



Creation Care Group

The Creation Care Group was set up two years ago to help St Mary's understand and address the developing environmental crises around us. As Christians we are not just following a trendy fashion of environmental concern, but want to show that we love creation because we love its Creator.

Our efforts so far were rewarded by an Eco Church bronze award last May. This recognised the progress we'd made in five areas:

Worship and Teaching – our worship and prayers often reflect our love and concern for creation, including a couple of Sundays in 2021 when we focussed on climate and the environment

Buildings – we're tracking the Church's 'carbon footprint', buying our electricity on a renewable tariff and progressively installing LED lights. But there's a long way to go – the Church of England is aiming that all its buildings are 'net zero carbon' by 2030.

Land – we've started managing the Churchyard to be of more benefit to wildlife

Community and Global Engagement – we've informed Church members about global concerns, particularly leading up to COP26 in Glasgow last November, and written to our MP about it

Lifestyle – we've tried to make sure that everyone has a copy of our home-grown leaflet of practical ways in which we can each enjoy more the world around us and do less damage to it, and there are regular tips in our Newsletters



But bronze is just the start – 25% score in each area. We're now working to improve that to silver, needing a 50% score in all five categories.



The most visible changes have been in the Churchyard where, with the Town Council, we've allowed areas to grow as meadows so that wild plants and creatures can thrive there. The Council also helped us to renovate a bed with fruit-bearing bushes, and create a new hedge and bed alongside the Circle of Remembrance with wildlife-friendly planting. We've created a bug hotel and compost heaps and installed a water butt. A 'Quiet Area' has been built with five benches to provide space for individuals or small groups to relax. All this has been recognised with another bronze award, sponsored by the local Wildlife Trusts.

The Council team has been very stretched over the past year, but we're very grateful for the extra work they've put in – it's actually taken them more cost and effort than the previous practice of regularly mowing and leaving the cuttings behind. We're also grateful to all the people who've adopted beds in the Churchyard, or helped at the Groundforce mornings or the new monthly Monday working parties.

There's more information about us on the Church website at www.eatonsocon.org/creation-care/.

We are looking for one or two more people to join our small Creation Care Group which leads these efforts to make the Church more creation-friendly. If you are interested, please contact one of us.

James Faulkner, Anthony Harris, Edward Jarvis, Roger Peppiatt.