



## **Christ Church Abingdon Environmental Policy**

**March 2024**

The vision of Christ Church Abingdon is to seek to grow as disciples of Jesus by being a church family that prioritises being with Jesus, becoming like Jesus, and living for Jesus. Within that, one of our twelve values is: "Committed to Caring for Creation. We strive to live out the practical implications of 'The Earth is the Lord's and everything in it,' and act as responsible stewards of creation as a church and as individuals." This policy seeks to present a framework for the practical outworking of that vision and value.

### **Vision**

At Christ Church Abingdon, we aim to show our love of God and neighbour through seeking to understand more fully the world and our calling within it; caring for our buildings and land in environmentally friendly ways; transforming our activities to make them just and sustainable; and advocating for creation care and environmental justice in our local and global communities.

### **Mission**

As a church community, we will incorporate care for creation in our mission, worship, study, education, training, pastoral, administrative and other projects and programmes.

### **Actions**

#### **1. Worship, Teaching and Mission, Youth and Children's Work**

We will include the importance of care for creation in our worship, teaching and mission, and our work with children and young people.

#### **2. Parish Environmental Champion**

We will appoint a person as our Parish Environmental Representative/Champion to lead our programme and encourage them to bring relevant environmental issues and concerns forward to the PCC on a regular basis.

#### **3. Eco Church**

We will participate in the A Rocha Eco Church scheme, which delivers the principles outlined in this policy, and actively seek to progress through the awards.

#### **4. Energy Audit**

We will use our environmental and energy audit of the church premises and property to identify the most significant issues and impacts which should be addressed, and make and implement plans and programmes to tackle them, recognising that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts.

## **5. Reporting on Energy Use and Carbon Footprint**

We will undertake to calculate and report annually on our church's carbon footprint annually using the Parish Return 'Energy Footprint Tool'.

## **6. Tackling our Energy Use and Carbon Footprint**

We will put in place an action plan striving to be a carbon net zero church by 2030 in line with the national Church of England target. In seeking to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions we will:

- Commit to continuing with "green" energy suppliers (renewably generated electricity and biogas) if appropriate ([see here for approved 'green' suppliers](#))
- Take a fabric first approach:
  - Use thermostats for temperature control
  - Fit LED light bulbs
  - Improve insulation wherever practicable and appropriate
  - Turn off lights, appliances and computers when not in use
  - Consider replacing old, inefficient boilers where practicable and investigate renewable heating alternatives
  - Plan major and minor building works in the context of our net zero ambitions.

## **7. Events and Hospitality**

We will encourage all those running events, both members of Christ Church and members of the public, to follow the principles outlined in this policy. Particularly, to consider how they can be energy efficient, how they travel to and from Christ Church, the resources they use, and the food/hospitality that is offered.

## **8. Transport**

*Staff and volunteers:* for all Christ Church related activities, we will encourage our staff wherever possible to use forms of transport which have minimum or reduced environmental impact e.g. walking, cycling, using public transport, car-sharing, electric/hydrogen vehicles.

*Congregation:* as part of efforts to promote and encourage sustainable lifestyles, we will actively promote forms of transport which have minimum or reduced environmental impact, and will raise awareness of the significant impact of air travel on carbon emissions. In particular, we will encourage the congregation to consider alternative modes of transport to services, events and activities run by Christ Church.

## **9. Food**

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. We will explore and seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the food and drinks we serve, by actively encouraging a reduction in meat consumption, promoting and choosing more plant-based options, and considering the origin and ethical implications of food we purchase. We will commit to becoming a Fairtrade church.

## 10. Community and Global Engagement

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. We will advocate for climate justice globally as well as locally.

## 11. Mission Giving

As has been our church practice for the past 40 years, we will continue to support Mission Partners who are working to care for the environment or to support those who are adversely affected by climate change.

## 12. Resilience

We will consider how our church is vulnerable to extreme weather from climate change and develop a climate resilience plan. For example, upgrading rainwater goods to cope with intense rainfall, tree planting to provide shading in heatwaves, hedges for strong wind protection, having a flood plan.

This policy and programme will be reviewed every year in light of developments. Next review date – **March 2025.**

### Appendix: Useful Resources

Diocese of Oxford Environment Action website pages: [www.oxford.anglican.org/environment-and-social-justice](http://www.oxford.anglican.org/environment-and-social-justice)

Diocese of Oxford EcoHub: [www.oxford.anglican.org/xdb/ecohub](http://www.oxford.anglican.org/xdb/ecohub)

Church of England Environment Programme Webinars:  
[www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/webinars-getting-net-zero-carbon](http://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/webinars-getting-net-zero-carbon)

Church of England Net Zero Carbon Church Guidance:  
[www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church](http://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church)

Eco Church, A Rocha: [ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)

Greening the Lectionary: [www.greeningthelectionary.net](http://www.greeningthelectionary.net)

Pray and Fast for the Climate: [www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk](http://www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk)

Green Christian: [www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk)

Climate Stewards: [www.climatestewards.org](http://www.climatestewards.org)

Caring for God's Acre: [www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk)

Historic England (environmental performance and historic buildings):  
[historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/energy-efficiency-and-historic-buildings](http://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/energy-efficiency-and-historic-buildings)