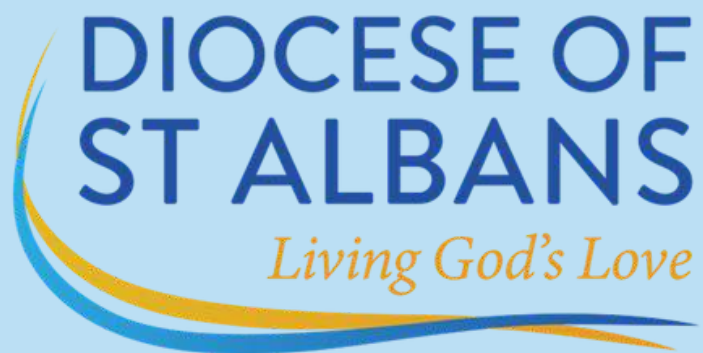




LIVING LIGHTLY

A brief guide for parishes on
how to get started



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LIVING LIGHTLY

INTRODUCTION

Funding is available to match capital either already raised or planned for an environment project which falls into one of the following categories:

Resource Use
Churchyard
Faith and Outreach
Practical

You will find ideas and suggested contacts and websites in these four categories in the following pages, and full details of how to apply in the inside back-page.



CATEGORY 1: RESOURCE USE

“For the Church of the 21st century, good ecology is not an optional extra but a matter of justice. It is therefore central to what it means to be a Christian”

Dr Rowan Williams



A key objective for every parish is to improve its management of resources, aiming to reduce its carbon footprint to net zero in line with the Church of England’s 2030 target and to benefit from possible cost savings.

This sends a strong message that as Christians we understand that the resources of the Earth are a gift from God and that living as sustainably as possible is part of our Christian witness.



CATEGORY 1: RESOURCE USE

Energy

As a first step, your church should review its energy consumption. The Energy Footprint Tool is designed to help your parish in this task and should be completed annually. Full information and contacts for advice can be found here: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/dac/energy-footprint/>

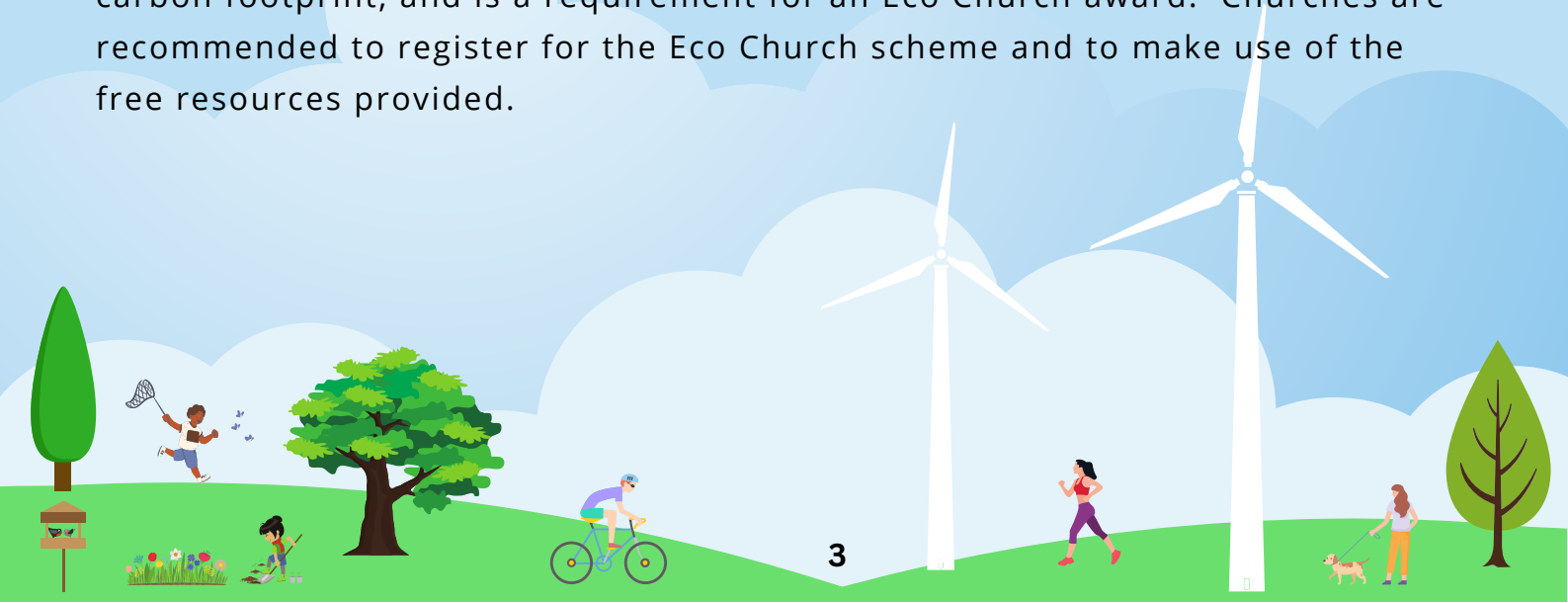
Having established a baseline measurement, your parish can then make improvements starting with the 'quick wins' outlined in The Practical Path to Net Zero Carbon for Churches such as installing LED lights, reducing draughts and improving insulation. In addition, choose a green energy tariff from your supplier so that your church is using energy generated from renewable sources.

