



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**



**ST. STEPHEN'S**  
THE BEACON OF LANSDOWN

# GUIDE TO: **ECO CHURCH GOLD**

**PREPARED FOR ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH**  
BY THE UoB CARBON REDUCTION VIP TEAM.

**APRIL 2026**



## Executive Summary

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This report has been prepared by the University of Bath VIP team to support St Stephen's Church in progressing environmental sustainability, improved financial resilience, and increased community engagement. The work contributes to the Church of England's commitment to achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and uses the Eco Church framework to assess progress across five areas: Worship & Teaching, Building & Energy, Land & Nature, Community & Global Engagement, and Lifestyle.

Based on the most recent Eco Church survey (early 2025), St Stephen's currently holds a Bronze award. The church performs strongly in Worship & Teaching (Gold level) and shows good progress in Land & Nature, and Community & Global Engagement (Silver level). The Lifestyle and Building & Energy categories remain at Bronze and currently prevent progression to a Silver award.

This report identifies quick wins and longer-term actions to improve sustainability performance, reduce operational costs, and strengthen community use of the church, supporting St Stephen's journey toward achieving a Silver and ultimately Gold Eco Church award.

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## Introduction

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### **Decarbonisation**

The Church of England have pledged to be Net-Zero Carbon by 2030.

For churches this means investigating low-carbon heating technologies, energy-efficient lighting and working towards Eco Church awards.

### **What is Eco Church?**

The Eco Church award is a framework that supports churches in making eco-positive decisions in several aspects of church life. The survey questions are split into the following areas:

- Worship & Teaching
- Building & Energy
- Land & Nature
- Community & Global Engagement
- Lifestyle

## How is the award graded?

Responses to the A Rocha UK survey dictate whether churches receive the bronze, silver or gold award.

Churches must reach a level across all 5 categories to receive an award for that level.

In order to achieve an award in each section, the following thresholds must be met:

**Bronze – 25%**

**Silver – 50%**

**Gold – 75%**

Churches are encouraged to add explanations at the bottom of each section to describe specific actions taken to apply the survey framework.

Where ‘Not Applicable’ answers are given, the specific question is removed for the calculation. The overall score changes but the same thresholds remain. Additional comments should be supplied at the end of the category section to explain why a question does not apply.

For example, in the case of St Stephen’s it is likely that insulating the main church would exacerbate damp. Therefore, a ‘Not Applicable’ answer with clear explanation would be sufficient.

## Where are St Stephens now?

**Current Award:** Bronze

Based on the Eco Church survey responses submitted by St Stephen’s in January 2025, we have quantified their current progress in respects to the threshold above. We have identified the number of points needed to reach higher award levels. As per the Eco Church guidelines, to be awarded an Eco Church level, churches must achieve an award level across all categories.

- **Progression to Silver:** the bronze level Lifestyle and Building & Energy categories are preventing St Stephen’s from progressing to silver.
- **Progression to Gold:** progress must be made in Building & Energy, Land & Nature, Community & Global Engagement, and Lifestyle to reach Gold.

| Category                                 | Award Level | Percentage | Points to Silver | Additional Points to Gold |
|--|-------------|------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Worship &amp; Teaching</b>            | Gold        | 77%        | N/A              | N/A                       |
| <b>Building &amp; Energy</b>             | Bronze      | 41%        | 35               | 293                       |
| <b>Land &amp; Nature</b>                 | Silver      | 53%        | N/A              | 64                        |
| <b>Community &amp; Global Engagement</b> | Silver      | 56%        | N/A              | 90                        |
| <b>Lifestyle</b>                         | Bronze      | 33%        | 36               | 88                        |

## How to use this guide.

This report outlines how St Stephen’s can achieve the Silver and then Gold Eco Church award. It is designed to be used by both the church leadership and future VIP teams. Progress will be made in a variety of ways. Throughout the report we have identified:

- Quick wins – these are speedy, simple and cheap actions to push progress.
- Long-term aims – actions that require more work, organisation & finance.

# WORSHIP & TEACHING

## ABOUT

The Worship and Teaching category encourages churches to recognise the climate crisis and need for urgent action within its teaching. Through prayer, music and preaching, churches should promote caring for the Earth, or ‘creation care’.

## CURRENT AWARD

**LEVEL: GOLD**

**PROGRESSION: 77%**



Although already at the gold level, there is still room for further progression!

## SUCCESS SO FAR

- Worship and Prayer – St Stephen’s regularly prays for environmental issues. Liturgies and music often encourage caring for the Earth.
- Leadership – The Rector and Associate Priest are extremely supportive of work towards Eco Church awards.
- There is regular celebration of creation care
- Scruffy Church and ‘Hangout’ regularly worship and teach creation care outdoors
- Guest speakers from Christian environmental organisations – The John Ray Initiative provided a set of 4 webinar workshops linking the environment to Christianity.

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

### QUICK WINS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT                       | QUICK WIN   | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS  |
|--|---|---|
| Use of oil filled candles.<br>[Criteria 9] | Switch to non-fossil fuel wax candles e.g. bee’s wax.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wholesale church candle stockist: <a href="https://www.eden.co.uk">bees wax   Eden.co.uk</a></li> <li>• Bee’s wax candles made in Bath:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Magee's Beeswax Candles</a> 🐝</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| Use of plastic flowers.<br>[Criteria 9]    | Switch to locally sourced, seasonal real flowers. Arrangements should be foam-free and use biodegradable materials. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General guidance on sustainable flowers in churches:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Sustainable Church Flowers</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Flower Farm in Bath. Flowers grown without chemical, pesticides, synthetic fertilisers and peat. Flowers available for wholesale. Flowers are seasonal:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Seasonal flower farm and florist in Bath</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

