



## Environmental/Climate Change Policy for St Matthew's (incl. Appendix)

### AIMS

We believe as a church community that

- 1) based on the Fifth Mark of Mission, we have a duty 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth';
- 2) as part of that duty, we must reject violence and strive for a just social order, both in this country and throughout the world, such that every individual is treated with respect and equity.

We see this as part of our Seven Whole Days Vision – to be serving Christ in our community through care for our environment every day.

### THE CHALLENGE

We as human beings have strayed so far from our duty of stewardship that the natural order – God's order – on which we depend for our existence is under threat. Scientists are agreed that the next decade, up to 2030, offers an unrepeatable window of opportunity for us to halt the accelerating process of environmental destruction and start the slow process of recovery.

### THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

The Church of England as a whole has recognised this challenge, and committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030, with regular reporting of progress year on year. We at St Matthew's are actively striving to meet the same target through the Eco-Church Bronze, Silver and Gold awards provided by A Rocha, working across the areas of *worship and teaching, lifestyle, buildings, land, community and global engagement*. In this, we are seeking to 'renew a right heart within us', by (1) acknowledging our connectedness to the creator and his creation, (2) acting as the stewards he intended us to be and (3) trying to reverse the process by which the first effects of climate change are felt most severely in the poorest countries, whose people have done least to cause the crisis.

### MONITORING OUR ACTIONS

We must be held to account by the wider church, by our congregation, and by the wider community. We shall report year on year on our progress in

- a) taking action through worship and teaching to reach out to our congregation and the community, to enable them to work together as widely as possible to bring about active and lasting change in mindsets and lifestyles
- b) ensuring that decisions within the church, on energy sources, maintenance of land and building, and purchasing of all kinds, are directed in line with sustainability and fairness
- c) reducing carbon emissions (using the Church of England Environmental Footprint Tool)
- d) planting and maintaining the church garden so as to prioritise biodiversity, safeguard the natural environment and help all who see it to connect with God's creation
- e) reaching out to join forces with other churches, faiths, community, business, charitable, heritage and lobbying groups where possible to achieve our overall objectives of sustainability, renewal and justice
- f) recognising and supporting international faith, charitable and transnational organisations, such as the United Nations, working for global action to combat climate change and promote social justice.

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## Appendix

In recognition of our previous Environmental Policy, this Appendix includes some suggestions for action as individuals and as a PCC:

- We will consider the environmental impact of all our policies and plans, and accept that additional costs may be incurred by minimizing that impact.
- We will seek ways to reduce consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment by, wherever possible:
  - using email
  - using eco-friendly office supplies
  - using eco-friendly cleaning and other products
  - repairing and re-using items
  - recycling waste
- We will avoid using water unnecessarily, check for leaks regularly and, if possible, collect rainwater for garden use.
- Where possible we will seek to use LOAF products in church which are locally sourced, organic, animal friendly and Fairtrade.

### **As individual Christians we commit ourselves to:**

- Reuse, reduce and recycle
- Use public transport, walk or cycle
- increase use of LOAF products where possible
- Reduce energy consumption at home
- Conserve water