing its carbon footprint  
by installing solar photovoltaic panels and new insulated ceiling**

St George's Church, the parish church of Wash Common in Newbury, Berkshire, today switches on its newly installed photovoltaic (PV) panels and takes a significant step towards reducing its reliance on fossil fuels and becoming one of the first carbon neutral churches in the UK.

The fundraising campaign was launched in November 2009 with support from local resident and congregation member, former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey of Clifton who was present today, along with Kuldip Singh, ex-Mayor of Newbury who has supported the project for the last 18 months.

Phase 1 of the project has focused on installing PV panels on the south side of the church roof after reinforcing the structure first, and replacement of the uniquely designed barrel-vault ceiling with an insulated alternative.

St George's was awarded a number of grants including £38,000 by the Low Carbon Buildings Fund however restrictions on this grant meant it had to be spent by the end of February 2011, thus exerting significant time pressures on the entire project. Even with a successful fundraising campaign, the project still faced a shortfall of almost £50,000 at the end of January 2011 and it was only after a last-minute push by the congregation that the project was able to go ahead.

Once the 129 PV panels have been switched on today they will produce just under 25 kilowatt peak output which will mean the church is able to generate enough electricity for its own needs but also some surplus which will be sold to the grid, via the government's FIT scheme.

For Press Enquiries:

Kimberley Tiley

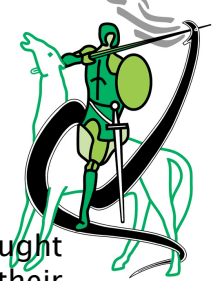
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St George the Martyr

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Solaris Developments, the company behind the installation of the PV panels brought a team of engineers and equipment over from Germany and this represents their first project in the UK.

The project has been led by the Vicar of St George's, Paul Cowan and a team of congregation members. He says:

"This project has represented a roller-coaster ride over recent months and at the end of January it looked as though the project would be cancelled due to a funding shortfall against bids to do the work. On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January I gave an update to our congregation and told them we were back to the drawing board. The response however was phenomenal and in the following 12 hours more than £40,000 was donated. We were then able to secure a discount with the contractors and suddenly we were back on track. These events seem truly miraculous as I am now able to admire the PV panels on the roof! St George's is still some way from being fully carbon neutral but this is a positive step in the right direction as we endeavour to play our small part in the stewardship of this beautiful world and as we make St George's a warmer and more welcoming space for the Wash Common community. In addition, the church will benefit from a regular income raised by the FIT, so all in all, we are very proud of the legacy we leave future congregations."

Lord Carey of Clifton says:

"I am delighted for the congregation of St George's and all the people who have worked hard to get the renewable energy project this far. Thanks to their hard work and dedication, we will soon have a warmer church that can be used by the entire community, safe in the knowledge that we have reduced our carbon footprint significantly. I sincerely hope that other churches will follow this fine example".

Kuldip Singh says:

"During my tenure as Mayor of Newbury the 'George Goes Green' project was my chosen charity and it is a delight to see the hard work of all those involved pay off, and to have been a part of this inspirational project".

Dermot Main of Solaris says:

"Solaris are delighted to have been part of the St George's exemplar project. This beautiful and interesting church presented some complex challenges but it was a privilege to work with Reverend Cowan and his team to realise their vision. We are

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looking forward to helping other churches and communities across the country who wish to reduce their electricity bills, limit their carbon footprint and receive additional revenue from the UK FIT. This is a new and exciting era for renewable energy in Britain, and Solaris are pleased to provide a specialist service, together with our German partners, using a wealth of experience gained from installing thousands of photovoltaic arrays across continental Europe.”

## Photos



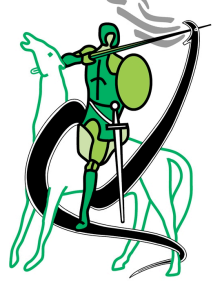
A crude cross discovered inside the roof space that had been signed and dated by those who constructed the 1960's section of the church.

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Vicar, Paul Cowan stood by the south side of the ceiling which has been removed and with scaffolding props in place ready for the PV installations to begin.

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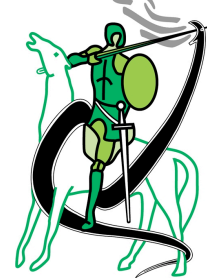


Photo showing partial removal of the south side of the ceiling.

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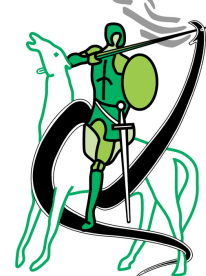


Photo showing the arrival of the PV panels from Germany.

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This and the following photo shows Solaris engineers attaching rails to the south side of the roof which will support the PV panels.

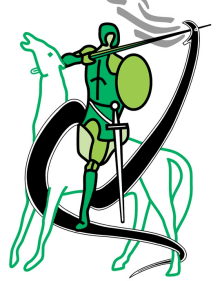
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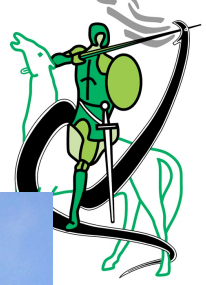


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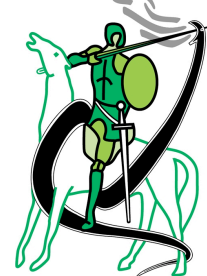
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The photos below show the exterior and interior of St George's prior to any work on the PV installation (bell tower, high altar, and south transept):

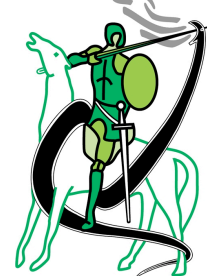


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## Notes

### Other companies involved in the project:

Structural Engineer:	Archibald Shaw	<a href="http://www.archibaldshaw.co.uk">www.archibaldshaw.co.uk</a>
Architect:	Acanthus Clewes	<a href="http://www.acanthusclews.co.uk">www.acanthusclews.co.uk</a>
PV Installer:	Solaris Developments	<a href="http://www.solaris-developments.com">www.solaris-developments.com</a>
Contractor:	Stepnell	<a href="http://www.stepnell.co.uk">www.stepnell.co.uk</a>
Scaffolder:	DSL	<a href="http://www.deborahservices.co.uk">www.deborahservices.co.uk</a>

Please also refer to our project website and blog for the latest developments:

[www.georgegoesgreen.org](http://www.georgegoesgreen.org)

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