



ST SAVIOUR'S CHURCH
SANDPIT LANE | ST ALBANS | AL1 4DF

stsavioursstalbans.com

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Policy statements

We recognise the climate and nature crises and the fundamental injustice these represent.

We recognise and teach that creation care and action to address the climate and nature crises are integral to Christian faith, life and worship.

We recognise the significant contribution churches can make to the UK's target of 30% of the land protected for nature by 2030. We manage our own land and/or work in partnerships with other organisations or community groups to manage their land for nature.

We recognise that we need to take action locally, nationally and globally to tackle climate injustice.

We recognise that integrating creation care into our daily lives is an act of worship and obedience to God as we grow in discipleship.

Denominational commitment

As a member of the Church of England, we recognise the commitment made by General Synod in February 2020 for the whole of the Church of England to achieve net zero carbon by 2030.

In line with this commitment to net zero, we have committed to reduce our carbon footprint.

Our principles and values

God created the world and everything in it.

God has created an awesome and majestic cosmos to bring him praise and glory. We are but one part of his created order. Jesus has redeemed the whole earth through his death and resurrection. We have a special responsibility to care for the Earth so that human life and all God's creatures may be sustained in harmony. *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth* (Genesis 1:1, NIV).

Our church is committed to minimising our negative impact on the environment.

As Christians it is our responsibility to care for creation, using resources wisely so that climate change is mitigated, biodiversity protected or enhanced, finite resources conserved, and waste and pollution minimised. *Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it...* (Isaiah 42:5, NIV).

Seeking climate justice is part of Christian discipleship and practice.

Following Christ's teachings means loving our global neighbours and caring for creation. The climate crisis both reflects and feeds off inequality, exploitation and greed: often the communities who are suffering the most from its effects, particularly in the Global South, are those who have done the least to cause it. We will aim to act in accordance with this understanding, making changes to improve our sustainability and to show solidarity with those across the world who are suffering in this crisis. *What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God* (Micah 6:8, NIV).

Our Commitments

1. Worship and Teaching

We will communicate our biblical understanding of responsibility to God for all that is entrusted to us through creation, making the links between poverty, wealth and environmental degradation. We will strive to equip leadership, staff, volunteers and church members with the skills, knowledge and confidence to respond to this responsibility.

2. Buildings and Energy

We recognise the most important environmental impact will be an ongoing reduction of our carbon emissions. We will seek to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions as much as we can, working toward net zero carbon.

3. Land and Nature

As a church, we at St Saviours Church want to reinforce the whole mission of our Church by caring for creation and serving the community. To achieve this, we plan to meet the UK's target of 30% land protection for nature by encouraging everyone to take action to protect and care for nature today. Everyone has a part to play in how the land around our church can make a difference and help protect and restore nature all around us. Caring for the land reinforces the whole mission of the church, not only by protecting nature but also serving the community by increasing access to nature for human wellbeing, action for climate resilience and pointing people towards our Creator God.

4. Community and Global Engagement

We will highlight and raise awareness that the climate and nature crises affect the poorest first and worst so our responsibility is to them and the places they live, wherever they are in the world, to promote justice for people and nature.

5. Lifestyle

We recognise that we have an impact on the world through the choices available to us and our use of money and resources. We will strive to support our church

family and wider community in bringing about positive change and care for God's Earth. We will seek to encourage our church community and beyond to live gently on the Earth and be prepared to challenge systemic injustice.

Our church has a strategy or plan to promote ethical and environmentally aware consumption patterns by individuals and households.

Application

We are committed to applying these principles in the following areas:

Worship and Teaching

- **Awareness**

- All Ministry team members, volunteers and church members will be made aware of this policy and it will be accessible on our website.
- This policy and action plan will be reviewed annually at PCC meetings, communicated and embedded in work plans.

- **Skilled and equipped**

- We will ensure all Eco Team members and the Ministry Team members receive Carbon Literacy training.
- We will offer other church members the opportunity to complete Carbon Literacy training or other relevant topics as interest is shown.
- We will offer opportunities for more in-depth engagement with environmental issues through small-group sessions.