## LONG-TERM GOALS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | WAYS TO IMPROVE  | GETTING THERE   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Confidence of church leadership to teach environmental issues and respond to eco-anxiety.</p> <p>[Criteria 11]</p>   | <p>Leadership should undertake training on environmental issues and eco-anxiety.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CRES Certificate – A two-year course studying rural and environmental issues from a Christian point of view.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">CRES Certificate – CRES</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Carbon Literacy Programme – A climate change training course that teaches the impact of ways to reduce carbon emissions. The University of Bath could deliver Carbon Literacy courses.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Become Carbon Literate - The Carbon Literacy Project</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Deep Waters Programme – An 8-week programme to discuss anxieties relating to climate change. Participants can join pre-arranged programmes. Alternatively, St Stephen’s could use the weekly resources to facilitate their own workshops.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The Deep Waters Programme – Borrowed Time</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <p>Teaching of creation care to children and youth groups is already well-established at St Stephen’s but there are always more innovative ways to teach caring for the earth.</p> <p>[Criteria 14]</p> | <p>Work with the VIP team to explore new ways of promoting creation care.</p>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VIP team could work with the church to provide climate change and eco-related resources to provide fun and educational sessions, teaching young people about caring for the Earth. Ideas could include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental science experiments – For example: <a href="#">Make a water filter   National Geographic Kids</a></li> <li>• Citizen Science - <a href="#">Citizen Science for Kids: Engaging with and Supporting Nature</a></li> <li>• Recycled art workshop - <a href="#">9 Creative &amp; Easy Art Projects For Kids With Recycled Materials To Try At Home</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |
| <p>Outdoor worship should be extended beyond Scruffy Church and ‘Hangout’ service to adult worship also.</p> <p>[Criteria 7]</p>  | <p>Trial outdoor services for all age groups.</p>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Scruffy service could be a good opportunity to engage in the ‘Forest Church’ movement. St Stephen’s could make use of their church garden and the neighbouring woodland to take worship outside.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Could now be the moment for 'Forest' churches to grow?   The Church of England</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Muddy Church provide ideas and resources to engage the community in creation care whilst outside. Resources are available by a ‘Donate as feel/can’ basis.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Community   Muddy Church</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

# BUILDING & ENERGY

## ABOUT

Buildings generate the most significant aspect of energy emissions. The Building and Energy category encourages churches to reduce their carbon emissions from buildings and energy use as well as considering future use in a changing climate.

## CURRENT AWARD

**LEVEL:** BRONZE

**PROGRESSION:** 41%



Although previously achieving silver, due to the change in survey questions the church is currently achieving bronze instead. Requiring 35 points to achieve silver.

## SUCCESS SO FAR

- Building is regularly used (at least weekly) – although this is looking to be improved upon, it is already a good foundation as it means the building has been kept in good condition and that the congregation are aware of the improvement to be made.
- Strong Eco Church Champion and vision group, with great knowledge to support the decarbonisation of the church. Additionally, the University can support.
- Renewable energy tariff for the church.
- Church has installed water-saving devices in terms of water-efficient toilets and water butts – again we can extend this to all water facilities but it is a great start.

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

### QUICK WINS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | QUICK WIN  | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS  |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Commitment to reducing carbon footprint year on year in line with the denomination's commitment to net zero.</p> <p>[Criteria 3, 4, 5, 6]</p> | <p>Map the existing carbon emission baseline using one of the tools.</p> <p>Create a basic roadmap to improve.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://360carbon.org/en-gb">https://360carbon.org/en-gb</a><br/>This carbon tool is recommended by A Rocha and is specifically for churches. The VIP team is keen to support the use of this carbon mapping tool alongside the church.</li> <li>• We would suggest then dividing this tCO2e by the number of people using the church in a week. This would allow a better comparison in the future when more people are using the church so the emissions may go up despite improvements to the church.</li> </ul> |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | QUICK WIN   | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS   |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Increasing knowledge and confidence of interested parties.</p> <p>[Criteria 8]</p> | <p>Host climate literacy events, climate Fresks, biodiversity symposium etc.</p> <p>Become facilitators and integrate events into yearly calendar for the whole congregation if appropriate.</p>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brian Rutter has already delivered a Climate Fresk for leadership. The VIP team could help to deliver these sessions for the wider congregation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://climatefresk.org/world/">https://climatefresk.org/world/</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• As noted in the Worship &amp; Teaching category, carbon literacy training is a great place to start! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Become Carbon Literate - The Carbon Literacy Project</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| <p>Draught-proof the church buildings.</p> <p>[Criteria 10]</p>                       | <p>Compression seals – for sides and top of door. Cheap and easy to install.</p> <p>Solutions to avoid; closing existing purposeful ventilation gaps, airtight secondary glazing, closing openings between head of wall and roof.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For draught proofing the crypt: <a href="https://aeroseal.co.uk/">https://aeroseal.co.uk/</a></li> <li>• We need to be careful when draught proofing as the Church is circa 1919 (1840s) and is thus a <i>traditional</i> building. These are designed to be vapour permeable and draughtproofing them leads to risk of condensation and mould.</li> <li>• Church of England Advice: <a href="https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2025-06/ventilation_v1_280525.pdf">https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2025-06/ventilation_v1_280525.pdf</a></li> <li>• A Rocha Eco Church advice: <a href="#">B4-Insulation-double-glazing-and-draught-proofing.pdf</a></li> <li>• Expert to consult: <a href="https://www.tcassociates.co.uk/">https://www.tcassociates.co.uk/</a></li> </ul> |
| <p>Insulate exposed heating pipes.</p> <p>[Criteria 11]</p>                           | <p>Identify and wrap any exposed heating pipes.</p> <p>The church had started this prior to VIP Team engagement but we noted some remain exposed.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces heat loss thus improving energy efficiency.</li> <li>• Guidance suggests 25mm thick insulation. Rubber, closed cell foam or fibreglass for hot heating pipes to handle the temperature.</li> <li>• Use radiator pipe sleeves and connectors.</li> </ul>   |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | QUICK WIN  | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS   |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Climate resilience action plan in place.<br/>[Criteria 14]</p> <p>‘Safe space’ policy<br/>[Criteria 28]</p> | <p>Create and initiate a climate resilience action plan.</p> <p>Consider: climate related risks and outline steps taken to mitigate these (e.g planning for extreme heat).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the CofE webpage regarding climate resilience in churches.<br/><a href="https://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/climate-resilient-church">https://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/climate-resilient-church</a> . It has advice on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why climate resilience/adaptation matters.</li> <li>What weather we need to prepare for.</li> <li>Where to start.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Further guidance:<br/><a href="https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/ccb_resilient_church_guidance_final.pdf">https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/ccb_resilient_church_guidance_final.pdf</a></li> </ul> |
| <p>Create an operations plan.<br/>[Criteria 27]</p>  | <p>Implementing an operations plan focused on energy efficiency and reduction.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic data-driven framework that integrates sustainability into day-to-day processes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an energy audit.</li> <li>Benchmark and set goals</li> <li>Appoint energy management team.</li> <li>Analyse the data and track consumption.</li> <li>Review goals and implement new strategies to reach them.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Strategies could include many areas listed in this document such as replacing lighting, upgrading insulation where possible, introducing water saving features etc.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Waste and recycling policy.<br/>[Criteria 30]</p>   | <p>Write up a policy and share with the congregation. Highlight this with posters provided by the university.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We understand that the current waste strategy is that members of the congregation take home the waste to bin with their own.</li> <li>Creating a recycling strategy and having different people take home different aspects to recycle with their own waste. This would maintain the current system that works for the church with increased granularity in the waste separation.</li> <li>Water waste management strategies could include increase rainwater capture and use around the grounds or grey water recycling.</li> </ul>  |

