

From: [Creation Care Team](#)
To: ctcinfohub@gmail.com
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Seasons

Welcome to the Winter Edition of Seasons. I have recently been appointed to the role of Creation Care Engagement Officer for the Diocese of Exeter. I am excited to be working across the Diocese to promote biodiversity and reduce our impact on the environment. The key aims for the Creation Care Team for 2024 are to promote the Energy Footprint Tool, Energy Audits and the Eco Church award scheme.

Winter can be a time of hibernation for many and with the wild and stormy weather we have had it is sometimes hard to be motivated to spend time out in nature! Although the days are short and getting outside can be dictated by the weather lets take to time to plan for year ahead.

Use the long dark evenings to dream and plan about how we can improve our churches and communities to encourage nature recovery and reduce our impact on both our immediate environment and the climate we all share.

Sarah Charker - Creation Care Engagement Officer



What are we up to?



Church Demonstrators Project

This project is looking for a handful of churches across the country who have substantial decarbonisation projects underway. By underway we mean that they've discussed it with the DAC and identified some appropriate measures, they've got some quotes and have started to fundraise. We asked churches to submit an Expression of Interest, because we have to send a shortlist to the Church Buildings Council who will then decide which churches will be invited to take part.

We've had three expressions of interest for projects which are part of a whole-church net zero journey. These churches are also fully engaged with their communities. One is for a large urban church to install air source heat pumps, another is a historic listed church with a substantial lottery-funded reordering project for pew or infrared heating and solar PV. Another is a church plant, currently with no heating at all looking to start out heading in the right direction. We won't know which projects are going to be selected for several months, but we'll keep you updated when we do.



Could your church achieve an Eco Church award?

We are encouraging **every** church to sign up to the Eco Church scheme - increasing engagement with the scheme is a key goal of ours for 2024. The Eco

Church questionnaire covers 5 areas of church life, Worship & Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community & Global Engagement and Lifestyle.

Often when I speak to people about Eco Church the immediate response is along the lines of 'is that to do with fitting solar panels?'. Although installing renewables is great for those who can, there is much more to the award and there are many easy changes and small wins that you and your church will be able to do quickly and easily to improve your environmental credentials.

Registering and adding your church is quick and easy and you will notice on filling out the survey how achievable many of the questions are. You may already be doing more than you realise – [click here](#) to register.

Are you wondering what's happened to the Energy Footprint Tool this year?

It is opening late because there have been some much needed improvements to the online form. This year the Energy Footprint Tool will be open from February to July for churches to submit their 2023 energy consumption data.

It is so important to do this because it opens up access to more grants and support for your church. The Church of England has committed to reduce our carbon footprint as a clear act of caring for creation. We have to be able to measure this, and the EFT is our tool for measuring.

The changes have been designed to make it easier to use and more effective. But you will still need energy bills from 2022, and info on any travel expenses paid for by your PCC.

Look out for more news and tips when the EFT opens, we'll be running a webinar to explain how to fill it in. If you have any questions in the meantime, please do get in touch.



Is Net Zero technically possible in your church?

In 2023, 80 churches took up the offer of a subsidised energy audit, the reports show that net zero is technically possible in these buildings. Unless a building is used all week long, the recommendation is to heat the people with a combination of different types of electric heating. This means that the heating can be switched on just when it is needed and not hours before to warm up the whole space.

The audits will continue to be delivered by Inspired Efficiency, and include a simple timeline of measures to help PCCs plan ahead and start fundraising. The audits are the first step in considering different low carbon heating systems in your building, they do not replace professional advice to design a system. They enable your PCC to access impartial advice on which measures are most appropriate in your church so that you can then make an informed decision.

The Church of England has announced it will provide free audits to 600 churches across the country – don't worry if you're to be offered a free audit we'll let you know. But we strongly encourage any churches interested in decarbonising their heating to register interest for an audit.

More information about our subsidised audit programme, and how to register your interest, can be found here:

<https://exeter.anglican.org/environment/church-energy-audits/>



Give 2 Go Green Update

We've learnt a lot from taking part in the pilot phase of G2GG with the Diocese of Leeds. Despite very short timescales we had 18 brilliant applications in November and have been able to offer funding to all the projects that applied. Currently, representatives from the churches are busy setting up their Give A Little accounts and preparing their fundraising campaigns.

