



Eco Champions Briefing: May 2021

Thank you for taking the time to read this update. These briefings will be sent approximately every other month, and aim to provide you with the latest information as you take action to protect God's creation.

If you are an Eco Champion, please do share these headlines with your church and/or deanery. If you have anything you'd like to include in the next briefing, [please email me](#).

NEWS

Bristol Diocese divests from fossil fuels

We have joined with 35 other Christian institutions and churches from 11 countries to commit to our investments being and remaining free of holdings in coal, oil and gas. Alongside the Diocese of Oxford, we are the first CofE diocese to announce our divestment from fossil fuels. [Read more.](#)



For information on how *your* church can publicly divest from fossil fuels, check out [this helpful guide from Operation Noah](#). Christian Climate Action has a divestment petition to the Church Commissioners [here](#).

College Green becomes greener!

Bristol Cathedral has teamed up with the Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation and Avon Wildlife Trust to 'rewild' college green, using crowdsourced funds following Greta Thunberg's visit last year. [Read more.](#)



EVENTS

Church Heating webinars

For most churches, heating will be by far the biggest part of the carbon footprint. Two webinars this month aim to guide you through tackling this:

1. **Choosing the best heating solution for your church.** Tuesday 18th May, 6-7pm - [register here](#)
2. **To replace or not to replace?** Tuesday 25th May, 6-7pm - [register here](#)



National Eco Church webinars

The Eco Church team at A Rocha are leading 4 workshops to guide churches through specific elements of the award scheme. Click on the links below to book your place:

1. [An introduction and overview of eco church - getting started](#) - Tuesday 22nd June, 1-2pm.
2. [Working towards an award and gaining momentum](#) - Tuesday 29th June, 1-2pm
3. [Working towards net zero carbon with Eco Church](#) - Tuesday 6th July, 1-2pm.
4. [Land](#) - Thursday 10th June, 4-5pm.



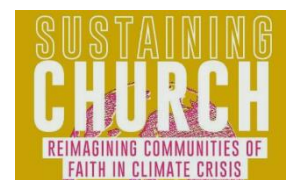
Bristol & Wiltshire churches lead national workshop, 9th June

Hear from churches across the Diocese, including the Draycot benefice, North Wilts Mission Area, and St Matthew's Kingsdown, as they share inspiring stories of how they're using their churchyards and church land to connect with nature and people. [Register here.](#)



Online conference: Sustaining Church, 21-22 July

This free online conference, led by Bristol's Hazelnut Community Farm Church in partnership with Trinity College and A Rocha, will explore issues the church will



face as a result of the climate emergency, as well as how to take action to mitigate them. [Find out more.](#)

OPPORTUNITIES

Rural Community Energy Fund

The [RCEF fund](#) is available to churches who can club together to bid for funds to install a renewable or low carbon energy facility. [Read this interesting example of how a group of churches in North Yorkshire were successful.](#) If you're interested in exploring this further, please contact Clare Fussell.

Trees for Climate grant

The Forest of Avon Trust can provide funding for all tree planting costs, materials and maintenance for the next five years. While the Trees for Climate grant is specifically for larger plots, the trust is keen to work with churches on smaller planting schemes. For more information, contact Director, [Alex Stone.](#)

Residential for young climate activists

The Resilience Project is looking for aspiring environmental change makers, aged 18-25, to join their free residential retreat in July that aims to build a stronger and more resilient UK youth climate movement. [Find out more.](#)

UN COP talks – church planning underway

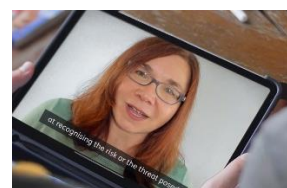
The UK will host the UN climate talks this November, and it's a key opportunity for churches to get involved in calling for greater ambition. While plans are still underway, some updates are:

- In the Diocese, we're hosting the Youth Christian Climate Network in July, who are walking from the G7 summit in Cornwall up to Glasgow for the COP summit. Watch this space for more information.
- The CofE Environment Programme, as part of *Make COP Count*, is organising an online event for MPs and Peers on 14 June at 16.00-16.45. Please contact your MP via email, letter or social media and encourage **them** to sign up [on Eventbrite using this link](#) (note: this event is only for MPs to attend).
- In November, we hope to team up with partners to project climate messages onto churches. If your church would like to be involved, and/or has a projector that could be used, please contact Clare F.

RESOURCES

Tearfund's 'Christianity & climate change' short film series

Tearfund has teamed up with climate scientist, and great Christian communicator, Dr Katherine Hayhoe to produce [a series of 9 films aimed for use by small groups.](#) I've watched about half of them so far, and can recommend them as accessible discussion starters for churches.



Climate Solutions 101 – a video series

Thanks to Mike Roberts from Bybrook benefice for recommending this set of 6 videos from Project Drawdown, all focusing on positive solutions to the climate crisis. [Watch them here.](#)



Hold a Climate Sunday before 5 September

[Climate Sunday](#) asks churches nationwide to **worship** (dedicate a Sunday to the environment), **commit** (to climate action) and **speak up** (with others). Check out the website for lots of materials.



Some inspiration...

[Read this month's roundup of your positive stories here.](#) Thanks for reading, and I pray for every blessing as you continue to work to protect God's earth.