## LONG-TERM GOALS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | WAYS TO IMPROVE   | GETTING THERE   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Using LED lighting throughout the church.</p> <p>[Criteria 16]</p>                        | <p>Replace all non-LED lights and consider automatic sensors.</p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Map out the existing lighting, internal and external.</li> <li>2. Highlight where the non-LEDs are in the building.</li> <li>3. Plan changes, to the whole churches lighting scheme in line with future works.</li> <li>4. Replace any high energy bulbs that won't be impacted by future changes to LED first.</li> <li>5. Ensure all new lights are LED going forward.</li> </ol> <p><a href="https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/church-care/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/lighting">https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/church-care/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/lighting</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance and template for how to write a statement of need etc for all proposed works such as a new lighting scheme:<br/><a href="https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/statements-significance-and-needs">https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/statements-significance-and-needs</a></li> </ul> |
| <p>Oil or gas supply is ongoing to be discontinued or non-existent.</p> <p>[Criteria 17]</p> | <p>While the boiler works, it is best to continue use. However, we recommend switching to a 'green gas tariff' in the short term.</p>     | <p>'Green' gas tariff at the point of contract renewal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.ecotricity.co.uk/">https://www.ecotricity.co.uk/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://100green.com/our-tariffs/">https://100green.com/our-tariffs/</a></li> </ul> <p>When the boiler nears the end of its life, switch it out for electric or another more sustainable alternative such as a heat pump or electric boiler.</p>   |
| <p>Install an internal energy control system.</p> <p>[Criteria 20]</p>                       | <p>Automatic lighting and controlled heating systems can reduce energy use.</p> <p>Other energy control systems should be considered.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider installing sensor-controlled lighting (as above).</li> <li>• E.g. St Saviour's use the 'Church Suite' booking system, integrated to their heating management system 'Energy Klarity'. Heating is switched on in the specific room booked. It is automatically switched on to reach set temperature for the start of the booking and to maintain this throughout. It also matches the booking to designated heating temperature. For example, a lower temperature is required for their Scouts group compared to their Women's Institute group. St. Saviour's have noted huge energy savings.</li> </ul>   |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | WAYS TO IMPROVE  | GETTING THERE   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>The current gas boiler heating system is a major source of emissions.</p> <p>[Criteria 21,22]</p> | <p>During the renovations, alternative, net-zero carbon options should be considered. However, optimal heating solutions depend on building usage.</p> <p>In line with the Building Standards, we recommend assessing how St Stephen's will be used before deciding on a heating system.</p> <p>The findings of the community survey should inform this.</p> | <p>Heating should be electrified and run using renewable electricity.</p> <p>There are two key strategies, space heating and localised heating.:</p> <p><b>Space Heating</b> – The whole space is heated. Generally, there is a central plant such as a heat pump or electric boiler, with heat emitted via underfloor heaters, radiators or hot air blowers.</p> <p><b>Localised Heating</b> – This aims to heat the people not the space, using technologies such as infrared heaters, under pew heaters or heated cushions.</p> <p>From our case study analysis, we found that space heating systems such as an air source heat pump with underfloor heating were most successful when run continuously so ideal for regularly used spaces. Localised heating systems such as infrared lamps were successful in intermittently used spaces but found to be too expensive to run for long periods of time.</p> <p>Heating solutions should not only consider the comfort of church users but also the building's fabric. Balancing building conservation and the comfort of user is a challenge. Relative humidity should be monitored to protect the building's fabric. Humidity sensors and monitoring systems can help with this. We recommend consulting an expert.</p> |
| <p>Zoned heating should be considered in the refurbishments.</p> <p>[Criteria 21]</p>                | <p>Whilst zoned heating can be achieved via the space heating methods described above, it can also be achieved by physical zoning methods.</p>   | <p>Many churches have installed glass screens to zone their heating. Similarly to the glass door used in St Stephen's foyer, these create draught proof areas.</p> <p>Again, the use of these would depend on the use of the building. However, they should be considered. For example, it may be beneficial to have glass screens to zone a smaller area of the main nave for weekly services. This would mean a smaller volume of air would need to be heated.</p>  |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | WAYS TO IMPROVE   | GETTING THERE   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Installation of solar PVs or other renewable energy generation.</p> <p>[Criteria 23]</p>                                   | <p>Incorporate PVs on the church roof.</p> <p>Investigate other opportunities for renewable energy.</p> <p>This will reduce the running cost of the church and in some cases earn the church money, where they're able to sell electricity to the national grid.</p> <p>Symbol of sustainability on the fabric of the church.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previously investigated and identified as not possible however we've had feedback from consultants that PVs have evolved, and it would be worth reconsidering.</li> <li>• The current renewable electricity tariff is operationally expensive. As we recommend electrified heating, it is worth noting the associated increased electricity cost. Installing solar panels would reduce this operational cost.</li> <li>• Church of England guidance: <a href="#">CCB_SolarPV_Guidance.pdf</a></li> <li>• Case study – Chester Cathedral: <a href="#">Climate Change Adaptation Case Study: Installing Solar Panels at Chester Cathedral   Historic England</a></li> <li>• Case Study – Southsea Church, Portsmouth: <a href="#">Diocese of Portsmouth - News - Solar panels installed at Southsea church</a></li> <li>• Other renewable opportunities include:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Heat pumps (as above)</li> <li>2. Wind turbine – planning unlikely.</li> <li>3. Micro hydro power – no adjacent river.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |
| <p>Procurement policy in place that prioritises products and services with low environmental impact.</p> <p>[Criteria 29]</p> | <p>Write up a sustainable procurement policy and share with relevant members of the church.</p> <p>Reflect on its usage and impact in 6 months time.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Really useful website explaining the importance, benefits and roadmap to sustainable procurement: <a href="https://sievo.com/en/resources/sustainable-procurement-101">https://sievo.com/en/resources/sustainable-procurement-101</a></li> </ul>   |
| <p>Prioritise sustainable use of the site.</p> <p>[Criteria 31]</p>   | <p>Create a letting policy that prioritises sustainable use of the site</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letting policy includes:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purpose and scope.</li> <li>2. Tenant selection and criteria.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• This is where terms can be curated to prioritise sustainable use. Creating an eco-friendly x economical matrix may help or developing a framework to assess and compare uses.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tenancy terms. - Can be adapted to insist on more sustainable practice whilst using the building e.g lighting, heating use.</li> <li>2. Rent and deposits.</li> <li>3. Property management and maintenance - Can frequent users contribute to the cost or action of maintenance?</li> <li>4. Termination and rent review.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>   |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT         | WAYS TO IMPROVE                             | GETTING THERE  |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Offsetting.<br>[Criteria 32] | Last resort to make up to net-zero by 2030. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once carbon footprint has been measured, changes have been made and the carbon emissions have been reassessed, the church then needs to purchase verified reputable offsets.</li> <li>• Verified reputable offsets as per Eco Church guidance: <a href="https://verra.org/programs/verified-carbon-standard/">https://verra.org/programs/verified-carbon-standard/</a></li> </ul> |

