

## **Stroud Deanery Environmental Ambassador report to Deanery Synod February 7th 2024**

### **Diocesan update**

At the Deanery Synod meeting in October I reported that the diocese was applying through national C of E for a grant for a net zero project officer. This has been successful. The post will be advertised soon and it is hoped that there will be a person in post by early summer. 70% of the funding is coming from the grant and the remainder from the diocese. The person appointed will lead on the 'nuts and bolts' aspects and Cate Williams, Diocesan Environmental Engagement Officer, will concentrate on Eco Church and other 'hearts and minds' work.

Gloucester diocese will be working together with the dioceses of Hereford and Worcester. The person appointed in each of these dioceses will cover a different specialist area: Worcester – church buildings, Hereford – church schools, and Gloucester – clergy housing. They will each work across their own diocese on general net zero work.

The diocese has committed to prioritising and supporting the decarbonisation of places with heavy energy use. They are NOT expecting small rural churches to be net zero. The Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) is a useful tool for churches to use to find out the carbon footprint of their buildings. I would encourage those who haven't used this yet to do so. The information for the calendar year 2023 can be entered on the Parish Returns Portal. It is a good idea to download a print a hard copy and collect the information ready to enter it online. Help is also available on the diocesan web site. Currently 50% of churches in the diocese are using the EFT and encouraging wider use is a priority.

### **Deanery Update**

I am waiting for an official update on Eco Church numbers in the deanery but I do know that since our October meeting, St Mary's Woodchester has gained a Bronze Award, another church is about to make their eco church application and two churches have registered with EcoChurch. It would be good to have more. The diocesan website has helpful guidance and resources and I continue to answer queries from churches by email or over the phone. I am encouraging churches within each benefice to look at ways they can work together and support each other. This will sit very well into the draft Stroud Deanery Strategic Plan, which is currently being discussed at PCCs.

Diocesan specialist Eco Ambassadors

Beth Bruce- Gardener is the first of these. She has recently taken on the role of working with churches to promote all aspects of arranging church flowers sustainably. Sustainable church flowers are biodegradable, local, seasonal and foam free. She has already done demonstrations and workshops in this deanery. Get in touch with me for further details.

My contact details are on the deanery website.

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