

The Diocese of
Southwark



Becoming an Eco-Deanery

Walking | Welcoming | Growing

There are many useful resources at the Diocesan Website:

<https://southwark.anglican.org/mission-ministry/faith-in-action/justice-peace-and-integrity-of-creation/environment/>

For further advice or information, please contact us:

environment@southwark.anglican.org

The Diocesan Environment Officer and environmental advisors for the Diocese are keen to give talks and join in workshops and discussions - for churches and deaneries and church-community events - so do get in touch to make a date.

Diocesan Environment contacts:

Area Environment Advisers:

Croydon: Revd Dr Timothy Astin tim.astin@virginmedia.com

Kingston: Ian Christie, Senior lecturer in sustainable development, Centre for Environment and Sustainability, University of Surrey home@christies.gn.apc.org

Woolwich: Revd Dr Catherine Shelley revdrcath@gmail.com

Why become an Eco Deanery?

- Floods, wildfires and hurricanes devastate God's planet because of human-caused global heating. Drought in our link Diocese of Zimbabwe has caused great suffering, and the last decade was the warmest on record. Climate damage requires a response.
- God created the earth and all that is in it; we are to help care for that creation. The 5th mark of mission recognises this Biblical imperative across the Anglican Communion.
- In February 2020, General Synod passed a motion recognising the climate emergency, calling on all parts of the Church to reduce their emissions year-on-year, aiming for a target of net zero by 2030 at the latest, and requiring progress to be regularly reviewed. Members voted in favour of this revised date, encouraging all parts of the Church of England to take action and ramp-up efforts to reduce emissions.
- Southwark Diocese, via Diocesan Synod, has committed to becoming an Eco Diocese and working towards the A Rocha Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. That involves parishes too.

What does it mean to be an Eco Deanery?

Being an Eco Deanery means committing to collective action, championing and supporting environmental endeavours at all levels.

The aim is to foster an environmental mindset throughout the Deanery, so that it becomes a natural reflex to consider the environmental impact of all actions we take. This can't be achieved by one person ticking off boxes - it needs to be a shift in the way we think as a community. Engaging with others and normalising conversation about nurturing God's creation should be top priorities.

How can we become an Eco Deanery?

Ideas for Deanery Actions

1. Recruit Eco Champions

Recruit a Deanery Environment Champion to take the lead on all things environmental. This could be one person or a small team of Parish Reps who share the role.

Southwark Diocese is keen to support Eco Reps/Champions in Deaneries and Parishes, and can provide informal training and networking opportunities, information and resources.

Deaneries are an ideal way to share ideas and pool resources. Many churches are already pursuing a huge range of eco initiatives. If we learn from each other and work together, we can make swifter, more impactful progress.

2. Create collective targets

Choose a clear goal with a realistic deadline and ask churches to work together to fulfil a deanery-wide pledge. Options could include:

- Every church in the Deanery to hold a [Climate Sunday](#) before 5th September 2021.
- Every church in the Deanery to do the [Eco Church](#) survey by the end of 2021.
- Every church in the Deanery to switch to green energy by the end of 2022.
- Every church in the Deanery to divest from fossil fuels by the end of 2022.
- Every church in the Deanery to switch to ethical banking by the end of 2022.
- Every church in the Deanery to achieve Bronze Eco Church by the end of 2023 and those who already have a Bronze award to aim for Silver.

Alternatively select one challenge for each category of the Eco Church survey: Worship & Teaching; Buildings; Land; Community & Global Engagement; Lifestyle.

Consider running an information-sharing event to make it as easy as possible for every church to participate and achieve the chosen goal - only one person need do the research for every church to benefit, and help is available from Trinity House and your Area Reps.

3. Share Information

- Create channels of communication between your Eco Reps; for example, use social media to create an online information-sharing hub, start a regular email list to share ideas, or host a monthly coffee morning in person or on zoom.
- Share information with congregations - e.g. most churches have news sheet or an e-bulletin or parish magazine. All the churches in the deanery could feature the same weekly 'Eco Tip' or 'Environment Pledge'. A booklet of '52 Eco Actions' is available to download at the Southwark environment page.
- Southwark Diocese website regularly lists upcoming environmental events on the [blog pages](#) and reports eco stories in [The Bridge](#) online, any of which could be shared among churches locally.
- Southwark Diocese also celebrates environmental action using the hashtag #EcoSouthwark.