## FURTHER NOTES

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[Criteria 19 and 25] The church has organised smart meter installation to monitor energy use on multiple occasions and each time has run into problem with getting the space completely empty. As such this action is more appropriate for consideration further in the future.

# LAND & NATURE

## ABOUT

Biodiversity and ecosystem services are an important aspect of climate resilience. This section discusses how the land surrounding the church can be used to promote such services and engage the local community.

## CURRENT AWARD

**LEVEL: SILVER**

**PROGRESSION: 53%**



An additional 64 points are required to achieve gold.

## SUCCESS SO FAR

- The land surrounding the church is managed for the encouragement of native wildlife, including animals, birds and plants. This is done through the presence of bird boxes, bug hotels and stocked wildlife feeding stations year-round
- Active garden management by a team of volunteers
- Growing plants on the land that benefit bees, butterflies and birds.
- The church maintains a section of land for native wildlife.
- Participation in “No Mow May” and has an established mowing routine that prioritises conservation of grassland and local wildlife.
- No chemicals used in land maintenance – pesticides, herbicides or fer
- Community garden that grows fruit and vegetables
- On-site composting.
- Active encouragement of recreational activities amongst the church community
- Fostered nature appreciation in youth through holding environmental workshops (building bird boxes, tree appreciation, etc.)
- Encouraged children to grow sweet peas in the church garden

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

### QUICK WINS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT                | QUICK WIN   | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS   |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Land Management<br>[Criteria 6, 13] | Currently, the gardens are managed by a team of volunteers, but there is no formal plan for upkeep. | Eco Church – Creating a Management Plan:<br><a href="https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Land13-Management-plan.pdf">https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Land13-Management-plan.pdf</a><br><br>A month-by-month guide on garden care:<br><a href="https://www.climbingwild.co.uk/a-month-by-month-gardening-calendar-for-uk-homeowners/">https://www.climbingwild.co.uk/a-month-by-month-gardening-calendar-for-uk-homeowners/</a> |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | QUICK WIN  | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS   |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Land Management (continued)</p> <p>[Criteria 6, 13]</p>   |  | <p>Example Churchyard Management Plan: <a href="https://www.somersetwildlife.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/East%20Harptree%20Church%20of%20St%20Laurence%20Management%20Plan%202021%20redacted.pdf">https://www.somersetwildlife.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/East%20Harptree%20Church%20of%20St%20Laurence%20Management%20Plan%202021%20redacted.pdf</a></p> <p>Implementing a formal volunteer schedule and including a month-by-month plan for maintenance could improve efficiency and help the garden flourish further.</p>  |
| <p>Living Churchyard Scheme, T25 or other scheme designed to promote conservation on church land.</p> <p>[Criteria 9, 6]</p> | <p>Implement garden care tips from The Living Churchyard or a similar scheme.</p> <p>Promote T25 to congregation and identify T25 species around the church.</p> | <p>The Living Churchyards Scheme: <a href="https://www.somersetwildlife.org/wilder-churches">https://www.somersetwildlife.org/wilder-churches</a></p> <p>The Target 25 (T25) scheme is a project designed to help declining wildlife and habitats. Encourage the congregation to identify and protect these species. Each species could form an eco-tip topic. <a href="https://arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/T25-species-All.pdf">https://arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/T25-species-All.pdf</a></p>   |
| <p>Grass Mowing</p> <p>[Criteria 5, 6]</p>   | <p>Reduce mowing frequency and/or allow different grass lengths in different areas to encourage wildlife.</p>  | <p>B&amp;NES Grass Maintenance (see lower frequency option): <a href="https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/grass-maintenance">https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/grass-maintenance</a></p> <p>The Living Churchyard Scheme recommends the following: “We recommend maintaining three different grass lengths in the summer months. Identify areas which can be left as long grass to create a wildflower meadow, areas where grass can be cut at a medium length and those areas which need a short close cut e.g. pathways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut the long grass (30-40 cm) in May and September (although flexibility will be needed depending on growing conditions)</li> <li>• Cut the medium length grass (15-25 cm) in May, June, August and October.</li> <li>• Cut the short grass (5 cm) weekly or fortnightly.</li> </ul> |

