

Note: amendments to the previously agreed text are highlighted in yellow.



Introduction

As Christ's disciples, we share a welcome duty of stewardship towards all of God's Creation. This is particularly expressed in the fifth Mark of Mission (see section 2, below). Our relationship with the natural environment is integral to our relationship with God. Good ecology is not an optional extra but a matter of justice, and so is a Gospel imperative. Care for the environment should therefore be a central component of our Christian practice.

Yet humanity's actions are causing dangerous global heating and catastrophic loss of biodiversity: we recognise that we are experiencing a climate and environmental emergency.

In response we must urgently reduce our carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2030; and promote biodiversity in every way we can.

This Policy is, therefore, framed in the context of the current climate crisis and ecological crisis. It sits within our Diocesan strategy of **Growing Church Bringing Hope** and is informed by our values of being generous, engaged and open with God and with one another.

Our mission and the environment

Our mission to share the good news of Our Lord Jesus Christ across the Diocese is summarised in the five Marks of Mission:

- i. To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom
- ii. To teach, baptize and nurture new believers
- iii. To respond to human need by loving service
- iv. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
- v. To strive to safeguard the integrity of Creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Environmental Policy Aims

In the light of the climate emergency and current energy crisis, we therefore commit ourselves to:

- a) Frequently emphasising God's love for Creation through our liturgy, theology and training.
- b) Understanding and minimising the impact of our activities, land and buildings on the environment (particularly the climate and biodiversity).
- c) Resourcing the Environment Working Group (EWG), which works with the Bishop's Advisor on the Environment to achieve these Policy Aims.
- d) Agreeing and implementing an Action Plan in line with the Church of England's *Routemap to Net Zero* to inform Diocesan Strategy, through the EWG and a new Net Zero Working Group (NZWG).
- e) Embedding our environmental commitment in all other diocesan policies and role descriptions.
- f) Working with and supporting our deanery and parish Eco Champions, to empower and encourage our parishes to engage with the Aims of this Policy and the Objectives of the EWG.
- g) Working with local and national partners to further our Policy Aims and Objectives.
- h) Engaging with local communities to minimise environmental impact, support vulnerable individuals, build resilience and adapt to the effects of climate change.
- i) Engaging with businesses and government at local and regional level to meet the IPCC's carbon reduction target.

Recognizing the value of the A Rocha Eco Church scheme, we will work towards achieving an Eco Diocese Gold Award, and encourage our parishes to work towards Eco Church accreditation.

Review

This policy was passed in 2019 and updated in November 2020 and November 2022. It will be reviewed every three years by the Diocesan Synod.

Environmental policy review schedule:

Policy reviewed	Date of Review:	Synod Co-chair	Synod Co-chair
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