



# St Mark's Church

## LEAMINGTON SPA

### ECO CHURCH POLICY

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St Mark's Church  
LEAMINGTON SPA

 THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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## Introduction

"Eco Church" is a program developed by A Rocha, an international Christian environmental organization, aimed at helping churches become more environmentally responsible and sustainable. The program encourages churches to consider the environmental impact of their activities and take steps to care for God's creation

Eco Church encourages churches to integrate environmental stewardship into their core values and practices. It emphasizes the importance of caring for the Earth as a reflection of Christian faith and provides practical guidance on how to do so. Participating in Eco Church can help churches fulfill their role as stewards of creation, build a sense of community, and set a positive example for their members and the wider community.

As a church, at St Marks we affirm these elements of our faith:

- Through Christ, God has created an awesome and majestic cosmos 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.
- We recognise that we have a special responsibility to care for the Earth so that human life and all God's creatures may be sustained in harmony.

## Aim

As a local church, we aim to take the practical steps necessary to realise the Fifth Mark of Mission, which is "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth".

## Objective

As a church community, we will take environmental concerns into account in our mission, worship across all ages, training, pastoral, administrative programmes and our Church Development plan.

## Actions

- We aim to appoint a person as our Environmental Officer or Champion to lead our programme and encourage them to bring relevant environmental issues and concerns forward to the PCC on a regular basis.
- We will continue to include our concern for creation and sustainability in our worship and teaching.
- As the church's energy use is arguably its greatest environmental issue, we will seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the electricity and gas used in church premises by:
  - Continuing to replace light bulbs with suitable low-energy bulbs eg. LED light bulbs;
  - Turning off lights, appliances and computers when not in use;
  - Switching to green energy suppliers offering renewably generated electricity and biogas when we are able;
  - Using thermostats for temperature control where possible;
  - Investigate renewable heating alternatives when the current boilers need replacing.

- We will seek ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment by, wherever possible:
  - serving locally produced food where possible
  - continuing to use fair trade and rainforest alliance produce where possible
  - using email rather than sending hard copies
  - using recycled paper
  - reducing the amount of paper used in notice sheets, fliers, etc. and reducing the number produced
  - reusing/ repairing items (if appropriate)
  - using low environmental impact cleaning materials where suitable alternatives are available
- We will assess our land and property for wildlife and manage them to conserve biodiversity.
- We will work with others in our local community to identify environmental issues which should be addressed in our area and help develop actions to tackle them.
- We will encourage individual members of our congregations to take actions in their personal lives to complement and supplement these actions of the church community.
- We will undertake an environmental and energy audit of the church premises and property, identify the most significant issues and impacts which should be addressed and make and implement plans and programmes to tackle them, recognising that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts.
- In the event of the need to undertake a building or refurbishment project, our church would insist that it adhere to BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) or a similar standard to ensure best practice in sustainable building design, construction and operation
- We will continue to participate in the Eco Church programme.