## LONG-TERM GOALS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT                                      | WAYS TO IMPROVE  | GETTING THERE   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>More Frequent Wildlife Surveys</p> <p>[Criteria 8]</p> | <p>Ensure up-to-date knowledge of wildlife on the Church grounds by conducting annual surveys. This will ensure accurate conservation measures are taken.</p> <p>Include the Church youth group in such events to further promote nature appreciation.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange a date when volunteers are available to survey the Church grounds.</li> <li>• Record species name, location found and approximate frequency.</li> <li>• Applications such as iNaturalist are excellent for surveys as the online community can help with species identification.</li> <li>• If involving the youth group, using resources from BioBlitz can allow for further engagement (Link: <a href="https://www.bnhc.org.uk/bioblitz/national-bioblitz-network">https://www.bnhc.org.uk/bioblitz/national-bioblitz-network</a>)</li> <li>• Potential to run such events seasonally and encourage participation from the local community, not just church members</li> </ul> |
| <p>Community Use</p> <p>[Criteria 13]</p>                 | <p>Allow and encourage members of the local community to use the Church gardens as a recreational space.</p>   | <p>N/A - up to your discretion.</p>   |
| <p>Native tree planting schemes</p> <p>[Criteria 6]</p>   | <p>A long-term aim for the church is to participate in responsible planting of native trees, following guidance from environmental professionals.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This church would face challenges in being able to do this within the church's ground, due to lack of space and the structural issues of the building that have previously been caused by trees (which have now been removed).</li> <li>• Potential for interested members of the congregation to participate in tree planting activities at an external site. This is an event that could be run by the EcoChurch group and linked to other sections of the EcoChurch survey, e.g. promoting care for God's creation.</li> </ul>  |

## FURTHER NOTES

[Criteria 4] The church's land does not contain a pond or wetland area. While this is beneficial for wildlife, this is not present in the area and this is unlikely to be introduced in the future.

# COMMUNITY & GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

## ABOUT

Protection of the planet cannot be done in isolation. This category encourages churches to engage both socially and politically in social and environmental justice. Collective advocacy and community action is more powerful than the church body alone.

## CURRENT AWARD

**LEVEL: SILVER**

**PROGRESSION: 56%**



To reach gold standard, 90 more points are required.

## SUCCESS SO FAR

- St Stephen's has an active Eco Church committee leader who regularly attends the local Cafe (Christian Action for the Environment) and encourages other Eco Church leaders to do the same.
- The church encourages enjoying nature in a variety of ways. From the development of a wildlife garden and promotion during the Great Big Green Week to creation of an Eco Trail around the local area.
- Lift sharing is common within the congregation.
- Environmental issues are commonly communicated to the congregation in Sermons, Service Intercessions and Benefice Prayers.
- Regular composting of coffee grounds and tea bags.

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

### QUICK WINS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | QUICK WIN  | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS   |
|--|--|--|
| Meals provided by the church 'Sometimes' use LOAF (Local, Organic, Animal-Friendly, Fairtrade).<br>[Criteria 11] | Increase the use of LOAF ingredients in meals.<br><br>Awareness of LOAF ingredients is key to implementing change in the meals provided. | The following links are examples of shops in Bath providing LOAF products:<br><br>Farm Shop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://newtonfarmfoods.co.uk">https://newtonfarmfoods.co.uk</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.priorparkfarmshop.co.uk">https://www.priorparkfarmshop.co.uk</a></li> </ul> Organic Food Shops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.harvest-bath.coop">http://www.harvest-bath.coop</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://uk.scoopwholefoods.com">https://uk.scoopwholefoods.com</a></li> </ul> |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | QUICK WIN  | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS  |
|---|--|---|
| <p>The church occasionally holds events for local people to enjoy nature.</p> <p>[Criteria 7]</p>   | <p>St Stephen's already has an Eco-Trail set up! We recommend wider promotion via a poster and E-Alerts. Additional organised walks around the Eco-Trial could provide an opportunity to engage with more people, who may be uncomfortable exploring a nature trail alone.</p> | <p>Useful guide for holding organised walks: <a href="https://parkscommunity.org.uk/how_to_guide/guided-walks/">https://parkscommunity.org.uk/how_to_guide/guided-walks/</a></p> <p>Several walks could be organised, each with a specific focus. Examples could range from more secular themes such as tree identification, or bird spotting for wider participation. More spiritual walks could also be led to discuss creation care in more detail.</p> <p>The VIP team can produce posters to encourage individuals to use the Eco Trial.</p> |
| <p>Although the church encourages minimisation of resources in some areas, we identified that encouragement of saving water and recycling could be improved.</p> <p>[Criteria 13]</p> | <p>We recommend promoting water saving and recycling via posters and e-alerts.</p>   | <p>The VIP team can provide resources for this, e.g. posters and e-alerts.</p>  |
| <p>More could be done to promote sustainable transport.</p> <p>[Criteria 12]</p>  | <p>We recommend promoting walking and cycling via posters and e-alerts.</p>  | <p>The VIP team can provide resources for this, e.g. posters and e-alerts.</p>  |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | QUICK WIN   | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS  |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Registering the church with the Fairtrade foundation.</p> <p>[Criteria 10]</p> | <p>Register as a Fairtrade Church!</p> <p>There are two main requirements to become a Fairtrade church:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use Fairtrade products where possible (particularly tea, coffee and sugar). Fairtrade products should be promoted to the congregation.</li> <li>2. Embed Fairtrade into worship. For example, Fairtrade Fortnight.</li> </ol> <p>Registration involves completion of a 30 min form.</p> <p>Step 1 can be considered a quick win. The VIP team can produce posters and write a E-Alert post to promote Fairtrade food to the congregation.</p> | <p>Information about Fairtrade registration for places of worship:<br/> <a href="https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/campaign-with-us/grassroots-groups/places-of-worship.html">https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/campaign-with-us/grassroots-groups/places-of-worship.html</a></p> <p>Link to registration form:<br/> <a href="https://www.tfaforms.com/4822880">https://www.tfaforms.com/4822880</a></p> <p>Fairtrade brands for consumables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sugar: <a href="https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/products-and-producers/fairtrade-products/sugar.html">https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/products-and-producers/fairtrade-products/sugar.html</a></li> <li>• Tea: <a href="https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/resources/blog/essential-fairtrade-teas-to-try.html">https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/resources/blog/essential-fairtrade-teas-to-try.html</a></li> <li>• Coffee: <a href="https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/products-and-producers/fairtrade-products/coffee.html">https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/products-and-producers/fairtrade-products/coffee.html</a></li> </ul> |

