

Environment



Diocese of Bristol
TRANSFORMING CHURCH.
TOGETHER.

March 2025

Welcome to the latest edition of the Diocese of Bristol's environment briefing, where we celebrate the environmental efforts from across the Diocese. Spring is here and even amidst global challenges, nature's resilience—blossoming trees, returning birds, and longer, lighter days—offers a quiet but powerful hope that change and growth are always possible.

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Upcoming projects & events

Next Eco Champions Meeting 28th of March - Agenda and meeting details to be sent this week.

Eden Bleeds Exhibition: Programme of Free Talks

St Mary Redcliffe Church

A series of free talks to open an art-led conversation about ecological devastation between artists, experts, and members of the public. Part of Chantal Meza's 'Eden Bleeds' Lent exhibition at St Mary Redcliffe Church running from **Sat 8 Mar to Tue 22 Apr**. Register [here](#)

Food Waste Action Week | 17-23 March

A national campaign by Love Food Hate Waste to tackle food waste.

This year's focus: Buy Loose – choosing loose fruit & veg to cut waste.

Did you know?

If all apples, bananas, and potatoes were sold loose, we'd save 60,000 tonnes of food waste yearly – that's 8.2 million shopping baskets!

Small changes in how we buy food can reduce waste, fight climate change, and save money.



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](#)

New animation and guide offer tips for churches to reach net zero carbon



Churches can find practical and easy tips to help them reach net zero in a new animation and guide launched by National Church.

The short two minute animation, using 'claymatian' style characters, highlights steps such as insulating pipes, draught-proofing doors and buying heated seat cushions to help churches on their journey to net zero carbon.

The animation has been launched alongside a [digital practical guide](#) which features a handy flowchart, a list of heating solutions and a checklist.

Sustainable finance conference in Indonesia

Olga Hancock, Head of Responsible Investment at the Church Commissioners for England, has co-led a group of global investors on a trip to Jakarta, Indonesia, as part of the IPDD (Investors Policy Dialogue on Deforestation) Working Group.

Indonesia's deforestation rates have dramatically decreased over the last decade thanks to decisive policies and commitments from businesses. The country has committed to making its forest land a net carbon sink by 2030.

"Sustainable finance has been charging ahead in the ASEAN region and Asia more broadly, and the region is seeking to take the lead in this area," said Olga. "It was inspiring to spend time with peers from Asia-based asset managers to better understand their perspectives and the broader region in relation to sustainable finance." [Read more...](#)

Lent Resources

We know that prayer can make a difference, so this Lent please join Christian charity Ripple Effect to pray for families in rural Africa living on the frontline of the climate crisis.

[Download everything you need](#) to set up a prayer station in your church or host a Lent lunch. You'll find a prayer, a story from a farmer in Kenya and information about sustainable farming techniques.

A Rocha International launch new Lent book

A Rocha International, a Christian conservation charity, has launched a new Lent Devotional dedicated to creation. 'The Whole Easter Story: Why the Cross is Good News for All Creation' by A Rocha International's Jo Swinney explores how the cross transforms not just our own individual connection with Jesus, but also our relationships with each other and our world. Find out more [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

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

Churches are eligible if they fall within the West of England Combined authority and can apply if 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 Application](#)

Eco Church Silver Award for St Barnabas, Wamley

Congratulations to St Barnabas for being awarded Silver Eco Church. They have achieved this through the hard work of their Eco team and PCC. In their pursuit of Net Zero, plans are in place to switch to LED lighting using grant funding, and a sub-committee is exploring sustainable alternatives to the gas boiler. The church has also begun bulk-buying ethical cleaning products and is now a registered Fair Trade Church.

Community engagement remains strong. Two clothes swaps have been held to reduce textile waste, and St Barnabas is featured on the Warmley Nature Reserve Map. Working with Avon Wildlife Trust and South Glos Commons Connection, the church has planted 1,000 bulbs and will host an ecologist-led churchyard audit. Partnerships with Warmley Men in Sheds, local schools, and community groups continue, with students from Warmley Park School helping maintain the grounds.

Creation care is also shaping their worship. Following a successful Green Service, there are plans for more outdoor services. St Barnabas also supports Tearfund's climate justice work, running an annual fundraising campaign.

Don't forget about the new survey from Eco Church, can you get your church to the next award. If you need any support, let us know.

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>



In the News

Climate Change Committee carbon budget recommendation

The Climate Change Committee (CCC) has published the seventh carbon budget, a new pathway to a decarbonised UK. Key findings include:

- Electrification makes up 60% of emissions reductions by 2040.
- Investment this decade creates savings over time.
- If the CCC pathway is delivered against, annual household energy bills are predicted to be ~£700 cheaper than today, and household driving bills are predicted to be ~£700 cheaper than today.
- If the country decarbonises against the CCC pathway, average household energy bills in 2040 would be 15 times less sensitive to spikes in gas prices.

[Read the CCC news release](#)

Extreme weather is our new reality. We must accept it and begin planning

On 15 February, an opinion piece was published in The Observer about the need for climate action in light of the extreme weather being seen around the world. Article author, Gaia Vince, says, “In this post-global heating era, we can expect more severe and frequent extreme events. Disasters will affect you and the people you care about over the coming decades. We must accept and factor this new reality into our plans.”

[Read the article](#)

Report: How climate insights drive a more reliable renewable energy transition

On 4 March, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) published a report into the renewable energy transition.

“Whether it is solar power generation in drier-than-average conditions, wind power generation in regions experiencing shifts from La Niña to El Niño conditions, or hydropower generation in the face of fluctuating precipitation patterns, climate has a direct bearing on both electricity supply and demand. Such challenges also present unprecedented opportunities: the integration of climate insights into energy planning yields more reliable power generation, helps anticipate seasonal peaks in demand and strengthens the adaptability of future infrastructure development,” wrote WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Director-General Francesco Camera and Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) Director Carlo Buontempo in a joint foreword.

[Read the WMO news release](#)

A Major Win for Green Energy: Record Heat Pump Installations in the UK

The UK's transition to clean energy is accelerating, with heat pump installations reaching a record high last year. This milestone highlights the growing commitment to sustainable home heating solutions.

According to figures released on Thursday, installations of these low-carbon heating systems soared by 52% compared to 2023. Experts point to the enhanced grant under the Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS) as a key driver, making it easier for households to make the switch from gas boilers to greener alternatives.

This surge is a significant step toward the UK's Net Zero targets, demonstrating a strong appetite for eco-friendly energy solutions. Industry leaders are optimistic that with further innovations and policy support, costs will continue to decrease, making heat pumps even more accessible to homeowners nationwide.

[Read the BBC article here](#)

Need support, or want more information?

If you have questions about the energy audit programme, please contact us at environment@bristoldiocese.org.

God Bless,

The Environment Team



[Visit our website](#)



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