**Dorset South and West Circuit**

**Circuit Environmental Policy**

In the words of Shirley Erena Murray’s hymn

*Touch the earth lightly,*

*Use the earth gently,*

*Nourish the life of the world in our care:*

*Gift of great wonder,*

*Ours to surrender,*

*Trust for the children tomorrow will bear.*

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We realise that that is not the lived experience of the people of this Circuit, nor of the world. because we have not carried out God’s wishes. Leviticus 26:3-4 *If you remember my laws and commands and obey them, I will give you rains at the right season*… We want to work towards addressing these failings where we can, to make the world a better place to live in for everyone.

Following the District model, this environmental policy provides a framework for the Circuit to walk humbly and do justice, guided by the Eco Church questioning and the Steps towards the Net Zero Carbon of Action For Hope. The Circuit invites churches and members of our communities to also follow these steps. As, for example, with safeguarding, equality, diversity, and inclusion, we consider creation care to be fundamental to our Way of Life, and thus be embedded within the dealings of our worship, meetings and councils; we treasure the value of “twos and threes” for enabling this mission. The Circuit shall also employ its mechanisms of guidance, resources, and grants to aide churches in these steps.

**Action for Hope step 1: Assess where you are.**

Bases of self-assessment of carbon emissions are provided by Climate Stewards for individuals and churches. These also provide a means for ethically offsetting carbon emissions. We are encouraging and supporting the church property stewards, via the Circuit-led property steward meeting, to complete their Eco Circuit questionnaires and to engage with the Action for Hope initiative.

A Circuit has particular responsibilities to its own buildings, offices and land. In our case this includes the manses, The Westham Centre and Tolpuddle Methodist Church. We will make an assessment of these buildings using the Eco Church guidance; this has included a current Energy Performance Certificate. (Both Capitol Close and Wakeham are band D). This assessment will inform future modifications.

**Action for Hope step 2: Green your energy.**

The Circuit will develop proposals for the infrastructure of the Circuit manses to improve its energy efficiency and reduce its carbon footprint. In addition, the energy sources for the managed buildings at The Westham Centre and Tolpuddle Methodist church will be on a green tariff. As the plans for the development of The Westham Centre progress energy saving, insulation and the possible provision of solar panels will be considered.

The Circuit will also provide guidance to aid churches in achieving the same goals. Circuit grants, as well as those provided by the District, have an emphasis on mission and making our buildings greener. The Circuit will encourage churches to apply Eco principles when applying for funding.

**Action for Hope step 3: Travel smart**

The Circuit seeks to install an electric charging point at the manse at Wakeham and any new manse and will maintain the point already installed at Capitol Close. It will also provide guidance to aid Churches to reduce the carbon footprint of staff travel.

The planning of Circuit meetings and events will continue to consider the use of on-line meetings to avoid the need for travel, but still allow for face-to-face interactions. When it is necessary to meet in person the choice of locations and timings will be influenced by the options for public transport, and guidance will be provided for travel to Circuit events.

**Action for Hope step 4: Go for Gold**

God puts creation in our hands,

Then asks us all to care

For children’s pets and ocean depths

All that’s living there.

From clouds to canyons, seas to heights,

Eroding winds to snow:

The whole wide world God lends to us,

Wherever we may go.

And what we do while living here

Will demonstrate our love

For insects crawling in the earth

Or gannets high above

As stewards of the universe,

And of his special place,

Each living thing has treasured worth;

Our part: to guard each race.

And all creation shares a goal

Along with humankind.

If heaven makes much sense at all

Its limits aren’t confined.

*Andrew Pratt*

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The Circuit greatly values the Eco Church surveys as a means of stimulating individuals and communities along pathways that *walk humbly* and *do justice.* Accordingly, it commits to the Action for Hope targets:

1. To have 50% of its churches registered with Eco Church by 2026
2. To have 50% of its churches registered with Eco Church having achieved a bronze award by 2026.
3. To have 20% of its churches registered with Eco Church having achieved a silver award by 2027.

Dorset South and West Circuit commits to attaining a Bronze Eco Circuit award level in 2025 and targets a Silver level in 2028.

The Circuit will provide resources, guidance and training to Churches for their Eco Church journeys. It will use the Senior Stewards and Property Stewards meetings to check in with churches and encourage and support them to get their Eco questionnaires completed.

**Action for Hope step 5: Live Light**

The Circuit recognises that the lifestyles of its communities are a substantial part of the overall carbon footprint of the church. It will therefore signpost churches and individuals to the resources available through the Learning and Training Network and provide training at a local level.

In its own events, the Circuit will promote the three “Rs” (Reduce- Reuse- Recycle) for materials and LOAF (Local, organically grown, animal friendly, fairly traded) for foodstuffs. The Circuit will promote the use of the “Scrapstore” at Westham so that all churches can make use of the resources there. It will use the weekly news emails and Circuit website to promote Eco Tips.

**Action for Hope step 6: Celebrate together.**

Jesus is Lord! Creation’s voice proclaims it,

For by his power each tree and flower was planned and made.

Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;

Sun moon and stars in heaven cry: Jesus is Lord!

Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!

Praise him with alleluias, for Jesus is Lord!

*David John Mansell (b.1936)*

*Words and music 1980 Springtide*

Creation Care can evoke love, passion and commitment, all of which enable these other steps on the road of Action for Hope. The Circuit will therefore enable sharing events, indoors and outdoors, as sources of inspiration. It will also promote intergenerational events such as Forest Churches.

Appendix: Resources for implementation.

[Eco Church - An A Rocha UK Project](https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/)

[Action for Hope (methodist.org.uk)](https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/environment-and-climate-change/action-for-hope/)

[Climate Stewards – For people and planet](https://www.climatestewards.org/)

**Action for Hope step 1: Assess where you are.**

Getting your building down to Net Zero: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/property/netzero/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCF7-SFZWpg&t=1s>

**Action for Hope step 2: Green your energy**

Lifestyle and maintenance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64qW4lv_a71&t=39s>

Panels and pumps: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=212i95yz3xw&t=34s>

**Action for Hope step 3: Travel Smart**

Guidelines on greenhouse gas emissions for various transport types, Brian Shorter, Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC):

<http://www.winacc.org.uk/downloads/STAP/Shorter_Transport%20Emission%20Report_110328.pdf>

Climate Stewards Carbon Calculators:

<https://www.climatestewards.org/carbon-calculators/>

**Action for Hope step 4: Go for Gold**

A Rocha UK: <https://arocha.org.uk>

Eco Church: <https://arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/eco-church/>

How to become an Eco Church: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c6uRyuSatEI&t=61s>