



Wimborne Minster

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Background

We recognise and affirm that we are part of God's creation and that we have a special responsibility to care for the Earth so that all life may flourish.

We recognise that our use of resources and disposal of waste have effects throughout the world and have caused the current Environment and Climate Emergency, with a rise in global temperatures, loss of biodiversity and extinction of species. Action is needed to cut emissions, conserve and restore natural habitats and preserve ecosystems.

Aim

As a local church, we aim 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". In so doing we stand by our neighbours throughout the world and act responsibly with regard to the needs of future generations.

Objectives

To bring concern and care for the environment into the whole of our church life through:

- our worship and teaching,
- reducing our greenhouse gas and noxious emissions and reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2030,
- promoting an eco-friendly, sustainable lifestyle,
- minimising use of resources and waste,
- enhancing biodiversity on our own land and beyond,
- and working collaboratively with the local community and environmental organisations.

Actions

1) Worship and teaching

In our worship and teaching we will show our concern and care for the environment in the following ways:

- using liturgy and music in our services to enable us to celebrate God's creation,
- including environmental issues in our prayers on a regular basis,
- holding special services related to caring for God's earth at least annually,

- preaching and teaching care of God's creation in services and small groups,
- and including items relating to environmental issues in our publications.

2) Buildings and Energy

We will seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from the electricity and gas used in church premises by, for example:

- choosing appropriate electricity and gas suppliers,
- using lowest energy light bulbs,
- improving insulation of buildings,
- controlling the temperature of our buildings,
- investigating and, where appropriate, installing renewable heating alternatives,
- investigating and, where appropriate, installing systems to generate renewable energy,
- turning off heating, lighting, appliances and computers when not in use,
- and off-setting carbon emissions if necessary, using schemes approved by the Church of England.

We will measure our use of energy and calculate our carbon footprint to monitor progress towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

3) Land

We will manage our land to enhance biodiversity and to avoid environmental harm by:

- ensuring that there is a group of guardians for God's Acre so that it is continually enhanced to be a haven for wildlife, protecting the existing flora and fauna,
- disposing of waste through composting and recycling,
- avoiding the use of toxic chemicals,
- ensuring that advice is sought from experts* for any major changes to the use of the land.
- Ensuring that any refurbishment or construction does not adversely impact the wildlife, flora and especially veteran and ancient species such as the lichen and yew trees.

*The Dorset Wildlife Trust offers support by the Living Churchyards scheme

4) Community and Global Engagement

We will work with others to identify and take action on local, national and global environmental issues which need to be addressed, by:

- working with local organisations to raise awareness in the community and develop activities to bring about change,
- and encouraging our congregations to take action on national and global environmental issues through prayer, giving and campaigning.

5) Lifestyle

We will seek ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment by:

- reducing our dependence on paper and print for church services,
- reducing, reusing and recycling materials as much as possible,
- minimising use and wastage of water,
- following Local Organic Animal-friendly Fairtrade principles for hospitality and events,

- and encouraging a culture of good stewardship of Creation by individual members of our church community in every way possible through an exchange of ideas and tips.

6) Travel

We will encourage our staff and congregations wherever possible to use forms of transport to work, services or meetings which have reduced or minimal environmental impact. This will be done through:

- having enough bike racks to encourage cycling,
- arranging meetings and services at times and places that help to minimise car miles,
- holding meetings on-line when appropriate,
- having a car-sharing scheme which is made known amongst the congregation,
- and giving details of public transport (where it exists) when meetings are arranged away from Wimborne.

7) General

We will continue to work towards improving our EcoChurch status.

8) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually with reference to the relevant UN sustainable goals.