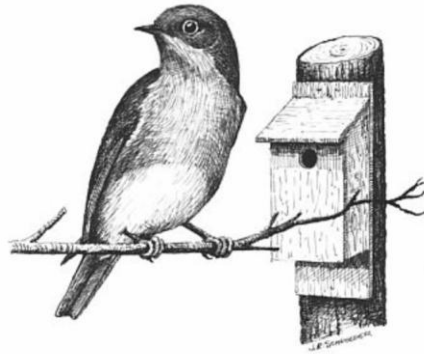


Grant aid for parish churches to have wildlife gardens



Gloucester Diocese believes that caring for the whole of creation is core to the work of the church, and as one of the Five Marks of Mission. It needs to be taken as seriously as work, which concerns the physical and spiritual wellbeing of people. We are living in times when there are significant challenges that society needs to negotiate in terms of caring for natural resources. Our LIFE Vision (2016) seeks engagement to live out Christ's love and hope by: "Being advocates for human flourishing, through initiatives which combat injustice, environmental destruction, exclusion and isolation." We are committed to caring for the environment and supporting the work of local and national environmental organisations, and working in partnership with other organisations where our values and priorities coincide.

To this end we have established a small Environmental Fund based on staff mileage contributions with support from Ecotricity and Gaia Energy. We believe that looking after our churchyards can have many benefits:

- encouraging appreciation for natural beauty
- creating space for Christian worship to happen outdoors
- enabling the flourishing of plants, wildflowers, insects, birds and animals
- providing opportunities for local schools to exercise stewardship
- giving visitors a sense of wellbeing and improved mental health

The Environmental Fund is therefore dedicated to improving local churchyards - whether that means restoring an overgrown churchyard into an orderly and wildlife friendly habitat, installing bee hives, providing an eco-loo so the parish church can be used more often for community events, organising litter picking days... We are open to suggestion!

Our grant-making committee based at College Green in Gloucester meets regularly to review applications and award grants. We offer grants of up to £250 and concentrate on helping local parish churches to deliver new environmental projects. Parish churches may only apply once per calendar year for a grant.

Please carefully read the following guidelines before starting an application:

Who do we support?

Any of the 380 parish churches in Gloucester Diocese can apply. We will give priority to applications that can already demonstrate having made a start towards attaining an EcoChurch Award <https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk> and have a long-term plan for sustainability.

What type of project can we support?

We are interested in projects that improve the physical churchyard. We are also interested in new approaches and innovative ideas as well as sustainable approaches to supporting your local environment.

Churchyard Regulations and Faculty Jurisdiction Rules

Churchyards are important, not only to those whose loved ones might be buried there, but also in establishing the setting of the church and often providing a haven for wildlife. The monuments, structures and boundaries contained within and enclosing the churchyard are all subject to Diocesan rules and regulations. You do not need permission for minor additions such as making bug hotels, putting up nesting boxes, making small holes in fences for hedgehogs, laying down hedgehog shelters and scattering wild flowers seeds. Advice is available to those who are currently maintaining churchyards, or looking to make changes and additions, including tree works. Gloucester DAC is fortunate to have a range of experienced specialist advisers who are happy to share their expertise and provide advice on day-to-day maintenance of churchyards and various churchyard-related project proposals.

<http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/parish-resources/church-buildings-and-churchyards/churchyards/http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/DAC-Membership-and-specialisms-2017-1.pdf>

Resources available

- GCEJN: <http://www.greengloucestershire.org.uk/resources/>
- Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust: <http://www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk>
- Caring for God's Acre: <http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/index.php/cherishing-churchyards-week/cherishing-churchyards-week-2.html>
- Eco Schools Award: <http://www.eco-schools.org.uk/topics/school-grounds/>
- Guidance note on the planting, felling, lopping, and topping of trees in churchyards <http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/1452848909.pdf>

What strings are attached?

1. Within six weeks of completing the project you must be willing to provide a short case study including digital images taken before and afterwards.
2. Please be aware that your case study needs to be well written since it will be shared on a website that aims to inspire and encourage other parish churches to get involved.
3. A suitable person in your team should be available to provide telephone and email advice if requested by other parish churches.
4. It is expected that all parish churches will aspire to gain the Bronze level EcoChurch Award within 12 months of completing the grant-aided churchyard project.

Submitting your application

1. Your application will need to clearly state what you are planning to do and the anticipated benefits.
2. Please state the name and email address of your Treasurer and provide bank details for the PCC account into which the funds should be paid.
3. Please get approval from your PCC before emailing your application form to Sandra Millar smillar@glosdioc.org.uk
4. It will be considered by a small committee meeting in the Department of Mission and Ministry
5. The committee meets on a regular basis throughout the year.