4. Engage with the local community

- Find out what local groups are doing on the environment and see whether members of congregations in the deanery could connect with and support them, e.g.
 - Transition Towns
 - School Eco Teams or clubs
 - Repair workshops
 - 'Friends Of' the local common or park
 - Community Gardens and Nature Reserves
 - Craftivist groups
 - Litter Pickers
 - Women's Institute.

There may be environmental activities happening all around that congregations could support without having to initiate them from scratch.

Engage as a group with local politicians - whether MPs or Local Councillors - to ask them to take action on the environment. *Hope for the Future* offers bespoke support to faith groups wanting to engage with MPs, and have a fantastic action pack available online: <http://www.hftf.org.uk/church-outreach>

5. Get young people involved

Climate justice and social justice are intertwined, and the church is in danger of losing young people over climate inaction. In 2020, [We Are Tearfund](#) and *Youthscape* surveyed 630 young Christians from the UK, and discovered that while 9 out of 10 young people are concerned about the climate crisis, only 1 out of 10 think their churches are doing enough about it.

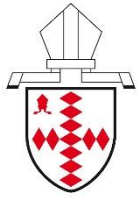
- Invite members of your youth group to become Junior Eco Champions.
- Collaborate with local youth groups like the Guides, Scout or the [Young Christian Climate Network](#).

6. Run Environmental Events

- Arrange an expert to speak on the environment and invite the whole deanery; charities such as Tearfund, Christian Aid and A Rocha can provide speakers, or see the first page for environment contacts within the Diocese.
- Host a [Fair Energy Switch Day](#), an initiative aimed at combatting both carbon emissions and fuel poverty while fundraising for your church.
- Get people together. For instance:
 - Run an eco congregation gathering featuring different activities (e.g. gardening activities; eco crafting such as making bird feeders or beeswax food wraps or upcycling; discussion of waste & recycling; an informative talk; composing prayers or personal eco pledges; singing about Creation; minibeast hunt; worship; sharing vegan food; sharing hopes and fears about the environment)

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- Hold a social evening featuring a climate quiz and mix up the teams so people from different churches get to know each other.
 - Hold a bring-and-share vegetarian or vegan meal, with ‘carbon footprint’ calculator stalls (on laptops) or recipe swaps to promote conversation.
 - Have a film screening (e.g. an Attenborough film on iPlayer such as *Climate Change The Facts*, or *Baked Alaska* at ridinglights.org) followed by discussion.
 - Organise a seed-swap environment event for the church garden groups and gardeners in your congregations; host a speaker from a wildlife charity to advise on promoting biodiversity.
 - Organise a litter pick.
 - Organise a trip to a local recycling plant.
 - Organise a Fairtrade event, selling Fairtrade goods and/or running a discussion about ethical consumption.
 - Hold an ideas-sharing event, with a couple of representatives from each parish or church to swap suggestions, share what they’ve been doing and form a moral support network.
- Run a family event, bringing together families from different churches to engage with nature. E.g. Eco-themed Messy Church, or a nature walk, or building a bug hotel, a gardening project and vegetarian picnic; a minibeast hunt.
 - Get churches to collaborate on running an Eco Fair, e.g. each church could commit to running two stalls. These could be information stalls rather than money-making e.g. representatives from green energy companies or the local council might be willing to take part; individuals might volunteer to run carbon calculator stalls, or repair/upcycling stalls, Fairtrade stalls, a craft stall, clothes swap or bring & buy stall (with the mantra refuse/reduce/reuse/recycle).

Contact environment@southwark.anglican.org for support, advice and suggestions, or visit the [Environment](#) page of the Diocesan website for useful links and resources.



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Southwark Diocese, via Diocesan Synod, has committed to becoming an Eco Diocese and achieving the Bronze Award by 2025.

Can I encourage you to use this booklet as a means to help you discern the calling and the direction of your local church? It will inevitably raise questions. I hope that the JPIC Team can continue to accompany you in your journey. Do be in touch with us if we can help further.

Nicola Thomas
Director of JPIC

Creator God,
the heavens declare your glory,
and the earth your generosity.
Forgive our exploitation of your gracious provision.
Through your bountiful goodness guide our efforts
to be better stewards of your creation.

Amen



Loving God
Walking with Jesus
Led by the Spirit

Luke 24:13-35