

**HARNHAM PARISH ECO CHURCH POLICY**

***It’s clear from Scripture that God wants us to steward this beautiful Earth we’ve been given. We need to take care of it at a time when global warming and climate change are creating enormous pressures.***

***We all know there is no plan B.***

*(*The Rt Revd. Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury, lead bishop on the environment.)

**Harnham Parish aims to take the practical steps necessary to realise the Fifth Mark of Mission: “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth”.**

**We are committed to becoming an Eco Church, and to implement such practices which are required of us to be responsible stewards to sustain the earth, to live ecologically and in harmony with the whole of creation.**

This aspect of mission is rooted within Biblical and Church teaching which begins with God creating and seeing creation as good, (Genesis 1 and 2) and continues with Jesus’ call for each of us, as disciples to preach the gospel to *all* creation (Mark 15 v 16) and bear the fruits of discipleship ( John 15 v 16).

There are five areas through which we will demonstrate our commitment.

1. **WORSHIP and TEACHING**.

Teaching, scripture readings, prayers, hymns, and preaching, will regularly encourage us to celebrate the gift of God’s earth and to keep in mind our responsibilities to care for it.

1. **BUILDINGS.**

We aim to reduce the carbon footprint of Parish church buildings and the Parish Hall by:

1. monitoring our energy use, working out our carbon footprint and commit ourselves to reducing this by five percent a year.
2. seeking ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment e.g. by using email rather than sending hard copies; using recycled paper, re-using items; using low environmental impact cleaning materials.

We acknowledge that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts.

1. **LAND***.*

Harnham Parish is fortunate to have two churchyards and an open space around the Parish Hall which have the potential to make an important contribution to the biodiversity of our local community and are special places for wildflowers and wildlife.

We aim to develop this potential and use this opportunity to work with the wider community and our schools. We will follow the five-step programme recommended by the organisation ‘Caring for God’s Acre’, which focuses solely on the conservation of churchyards and burial grounds.

i. Research existing records;

ii. Map the site and record information about plants, animals and built features;

iii. Make a plan and how the site will be managed. Of great importance we will talk to people and reach an agreement onmanagement;

iv. We will inform the community about the plans and invite them to become involved.

Events and training days can be organised to help people learn more about the site; v. Review the plan periodically.

1. ***COMMUNITY and GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT****.*

Becoming an Eco Church, will affect every area of our church lives, including how we engage with the Harnham Community and the wider world:

1. We will work with others in our local community to identify environmental issues, which should be addressed and help to develop actions to tackle them.
2. We will live ecologically. E.g. Wherever possible we will use Fairtrade products, and serve food that is locally produced, organic and animal friendly.
3. ***LIFESTYLE.***

The Parish of Harnham will work towards putting faith into action, which entails, every so often, making honest audits of our lifestyles and reflecting on the question

‘Where does God want us to change?’ Examples of such reflection could be

1. Wherever possible to use forms of transport to work, meetings which have a minimum or reduced environmental impact, e.g. walking, cycling, car sharing
2. To use locally produced goods and Fairtrade products at church socials and within our homes.

The Parish will encourage its members to live lightly, watching lifestyle issues, and will produce articles and tips in the monthly magazine, and on the parish website, so that we all find ways of living without harming God’s earth.

**Harnham Parish has appointed an Eco-Church sub committee to seek to implement this policy, and to bring relevant environmental issues and concerns forward to the PCC and the wider parish on a regular basis.**

**Policy accepted on 19th January 2019**

**This policy will be reviewed in 2020.**