

Environment Briefing: July 2022

Huge thanks to all who've shared events and news with the wider network this month. There's a lot to cover this month, so make a cuppa and read on. The next briefing will be in September.

NEWS

Church plans for Net Zero carbon approved

The General Synod of the Church of England has endorsed the national *Routemap to Net Zero Carbon*, outlining how churches, schools dioceses, and others can decarbonise by 2030. You can read the press release [here](#) & the routemap [here](#).



[These video case studies](#) show what has already been done in some churches, schools and homes to reach net zero carbon and care for the environment.

Deadline approaching: submit your church's energy footprint

Churches have **until 31 July** to submit their Energy Footprint data via the Parish Returns system. So far only around a quarter of churches have completed their return, so please check whether your church has. It's a crucial way to monitor your energy use. [See guidance here](#) and you can access [Parish Returns here](#).



Ground-breaking Gold Eco Church award

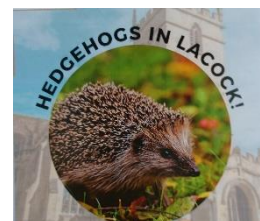
We are thrilled to celebrate with Hazelnut Community Farm, as they become the first church in the Diocese – and the wider Southwest region – of any denomination to receive a Gold Eco Church Award from the Christian conservation charity A Rocha. Find out about their story [here](#), and start **your** Eco Church journey [here](#).



Huge congratulations also to a bumper number of churches who've gained awards since the last bulletin. Bronze awards were received by Easton Grey Parish Church, All Saints Lydiard Millicent, St Mary Luckington, and St Michael's Stoke Gifford; and Wroughton Parish Church have received a Silver award. Wonderful news!

Dozens of churches celebrate Church Count on Nature

Many of you got involved in the [Churches Count on Nature](#) week this June. It's been great to see so many nature counts, wildlife walks, gatherings and talks exploring creation care taking place across the Diocese – like this one on Hedgehogs as part of St Cyriac Lacock's celebrations.



Faculty rule changes to support church decarbonisation

New faculty rules come into effect this month to make it easier for churches to make 'green' changes to their buildings and grounds, and harder to make environmentally damaging ones. Find out more about the new rules [here](#).

"A great way to share learning and enthuse others!"

Read how Aidan, a student at a Chippenham Secondary School, is [helping churches in his benefice become Eco Churches](#).



Wild Church weekend

The North Wilts Mission Area held a Wild Church weekend this month, gathering at a Wiltshire farm to connect with God, each other, and nature. Sessions focused on the vision for church in this time of climate emergency, and there was an excellent programme for youth & children. [All welcome to next year's event, from 7-9 July](#).



Changes to Diocesan Environment staffing

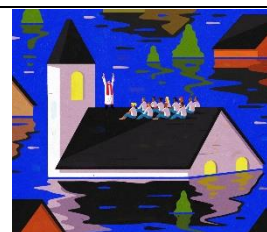
I am expecting a new arrival next month, and so will be taking maternity leave from the end of July. Bristol Diocese are seeking someone to cover my absence; while the job advert isn't live yet, please do [check here for further information in due course](#). **Please do share this job opportunity with your networks, as we'd love to find someone to continue this important work.**



EVENTS

Creation Restored: Ministry in a time of Climate Crisis - Sat 17 Sept

Join us for an [inspiring and challenging day for all in church leadership](#) – whether that's lay, ordained, youth or environmental! Share in fellowship, and explore the challenges, sensitivities and opportunities of church life in a time of climate crisis. Held at the Pattern Church in Swindon, with guest speakers including Dr Ruth Valerio, and friends from Operation Noah, the Carbon Literacy Project, Christian Climate Action and Green Christian, it promises to be a great day. [Register here](#).



Fantastic new eco-webinar programme, Aug – Nov

The Church of England Environment Programme has launched its programme of webinars for the coming months. There are some excellent sessions, from church heating options to Season of Creation inspiration. [Find out more and register here](#).



XR Bristol day of action on Sat 30th July & training day in September

For those of you in Bristol, Extinction Rebellion are meeting at 10am in Queens Square for a time of climate action together, and also offer a [Bristol training day on Saturday 3rd Sept](#). Find out more at <https://xrbristol.org.uk/>

OPPORTUNITIES

Free waste candle recycling

The church supplier DM Hay has launched a free church candle waste collection service. They collect used candle stubs, old paschal candles, empty sanctuary lights, empty plastic/metal votive cases and empty candle oil bottles, to clean and recycle wax and plastics to avoid them going to landfill. [Watch this 1-minute film to find out more](#), and contact them on 01392 202248



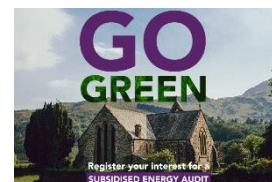
Lend a hand for the Lambeth Conference

The Youth Christian Climate Network are appealing for friends to 'lend a hand' prior to the once-in-a-decade Lambeth conference taking place next month. YCCN will hold a prayer vigil outside displaying a chain of hands to represent climate justice fellowship and global messages. [Check out the resources here](#).



Parish Buying Energy Audit programme

Registration for the next round of Energy Audits has opened, with a £100 reduction in the £445 fee for the first 100 churches to sign up. Your audit will include an assessment of the feasibility of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies – all with the goal of reducing your energy consumption and carbon footprint. [The offer is open to all](#).



Plan your tree planting event for October

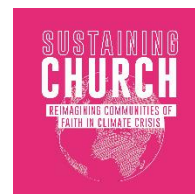
Free trees are still available for church and community groups to plant as part of the [Queens Green Canopy](#). Plan to plant your trees from October – March, as St Mary's Alveston did this spring, inviting local Councillors and uniformed groups to take part in the busy event (see photo).



RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

Sustaining Church conference sessions now online

Last week, Hazelnut Community Farm hosted some fantastic speakers at their online Sustaining Church conference. Take a look at their YouTube channel to view the conference videos: www.youtube.com/c/HazelnutCommunity



Bybrook Eco Church briefings continue

The monthly briefings from the Eco Church team at Bybrook Benefice continue, with July's edition focusing on Transport and Travel. [Check out the series here](#), and do use them in your own churches.

Stephen Fry short film to support environmental action

This [7 minute film](#) supporting climate activism is worth a watch, and perhaps a good conversation starter for a church or youth group session?



Environmental Fundraising resources

[This new webpage](#) from the CofE talks you through how to approach environmental fundraising, and helps you identify which funders to approach.

Preaching for God's World

[Preaching for God's World](#) is a resource for preachers, offering thoughts and reflections on each Sunday's Revised Common Lectionary readings viewed through the lens of the Anglican Five Marks of Mission – in particular on caring for people and the planet.



Deep Waters – exploring climate grief with Green Christian

In the last briefing I introduced **Deep Waters** sessions exploring climate grief and eco-anxiety, to help you discover renewed courage, hope, and purpose. Deep Waters is a safe space, designed for small groups. [Find out more and register your interest here](#).



And finally...

Comedy Wildlife photography award – applications now open!

For any budding wildlife photographers, applications are open until 1ST September for the [Comedy Wildlife photography award](#). And for the rest of us, a browse through the online galleries might raise a few smiles!



Please share this information with your church and deanery.

Thanks for reading, and I pray for every blessing as you continue to work to protect God's earth.