



News - March 2019: Oakwood Church Environmental Policy

The Church Resources Team and Church Council agreed and pledged support to the Environmental Policy for Oakwood Church, presented on 25 February. The Policy was also endorsed at the Oakwood Church Annual Meeting on the 26 March. The Environmental Policy is now available to read in full on our website here www.oakwoodchurch.info/environment and on our notice board in Church.

Our Environmental Policy means as a church community, we will take environmental concerns into account in our mission, worship, study, education, training, pastoral, administrative and all other activities impacting on our environmental footprint and climate change. As Christians in our local church, we aim to take the practical steps necessary to realise the Fifth Mark of Mission, which is "*to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth*". We will give our support to address the issues of air and water pollution, waste management, ecosystem management, bio diversity protection, the protection of natural resources, wildlife and endangered species, and the preservation of these natural resources for future generations.

In practical terms it will mean we will take the following actions:

1. Bring relevant environmental issues and concerns forward to Church meetings on a regular basis.
2. We will include our concern for environmental sustainability in our worship and teaching.
3. 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.
4. We will work with REAP (Roundhay Environmental Action Project www.reap-leeds.org.uk) and others in our local community to identify environmental issues which should be addressed in our area and help develop actions to tackle them.

5. As the church's energy use is arguably its greatest environmental issue, we will seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the electricity and gas used in church premises by where possible:
 - Switching to "green" energy suppliers (renewably generated electricity and biogas), when we can.
 - Using additional thermostats for temperature control
 - Fitting more LED light bulbs
 - Improving insulation wherever practicable
 - Turning off lights, appliances and computers when not in use
6. We will encourage wherever possible to use forms of transport to work, meetings etc. which have minimum or reduced environmental impact – e.g. walk, cycle, public transport and car sharing.
7. 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, reducing the amount of printed paper in meetings and Church communications, including the number of Broadcast copies
 - using low environmental impact cleaning materials
 - avoiding the use of disposable plastic products where practical (e.g. plastic bags, cups, cutlery and straws)
8. We will avoid using water unnecessarily, install water meters where appropriate, check for leakages, fit water minimising systems to taps and cisterns wherever practicable.
9. We will assess our land and property to promote wildlife and plant biodiversity. We have installed a hedgehog nesting box (with a successful resident 😊), and are planning additional bird nesting boxes and aim to review what additional plants we can grow, particularly fruit bushes.
10. We will encourage individual members of our congregations to take actions in their personal lives to complement and supplement these actions of the church community. We have a regular Eco tips page in the Broadcast most months.
11. We will participate in the Rocha Eco Church programme, you can find out more details here <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>
12. We will communicate this policy to our congregation, church groups and all users of the church and seek their cooperation to follow these guidelines.

This policy and programme will be reviewed every year to assess progress.

Al Fraser Environmental Steward