

Environment



DIOCESE OF BRISTOL
TRANSFORMING. TOGETHER.

May 2025

Welcome to the latest edition of the Diocese of Bristol's environment briefing, where we celebrate the environmental efforts from across the Diocese.

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Upcoming projects & events

Two-day study programme led by Nigel Dikes exploring the deep connections between Christian faith and care for God's creation.

Day 1 – Hope for Creation 29 May 2025 | Hillside House

Day 2 – A Future for Creation 17 June 2025 | Hillside House

It would be great to get some more participants for this – confirm your place by emailing environment@bristoldiocese.org

Wednesday 21st of May - Young Eco Champions Info meeting - 7pm-7.30pm

It is a new initiative equipping secondary aged young people to explore creation care, creation care, community leadership and what it means to live out their faith in action.

Email - office@hazelnutcommunityfarm.com for meeting link

Church Buildings Team afternoon/ evening – 4pm – 7pm Chippenham/ Bristol/ Swindon

Opportunity to discuss your church / environment project in person.

Chippenham Centre – 22nd of July

Bristol Centre – 23rd of July

Swindon – Pattern Church – 24th of July

If you are keen to come - let us know at environment@environmentjob.org

Wiltshire County Climate Event - June 20th and June 21st

Event for businesses and for communities (including churches and schools) on June 20th and June 21st respectively in the County Hall in Trowbridge. For more info click [here](#)

BS5 Community Event – 26th of July – 3.00pm - 8pm – Hazelnut Farm

The event will celebrate diversity and different cultures, with a strong environmental focus.

Introduction to Climate Ambassadors webinar

Interested in learning more about how you can partner with Climate Ambassadors to get your church involved in climate action? Join a 45 minute webinar co-hosted with STEM Learning

on Wednesday 4 June, 12pm to find out more. Register for the session [here](#).

EFT - Understand your carbon footprint and help care for God's creation

Work out your church's carbon footprint to help care for God's creation!

ENERGY FOOTPRINT TOOL



The Church of England's Energy Footprint Tool is open for churches to enter energy use from 2024. The Diocese of Bristol has set a target of 92% completion rate, please help us hit this.

The data collected from the tool will help your church understand its carbon footprint and will mean you may be eligible for grants to help kickstart your net zero projects.

This work is an essential part of caring for God's Creation, by helping to combat global heating and climate change. [Find out more...](#)

A new step by step video has been launched to help churches fill in the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT).

[Step by step video here](#)

St Helen, Alveston – install an Air to Water Heat Pump



St Helen's Church, Alveston has taken a bold step towards a more sustainable future by installing a new air to water heat pump. This significant upgrade is part of the church's ongoing commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and caring for God's creation.

The new system is expected to cut emissions substantially while keeping the congregation warm through the colder months. As more churches across the diocese explore different sustainable heating systems, St Helen's sets a fantastic example of what's possible when communities embrace innovation.

Trinity Church in Cheltenham - completes a major decarbonisation project

Trinity Church in Cheltenham has successfully completed a major sustainability project, installing 60 solar panels, battery storage, LED lighting upgrades, and cavity wall insulation in its community centre, Trinity House.

The project has made big improvements for Trinity's carbon emissions and financial spending. The church expects to reduce the community centre's annual energy costs from £15,000 to between £4,000-£5,000, and on a sunny day can generate up to 98% of the electricity they need. [Read more...](#)

Infrared Halo Heaters installations increase inside and outside of the Diocese



‘Our new carbon-friendly heaters are part of our faith and mission’

A Norman church in the heart of the Cotswolds has raised the funds for two infra-red Halo heaters in less than six months. What makes this even more of an impressive achievement is that All Saints’ Turkdean only has a service once a month (except August), though it is open every day of the year.

According to churchwarden Vivien Burford (pictured) it was important to change to the carbon-friendly chandeliers as, ‘these heaters are part of our faith and mission’. [Read more.](#)

Join in with Churches Count on Nature 2025



See what wildlife you can spot in your churchyard this summer by taking part in Churches Count on Nature Week (7 - 15 June).

Conservation charity Caring for God's Acre is encouraging everyone to join them in celebrating UK churchyards, cemeteries, and other types of burial grounds. Churches across the country will be hosting events, which can be registered with the charity. A series of midday webinars will also accompany the week, [find out more](#).

Hear the voices of young people about the climate crisis in short video



"I think it's important to care for our planet because it's not just our home, it's the animals that live in it too," says year 5 pupil Isaac from Gloucester.

Isaac speaks on a new video released for Earth Day last month, which shares the views of young people on climate change and what action they think we should all take. Watch the video [here](#).