Further advice, case studies and sources of funding can be found on the Church of England website here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church>

Other resources

As a next step, consider other areas of your church life which contribute to your carbon footprint, such as waste, water, travel and food. The 360 Carbon tool is a free recommended resource that will help your church calculate its overall carbon footprint, and is a requirement for an Eco Church award. Churches are recommended to register for the Eco Church scheme and to make use of the free resources provided.



CATEGORY 2: CHURCHYARD

“All around the world communities are learning that possessing a sense of the sacredness of the land is invaluable when instituting community-based programmes to protect nature and enhance our understanding of our place with it.”

From Sacred Land by Martin Palmer, published 2012



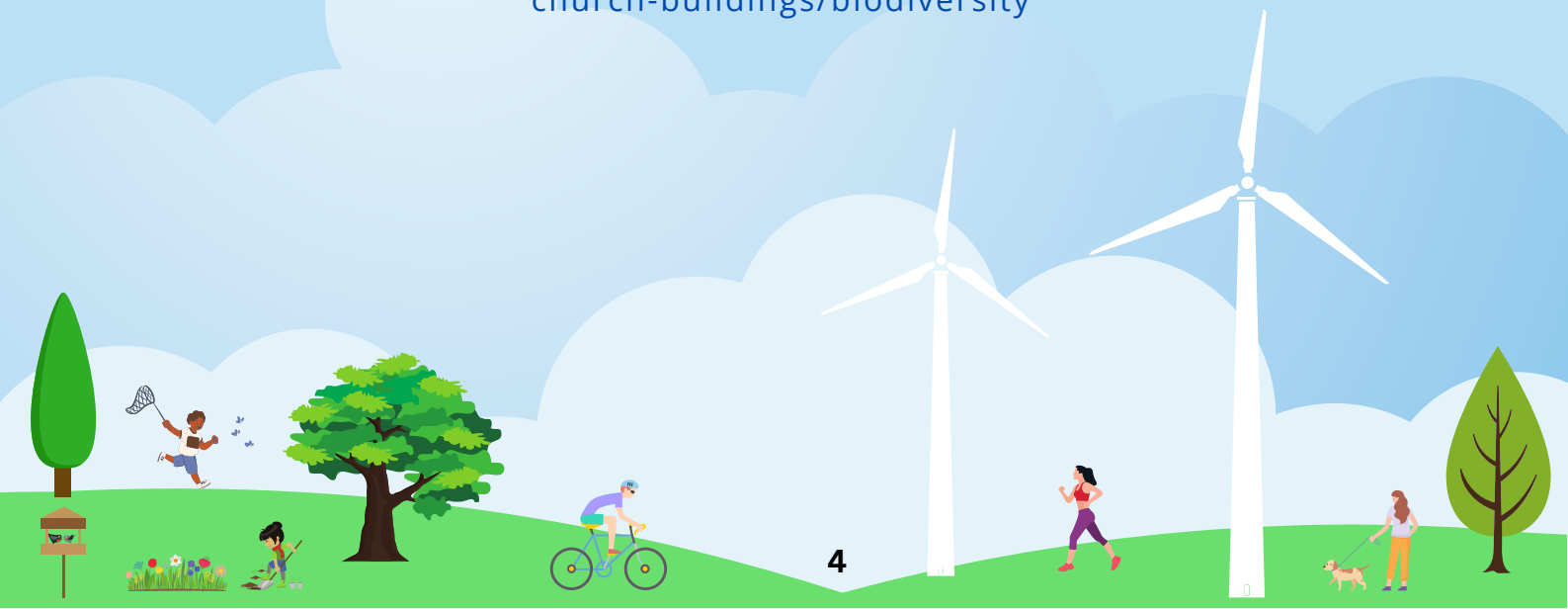
Is your church helping to protect nature by managing your churchyard or church garden in a wildlife-friendly way? The Living Churchyard scheme is being promoted in the diocese to encourage management that benefits wildlife and people. Contact livingchurchyards@stalbans.anglican.org for information or advice, or see: [http:// www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/living-churchyards/](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/living-churchyards/)