Buildings and Energy

- **Energy use (buildings, office, church hall, vicarage, etc)**

- We will assess our energy use annually using Church of England online tool
- We will set annual carbon reduction targets and review our progress annually.
- We recognise that digital data has a footprint and we will encourage regular digital clean-ups.

- **Travel**

- We are committed to minimising unnecessary travel and encouraging use of the least polluting means of transport.
- We will prioritise the use of car sharing and bicycles over private cars for church business.
- We will consider the pros and cons of meeting in person versus online, e.g. for meetings or arranging meetings around other in-person commitments.

- **Fabric**

- Through the annual fabric review and quinquennial review, we will monitor the upkeep of the building, ensure repairs are undertaken promptly and continually review ways in which we can improve.

- **Operations**

- We will regularly review our operations plan (heating protocol, lighting procedures, etc.) to ensure energy efficiency.

- **Climate resilience**

- We will develop a climate resilience plan.

- **Procurement**

- We recognise that the decisions we make in what we consume for church life (such as materials, products, equipment and consumables) have an impact on the environment.
- We consider our procurement decisions to minimise negative environmental impacts, where feasible, and will aim to encourage positive action by suppliers and partners. Strong preference will be given to suppliers who take environmental responsibility seriously.
- We will use recycled paper wherever feasible and otherwise use paper derived from sustainably managed forests.
- We will avoid the purchase of products and packaging that use non-recyclable and non-biodegradable materials in the first instance
- **Lettings**
 - We encourage our Church and Hall hires to be as environmentally friendly as possible, encouraging them to use our plates and crockery rather than disposable items. We encourage them to compost any food waste and recycle as much as possible.

Land and Nature

- We prioritise and organise biodiversity on our land and manage our outside space to ensure wildlife flourishes.
- We have already installed Swift boxes and a Bat box and are looking into Hedgehog Hotels, Bug Hotel, planting a tree, composting and the use of a water butt.
- We also want to encourage our community and volunteers to support and engage in planting and managing hedgerows in the area.
- We will actively join in wildlife surveys on our land.

Community and Global Engagement

- **Advocacy and action**
 - We will raise awareness of, and encourage participation in, taking action as a means to loving our neighbour and caring for creation.
 - We will seek ways to support and campaign on environmental issues as a whole church.
 - We will collaborate with, and encourage awareness of, local environmental groups and other churches to share resources and best practices.
 - We will seek to provide opportunities for marginalised groups in our community to have access to nature.
 - We will raise awareness about ethical finance.
- **Food and drink**
 - We will opt for Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar when purchasing for the church
 - We will always provide a vegetarian or vegan option when providing food.
- **Sustainable transport**
 - We will encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport, car sharing and cycling to church.
- **Waste**
 - We are committed to reducing waste, re-using and recycling waste as far as practically possible.
 - We will offer recycling of 'difficult' items to the wider community, such as printer cartridges.

- **Finance**

- We are committed that a portion of our charitable giving will go toward charities that care for the environment or to support those who are adversely affected by climate change.
- We will avoid banking with banks most heavily invested in fossil fuels.
- We will not knowingly invest in or deal with companies or organisations whose activities significantly conflict with our own environmental policy.
- We will actively seek to work with financial institutions that make a positive difference.

- **Communication and promotion of Eco Church**

- We will respond to enquiries and seek to promote Eco Church locally.
- We will participate in denominational and other events to promote Eco Church and care for the environment.

Lifestyle

- **Sustainable lifestyle**

- Throughout the year we will share information, stories and examples of lifestyle action to encourage individual members of our congregations to take actions in their personal lives to care for God's creation.
- We will promote and encourage our church members to undertake personal auditing of individual and household carbon footprints.

Implementation and monitoring

- The Eco Team will report **progress and updates** from the Action Plan to the PCC at each meeting.
- The PCC will **review the targets and revise** the Action Plan annually.
- The PCC will ensure **communication** with the church membership through the Annual Report.
- This policy document will be **fully reviewed** every two years or earlier as needed considering developments.

Date policy updated: August 2026

Date of next review: September 2027