



HOLY TRINITY TWICKENHAM



Eco Church update

October 2024

Eco Church

Eco Church is **A Rocha UK's** award scheme for churches in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth. The following is taken from their website:

'Our free online survey and supporting resources are designed to equip your church to express your care for God's world in your worship and teaching; in how you look after your buildings and land; in how you engage with your local community and in global campaigns, and in the personal lifestyles of your congregation.

The actions you take will count towards a prestigious Eco Church Award at Bronze, Silver or Gold level.

Our vision is for churches of all denominations to care for creation as an integral part of loving their neighbours and following God faithfully.'

Our introduction to Eco Church

We created a small project team, led by our Curate at the time, completed the survey and put a number of issues into practice. As a result, we were awarded Bronze status in 2022. Our plan is to continue this work and some progress was made in 2023 with more activity in 2024.

Team members

- Simon Couper
- Paul Butler
- Anna McPherson
- Katie Cook
- Tim Little, project sponsor

How does it work?

We complete an online survey which has a total of 101 questions. Having answered them all we get a score for each of the 5 topic areas. You can see the results in the table. As you can see, we need to work on

Community & Global Engagement and Lifestyle. Once we get some improvements there, we should get them to silver. But some way to go yet with more work to do.

For those who like statistics!

Grouping	Current level	Number questions	Score
Worship & teaching	Gold	10	96 out of 110
Buildings	Silver	33	265 out of 510
Land	Gold	16	120 out of 155
Community & Global Engagement	Bronze	27	76 out of 230
Lifestyle	Bronze	15	64 out of 160
All groups		101	621 out of 1165

Volunteers

Could you spare a very little time to help act as ambassadors for our endeavours? If you can, please let us know and we will be in touch. You could, for example:

- Join the Eco Team
- Work with one of the team to move a topic forward
- Help with the Eco Newsletter

The Congregation Survey

We want to get an insight into what our congregation feel about environmental and sustainability issues. Soon, we will distribute a survey which we really hope you will all complete. Takes a little over 10 minutes to do and we will then share the generic results.

Costs

There is no charge, as such, for belonging to the Eco Church programme. There is a charge of about £100 for being assessed against an award level. We also make an ad-hoc donation to the programme and the last one was in September for £125.

What have we done so far

These are just a few of the things we have tackled in the last couple of years.

- We have measured our energy use and calculated the carbon footprint of our church premises
- We have switched to a green energy provider for gas and electricity
- Where practical, we have changed all light bulbs for LED versions
- We only use recycled toilet paper
- Our toilets have been twinned to two town in Africa
- Installed TV monitors in the church to reduce our use of paper
- We have worked to get the other churches in the Hampton Deanery collaborating more
- We have registered and are now formally a Fairtrade Foundation Church
- We have put up insect boxes and bird nesting boxes with a few more still to fit
- We have a very active Gardening Team
- Commissioned an ecological survey of the grounds
- Published a management & gardening plan
- We started to give Eco Tips in the newsletter but it fizzled out; we need to re-start

Plans for the near future

- We have commissioned an in-depth energy audit to be carried out. This will be done in November and will help us with our boiler problems
- Another project is to try and get our water metered; but Thames Water are being slow
- The gardening team are considering how best to fit water butts to collect rainwater; we have a lot of roof area!
- Considering the installation of cycle racks; just deciding on the best location
- Our church is working to engage with our local MP, local council and the Habitats &

Heritage [the environmental charity] on environmental matters

- We are connecting with Richmond Council's Climate Action Group
- Planning to move the Friendship Bench to a more accessible location
- We are going to cultivate a berry bush border at the back of the church in the corner bounding Pope's Avenue

Updates and progress

At the moment we will probably do an Eco Church update once a quarter. But one of the questions in the congregation survey asks for your opinion on the frequency.

And finally

This update is a bit wordy but it needed to be like that as it was the first and I wanted to get quite a bit of the Eco Church background across.

For future updates, I think the better style will be along the infographic lines, with the occasional deep dive into a particular topic.

Thank you for reading this far!

Tim