At St Mary’s we recognise God’s redemptive plan for all creation, made known in the person of Jesus, and seek to co-labour with him in the renewal of the earth.

Our Eco Action Group has recently been formed, following a Life Group studying Christianity and Climate Change. We used Tear Fund resources to examine what the bible says about our responsibility as stewards of the planet and seekers of justice for the poorest in society.

As Christians, we are called to follow Christ and to share the good news of the saving grace of Jesus, by his death and resurrection. He has given Christians the power of the Holy Spirit to live as ‘salt and light’ in the world.

St Mary’s church acknowledge God created the world for us to enjoy and to care for. We are deeply saddened that human activity has brought changes in our climate that have caused global injustices and inequality.

In relation to climate change, we seek to commit ourselves to:

1. Examining our lives individually and corporately seeking to live faithfully to God.
2. Developing an Action Plan aligned with the A Rocha Eco Church Framework to minimise our negative corporate impact and to help restoration where possible.
3. Encouraging our church family to make relevant lifestyle changes appropriate to their circumstances.
4. Encouraging action in our neighbourhoods, workplaces and other spheres of activity.
5. Lobbying and influencing local and national government to expedite positive climate action
6. Collaborating with Salisbury Diocese, corporate organisations, community groups and volunteer organisations to facilitate positive action
7. Contributing to the Church of England 2030 Carbon Neutral Target

# Next Steps – St Mary’s Church Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan has been developed by the St Mary’s Church Eco Action Group and encompasses the five sections of the A Rocha UK Eco Church project which aims to connect faith, nature and climate. The five sections are:

* Worship & Teaching
* Buildings
* Land
* Community & Global Engagement
* Lifestyle

The Eco Action Group will liaise with the Leadership Team and Beacon Cafe Manager to update the Climate Action Plan on a regular basis, and report updates to the PCC accordingly. The Eco Action Group will actively pursue suitable funding opportunities to progress the Action Plan and oversee a separate, self-generated Eco budget.

St Mary’s Church Climate Action Plan

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Start** | **Review** | **RAG status** | **Progress** |
| Ensure climate & ecological action is embedded within our worship and teaching | Apr-22 | July-23 |  | * Climate Sunday being planned
* Harvest Sunday will be correlated with climate change
* Bitesize climate action messages regularly included in Sunday services
* Eco tips included in welcome sheet
* Information regarding solar PV planning application included within welcome sheet
 |
| Minimise, reuse or recycle all on-site waste | Apr-22 | June-23 |  | * Beacon cafe food waste collected separately
* Dry recycling collected separately
* Soft plastics separated for recycling
* Any food passing its ‘best before’ date offered to volunteers
* Researching new recycling bins for kitchen area
* New recycling bins installed in kitchen area
 |
| Enhance church grounds to promote wildlife and biodiversity | Apr-22 | Sep-23 |  | * Grounds ‘eco-group established
* Bat boxes to be installed
* Bug ‘hotel’ installed
* Log piles established
* Bird boxes installed
* Contact established with Dorset Wildlife Trust
* Wildflower areas established
* New mowing regime and exclusion areas established
* Grass cuttings composted on site
* Butterfly survey undertaken
* Bird survey undertaken
* Funding bid submitted to Wessex Water Community Fund
* New water butts installed for rainwater harvesting
* ‘New Zealand’ style composting system installed
* Prepared and seeded large area previously used for bonfires
 |
| Explore & consider energy reduction initiatives for church buildings | Apr-22 | Sep-23 |  | * Staff & volunteers continually signposted to switch off electrical equipment not in use
* Investigate additional signage to reiterate switch offs
* Partial timers/thermostats in place
* Awaiting insulation costs for church ceiling
* Funding bid submitted to Wessex Water Community Fund
* Energy footprint calculated for Church building
* Hippo bags installed in toilets
* Low Carbon Dorset (LCD) assessment undertaken
* PCC endorsed key recommendations within LCD report
* Engaging with Bat Conservation Trust regarding survey of roof space
* Additional LED lighting to be installed in Church building
* Bat survey for roof space scheduled – 3rd June
* Bat survey undertaken
* Positive dialogue with external funding providers
* Quotations received to replace boilers with ASHP/Hybrid system
* Quotations received for roof insulation
* Meeting scheduled (December) with external funding provider
 |
| Explore and consider energy generation initiatives | Apr-22 | Sep-23 |  | * Liaising with Salisbury Diocese regarding eco initiatives
* Funding bid submitted to Wessex Water Community Fund
* 2 day assessment planned with Low Carbon Dorset
* LCD assessment undertaken
* PCC endorsed key recommendations within LCD report

Exploring solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Rector and finance lead* Engaging with local PV suppliers for on site feasibility/estimates
* Quotations received for solar PV to church and hall roofs
* Positive dialogue with external funding providers
* Planning application submitted for solar PV
* Meeting scheduled (December) with external funding provider
 |
| Ensure a sustainability/climate impact assessment is undertaken on all procured goods & services | Apr-22 | July-23 |  | * Fair trade products purchased for Beacon Cafe.
* Beacon cafe achieved plastic free status
* Local suppliers used whenever possible
* Consideration given to the use of recycled products
 |
| Work with partners to facilitate positive climate action | Apr-22 | Sep-23 |  | * Utilisation of A Rocha UK Eco Church project
* Contact to be established with Dorset Wildlife Trust
* Contact established with Dorset Wildlife Trust – May 22
* Liaising with Salisbury Diocese regarding eco initiatives
* Community larder established with Ferndown Community Support Group
* Working with Hope Church regarding food share of non- perishable goods
* Ongoing dialogue with LCD
 |
| Encourage the church family to facilitate positive climate action | Apr-22 | Sep-23 |  | * Personal Carbon Footprint initiative being developed
* Further promotion of lift share, walking & cycling
* Climate Emergency Statement & Action Plan prominently displayed on website to engage and raise awareness
* Eco tips included in welcome sheet
* Environmental lifestyle event planned
 |
| Engage with local & national government to facilitate positive climate action | Apr-22 | June-23 |  | * Eco Action Group to contact local MP’s
* Eco Action Group to contact local council representatives
* Written to MP for Christchurch East – 10th March 22
 |
| Engage with the wider community to facilitate positive climate action | Apr-22 | Sep-23 |  | * Swishing (clothes swap) event planned – May 22
* Community larder established with Ferndown Community Support Group
* Climate Emergency Statement & Action Plan prominently displayed on website to engage and raise awareness
* Swishing event undertaken – May 22
* Second Swishing event planned for October 22
* Second Swishing event undertaken
* Third Swishing event planned – May 23
* Third Swishing event undertaken
* Radio Solent interview undertaken – May 23
* Fourth Swishing event planned – Oct 23
* Fourth Swishing event undertaken
* Eco event idea endorsed by PCC – Nov 23
 |
| Ensure a sustainability/climate impact assessment is undertaken for all events on church premises | Apr-22 | July-23 |  | * Initially ‘light touch’ approach but will develop matrix/assessment in conjunction with Leadership Team/Beacon Manager
* Traditional bonfire night event changed to community worship and use of small fire pits
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