Open letter to the Prime Minister from We The Curious



Some news from We The Curious in response to the Prime Minister's decision to grant new oil and gas licenses and roll back the governments net zero strategy. They felt it important we continue to support the science and call out these decisions that affect people on a global scale. They have therefore written an open letter to the prime minister and to respective party leaders condemning the PMs latest actions.

[Read the open letter here](#)

Learn to lobby with Hope For The Future

Interested in lobbying your local politicians to act against the climate crisis? Charity Hope For The Future are running a series of free online training sessions that will help you learn how to use your voice to engage in effective and constructive conversations, enabling you to have a say in environmental decision-making. Find out more [here](#).

The Climate Coalition plan mass lobby of MPs

Join thousands of people from across the country this summer to take action on climate change. The climate action charity, The Climate Coalition, is organising a mass lobby of MPs on Wednesday 9 July in Westminster. More details will be released soon.

Recycled textiles from the city's world-renowned hot air ballooning scene have been put to good use



Bristol-based streetwear brand Rerun is proving its eco credentials are more than hot air by crafting messenger bags fashioned from balloon fabric offcuts. Full story [here](#).

Grants

Grants launched to help churches with bats

The next round of a 'Living Alongside Bats in Churches' grant is now open. Grants can be awarded to fund things such as:

- Pew covers
- New hoovers
- Telescopic brushes
- Specialist cleaning
- Bat detectors for future events (in addition to cleaning equipment)

Find out more and apply [here](#). If your church wants something more major, or needs a bat survey prior to works which wouldn't be eligible for this grant, please contact the [National Bat Helpline](#).



WECA Grants

Reminder of grants available of up to £15k for projects that are reducing carbon emissions and energy costs.

Churches are eligible if they fall in within the West of England Combined authority and can apply they or their PCC is a registered charity.

- [Green Business Grants - Growth Hub](#) which has a short video that explains the grant process
- [Full Grant Guidance](#) page 7 has an example of eligible items
- Step by step summary guidance [Green Business Grants - Grant Applicatio](#)

BUPA Community Gardens

£2k available for community funding - applications only open 2-30 June 2025 - so be quick!

If you have any questions about the programme or an application in progress please contact Groundwork on 0121 237 5802 or by email at bupafoundationgreengrants@groundwork.org.uk

Wiltshire Wildlife Community Energy

They develop renewable energy projects to protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity in Wiltshire. They could be good to talk to about how to use our glebe land?

They also have a community fund where you can apply for up to £5k for work including decarbonisation work. The person I spoke to seemed to think they would support applications from churches. Deadlines are 3 times a year and the next one is in June; find out [more](#)

Wiltshire Area Boards

Part of the local council. They can give up to £5k grants towards capital costs of building work that improves the local area. The person I spoke to said decarbonisation in churches would fit into this as long as the church is also being used by the local community. They meet quarterly and you have to go through your local councillor initially: [Find out more](#)

[Learn more about the funding here](#)

Blooming lovely tips to make your church flowers sustainable



Flowers are such a lovely part of church life. But often this beauty can come at a high environmental price through the use of materials such as floral foam and plastic containers. We've gathered some of our favourite advice for you, to help you create displays that don't cost the Earth.

[Find tips for making your church flowers more sustainable here](#)

In the News

Climate change takes increasingly extreme toll on African countries

"Extreme weather and climate change impacts are hitting every single aspect of socio-economic development in Africa and exacerbating hunger, insecurity and displacement," the UN World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

[Read more](#)

Climate crisis threatens the banana, the world's most popular fruit, research shows

The climate crisis is threatening the future of the world's most popular fruit, as almost two-thirds of banana-growing areas in Latin America and the Caribbean may no longer be suitable for growing the fruit by 2080, new research has found.

[Read more](#)

UK scientists stage historic climate protest at parliament

As parliament debated the controversial climate and nature bill on 13 May to remove protections for the UK's natural environment, scientists gathered en masse in Parliament Square. This followed a stark warning from the UK's Climate Change Committee (CCC) that the country was "not prepared" for the impacts of climate change.

Over 150 scientists from across the UK were joined by TV broadcaster and naturalist Chris Packham, expert researcher on carbon footprints Professor Mike Berners-Lee, presenter of popular science series Robin Ince, and former chief scientific adviser to the UK government Sir David King.

[Read more](#)

Attenborough at 99 delivers 'greatest message he's ever told'

Sir David Attenborough is launching what he says is one of the most important films of his career as he enters his hundredth year.

He believes his new, cinema-length film *Ocean* could play a decisive role in saving biodiversity and protecting the planet from climate change.

Sir David, who will be 99 on Thursday, says: "After almost 100 years on the planet, I now understand the most important place on Earth is not on land, but at sea."

[Read more](#)

Have you got stories for this newsletter?

Need support, or want more information?

please contact us at environment@bristoldiocese.org.

God Bless,
The Environment Team



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