

# Environment Policy



## Aim:

As a church we aim to take the practical steps necessary to realise the Fifth Mark of Mission, which is 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth'.

## Objective:

As a Gold Eco Church community, we will take environmental concerns into account in our mission, worship and teaching, lifestyle, community and global engagement, buildings and land management, administrative and all other projects and programmes.

## Actions:

1. We will strive to sustain our gold Eco Church status and further embrace the need to care for the environment within the culture at St John's church, and how we live our lives, collectively and individually
2. We will regularly include our concern for sustainability in our worship, teaching, prayer and music, including at least four green communions each year
3. We will pray for a specific project run by/in conjunction with the environmental policy St John's is currently supporting
4. We aim to reach net zero and become a carbon neutral church and ensure environmental sustainability in all building work (looking at BREEAM<sup>1</sup> certification, or similar, wherever possible)
5. We will undertake annual environmental audits of the church premises and church hall, identify the most significant issues and impacts which should be addressed, and make and implement plans to tackle them, recognising that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts
6. We will ensure that our electricity comes from renewable sources, and explore generating renewable energy
7. As the church's energy use is arguably its greatest environmental issue, we will seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of gas and electricity used by the church and church hall, in proportion with their use,
  - a. in heating by:
    - i. Using thermostats for temperature control
    - ii. Improving insulation wherever practicable
    - iii. Replacing old, inefficient boilers where practicable and investigating renewable heating alternatives
    - iv. Moving towards remote control of the heating system
  - b. In internal lighting by:
    - i. Fitting LED lights (including floodlights)
    - ii. Notices by exits reminding people to switch the lights off
  - c. In external security lighting by:
    - i. Fitting LED or other low energy lights
8. We will seek ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment, wherever possible:
  - a. Serving locally produced food where possible

- b. Being a Fairtrade church and retaining that registration by:
    - i. Using and encouraging the congregation to use Fairtrade products wherever possible (at least tea, coffee and sugar)
    - ii. Celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight and integrate Fairtrade into the life and worship of the church
    - iii. Engage with other Fairtrade campaigns and connect with community groups and/or schools where possible
  - c. Not using any disposables in the church and church hall
  - d. Providing recycling facilities in the church
  - e. Using email rather than sending hard copies
  - f. Printing fewer annual reports, encouraging people to use tablets etc to access them
  - g. Using recycled paper
  - h. Re-using/repairing items
  - i. Using low environmental impact cleaning materials
9. We will avoid using water unnecessarily, and
    - a. install a water meter at the church
    - b. ensure that new taps and cisterns include water minimising features
    - c. use the water butt for watering plants
  10. We will measure and offset our carbon footprint annually
  11. We will encourage our congregation to audit their own environmental impact and consider offsetting their carbon footprints
  12. We will audit the wildlife in the churchyard annually, and manage it to increase and conserve biodiversity
  13. Ensure church events include opportunities for local people to enjoy God's earth

Note 1: BREEAM is Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method

**Useful resources:**

Eco Church, A Rocha <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

Net zero carbon church <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church>

Churches Together in England <https://cte.org.uk/topic/environment/>

Prayers for Climate Change <https://www.compassionuk.org/blogs/5-powerful-prayers-for-climate-change/>