In the Diocese of Gloucester we affirm that:

• caring for God’s creation is a Biblical requirement, a gospel imperative, and central to Christian mission.

• the Fifth Mark of Mission commits us: “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the Earth”.

• the Engagement priority of our diocesan LIFE vision includes a commitment to ‘being advocates for human flourishing, through initiatives which combat injustice, environmental destruction, exclusion and isolation’.

• the Diocese of Gloucester has been registered with A Rocha since February 2018 (Appendix 1 shows our registration certificate), was awarded a bronze “Eco Diocese” award in February 2021 and is committed to working toward silver by December 2023.

We recognise that we are facing a climate and ecological emergency which is a crisis for the whole of God’s creation.
In pursuit of these commitments we will:

• actively participate in and exceed the Church of England’s (CofE’s) national environmental campaign which aims to reduce the CofE’s emissions of CO2 and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) based on 2006 data by 42% at 2020 and 80% at 2050, by bringing forward the date to 2030 and to take other measures in order to be carbon neutral, also by 2030.

• actively encourage local worshipping communities, deaneries and benefices, and commit the Diocesan Board of Finance, to participate in the national Eco Church awards, and to see environmental action as a key part of their missional engagement with the wider community.¹

• encourage and support PCCs, chaplaincies, fresh expressions, church schools and individuals that are already engaged in caring for creation, most notably through organizing regular meetings of the Gloucestershire Churches Environmental Justice Network (part of Churches Together in Gloucestershire).

• comply with all applicable statutory requirements and seek to match our performance to the highest relevant non-mandatory standards.

• manage diocesan investments ethically (in line with the ethical policies of the Church of England national investing bodies) being guided on climate change by the recommendations of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group.

• work with our church schools in implementing this policy.

• work with the group of South West Dioceses to encourage greater environmental action, including promoting Eco Church as a helpful tool.

¹ Bronze Eco Diocese: 10% of local churches registered; 5% of local churches awarded
Silver Eco Diocese: 20% of local churches registered; 10% of local churches awarded
Gold Eco Diocese: 30% of local churches registered; 20% of local churches awarded

Actions

Within the context of the work of LIFE priority group E1, the Diocesan Environmental Adviser will:

• coordinate progress towards the Eco Diocese Award, reporting to the Director of Mission and Ministry. This will include working with diocesan colleagues towards the relevant Eco Church Award level in relation to diocesan and bishop’s offices around College Green.

• work with the diocesan communications team to develop and implement a communications plan.

• actively encourage PCCs to turn their churchyards into wildlife gardens.

• promote the recording and celebrating of individual environmental initiatives.

• work with the Director of Mission and Ministry to embed environmental concerns across the diocesan ministerial development programme.

• actively work with church schools under the guidance of the Education Department to promote ‘eco-schools’.