They'll need to do a 6-week targeted campaign, starting in Feb, asking their congregations and wider communities to raise 50% of their project costs through digital giving. That's online donations via a website or through their giving machines. Then they'll get a match funded grant, and will have 12 months to complete the project.

We're working closely with our Church Buildings Officers and the DAC to make sure any necessary permissions are underway. The applications we've received included double and secondary glazing, LED lighting, window repairs, suspended ceiling insulation in a hall, pew heaters, heating controls, pipe insulation and more. We even had a couple of applications for solar PV on where energy efficiency improvements have already been made.

Dr Kerry Gilbert, Churchwarden at St Mary and All Saints in Plymstock commented:

"We had our church energy audit in July and realised there were things we could do that would make a difference! We had already been looking at updating our lighting and were inspired by the more climate-friendly and effective ways the energy advisor

suggested to heat the people in our cold and drafty church. When the Give to Go Green Campaign was announced we were excited to have the opportunity to kick start our audit-inspired Net-Zero Action plan, we're hoping that upgrading and greening our lighting and heating will enthuse the Parish to strive towards being responsible stewards of God's creation here in Plymstock and Hooe."

Fingers crossed we'll be selected to take part in the second round of G2GG. If that happens we expect to be able to open applications in the Spring. If you think this might be for you, take a look at the application docs on our website and feel free to get in touch with Sophie.

[http://Net Zero Grants - Give 2 Go Green - Diocese of Exeter \(anglican.org\)](http://Net Zero Grants - Give 2 Go Green - Diocese of Exeter (anglican.org))

What's coming up?



Exeter Cathedral | 28th April | 12.30 - 3.15pm

An event to celebrate the Eco Church scheme in Devon will include teaching from Dave Bookless, A Rocha's Director of Theology, as well as inspiring stories from churches taking environmental action around the Devon. It will include:

- Presentation of Eco Church awards by Acting Bishop of Exeter
- Marketplace with stalls and displays from Environmental Organisations
- Eco-Church Panel Discussion
- Update on Creation Care and Net Zero work across the Diocese
- Guidance and Advice about how to get started as an Eco-Church

Come along to be refreshed and resourced in your journey towards a more environmentally friendly church.

Book your ticket for this free event using this QR code or click the link below:

[Book Here - Eco Church Celebration](#)



Stories



State of Nature Report 2023: How Churchyards can play a leading role in a Nature Recovery Programme.

Introduction

September 2023 saw the publication of the 4th State of Nature (SON) Report. The report provides the most comprehensive overview ever of species trends across the UK. It lays bare the stark fact that nature is still seriously declining across the UK, a country that is already one of the most nature-depleted in the world.

The data show that since 1970 UK species have declined by about 19% on average, and nearly 1 in 6 species (16.1%) are now threatened with extinction. This is a timely reminder, if we needed it, that the nature crisis isn't restricted to far-off places like the Amazon or Great Barrier Reef. It is right here, on our doorstep. We are losing familiar wildlife that we cherish including the hazel dormouse and skylark.

SON goes beyond the bare statistics to assess the evidence behind these

differences it also identifies the actions that are needed to recover nature. To quote the report, ***“We have never had a better understanding of the State of Nature and what is needed to fix it.”***

To read the full report click on the link https://bit.ly/State_of_Nature_Report.



Congratulations to the below churches who have achieved a new Eco Church award since our last newsletter:

- Holy Cross Church, Axminster – Bronze
- St Basils Church, Tedburn St Mary – Bronze
- St Micheals Church, Shute - Bronze
- St Michael and All Angels Church, Alphington – Bronze
- St Peter's Church, Uplowman - Bronze

And well done to the churches below who have registered with the scheme and begun their Eco Church journey:

- All Saints' Church, Thurlestone with Buckland and Bantham
 - St Luke's Church, Newton Poppleford
 - St Andrew's Church, Chardstock
 - St James' Church, Jacobstowe
 - St Simon's Church, Plymouth
 - Holy Cross Church, Axminster
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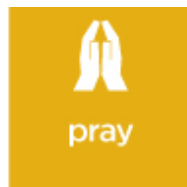
Let's share



Residential Volunteers The Shallowford Trust: Widecombe in the Moor

For more information visit the [website](#) and follow this [link](#) for detailed information on how to apply.

Upcoming National Campaigns



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