

Being an eco-church is not a phase that we are going through. It is not an optional add-on to our discipleship. It is not a fashionable project that will be here today and gone tomorrow. Here at St Paul's we have always understood, from centuries of biblical Christian understanding, that we are stewards of God's own creation; trusted by Him to care for this planet as part of our worship.

A growing number of members of our church are increasingly concerned over rates of biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change, and we are hearing God's call to play our part in changing our own lifestyles and campaigning for environmental protection.

As people who take seriously the command of Jesus to 'love our neighbour' we know that that includes the poorest people on earth who are most affected by environmental damage, as well as the generations to come who will inherit the earth from us.

This leaflet details some of our work and ways that you can be involved, and we would love you to join in!

Rev. Ruth Bushyager



### Find out more

To find out more about how you can get involved, sign up for the St Paul's Action on Climate and the Environment email list [http://eepurl.com/cn\\_O8z](http://eepurl.com/cn_O8z)

### Further resources

**A Rocha** <https://arocha.org.uk/>

**Operation Noah**

<http://operationnoah.org/>

**Tearfund**

<https://www.tearfund.org/>

### Local green initiatives

**Food Float** – locally produced food <https://foodfloat.org/>

**Dorking Community Fridge** – redistributing good surplus food for free

<https://dorkingcommunityfridge.co.uk/>

**Dorking Repair Café** – repairing textiles, electronics and bikes to reduce waste <https://www.facebook.com/dorkingrepaircafe/>

**Dorking Solar Group** – supporting renewable energy <http://dorkingsolargroup.org/>

**Dorking Community Orchard** <http://dorkingcommunityorchard.org/>

**Surrey Wildlife Trust** <https://www.surreywildlifetrust.org/>

**Brockham Oil Watch** - a non-political group of local residents concerned about the threat of unconventional hydrocarbon extraction in Brockham and beyond <https://brockhamoilwatch.org/>



# Caring for creation

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## Why we should care for creation

The Bible teaches us that the earth is the Lord's (Psalm 24 v 1), and that all things have been created through and for Jesus (Colossians 1 v 16). If we love the Lord our God, we should cherish and protect his creation.

Caring for creation is also a key part of loving our neighbour. When creation is damaged through climate breakdown or pollution, people suffer. And the poor, those whom the Bible tells us we should particularly care for, are the most affected. Failing to look after creation is failing to love our neighbour.

The news about climate breakdown, wildlife extinctions and pollution can seem overwhelming. In a time of fear, the church has the opportunity to bring hope. As a church, we can demonstrate love for our neighbour and care for God's creation through every aspect of our church life, including:

- worship, prayer and teaching about caring for creation
- making sure our church buildings do not damage the environment
- managing church land in a way that allows our wild neighbours to flourish
- engaging with our community and the world on issues such as climate breakdown, pollution & species loss
- encouraging our church family to live in a way that cares for God's creation

## What has St Paul's Dorking done as a church?

Over the last few years we have made a number of changes to improve our impact on creation, including:

### Worship and Teaching

- Creation Matters small group Bible studies
- Sermons on caring for creation

### Buildings

- Switched to green electricity
- Replaced energy-hungry lights with efficient LEDs

### Land

- Developed a management plan for our church land
- Encouraged native wildflowers

### Community and global

- Co-organised Dorking Eco Fair, highlighting the work of local organisations that care for the environment
- Introduced food waste collection in the church kitchen

### Lifestyle

- Encouraged members to audit their carbon footprint
- Held a 'Swish' clothes swap event

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## What can church members do?

We want to see every member of St Paul's taking action to care for God's creation. While individual actions may not seem to make much difference, imagine the impact we could have if every Christian lived in a way that protected creation.

Here are some suggestions of how you might put this into practice:

- Walk or cycle rather than drive, whenever possible (or car share if you have to travel by car)
- Calculate your carbon footprint <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>
- Reduce your personal energy consumption
- Limit your waste: reduce, re-use, repair, recycle
- Buy food that is locally grown, organic, animal-friendly and/or Fairtrade whenever possible
- Put your savings in banks and investments that have ethical policies
- Make your garden a haven for wildlife <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/>
- Move to a green electricity supplier <http://dorkingsolargroup.org/files/2018-04/energy-supplier-electricity-fuel-mix-2018.pdf>