

St. Mary's Church

The Parish Church of Riverhead with Dunton Green, Kent

Environmental Policy





Environmental Policy

Introduction

St Mary's recognises that through its activities and buildings it may have a direct or indirect effect on the local, regional and global environment. This policy is being adopted in the context of global responses to climate change linked to greenhouse gas emissions and anticipated reduction of available fossil fuel supplies. National policies seek to reduce carbon emissions by 20% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050.

As a Christian organisation we have a direct concern for the well-being of our neighbours and a responsibility to care for creation. This policy seeks to guide the way, which we take responsibility for reducing any harmful effects on the environment that we as a community may have. It also seeks to promote the understanding of sustainability in its broadest context. This will involve considering our effect as a community ourselves, our interaction with our local community and surroundings and as part of the global community and seeking to minimise our impact on the environment in all of our activities.

This policy will be made available to all committees and action groups of the church as a guide for their decision making as appropriate. It will also be given to all users of the premises along with any advisory materials, which may from time to time become available. The policy will be reviewed at least every 5 years or more frequently as determined by the Church Council.

Aims

Our aims are:

- ✚ To use water and energy efficiently and, where possible reduce use;
- ✚ To use more renewable sources of energy
- ✚ To use less, waste less and recycle more;
- ✚ To try to make sure our suppliers, contractors and user groups share our values towards the environment;
- ✚ To encourage our members and all our building users to make positive environmental choices;
- ✚ To lower our community carbon footprint through promoting alternative means of transport for church purposes;
- ✚ To promote a more sustainable approach to our life as individuals, as a community and as an organisation within its locality.
- ✚ To be an example in our town, circuit, etc. of how to make a meaningful response to the challenges posed by climate change and the need for a more sustainable lifestyle.

In order to achieve these aims we shall communicate clearly with all users of the premises as we take action as described below.



Environmental Policy

Energy Saving

We will:

- + Consider the use of smaller rooms for services where this is appropriate to reduce heating costs, e.g for winter evening services
- + Consider the shared use of buildings with other local churches as appropriate to reduce combined energy usage
- + Review insulation in the building and increase the levels where possible
- + Run a 'switch off' campaign to make sure that appliances are not left on when this is not necessary
- + Replace light bulbs with low energy devices wherever possible and avoid unnecessary use of lighting and heating
- + Install thermostatic controls where possible
- + Seek to review, where possible, energy obtained from renewable energy suppliers
- + Keep under review the feasibility of installing renewable energy technology.

Water

We will:

- + Encourage efficient use of water
- + Use only detergents and cleaners which are environmentally friendly

Waste management

We will:

- + Encourage the recycling of all recyclable waste including food waste through use of notices and clearly available, labelled bins
- + Recycle materials whenever possible, e.g printer cartridges
- + Set the photocopier to print double-sided black and white, use refillable toner cartridges where possible and recycle others
- + Monitor and review paper use annually and use recycled paper wherever possible

Material and resources

We will:

- + Use locally made goods and locally sourced services wherever we can, and buy products manufactured in a sustainable way
- + Take into account the lifetime costs of materials when repairing, altering and rebuilding works are undertaken and ensure that major works are based on principles of sustainability
- + Seek to work with suppliers who demonstrate that they share our values
- + Offer electronic alternatives to paper for those suitably equipped
- + Use sustainable paints



Environmental Policy

Travel

We will:

- ✚ Encourage use of alternative means of transport by all users of the building that reduce the use of fossil fuels.
- ✚ Encourage public transport or car sharing by people attending church activities on site or at other locations

Communication

We will:

- ✚ Maintain a notice board to inform users of issues related to this environmental policy
- ✚ Regularly provide information to members about global, national and local environmental issues and events to enable them to be well informed and to help them make appropriate personal decisions when necessary
- ✚ Encourage church groups and user groups to consider environmental issues within their normal activity programmes where appropriate

Community involvement

We will:

- ✚ Encourage members and user groups to take part in local environmental activities
- ✚ Make members and users aware of national and international campaigns seeking to address the global impact of climate change and fossil fuel stock depletion, e.g. those of Christian Aid

Worship, teaching and learning

We will:

- ✚ Encourage those responsible for leading worship and study activities to include the theology of environmental care in worship and study – Respect for the world that God has made
- ✚ Seek to have at least one Sunday per year when the focus will be on the environment, e.g the Sunday closest to the UN World Environment Day

Policy created: 28 September 2015
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