

A Greener Diocese

*An Environment Policy
for Suffolk Churches*



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

Christians recognise that all life exists in an intimate, mutually supporting community, sustained by and reflecting God's love¹ and Anglicans affirm their responsibility *'to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth'*². In the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:

We **acknowledge** that the actions of human beings have placed the whole of creation in peril.

We **believe** that hope for a sustainable future lies in turning from activities that are harmful to creation.

We **affirm** that we are called by God to be faithful stewards of the earth³.

We **commit** ourselves to positive action to enable us to participate more fully in God's work in the renewal of all creation.⁴

Growing in God envisions ***Flourishing Congregations making a Difference*** and in that spirit we aim to incorporate our environment policy into our vision in the following ways:

Growing in Depth: God reveals his glory to us through his creation⁵.

- We will encourage churches to deepen their understanding and celebration of God as Creator through the provision of worship and preaching resources at key times of the church year.
- We will promote the use of tools, such as the EcoChurch Survey, to enable the church at local and diocesan level to learn how to lessen their impact on the environment.
- We will foster the habit of sharing and celebrating good news as we make progress towards our goals.

Growing in Influence: Our parish network includes every town and village in the county. The Church of England is well placed to have a real impact by putting environmentally friendly policies into place, by finding a confident and prophetic voice on environmental issues, and by challenging injustice.

- We will aim to use the combined buying power of our 478 churches and key diocesan buildings to foster a shift towards greater use of renewable energy and move our investments away from fossil fuels.
- We will seek to make the best use of our churchyards as oases of biodiversity.
- We will endeavour to reduce carbon emissions by ensuring best practice in our travel policies, our use of church land, clergy housing, and key buildings such as the cathedral and diocesan office.
- We will encourage collaboration with local and national green organisations seeking similar aims.

¹ Colossians 1:17

² The Fifth Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion: <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx>

³ Genesis 2.15

⁴ Revelation 21:1

⁵ Psalm 19:1

Growing in Number: National research suggests that involvement in environmental projects may have a positive impact on numerical growth.⁶ Whilst there are no guarantees we can say that conservation projects do definitely offer opportunities for making new contacts and for drawing people into the life of the church.

- We will encourage churches to be open and welcoming to members of the local community who wish to become involved in church environmental projects.

Growing Younger: It is an important part of our care for the young that we seek to safeguard the future of their world through working for justice and caring for the planet.

- We will work with church schools and parishes to provide resources for youth and children's work focussing on the distinctively Christian reasons for caring for the creation.
- We will promote opportunities in our churches to engage children and young people in practical environmental projects.

We affirm Suffolk's aim to be the 'Greenest County' and seek to echo this in our bid to become a Greener Diocese. The detailed steps we intend to take towards this goal over the next three years are found in Appendix 1.

Many of our aims will be achieved and measured through our adoption of the **Eco Diocese** framework (Appendix 2) that will give us the tools at local and organisational level to develop and implement this policy.

⁶ From anecdote to evidence - p.10 <http://www.churchgrowthresearch.org.uk/UserFiles/File/Reports/FromAnecdoteToEvidence1.0.pdf>