Becoming an Eco-Church

*(Updated 11 November 2021)*

We believe that care for God’s creation and urgent action to tackle climate change form part of our Christian calling and responsibility.

At Wesley, we are committed to showing our care for God’s creation in all we do. We have recently embarked on our Eco-Church journey to help us learn more about how we can do this - as a community, in our building, in the city and the world around us, and in our own lifestyles.

We were delighted to gain a Bronze Eco-Church award early in 2021.

We are now working across all groups and generations in the Wesley community to raise awareness, to encourage and inspire change, and to do everything we can to care for God’s creation.

We hope this will be transformative for us as a church community and also for the lives of our members, visitors to the church centre, the wider life of our city, and beyond.

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| Nov '20 | First meeting of Eco Group |
| Jan '21 | Church Council agrees to registering with Eco Church  Joined MakeCOP26Count programme |
| Feb '21 | Initial Eco Church audit undertaken  Greener energy tariff agreed for future contracts |
| March '21 | Training taken on political engagement with MPs prior to COP26 |
|  | Talk given to Churches Together in City Centre on Make COP26Count |
| April '21 | Climate Service on 25th with talk by Deborah Tomkins of Green Christian  Eco conversations with Splat |
| May '21 | Gained Eco Church Bronze award |
| June '21 | Church agrees to order eco cleaning materials and office supplies |
| July ‘21 |  |
| Aug ‘21 | Online Eco survey on the website ready to complete. |
| Sept '21 | Meeting planned with Chris Matheson MP |
| Oct ‘21 | Eco Conversations mini-series on Zoom  EcoHarvest service  including talk about the new Greenway Grocer project and display of prayer boats for COP26 |
| Nov ‘21 | UN COP26 Climate Conference in Glasgow  Eco Conversations mini-series |

A small eco-group began working in 2020 and this has already led to some significant steps. As a first task, we undertook the audit of energy and fittings within the Church buildings, as well as of materials such as cleaning products used on the premises. We also analysed the frequency of themes of creation and environment within our services, as well as looking at issues of personal lifestyle and political engagement on environmental matters. On the basis of this audit, we were delighted to gain a Bronze Eco-church award early in 2021 and are now working to hopefully gain a Silver and eventually, perhaps, a Gold award! We will shortly be trying to help members to think about the environmental impact of their own lifestyles. To find out more [click here](https://www.wesleychester.co.uk/about-us/eco-church/wesley-eco-church-group.php).

The group have worked closely with SPLAT (the Church’s children and young people’s groups) and aim to involve them as much as possible in projects undertaken. SPLAT are very enthusiastic about this. We are also working with the support of the Church leadership team and the administrative committee.

2021 sees an important date with the COP 26 conference in Glasgow. The eco -group has been working towards this with a [Climate Sunday service](https://www.wesleychester.co.uk/worship/sunday-services/sunday-morning-worship-25th-april-2021.php) held on April 25th, which had Deborah Tomkins of Green Christian as the speaker *(*49 minutes into the service). The convenor of the eco-group is regularly attending training from the ‘Make COP 26 count’ organisation.

Further details of Eco-Church can be found at <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>, and those of Make COP 26 Count at https://www.uspg.org.uk/cop26