

Environmental Policy for St Mary the Virgin, Embsay with Eastby

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 have a ministry and mission of environmental stewardship, both for our own property, through our congregation and in our community, which glorifies God and brings Christ's kingdom in our parish.

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 Parish Environment Officer 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 to calculate our church's carbon footprint annually and work to reduce it in line with the targets of the Church of England and Diocese of Leeds of a reduction to net zero carbon emissions by 2030.
4. We will consider how our church is vulnerable to extreme weather from climate change and develop a climate resilience plan.
5. 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. We recognise that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts and that changes to buildings may need faculty permission, requiring consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee and external bodies to ensure historic buildings legislation requirements are met.
6. 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:
 - Switching to "green" energy suppliers
 - Fitting LED light bulbs
 - Improving insulation wherever practicable and appropriate
 - Turning off lights, appliances and computers when not in use

- Replacing old, inefficient boilers where practicable and investigating renewable heating alternatives
- 7. 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.
- 8. 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, hybrid, compressed natural gas or hydrogen vehicles.
- 9. We will seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the food we serve. For example, using locally sourced and ethically farmed produce where possible, making vegetarian and vegan options available.
- 10. We will try to ensure that our church's money is being used ethically.
- 11. We will seek ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment by, wherever possible:
 - using email (where necessary) rather than sending hard copies
 - using recycled paper/ reusing/ repairing/ repurposing items
 - using low environmental impact cleaning materials.
- 12. We will take care not to waste water.
- 13. We will assess our land and property for wildlife and manage them appropriately to conserve biodiversity.
- 14. 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.
- 15. We will participate in the Eco Church programme.

February 2021

This policy and programme will be reviewed every three years in light of developments. Next review date – February 2024.