The management of church land is also a section in the Eco Church award, and further excellent resources can be found here:

<https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/resources/>

<https://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/biodiversity>



CATEGORY 2: CHURCHYARD

First steps:

- Allow your wildflowers to flower. This only requires mowing to cease in certain areas for 2 – 3 months and then the clippings to be removed on the initial cut (a fun task for children). You may be surprised at the uncommon flowers that are present. For details of the annual 'No Mow May' event and citizen science nature count organised by Caring for God's Acre, see:

<https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/about-us/news/no-mow-may-dawn-of-a-new-british-lawn>

<https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/churches-count-on-nature-faqs/>

- Bird boxes always seem to attract birds even when there are hedges and bushes present. What about installing one with a built-in camera so you can watch what is going on? www.rspb.org.uk

- A church garden? Use plants that will attract butterflies and bees, they need our help. www.butterfly-conservation.org
www.bumblebeeconservation.org

- Tell everyone what is going on – the Church cares about the environment – print some leaflets, install a noticeboard, put up some posters, set up a nature group. Invite the local school to have outdoor lessons.

- Have fun while you learn. Organise a social event and book an expert to identify the flowers or lichens or birds or bats



CATEGORY 3: FAITH AND OUTREACH

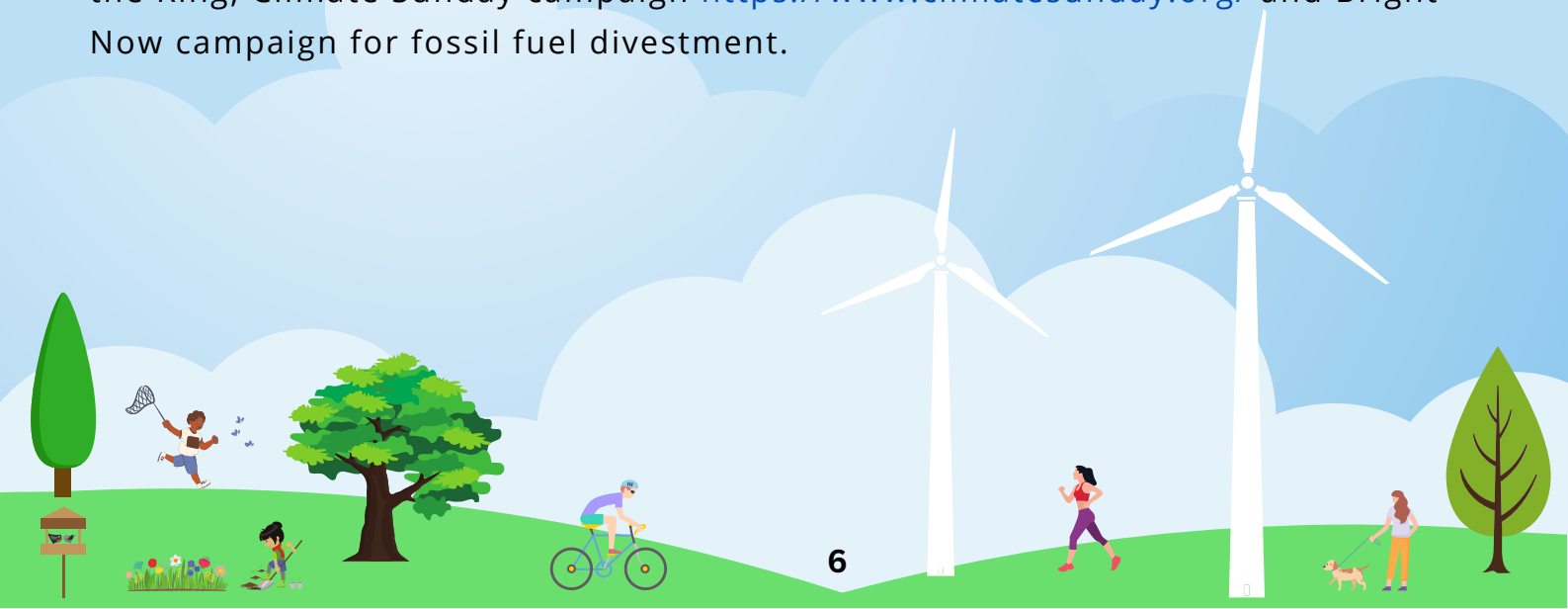
In Colossians 1.17 we read that all things were created by God and for God: “He is before all things and in Him all things hold together.”

But, says biblical scholarship, there is also a hidden warning in Colossians. If all things hold together in Jesus then the opposite is also implied. Without Jesus all things fall apart. The roots of human destruction of the environment are to be found not just in actions but in our most deep-seated attitudes. It is not enough for us to keep alive by consuming the world around us; we need to change because our world is changing. The loss of our connections with the earth – which as consumers we often see as purely utilitarian or market based – has become a crisis of spiritual vision. We have forgotten that we depend for our lives on plants, animals, water and oxygen for life. These are sacred gifts and the meaning of creation itself.

Resources to help your church explore these areas further can be found on the A Rocha website www.arocha.org

Watch: Nurture in His Name, a series of four short films on You Tube by Mary Colwell and David Shreeve about action for climate change and biodiversity for church congregations: www.youtube.com/user/NurtureInHisName

Investigate: <https://operationnoah.org/home/faith-motivated/> to discover what the climate crisis has to do with being a Christian, the study course Tenants of the King, Climate Sunday campaign <https://www.climatesunday.org/> and Bright Now campaign for fossil fuel divestment.



