
Your Church and the Environment

In support of the Environment Policy of St Albans Diocese and the motion passed at the Diocesan Synod in March 2007, the following guidance is offered to parishes to:

- help you identify where and how your church buildings and churchyards can be made more environmentally-friendly
- show you how the parochial church council can become involved in 'greening' your building and its environs.
- encourage your PCC to make a commitment to be at the forefront in 'green' leadership.

Steps you can take:

1. Place this on your PCC agenda for discussion and if possible designate one or more members to become leaders for your environmental programme.
2. Plan how your church can achieve and monitor the five targets:
 - To have a mechanism in use to enable waste recycling. This should include paper, bottles, green waste, etc.
 - To achieve a 10% reduction in energy use.
 - Churches with churchyards to have a designated area managed for wildlife.
 - To initiate a car sharing scheme and to provide a secure location for bicycles.
 - To become a Fair Trade parish.

Guidance on how to achieve these targets is available in the Environment section of the Diocesan website (see below).

3. Carry out an audit of the churchyard, church building, its services, suppliers, and practices. There is a useful audit tool in Module 1 of the Eco-Congregation 'Free Resources' section (see below).
4. Did you complete the Church of England's National Energy Audit 'Shrinking the Footprint' in 2006? Check the progress that you are making.
5. Discuss the results with the PCC and formulate an action plan.
6. Consult the DAC and your church architect/surveyor about any proposed changes to the building or churchyard.
7. Ensure any contractors you use to achieve the above are competent and are themselves environmentally aware.

If you want to go the extra mile:

- Join the Living Churchyard scheme
- Enter for an Eco-Congregation award.

Resources

The following contacts are suggested:

- a Environment section of the diocesan website:
www.stalbans.anglican.org/Mission/Environment This keeps you up to date with environmental issues in the diocese and information on where to seek help. There are links to other useful websites and a book list.
- b Shrinking the Footprint - www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org The Church of England's national environmental campaign has useful information.
- c Eco-Congregation – www.ecocongregation.org. The 'Free Resources' section has a helpful and easily followed audit tool in Module 1 - "Churches' Environmental Check-up". Module 7 – "Greening the Cornerstone" specifically addresses the building and Module 9 – "Planting and Conserving Eden" addresses churchyards. Both provide helpful case studies as well as further resources and a directory of useful organisations
- d Christian Ecology Link - www.christian-ecology.org.uk "The Cool Church Toolkit" helps churches to calculate their annual contribution to climate change and has tips for efficient use of the building and a sample action plan. Find it in 'Ark in a Box' under Operation Noah; other items are in the Resource Section of the website.
- e Caring for God's Acre, is the Living Churchyard project in the Diocese of Hereford. Their website contains a lot of useful information on managing churchyards for the benefit of wildlife. www.caringforgodsacre.co.uk

Remember:

- Much that is suggested for secular buildings and for saving energy in our homes is relevant to church premises.
- Practices for our churches can be adopted into our lifestyles.
- Greening our churches requires an individual commitment as well as a corporate one.

Additional information and advice is available from the DAC's Environmental Adviser, who can be contacted via the DAC team:

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