

## Horsham Parish Cuts Energy Costs and Carbon Emissions with Smart Thermostats

Horsham Parish in Sussex is leading the way in reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions through an innovative project using smart thermostats.

The initiative, which began as a pilot study in early 2023, has now been expanded to multiple parish buildings with impressive results.

The parish, which recorded a total energy consumption of 381,000 kWh and a carbon footprint of 72.7 tonnes in 2022, has been actively seeking ways to reduce its environmental impact and energy costs.



With energy prices on the rise, the parish faced a potential threefold increase in annual gas costs. Five 'Nest' thermostats have been installed so far and have produced encouraging results. The parish plans to install two more soon.

The initial installation at St Mary's Church nave has been particularly successful, achieving about a 20% reduction in gas consumption over the spring / early summer of 2024.

The smart thermostats allow for remote monitoring and control via a smartphone app, which is used by two staff members and two volunteers. This increased remote visibility and control has contributed significantly to the energy savings.

While the project has faced some challenges, such as dealing with old thermostat controls and complex existing systems, the overall impact has been positive.

The parish has managed to keep additional costs low by utilising in-house skills for installation work.



This initiative serves as an excellent example for other parishes looking to reduce their energy consumption and carbon emissions. It demonstrates that relatively simple technological solutions can have a significant impact on both environmental sustainability and cost reduction.

The initial pilot study suggests potential annual savings of approximately 10% in gas usage, equating to approximately seven tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum (34,232.4 kWh). The early actual results in some buildings have even exceeded these projections.

As parishes and community organisations face increasing pressure to reduce their carbon footprint and manage rising energy costs, the Horsham Parish project provides a practical and replicable model for action. It highlights the importance of embracing smart technology and the potential for significant energy savings through relatively simple interventions.