CATEGORY 4: PRACTICAL

“Receive the world that God has given. Go for a walk. Get wet. Dig the earth”

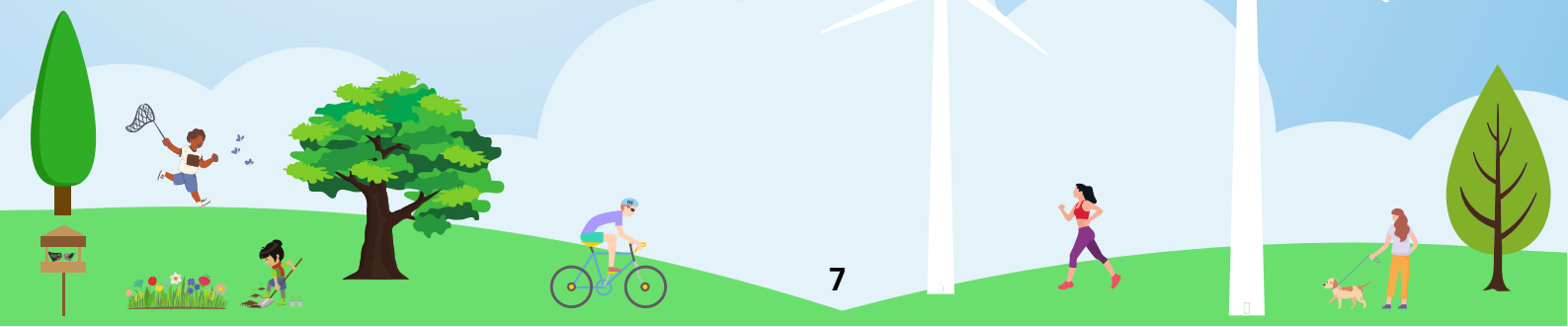
From Rowan Williams’ foreword to the Report “Sharing God’s Planet”.



Both as individuals and as church communities, there are many ways in which we can become more sustainable and ‘live lightly’ on the Earth.

Ideas for action:

- Walk, bike or create carpool for getting to church, and plan a ‘Walk to Church Sunday’
- Tell everyone that you intend to reclaim the meaning of ‘Sabbath’ by slowing down, simplifying Sunday schedules, making time to do things together as a family.
- Does your church make an effort to eat locally and support local farmers? Investigate the Green Christian campaign, Use your LOAF, and encourage Locally Produced, Organically Grown, Animal Friendly and Fairly Traded food
www.greenchristian.org.uk
Host a harvest supper with dishes made from locally sourced ingredients and discuss the religious implications of a communal meal.
- Is there an elderly person in your congregation who is finding their garden too much to manage but doesn’t want to move? Maybe there is someone in your church who would like to help and perhaps grow them some fruit and vegetables and sell the surplus for church funds? Could your church have its own community garden or café, or join with others in the local area to create one?



CATEGORY 4: PRACTICAL



- Think about action you can take to address the social injustice brought on the poorest countries of the world by the developed world's emissions of greenhouse gases and the use of fossil fuels. Develop your church's campaigning skills by taking an advocacy course, see <https://www.hftf.org.uk/training>

- How can your church prepare for a world affected by climate change? What actions would make your building more resilient against severe storms or flooding, and how could your church respond to the needs of people displaced as countries become uninhabitable?

See the Climate Resilient Church resources on the Church of England website and campaigns of organisations such as Tearfund or Christian Aid:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/climate-resilient-church>

<https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/all-campaigns>

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns>

- Host a gathering of local churches, voluntary and civil organisations, transition towns etc to take a lead in a local 'green issue'.



LIVING LIGHTLY

APPLYING FOR A GREEN GRANT

To apply for a Green Grant the following information is required:

1. How much grant you are applying for
2. How this is to be matched by the PCC or some other funding source
3. Which of the following category or categories your project falls into:
 - Resource Use
 - Churchyard
 - Faith and Outreach
 - Practical

Please complete a Grant Application Form—this can be downloaded from our website (see below) or for a paper copy contact Linda Watson, Mission and Ministry Executive Administrator at St Albans Diocesan Office, Holywell Lodge, 41 Holywell Hill, St Albans AL1 1HE on 01727 818148, lwatson@stalbans.anglican.org

Your Application Form plus any photographs or diagrams to support your application and a contact name and email or phone number should be sent to Linda at the address above.

