



Environmental News



Summer 2026

Updates from Bethan Still, Diocesan Environmental Officer

Net Zero Programme

- New Fundraising Officer for the North East Diocesan Cluster - Adele Borrowman has begun her post and intends to begin looking at opportunities for solar PV on church rooves - if this is something you would like to be involved with, please get in touch with Bethan.
- Grants - There are a small number of grants available to provide new heating systems for high emitting churches, who have a boiler that is older than 20 years. If you fall into these categories and are interested, please contact us.
- National Progress Report - The national Net Zero Carbon Programme Team has released their most recent data on the carbon footprint of church buildings, schools, cathedrals and work-related travel. Find out more and read the most recent report [here](#).



Eco Church

- We have a number of churches who have registered for Eco Church but not yet achieved an award. It is very easy to fill in the survey - some churches find they are already eligible for an award without much action required! If you are in this position, why not fill in the survey and see? If you are struggling, please contact Bethan.
- It will soon be mandatory for churches to be registered for Eco Church in order to receive Net Zero Funding. It is easy and free to register. You can do so [here](#).
- Congratulations to St Andrews Houghton-le-Skerne and St Barnabas Bournmoor which have both achieved Bronze Eco Church awards this summer.



People's Emergency Briefing

The People's Emergency Briefing on Climate and Nature is a 50 minute public-information campaign film organised by the National Emergency Briefing initiative. Many churches across the country have already hosted a screening of the film, to help people in their local communities be aware of and respond to the climate crisis.

Currently, I am not aware of any churches in our diocese that have held a screening - but if you are able, please do consider holding one within your church or church hall. It would provide a fantastic opportunity to invite members of our local community into our churches, and to show that Christians are seeking to be good stewards of the environment whilst acting in compassion and love.

The Church of England has produced specific resources to assist churches who are holding screenings, which can be found [here](#). For more information, please see [here](#).

Energy Footprint Tool



A huge thank you to all of you - we had a 100% return rate for the EFT! This is an amazing achievement which gives us an accurate dataset and enables us to move towards net zero carbon as a diocese.

The EFT is an annual return so please mark your calendars for January 2027 in order to complete it next year.

Season of Creation and new Festival of Creation in Christ

The Season of Creation (Creationtide) will soon be here! It runs each year from 1st September to 4th October, and is an opportunity for Christians to give thanks for God's gift of creation and to reflect on our responsibility towards and pray for the renewal of creation. This year's theme is "Living Waters" Perhaps you could hold services or events to celebrate Creationtide in your parish? More info can be found [here](#).

Excitingly, General Synod have just approved the new "Festival of Creation in Christ", to be celebrated annually on the first Sunday of September. It provides a particular day within the period of Creationtide to meditate on the fact that creation is made through Christ, sustained in Christ and destined for renewal in Christ. For more information about this and other General Synod Environment Updates, see [here](#).

Hope For All Creation



The Church of England has published a fantastic new teaching resource called Hope for All Creation. It is a book that explores how the Christian faith helps us understand the environmental and climate challenges facing our world.

If you would like to learn more about Hope For All Creation, the church of England are running various informative webinars throughout Creationtide. They are open to all, and will feature a presentation and then a Q&A session.

For more details on webinars and also to buy your own copy of the book, please see [here](#).



Carbon Literacy Training

If you would like to increase your confidence and knowledge on climate change and how to make more sustainable choices in your lifestyle, you may like to consider doing some Carbon literacy training.

There is a full version of the course (~6 hours total learning time) or a shorter 1 hour Carbon Confidence course - Bethan is qualified to lead both so please contact her if you would be interested.

The Church of England has also organised a special "Carbon Literacy for Congregations" with more of a focus on lowering carbon within a church context. The course will run on evenings throughout September in Zoom. Please sign up [here](#) if it is of interest to you.



Could you be a Diocesan Eco Champion?

We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers (both clergy and lay people) who are passionate about helping churches in the diocese respond to the climate and nature crises.

Being an Eco Champion would include:

- Supporting the Diocesan Environmental Officer (DEO) in helping churches consider Creation Care
- Encouraging churches to begin or continue an Eco Church journey
- Sharing ideas, resources and case studies and encouraging environmental conversations at PCC meetings and deanery synods
- Connecting churches with diocesan support, training and expertise
- Helping churches discover their next practical step towards Net Zero

You won't be alone! We hope to build a supportive network of Eco Champions, who can share and learn from each other and will receive support from the Diocesan Environmental Officer. If you would like to find out more, please contact Bethan.

Contact Me

I am always happy to visit churches, offer advice or give presentations. Please contact me if this will be of interest to your Church or Eco Group, or if you have any other queries.

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