

Blog written in Jan 2025:

We hold Eco Church Silver Award

In 2022 we achieved Eco Church Bronze Award and in January 2025 we achieved Eco Church Silver Award. This is a national award, given by the charity [ARocha](#). We are one of more than 4000 churches across England Wales that hold an Eco Church Award.

Here are some examples of what we've done in the last few years:

- Measured our carbon footprint as a church. We are now using this information to inform how we best go about reducing our carbon emissions.
- Begun the journey to install solar panels on St Peter's Centre. Various steps are needed to make this happen and, as of May 2025, we are submitting various applications to the local council.
- Held children's clothes swaps at two of our Messy Church events and a ladies' clothes swap at Steel in the Wind (our women's ministry). This helps avoid clothes going to waste.
- Become a [Fairtrade Church](#). We serve Fairtrade coffee, tea and sugar at gatherings and have hosted speakers from two organisations working with Fairtrade producers. We celebrate [Fairtrade Fortnight](#) and have hosted a stall at a Gathering selling Fairtrade items suitable for Christmas.
- Grown food in raised beds on land rented by our partner Baca, next door to St Peters. We have grown rhubarb, tomatoes, butternut squash, pumpkins, yellow courgettes, potatoes and beans. The produce has been used by Baca's young people.
- Installed compost bins which are being fed with waste from the St Peters kitchen and paper waste from the office. The compost will be used on the vegetable beds at Baca.
- Installed various wildlife boxes in St Peters' churchyard.
- Around 10 members of our community have been involved in lobbying our local MP at a weekly [climate vigil](#) outside their office.
- Invited [Ruth Valerio](#) to be a guest speaker at our Gatherings.
- Switched Open Heaven's savings accounts to a building society and a bank which don't invest in fossil fuels. They also meet a number of other criteria

around human rights and other ethical practices. We are planning to review our current account providers in the future.

- Encouraged people to cycling and walk to Gatherings. This has become so popular that the St Peters cycle racks are often full to bursting on a Sunday morning and we now encourage people coming to OH2 to use the cycle racks outside Baca's building as overflow cycle parking. There's also lots of cycle parking available at the Student Union for OH1'ers.
- Added resources to the St Peters Prayer Room to help our church community pray about environmental issues. This includes [Green Christian's monthly prayer guide](#), copies of [Jesus Died to Save the Planet](#) (published by LICC) and copies of [How to Pray for Climate Change](#) (published by 24/7 Prayer).
- As part of Loughborough Churches Partnership events, taken part in litter picks around Loughborough.
- Set up a social supermarket which makes sure that food that would have otherwise gone to waste is given to those who need it. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions from wasted food going to landfill.
- Organised a meeting for other churches within the Loughborough Churches Partnership who either hold an Eco Church award or are interested in starting their own Eco Church journey. This was an opportunity for churches from across the LCP to share ideas, top tips, successes and challenges with each other. We hope to organise more meetings in 2025.
- Held a creation care course during Lent 2023.

What can you do?

There are lots of things we can all do in our own lives and communities to care for creation. Below are just a few:

- Work out your personal carbon footprint. You can most effectively reduce your carbon emissions if you know what your emissions from different areas of your life are. The [WWF Carbon Footprint tool](#) is one of the easiest to use.
- Buy chocolate with the Fairtrade logo. The Christian bookshop and Oxfam shop in Loughborough both stock Fairtrade chocolate, as do most supermarkets. Fairtrade works with farmers and workers so they can improve their living standards, invest in their communities and businesses, and protect our shared environment. [Find out more](#).
- Switch to an ethical bank account and/or pensions. Many banks and pension funds invest some of their funds in fossil fuels. We can only effectively tackle climate change if we stop burning fossil fuels. Some useful links.

- <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/>
- <https://www.mymothertree.com/bank-league-table>
- <https://makemymoneymatter.co.uk/>
- Car share to gatherings. We know that cycling and walking doesn't work for everyone, but could you share a lift with someone else who is coming from the same direction?
- Join the OH Gardening Group. This is a great opportunity to help grow veg (and learn how to if you haven't done it before).
- Learn more about the climate crisis and what you can do about it with [resources from Tearfund](#).

If you'd like to know more about what we're doing as a church or get involved, you can contact the OH Eco Team via the Open Heaven office.