## LONG-TERM GOALS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | WAYS TO IMPROVE  | GETTING THERE   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Organising events for local people to engage with local leaders on environmental issues.</p> <p>[Criteria 5]</p> | <p>Organise regular events with local leaders such as MPs or council leaders and local people the opportunity to engage in environmental issues.</p> | <p>Wera Hobhouse, the MP for Bath actively supports environmental initiatives and has been recognised for her drive in the nation's decarbonisation efforts.</p> <p><a href="https://werahobhouse.org.uk/climate-nature/nature-recovery/">https://werahobhouse.org.uk/climate-nature/nature-recovery/</a></p> <p>Currently there are plans to invite the MP and local council leaders to a celebration event of our university support of St Stephen's Sustainability Journey. Creating awareness of the project should be seen as the first step of engagement with local leaders.</p> |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | WAYS TO IMPROVE  | GETTING THERE  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Arrange for local environmentalists to speak in the church's services.</p> <p>[Criteria 6]</p> | <p>Invite local environmentalists to speak in church services.</p>                               | <p>Many staff and students at the University are well-informed on environmental issues and could provide talks at the church about their specific interests. A series of talks could be designed by the the VIP team and delivered to the church at regular sessions.</p> <p>Alternatively, external environmentalists could be contacted. For example, Transition Bath held an event in June 2024 with 6 environmental speakers. These individuals could be invited to give similar talks at St Stephen's.</p> <p><a href="https://transitionbath.org/six-speakers-talk-sustainability/">https://transitionbath.org/six-speakers-talk-sustainability/</a></p>   |
| <p>Holding events to increase environmental awareness.</p> <p>[Criteria 7]</p>                    | <p>Events can be held at the church to increase environmental awareness in the congregation.</p> | <p>The VIP Team could help St Stephen's to run environmental awareness-raising events. We are aware that Brian Rutter led a Climate Fresk (<a href="https://climatefresk.org/world/">https://climatefresk.org/world/</a>) at the church. We recommend holding similar events. A range of events will reach a wider audience. Events could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity Collage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://climateclarity.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Climate-Clarity---1-Page---Biodiversity-Collage-Logos.pdf">https://climateclarity.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Climate-Clarity---1-Page---Biodiversity-Collage-Logos.pdf</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recycled art workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://cleanriver.com/resource/recycling-projects-kids-schools/">https://cleanriver.com/resource/recycling-projects-kids-schools/</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Environmental science experiments. For example, the greenhouse gas effect, water filtration or ice cap melting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.naturesave.co.uk/going-back-to-to-school-with-climate-change-experiment/">https://www.naturesave.co.uk/going-back-to-to-school-with-climate-change-experiment/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/resources/project/how-melting-ice-causes-sea-level-rise/">https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/resources/project/how-melting-ice-causes-sea-level-rise/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/books/article/water-wonders">https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/books/article/water-wonders</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sustainability workshops such as Repair Cafes, Beeswax Wrap Making, DIY Natural Cleaning Product making and Community Clean Ups.</li> </ul> |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | WAYS TO IMPROVE  | GETTING THERE  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Hosting green fairs at the church.</p> <p>[Criteria 9]</p>                     | <p>Host more Green Fairs.</p>  | <p>Hosting Green Fairs requires significant space. Therefore, it is likely that this would be more successful following the renovations associated with the Beacon of Lansdown project. The following links provide information on Green Fairs held at other churches. Generally, they include a series of Talks provided by local environmentalists, stalls by local environmental groups providing advice, workshops and sustainable goods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allhallowgate Methodist Church Green Fair</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.ripontgether.com/greenfair/">https://www.ripontgether.com/greenfair/</a></li> <li>• Green Spring Fair at Llandaff Cathedral</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.llandaffcathedral.org.uk/green-spring-fair/">https://www.llandaffcathedral.org.uk/green-spring-fair/</a></li> </ul>   |
| <p>Supporting environmental charities financially.</p> <p>[Criteria 16]</p>       | <p>If the church is in a position to support environmental charities financially then donations could be collected to support charities local to the church.</p>   | <p>We understand the church may not currently be in a position to support environmental charities financially. However, it is the long-term aim of the church to become more financially sustainable. At such a time, financial support of the following local environmental charities could be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Avon Wildlife Trust - <a href="https://www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk">https://www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Bristol Avon Rivers Trust - <a href="https://bristolavonriverstrust.org">https://bristolavonriverstrust.org</a></li> <li>• Forest of Avon Trust - <a href="https://forestofavon.org">https://forestofavon.org</a></li> <li>• More Trees BANES – <a href="https://moretrees.earth">https://moretrees.earth</a></li> </ul>   |
| <p>Registering the church with the Fairtrade foundation.</p> <p>[Criteria 10]</p> | <p>Please refer to the Quick Wins for Fairtrade Church information.</p> <p>Step 2 can be considered a long-term goal. Running events as part of Fairtrade Fortnight can be explored by the VIP Team.</p> | <p>Information about Fairtrade registration for places of worship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/campaign-with-us/grassroots-groups/places-of-worship.html">https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/campaign-with-us/grassroots-groups/places-of-worship.html</a></li> </ul> <p>Link to registration form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.tfaforms.com/4822880">https://www.tfaforms.com/4822880</a></li> </ul> <p>Fairtrade Fortnight Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/resources/resource-library/fairtrade-fortnight-resources.html">https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/resources/resource-library/fairtrade-fortnight-resources.html</a></li> </ul> |

