

Eco Group Report for St Peter's AGM, April 2023.

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he found it upon the seas and established it upon the waters. Psalm 24: 1-2

It is positive that the focus, for so many of us at St Peter's, and indeed the groups connected to our church through their use of our land and buildings, continues to be our need to care for God's creation, and be mindful of our impact on the world. There are two environmental officers but also a huge number of people who work hard to make our church and its resources more sustainable and who encourage us all to consider sustainability in our lives outside the church. If you want to do something to promote the environment, or support the work of the Eco Group, please do let Gemma or Jackie know.

On 30 March 2022 St Peter's commitment to the environment led us to gain our Eco Church Bronze Award. The Eco church scheme is run by <https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/> We hope to gain silver in 2023. In three out of the five areas that are assessed, St Peter's has already met silver (community and global; lifestyle; land) – and in the case of 'Worship and Teaching' we currently meet the gold standard! However, in the case of the fifth area, Buildings, we have not yet quite met the threshold. We are confident that we will be able to achieve it, and to this end, the Eco Group sends a delegate to the PCC's Hall and Building's subgroup meetings to ensure that decisions taken in relation to this consider the environmental aspect.

Since the last AGM here are some of the things the church, and associated community groups, have achieved:-

Environmental Service 30 October 2022 - following on from this the church raised money to twin all 6 of our toilets; and St Peters has signed up as a Community Ally for Plastic Free Shipley – which involved pledging to further reduce our use of single use plastics and encourage church members and facilities users to do the same – we attended Plastic Free Shipley's AGM recently to learn and share more about progress towards Plastic Free Shipley Status . (<https://plasticfree.org.uk/>)

Our main cleaning products, hand soap, washing up liquid and loo rolls are now obtained through Refill Shipley reducing vastly the number of single use plastic containers /wrappers we use.

Messy Church and the Scout Group created Bug Hotels to attract the bugs that are important for our ecosystem

The Scouts have planted wildlife friendly hedging (hazel, hornbeam, beech, hazel) at the Fernhill site, and are planning to plant fruit trees.

Those using our buildings are asked to consider sustainability such as minimising waste, recycling where possible, avoiding single use plastic, choosing fairly-traded products where possible, encouraging reusable water bottles.

Solar Panels installed during the Hall Roof project generate solar power, as well as providing a small income to the church, when we sell excess electricity back to the grid.

The church has six litter pickers you can borrow if you/your group want to do a litter pick

As we write this report, we are also preparing for a service of penitence and reflection on Palm Sunday, incorporating environmental themes into Stations of the Cross. In terms of our stewardship of the world, there is likely to be much we can do better. However, as Revd Sue Penfold encouraged us when she preached at our Environment Service in October 2022, we are not all in a position to change everything, but we may all be in a position to do something, and that is a good thing.

Thanks

Gemma Richards and Jackie Loach

27.03.2023