Will your church care for God’s creation?

The Church of England is going green!

By 2030, we need to have reduced our carbon consumption to net-zero, as we play our part in tackling the climate emergency.

Chelmsford Diocese has pledged to go further than this, and become an Eco Diocese. That means we’re encouraging churches to see what they can do, to take creation care out into their communities.

This leaflet provides eight steps that every church can take to become more environmentally friendly. Most of these will not require significant time or money.

Our aim is that every church will be able to complete at least the first four steps by 2022. Many churches have already gone beyond this, and it is hoped that many more will as this decade progresses.

Be assured of our prayers and support as you tackle the vital task of caring for God’s creation.

+ Guli Chelmsford

+Evelyn Broadwell + Roger Crammer

Eight steps to an environmentally friendly church

ECO CHURCH
AN AFOCUS UK PROJECT

More detailed information is to be found in the following resources from Chelmsford Diocese:

The Fifth Mark of Mission, Your Church: Getting to Carbon Neutral and Beyond a brochure with substantial guidance on the eight points that are in this leaflet.

Chelmsford DAC Carbon Neutral Guidance Note a detailed document giving specific guidance on significant environmental-based changes to church buildings, particularly heating and solar energy.

Green Energy Guide a guide to green energy companies supplying churches.

Essex is Green is a collaboration between Essex County Council, The Essex Climate Action Commission and local Facebook groups www.facebook.com/greenessex

These are available at www.chelmsford.anglican.org/environment

For specific information or queries, please contact the Diocesan Environment Officer, Revd James Gilder - environment@chelmsford.anglican.org
Pray about it
Change starts with prayer. Pray for guidance and strength as you and your church start to discuss these important issues. Pray for discernment of the right way ahead, and for the determination to see it through.
You might like to think about including environmental issues in your church’s intercessions or prayer calendars. Your preachers and other leaders might help your congregation to think biblically about these issues.

Discuss it as a PCC
Change needs widespread support. In order to achieve results, your PCC will need to talk about what is possible and agree a timeframe for action. If appropriate you may want to nominate a small group to investigate and report back, before taking action.

Measure your energy use
Heating and electricity use are the main sources of carbon emissions from churches. Measuring and recording energy use allows churches to track how much energy they are using over time.
Your annual parish return has a section which allows you to calculate your church’s energy use. All you need are last year’s meter readings and a rough idea of the floor area of your church (this can be found on your quinquennial report).
If every church and church school in our diocese changed to a green energy supplier, we could save 5,000 tonnes of CO₂ being emitted, every year!

Change your energy supplier
Nowadays it is easy and cheap to get 100% green energy from the National Grid. Changing your electricity to a green supplier is the single most positive thing every church can do to help the environment, and it needn’t cost anything.

Become an Eco Church
The Eco Church awards scheme is a great way for churches, large and small, to engage in a range of environmental projects in their communities, from recycling to tree planting.
These projects can start really small, and you might find that your church is already doing more than you thought!
Registering for Eco Church is free and A Rocha, who run it, provides plenty of information and ideas.
Find out more and register your church - www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

Involve your community
Lots of people care about the environment and want to leave a better world for the future. The Eco Church awards help churches to engage with their local communities and schools, with ideas of how to include them in lots of fun things inside and outside the church.
You might have heard of Messy Church, but what about Muddy Church or Forest Church?
These are fantastic ways to engage children in caring for the environment.

Create a zero carbon plan
Churches that are really committed to becoming carbon neutral, will want to make a plan for how to reduce heat loss and even how to eventually change their buildings’ heating systems so they do not run on oil or gas.

Revisit your plans
It’s important to regularly review your hard work, and then to update your plans to go on to the next stage.