



Issue 1
Autumn 2017

Eco Church Newsletter



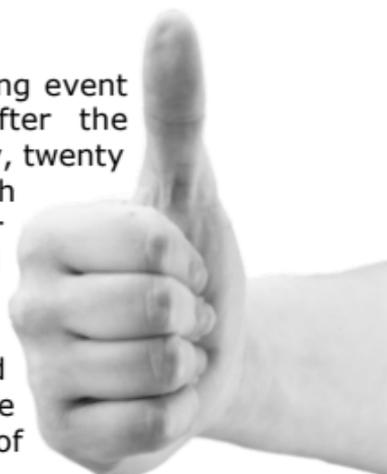
Welcome to St. Mary's first Eco Church Newsletter

This is the first issue of a quarterly newsletter that will focus on the work we as a church community are undertaking in our efforts to reach all three stages of the Eco Church Award. As you are aware, last February we were awarded the bronze level of the scheme and we are now working towards the silver level. It will take us about two years to reach that standard and there will be some difficult issues for the church and its community to embrace to attain this.

These newsletters will focus on what we have recently achieved and the proposed work areas in the coming three months. The main topic for this issue will be recycling both for the church and for us as individual members of the church community. In addition there will be an item that focuses on other issues so that each issue covers all four aspects of the scheme (worship, buildings, community & global and lifestyle).

Action Update

During July our first litter picking event took place. In one hour after the 10.30am service on the 9th July, twenty members of the church community picked up litter around the church, Memorial Garden, Newbury Street and the cemetery, collecting five bags of rubbish. This action increased our score by 5% in the Community and Global section of



the Eco Church Scheme. Also on the 30th July we asked the church community to consider walking to church.

It is intended that over the coming year we will ask everyone to consider this action on every 5th Sunday in a month. The installation of cycle racks is being investigated and once this has occurred we will also encourage cycling to church. This has added a further 1% to our score in the Lifestyle section.



At the PCC meeting in July it was agreed that the church will commit to working with the Council in the development of the Andover Vision Plan. This consolidates 10% of the potential points in the Community and Global section of the scheme.

Recycling

Earlier in the year the church signed up to the Test Valley Recycling Stars Scheme. We are the first church in the Council area to do so. The scheme expects us to maximise our efforts in recycling and reducing our waste.

The Eco Church Scheme requires that we as a church, and as individuals, maximise our recycling and minimise our waste. This is action in both the Buildings and Lifestyle sections of the Eco Church Scheme. To date we have looked at the waste put into our rubbish bins for both the

church and the Church Centre and find we can do a lot better.

Notices of what is recyclable in the Test Valley area have been fixed to both recycling bins. Evidence so far is that we seem to be looking at the packaging to see if it is recyclable rather than what our Council accepts for recycling.

What we can put in our brown recycling bins is:

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Any plastic bottle without the tops
- Food tins and drink cans
- Empty aerosols

Glass bottles are only recyclable at recycling stations around the town.

So please review what is going into your brown bins. Reviews of the bins in the church and Church Centre have been taking place over the last couple of months and we are improving on our adherence to what the Council requires.

Leaflets on Test Valley Council Scheme are available at the back of the church.

Recycling of Church Flowers

Back in the spring a request was made about how the church could better compost the discarded flower

arrangements. After discussion at the **EQuIP** (*Environment Q u i n q u e n n i a l I n s p e c t i o n P r o p e r t y*) Committee it has been agreed that the church will subscribe to the Council's Garden Waste Scheme and it is hoped that will be in place at the time this newsletter is issued.



Recycling Stars

As part of our commitment to Test Valley Council's Recycling Stars Scheme we are asked to promote items to improve recycling and the environment. The latest is about reducing food waste and is as follows:

The average UK family throws away £700 worth of food a year, that's £60 a month. More than half of the food we throw away can be eaten.

Saving food is not just about reducing our food bill though. It takes a great deal of resources such as water, energy, fuel and packaging to produce food, all of which can be saved if we only bought what we could eat.

Please reflect upon this and look at what changes you can make to reduce your food waste.

Buildings

A major part of the Eco Church Scheme relates to how we manage the use of resources in our buildings.

In the coming months we will be reviewing our energy use against the reduction target the PCC set earlier in the year. In addition, as equipment is being replaced, energy efficient options are taken where it is cost effective to do so.



Reflecting the environment in our worship

The worship section of the Eco Church Scheme is one where we are scoring highly. This needs to be maintained, however, and potentially improved.

Praying for environmental issues is one area where we can improve by ensuring that we include prayers for the environment every week in our worship.

An example of praying to God on environmental change is below:

"We pray for a world of rising temperatures, drought and flood, wild weather and broken seasons, failed crops and dying forests..."

*God in your mercy renew this damaged world.
(Source - Celtic Nature Prayers Chapter 3,
Prayers for the Planet)*





Future Dates for your diaries

Litter picking on
15th October at 12.15pm

Walk to church on
29th October and
31st December

Do you have suggestions for future action?

Do you have any ideas to improve our work to protect the environment?

We now have a working party that meet to discuss any ideas put forward, so please contact Ann Smith, Heather Norton, Paula Deverill or Andy Berry with your suggestions.