# LIFESTYLE

## ABOUT

The Lifestyle section of the Eco Church award includes four subthemes: influence, carbon footprint, personal choices and nature. This section focuses on the promotion of sustainable behaviours by the church's Eco Church Team and the responsibility of individuals within the congregation to make changes in their everyday lives. This includes reducing personal carbon emissions and caring for animals and the natural environment.

## CURRENT AWARD

**LEVEL:** Bronze

**PROGRESSION:** 40%



There are some quick wins that are easily achievable towards silver level, and several long-term improvements that can be made in order to be awarded gold! 36 points required to achieve silver and 88 to achieve gold.

## SUCCESS SO FAR

- The Eco Church Team sends weekly Eco-Tips and e-alerts to around 200 subscribed members of the congregation, which include practical lifestyle tips for caring for God's creation. The church's website has an eco-section for eco-related news and information. [Criteria 2, 6]
- Reduction of car use is encouraged within the church, with lifts being given to church events and services, reducing carbon emissions per person in their travel to and from the church. The use of public transport is also promoted. [Criteria 8]
- The church hosts events and activities outdoors and encourages the congregation to volunteer. [Criteria 12]
- The church supports the congregation to manage their own gardens and local green spaces, recognising the importance of nature and biodiversity. [Criteria 13]

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

### QUICK WINS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | QUICK WIN  | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS   |
|---|--|--|
| Information and advice about how individuals and households can respond to the climate and nature crisis.<br><br>[Criteria 3] | Along with the Eco-Tips and e-alerts, posters can be put up around the church and shared on their website, as well as on social media. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VIP Team can create posters and resources to be shared with the congregation.</li> <li>• Further Eco-Tips resources based on resources on the Eco Church website can be made to broaden the scope of information and advice shared. Eco-related topics that have recently been in the news could be included as a section of the Eco-Alert, potentially a mini Eco-news article.</li> </ul> |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | QUICK WIN   | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS  |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Carbon footprint tool</p> <p>[Criteria 5]</p>   | <p>Eco Tips E-alert encouraging the use of a carbon footprint tool so that members of the congregation can calculate their personal carbon emissions. Members of the congregation could also be encouraged to complete an environmental audit.</p>  | <p>Carbon footprint calculators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/">https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://footprintr.me/">https://footprintr.me/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.carbonfootprint.com/sustraxvita.html">https://www.carbonfootprint.com/sustraxvita.html</a></li> </ul> <p>Links to environmental audits can be included in an Eco Tips e-alert so members of the congregation have access to an audit they can complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://creationcare.org.uk/">https://creationcare.org.uk/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/L4-Auditing-your-lifestyle.pdf">https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/L4-Auditing-your-lifestyle.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p>The VIP Team can support the members of the church's leadership team to learn how to use each tool, so that they can provide support to the congregation. Note: environmental auditing includes carbon foot-printing.</p> <p>There is potential for an event with members of the congregation who are interested where we can help them to complete the audit and talk about environmental topics.</p> |
| <p>Encouraging actions and behaviour changes associated with the unsustainable global food system.</p> <p>[Criteria 7]</p> | <p>Encouraging sustainable food consumption, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predominantly plant-based diets.</li> <li>• Consuming less meat and dairy.</li> <li>• Locally sourced foods.</li> <li>• Minimising food waste</li> <li>• Sustainable food systems</li> </ul> | <p>Poster resources would be effective in promoting several of these sustainable consumption behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LOAF principles poster – would address plant-based diets, less meat and dairy consumption, locally-sourced foods and sustainable food systems that are based on the LOAF principles.</li> <li>• Correct disposal of food waste can be promoted in the church within a recycling poster.</li> <li>• Minimising food waste could form part of an Eco-Tips resource or poster for the website.</li> </ul> <p>Eco Church and Green Christian LOAF principles resource:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/C11-Sustainable-Food-Provisions-in-Church.pdf">https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/C11-Sustainable-Food-Provisions-in-Church.pdf</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://greenchristian.org.uk/loaf-principles/">https://greenchristian.org.uk/loaf-principles/</a></li> </ul>   |
| <p>Promoting sustainable travel further.</p> <p>[Criteria 8]</p>   | <p>Resources to promote more sustainable travel options, including active transport and flying alternatives.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VIP Team can produce posters to promote walking and cycling to the church and in the congregation's everyday lives.</li> <li>• An Eco Tips resource can be created to promote alternatives to flying, such a travel by train.</li> </ul>   |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | QUICK WIN  | NOTES AND USEFUL LINKS  |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Promoting responsible consumption and waste.</p> <p>[Criteria 11]</p>     | <p>Promoting several sustainable consumption behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active minimisation of consumption of materials.</li> <li>• Reuse and buying second hand.</li> <li>• Recycling</li> <li>• Aiming for zero waste to landfill</li> <li>• Minimising wastewater.</li> </ul> | <p>Resources (either posters or website/Eco-Tips information) about sustainable consumption and responsible waste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poster on how to minimise the water wasted both in the church and at home.</li> <li>• Resource on reduce, recycle and reuse. Addresses consumption minimisation and aiming for zero landfill waste.</li> </ul> <p>Eco Church 'You and Your Stuff' resource provides information on the key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/L6-You-and-your-stuff.pdf">https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/L6-You-and-your-stuff.pdf</a></li> </ul> |
| <p>Promoting A Rocha UK's Wild Christian Programme.</p> <p>[Criteria 12]</p> | <p>Promote to individuals in the congregation who want to learn about nature and how to take climate and biodiversity action.</p>  | <p>Link to the sign-up page:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://arocha.org.uk/wild-christian/">https://arocha.org.uk/wild-christian/</a></li> </ul> <p>The link could be sent out in an Eco-Tip.</p>   |

