

Stroud Deanery Environmental Ambassador report to Deanery Synod February 2025

5th mark of mission: *To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth*

Diocesan update

Cate Williams' role as Diocesan Environmental Engagement Officer came to an end in November. Deanery Eco Ambassadors have met with Sandra Millar (Director of Mission and Ministry) with further meetings in February and after Easter. The aim of the meeting was to see what planning and provision the Diocese had in mind for continuing support in this area, who the key contacts would be and how churches environmental and climate work, often using the A Rocha Eco Church survey as a tool, could contribute constructively to this planning. This will be the focus of the following meetings. At the moment Sandra is the first port of call and will redirect enquiries to the relevant staff member.

Helping churches reduce their carbon footprint C of E Energy Footprint Tool (EFT)

The C of E Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) is now open and all churches are strongly encouraged to use it. It is available through the Parish Returns and takes about an hour to complete. The data collected from the tool helps a church understand its carbon footprint, start to take some steps to reduce it and will mean that you may be eligible for grants to help you kick start your net zero projects. The EFT deadline is earlier this year, June 30th, to give more time to analyse the data and get the results to Diocesan Synods by autumn 2025.

Stroud Deanery Eco Church

Since the November Synod meeting, Brimscombe have gained a Bronze A Rocha Eco Church Award. Thanks to the Eco team and congregation there for all the progress they have made.

St Cyr's, Stonehouse have recently registered.

Now is a really good time to do this. All registered churches are beginning to get to grips with the revised and more challenging survey and there will be a chance to learn together and sign up to online training in the coming year.

I would encourage all churches to do so (see link below). It is then entirely up to each church as to how much or little they do. Just reading the questions can prompt some reflection and this in some cases can lead to some positive action. Small steps really do count.

So as a deanery we currently have:

- 2 registered churches – working towards Bronze
- 9 Bronze
- 2 Silver

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

Church yards

Rebecca Charley, Strategic Lead for Biodiversity and Nature Recovery for Stroud Council, led a very successful session last year on managing our churchyards. With this very much in mind she will be leading a follow up on morning of 25th March and hosted by St Mary's Woodchester. Invitations with further details to follow.

I am always happy to help if I can or to try to answer any questions you may have – and if I don't have the answer to try to help find it! Please contact me using the email below

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20th January 2025