

PCC of Kings Worthy Creation Care Strategy



DATE OF STRATEGY: Nov 2025

date of next review: by 31 Dec 2026

1. Background

'Creation Care' refers to the fifth mark of mission within the Anglican Communion¹, which states that Christians should *"strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth,"* essentially calling for responsible stewardship of the natural environment and addressing environmental concerns as a part of their faith practice.

As voted by General Synod in 2022, the Church of England aims to be carbon net zero by 2030². The Church Commissioners have set aside £190m between 2023-2031 towards actions that support a pragmatic roadmap to net zero. Some of the funding will be made available to parish churches who are actively engaging in reducing their carbon footprint.

St Mary's has registered with A Rocha UK's Eco Church programme which promotes Creation Care activities under five categories: Worship & Teaching, Buildings & Energy, Land & nature, Community & Global, and Lifestyle.

Our environmental work is led and co-ordinated by an Eco Church and Environment Hub (the Eco Hub), which reports to the PCC and to the Rector. Its work is publicised through monthly Eco Tips and other updates distributed by social media and the weekly newsletter to the congregation, and wider local community through the Parish Magazine.

2. Affirmation

We affirm these elements of our faith:

- The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it
- God has created an awesome and majestic universe 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 and on his return will consummate a renewed heaven and earth.
- As those made in God's image, we have a special responsibility to steward and care for the earth so that human life and all God's creatures may be sustained and flourish in harmony. As members of Christ's kingdom, we have a special responsibility to participate in his renewing of the earth through our own actions.

3. Aim:

¹ <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx>

² The Church of England defines Net Zero Carbon as the reduction as far as possible of all in-scope carbon emissions (see below) and the removal of an equivalent amount of carbon from the remaining in-scope emissions by the use of accredited offsetting schemes. In-scope by 2030: building emissions from oil and gas heating; generation emissions from electricity used to run buildings; business travel. In-scope after 2030: purchasing; waste; water; contractors; IT; air conditioning gases. Not in-scope but aim to missional influence: commuting; congregational travel; staff and clergy; family lifestyles; church member's emissions.

As a local parish church, we aim to take the practical and pragmatic steps necessary to appropriately support the fifth Mark of Mission in our context reaching out to community, country and where possible globally.

We aim to take environmental concerns into account in all aspects of our church life, including our worship, teaching, mission, pastoral, youth and children's work, training, maintenance, administration, and charitable giving as outlined in the Creation Care commitments below.

4. Our Creation Care commitments:

a. Worship, teaching & mission, youth & children's work

We will include the importance of care for creation in our worship, teaching, prayers and mission, and as part of our work with children and young people.

b. Parish Environmental Champions

All of the members of the Eco Hub are considered to be St Mary's Environmental Champions, involved in leading our programme of work and encouraging other members of the congregation. The PCC receives regular updates on the work of the Hub, and on relevant environmental issues and concerns.

c. Eco Church

St Mary's participates in the A Rocha UK Eco Church award scheme in which we assess our Creation Care activities against the five categories (see section 1). We have previously achieved bronze status, and are currently working through the revised assessment criteria that were introduced in late 2024, seeking to achieve Silver status by early 2026 and to set out a plan beyond that to identify what further steps would be necessary to target the Gold Award.

d. Measuring our carbon footprint

We will complete the Church of England's Energy Footprint Tool on an annual basis, providing information on the energy use within our premises and reporting this to the Diocese.

We will also complete the Climate Stewards 360 carbon tool on an annual basis providing information on the total carbon footprint of our church buildings and activities.

e. Reducing our carbon impact (buildings & energy)

We will take all reasonable steps to reduce the carbon impact of our energy use by:

- Utilising green electricity and gas tariffs
- Using thermostats and timers for temperature control, and remote heating control systems through Apps
- Having LED lighting where practicable
- Turning off lights, appliances and computers when not in use

We will support the decarbonisation of our church buildings through identifying the most significant issues and impacts and addressing them as opportunities arise to do so, and funds are made available. We will make and implement pragmatic plans to evaluate and address opportunities, recognising that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts, and that time will be required to raise necessary funds and to secure any necessary approvals.

Over the next five years this will include seeking opportunities to improve insulation, install solar panels on the church roof, replacing gas heating (at the end of its useful life) with electric, and the adoption of other measures within the design and future operation of St Mary's Church to improve its environmental performance.