## LONG-TERM GOALS

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT  | WAYS TO IMPROVE  | GETTING THERE  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Strategy plan to promote ethical and environmentally-aware consumption.</p> <p>[Criteria 1]</p>          | <p>This Eco Church Guide lays out clear short and long term aims for the church and how they can be achieved.</p> <p>A specific strategy or plan could be produced to clearly set out the steps required and the timescale for achieving these aims.</p> | <p>This guide can be used to lay out the short- and long-term actions the church plans to implement and what is required to achieve each goal.</p> <p>From identifying areas of progress, the VIP Team can help to meet some short-term quick wins, as well as helping to begin the process of working towards the long-term goals.</p>  |
| <p>Encouraging the congregation to take part in social and environmental campaigns.</p> <p>[Criteria 4]</p> | <p>For those who are interested in making positive changes in their personal life and are engaged in sustainability, taking part in social and environmental campaigns could be encouraged.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links to petitions that might be of interest to the congregation and are linked to the climate action the church is taking could be included in an Eco-Tip.</li> <li>• Making the congregation aware of demonstrations in support of social and environmental campaigns that the church supports, including when they are happening or information about events that have taken place.</li> </ul> |

| AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT   | WAYS TO IMPROVE  | GETTING THERE  |
|--|--|--|
| Promoting electric heating and renewable energy.<br><br>[Criteria 6]   | Low-energy technologies should be promoted to the congregation.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documenting St Stephen's own decarbonisation process should inspire others!</li> <li>• The Beacon of Lansdown Instagram is a great platform for this.</li> </ul>  |
| Actions towards and promotion of reducing household consumption and making ethical choices.<br><br>[Criteria 10] | Households together form the majority contributing source to the UK's carbon dioxide emissions, so the church has the opportunity to support the congregation in reducing their household carbon footprints. | The church can help the congregation in several ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the use of sustainable comparison websites. A link can be shared in an Eco-Tip. Link: <a href="https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/">https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/</a></li> <li>• Potential for a local food cooperative and sharing initiatives in the future as climate change's impact on food production increases.</li> <li>• The church can share apps and surveys to the congregation for monitoring and reducing consumption, including the Creation Care survey and resources. Link: <a href="https://creationcare.org.uk/resources/">https://creationcare.org.uk/resources/</a></li> <li>• Responsible food consumption can be promoted through the LOAF principles – encourages fairly-traded foods.</li> <li>• Host a local repair café in the church space. A survey of the congregation would identify what type of repair café would be most useful.</li> </ul> |
| Reuse/recycling and donating of clothes, food and unwanted items.<br><br>[Criteria 11]                           | The church is already doing this occasionally, so the next step is to expand on this and make it a more regular occurrence.  | This could be done by allocating a small area in the church for donated or unwanted food and/or clothes bank. This is something that is done at the university, as well as other small events like having a bike repair shop for the day. There is the potential to link with a charity with a location in Bath so that donations can be arranged.   |

## FURTHER NOTES

[Criteria 8] With the church sitting on the hill, it is not realistic to suggest walking and cycling to everyone. A number of the congregation are elderly, and the hill poses issues for achieving a significant of change in the congregation's transport choices.

[Criteria 10] A food cooperative and partnering with local churches may become more important in the future as climate change is likely to have an effect on food production. This would, for now, likely be a N/A answer in the next EcoChurch survey that is completed, since there is not a demand for this in the church currently and it would involve a lengthy set up process.

For the resources made available to the congregation, a section of the website could be created to store them so that they are easily accessible. A regular reminder to check the resources could be included in the e-alerts.

# Conclusion

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## Worship and Teaching

St Stephen's have already reached gold in the Worship and Teaching category! This success should be celebrated. However, there is still room for improvements. St Stephen's should consider using sustainable Worship resources such as using Bee's wax candles and local flowers. Consideration should also be given to outdoor worship.

## Building and Energy

The Church is close to silver, one action that could lead to additional points in numerous criteria is mapping the church's carbon footprint. We have the data for mapping energy use, the next step would be to map additional emissions across all three scopes and create a simple reduction roadmap. This action would gain points from criteria 4, 5, and 6 bringing the church only one point from gold.

## Land and Nature

By creating a succinct land management plan that incorporates month-by-month maintenance and mowing plan, promotes conservation of land, touches on native tree planting in the future and encourages community use of the grounds, the church will easily surpass gold.

## Community and Global Engagement

Community and Global Engagement currently sits at silver. St Stephen's should consider registering as a Fairtrade church. The VIP team can create posters to promote the Fairtrade produce to the congregation. Many of the progress points involve organising events to raise environmental awareness or to engage with local leaders. The VIP Team can help to organise such events. In some cases, such as the Green Fair, it may not be feasible to run large scale events in the Church as is. However, plans for future renovations should consider how the space can be used for these large-scale events.

## Lifestyle

Currently, this is the church's lowest ranking sector, however it is very close to silver and not much further from gold. With the posters created by the VIP Team, the church will be able to gain additional points through promotion of various sustainable activities.

## **Final Steps to Gold**

Obtaining a Gold award requires additional documentation to support the application. In addition to reaching Gold in all 5 categories, churches must upload:

- The Gold Award supporting pro-forma
- This involves describing the church's Eco Church journey, the personnel involved, the steps made to reach gold in all categories and future 'Eco' plans.
- A recent Climate Steward 360 Carbon Footprint Report
- Their Environmental Policy and Action Plan
- Land management plan