



Peasedown St John Methodist Church Environmental Policy

1. Introduction

The earth is God's creation. It is a precious resource, given to humanity as a gift from God, which sustains all life. We are merely temporary stewards of the world and need to ensure we nurture it, protect it, and allow it to thrive for all of God's children, now and for future generations.

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it"
Psalm 24:1

The Church Council of Peasedown St John Methodist Church ("Church Council") recognises and acknowledges the negative impact on our environment from human actions and accepts its responsibility for ensuring that changes are made within the life of the church to adopt practices and processes that focus on the safe stewardship of God's earth.

The Church Council commits itself to:

- a. **RESPOND** to the challenges of climate change without delay.
- b. **IMPLEMENT** an environmental plan that aims to reduce the use of natural resources and embed sustainable, eco-friendly practices into church life.
- c. **PROMOTE** the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices through teaching, study, prayer and action on creation care.
- d. **SUPPORT** the church leadership team and congregation with advice and training so that they are clear and confident of how to apply and promote the initiatives detailed in this policy.

2. Purpose

The Church Council is committed to being good stewards of God's creation and recognising our responsibility to care for the environment. We strive to minimise our ecological footprint and actively contribute to a sustainable future. The environmental policy outlines our dedication to environmental stewardship and our commitment to promoting sustainable practices within our church community.

3. Good Practice

As Christians it is our responsibility to care for creation, using resources wisely so that climate change is mitigated, biodiversity protected or enhanced, finite resources conserved, and waste and pollution minimised. The following sections identify how we will respond and act on our journey.

3.1 Worship and Teaching

- We will ensure that ministry regularly includes themes of good stewardship, creation care and ethical living.
- We will ensure that this ministry is supported by considering these themes in our worship songs, prayer topics, house groups, children's work, website, notices etc.
- We will actively engage in prayer for environmental issues, recognising the power of prayer in seeking guidance, strength, and solutions to the challenges facing our planet.

3.2 Travel and Transport

- We will promote sustainable transportation options such as car-sharing, cycling, and public transportation for church services, events and activities.
- We will make every effort to reduce air pollution and energy consumption resulting from the use of the car by avoidance of unnecessary travel and the use of energy efficient vehicles.



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3.3 Waste Reduction and Recycling

- We will minimise waste generation by promoting practices, such as electronic communication and the use of reusable tableware.
- We will make recycling bins available on the premises and encourage their use with clear labelling, including for food waste.
- We will strive to minimise unnecessary packaging when buying products, particularly single-use plastics, and non-recyclable materials.
- We will endeavour to reuse and repair items when required, as a preference to recycling, with disposal being the last resort.
- We will ensure that any waste is disposed of in a safe and responsible way.

3.4 Energy Usage and Utilities

- We will encourage users of the premises to conserve energy by turning off lights when not in use and being mindful of energy usage during church services, events and activities.
- We will strive to reduce energy consumption by implementing energy-efficient measures in our church facilities, such as using energy-saving light bulbs and insulating the building.
- We will ensure that our utilities are obtained through companies that prioritise renewables, green energy and sustainability, even if this is at a higher cost.
- We will monitor our use of gas, water and electricity, and seek to minimise these over time.
- When upgrading or replacing the existing heating system we will look for renewable energy options such as solar panels, heat pumps etc.
- We will strive to reduce water consumption by regularly monitoring and repairing any leaks or water inefficiencies within our church facilities.
- We will educate our members on the importance of water conservation and encourage responsible water usage both within the church and at home.

3.5 Church Life

- We will ensure church bank accounts and investments are with companies that have an ethical track record.
- We will aim to minimise the amount of printing and photocopying we do, and use recycle paper where possible.
- We will aim to purchase fairly traded products where possible, including tea and coffee.
- We will endeavour to buy locally grown and seasonal produce for consumption at church events and activities.
- We will strive to reduce the use of harmful cleaning products, substituting with environmentally friendly alternatives where possible.

3.6 Outdoor Space

- We will maintain our outdoor spaces in an environmentally responsible manner by using sustainable gardening practices, minimising the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers.
- We will explore opportunities to create wildlife-friendly habitats and adopt gardening practices that support biodiversity.
- We will actively encourage church congregation, church groups and other users of the premises to use church land for recreation/contemplation.



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3.7 Environmental Awareness and Commitment

- We will raise awareness about environmental issues and the importance of sustainable practices through church services, events and educational information.
- We will actively engage with other churches, community organisations, and environmental groups to collaborate on environmental initiatives and share best practices.
- We will encourage our members to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours both within and outside of the church.
- We will stand for creation care and for climate justice, working through and with appropriate organisations (such as Christian Aid, Tearfund and Methodist Conference), and bringing matters of concern to the parish council, local council and national government, where appropriate.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Church Council will appoint an environmental champion to lead and inspire the whole church in caring for God's creation by promoting environmental sustainability and integrating eco-friendly practices into church life. This person is currently **Ian Souter**.

The Church Council will also appoint a support group to organise, promote and implement eco-friendly practices into church life.

We will involve the church leadership team and congregation and seek their input on environmental matters to foster a sense of shared responsibility and commitment to environmental stewardship.

5. Distribution of this Policy

A printed copy of this policy will be displayed on a noticeboard located on the Church premises and an electronic copy will be made available for download on the Church website.

6. Approval & Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Church Council. Next review date: **September 2027**.

Signed (Minister)

Dated