We will pursue the installation of solar panels on the roof of St Mary's Chapel, and investigate ways in which the renewable electricity that is generated can be used to further reduce carbon footprint, for example through reducing gas heating and other such means as they become known.

We will review our carbon footprint and subject to specific approval by the PCC at a later date consider making a payment to offset our residual carbon emissions through suitable local or global carbon offsetting programmes, where this can be funded through available funds.

f. Transport

We will encourage our staff and congregation wherever practicable to use forms of transport to work, meetings etc. which have minimum or reduced environmental impact – e.g. walk, cycle, public transport, car sharing, hybrid/electric/ hydrogen vehicles. At the same time we fully recognise and appreciate that for some this may not be an option due to mobility or other reasons.

g. Food

We will encourage those preparing food for church activities to, where practicable:

- Serve fairtrade tea and coffee,
- Provide seasonal food prepared using local produce
- Encourage vegetarian and vegan food options, without incurring unnecessary waste or cost by offering these options which may be for very few individuals or even none at all.

h. Recycling and unnecessary waste

We recognise that the use of primary natural resources and carbon can be greatest in the initial production of goods and materials. Without any diminution to the quality and range solutions that the church needs, we will seek to avoid the unnecessary purchase and use of new goods and materials.

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

- Using email rather than sending hard copies
- Using recycled/green verified printer paper for internal communications
- Reusing/ repairing items to extend their usability, providing this is cost effective
- Minimising the use of single-use plastic, and eliminating single use plastic straws, plates, cups and cutlery
- Using low environmental impact cleaning materials
- Supporting local initiatives including the Kings Worthy Community Shed, the Winchester Repair Café, Emmaus and other organisations that seek to recycle and reuse items

We will seek to ensure that waste that can be recycled is separated from that which cannot, and provide appropriate bins and signage to encourage this. We will compost churchyard green waste.

i. Water use

We will avoid using water unnecessarily, regularly check for leaks, and fit water minimising systems to taps and toilet cisterns wherever practicable.

We will explore the potential for introducing water butts at St Mary's Church, St Mary's Chapel and at the Verger's Cottage.

j. Outdoor spaces

We will manage the churchyard and the grounds at the Chapel for benefit of both people and nature.

We will leave parts of the grounds unmown in summer (to promote wildflowers and insects, etc) whilst allowing access to graves and keeping the more public parts presentable. We will provide both natural and manmade homes and food for wildlife. We will regularly carry out surveys of our outdoor spaces to measure their benefit for nature.

We will encourage the use and enjoyment of our outdoor spaces by the congregation and the wider community, including utilising the space for Forest Church and other activities.

k. Individual lifestyles

We will encourage our congregation to embrace Creation Care into their daily lives by providing information and advice on living lightly on the earth and in harmony with nature. Currently information is shared in the form of Eco Tips and articles in newsletters, the Parish Magazine, on social media, and shared in services.

We will encourage our congregation to measure their own carbon footprint using the [WWF Footprint Calculator](#) or other similar calculators.

l. Community outreach

We will work with other organisations and individuals in our local communities, both church and non-church to identify environmental issues which should be addressed in our area and help develop actions to tackle them.

We will use initiatives such as Forest Church to promote Creation Care to families within the congregation and wider community.

We will attend local church and other events to share information and exchange ideas on environmental issues and encourage wider adoption of measures to achieve environmental objectives within our communities. We will provide opportunities to discuss environmental issues including climate change, in the context of our Christian beliefs.

We will support local environmental activities such as litter picking, planting and wildlife conservation activities.

m. Charitable giving

Subject to specific PCC approval, following a recommendation from the Blessing Others Hub, we offer financial support to local environmental charities, or to support those globally who are adversely affected by climate change or charities working to

address climate change impacts. We will also highlight our church's charitable giving work through the Blessing Others Hub as a potential source of funding to local environmental groups and organisations working to care for the environment

o. Campaigning

We recognise our role as environmental guardians.

As Environmental Champions the Eco hub will advocate for social and environmental justice, bringing current local, national and global campaigns to the attention of the church community for individuals to support if they wish to.

With the prior written agreement of the PCC and the Rector, the Eco Hub may also lead work on behalf of St Mary's to engage in campaigns and lobbying activities to promote environmental action including in response to the climate and nature crises we face, and to tackle local and global inequalities.

This Strategy was approved at the PCC at its meeting on 24 Nov 2025.