

The Emmanuel Benefice of Newsome, Armitage Bridge and Netherton

St Paul's Armitage Bridge

Environmental Policy

We affirm these elements of our faith

- Through Christ, God has created an awesome and majestic cosmos to bring Him praise and glory. We are but one part of His created order.
- Jesus has redeemed the whole earth through His death and resurrection.
- We recognise that we have a special responsibility to care for the Earth so that human life and all God's creatures may be sustained in harmony.

Aim

As a local church, care for Christ's creation will remain an integral part of our ministry and mission, through both the use of our own property and resources, and our activities in the community, which glorify God and demonstrate Christ's kingdom values in our parish.

Objectives

We will take environmental concerns into account in all aspects of our church life: worship, mission, teaching, pastoral care, management and administration.

We will continue to participate in the Eco Church programme, building on our present Eco Church Silver designation.

Actions

Eco Church Committee

1. We will appoint a Parish Environmental Officer to lead our programme and encourage them to bring relevant environmental issues and concerns forward to the PCC on a regular basis.
2. The Parish Environmental Officer will be supported by the Eco Church Committee, who will meet regularly to oversee the environmental programme and identify and implement projects that will contribute to environmental awareness and sustainability.
3. The Committee will use the Eco Church survey tool to identify specific areas for action and assess progress towards achieving the Eco Church Gold award.

4. The Committee will maintain and regularly update a project list, publicise events and activities and encourage all members of the congregation to take part.

Key areas of church life

Worship and Teaching

5. We will include our concern for sustainability in our worship and teaching, including through the Church of England's Season of Creationtide.

Buildings and Energy

6. We will undertake to calculate and report annually on our church's carbon footprint using the [Parish Return's Energy Footprinting Tool](#).
 - We will put in place an action plan striving to be a carbon net zero church by 2030, in line with the Church of England's climate ambition (using the Six Steps to Carbon Net Zero Church Toolkit).
 - We will use an offsetting website like Climate Stewards to calculate the cost of offsetting our annual emissions and commit to offsetting where appropriate, building up to 100% offsetting by 2030.
7. We will undertake an environmental and energy audit of the church premises and property, identify the most significant issues and impacts which should be addressed and make and implement plans and programmes to tackle them. We recognise that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts and that changes to buildings may need faculty permission, requiring consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee and external bodies to ensure historic buildings legislation requirements are met.
8. We will seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the electricity and gas used in church premises by:
 - Switching to "green" energy suppliers (renewably generated electricity and biogas) if appropriate
 - Using thermostats for temperature control
 - Fitting LED light bulbs
 - Improving insulation wherever practicable and appropriate
 - Turning off lights, appliances and computers when not in use
 - Investigating the range of options for replacement of the present heating system, including sustainable heating alternatives.
9. We will consider whether our church building is vulnerable to extreme weather from climate change and develop a climate resilience plan, e.g. upgrading rainwater goods to cope with intense rainfall, devising a flood plan.
10. We will avoid using water unnecessarily, install water meters where appropriate, check for leakages, fit water minimising systems to taps and cisterns wherever practicable.

Land and Nature

11. We will carry out regular assessments of our land and property for wildlife, and manage them to conserve biodiversity, working in partnership with local conservation and wildlife organisations where appropriate.

Community and global engagement

12. We will work with others in our local community to identify environmental issues which should be addressed in our area and help develop actions to tackle them, including working with local councillors and MP.

Lifestyle

13. We will encourage our staff and congregation to reduce unnecessary travel using online communication, as appropriate. We will encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport to reduce environmental impact, such as walking, cycling, use of public transport, car sharing, electric, hybrid, compressed natural gas or hydrogen vehicles.
14. We will explore and seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the food we serve. We will raise awareness among the congregation of the environmental impact of food and aim to help our community to enjoy healthy, seasonal food with a low environmental impact.
15. We will ensure that our church's money is being used ethically and our investments and bank account are divested from fossil fuels.
16. We will seek ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment by, wherever possible:
 - using email rather than sending hard copies
 - using recycled paper
 - reusing/repairing items
 - using low environmental impact cleaning materials
17. We will encourage individual members of our congregation to take actions in their personal lives to complement and supplement these actions of the church community.

Policy adopted by PCC on 15 July 2026.

Review date July 2027.