

Environmental Policy for Oakwood Church

We affirm these elements of our faith:

- Through Christ, God has created an awesome and majestic cosmos to bring Him praise and glory. We are but one part of His created order.
- Jesus has redeemed the whole earth through His death and resurrection.
- We recognise that we have a special responsibility to care for the Earth so that human life and all God's creatures may be sustained in harmony.

Aim

As a 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".

Objective

As a church community, we will take environmental concerns into account in our mission, worship, study, education, training, pastoral, administrative and other projects and programmes.

Actions

1. We will appoint a person as our Environmental Officer/Champion to lead our programme and encourage him or her to bring relevant environmental issues and concerns forward to the PCC on a regular basis.
2. We will include our concern for 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, recognising that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts. (See partial lists below).
4. We will work with REAP¹ 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)
 - Using thermostats for temperature control
 - Fitting LED light bulbs

¹ Roundhay Environmental Action Group <https://www.reap-leeds.org.uk/>

- Improving insulation wherever practicable
 - Turning off lights, appliances and computers when not in use
 - Replacing old, inefficient boilers where practicable and investigating renewable heating alternatives
6. We will encourage our staff and congregation wherever possible to use forms of transport to work, meetings etc. which have minimum or reduced environmental impact – e.g. walk, cycle, public transport, car sharing electric/ hydrogen vehicles.
 7. We will seek ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment by, wherever possible:
 - serving locally produced food where possible
 - minimising the amount of red meat and dairy products served
 - using email rather than sending hard copies
 - using recycled paper
 - reusing/repairing or recycling items
 - 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 for wildlife and manage them to conserve biodiversity.
 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.
 11. We will participate in the Eco Church programme.
 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 three years in light of developments. Next review date Spring 2022.

Useful Resources

Eco Church, A Rocha <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

Diocese of Leeds Environment webpages www.leeds.anglican.org/environment

The Methodist Church position on Climate Change <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/climate-change/hope-in-gods-future/>

Shrinking the Footprint, Church Care www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint/about-shrinking-the-footprint

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland environment webpage <https://ctbi.org.uk/environment-links#ecochurch>

Pray and Fast for the Climate www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/

Green Christian www.greenchristian.org.uk/

Climate Stewards www.climatestewards.org/

Operation Noah <http://operationnoah.org/>

Caring for God's Acre, churchyard care www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/