

# PROMOTING ECO CHURCH TO OTHER LOCAL CHURCHES

COMMUNITY & GLOBAL

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## COMMUNITY & GLOBAL

# Promoting Eco Church

### WHY?

Promoting Eco Church to other churches is a great way to encourage and inspire them on their Eco Church journey and equip them with the knowledge you have already gained through your own experiences.

By working with nearby churches, you can have a wider impact on your local community. For example, the churches in your area could collectively host a 'green fair' or other environmental awareness raising event. It is also easier to influence local leaders and decision makers when working together. All Saints Church, Leighton Buzzard, who achieved their Bronze Award in September 2020, worked alongside other local Eco Church teams to launch a 'Plastics Pledge' for the town, aimed at cutting single-use plastics. The local council gave their support and provided space for a stall at future events on the market square. Over 1,000 signatures were collected towards the Plastics Pledge, raising awareness around the issue of single use plastics, and the MP has since signed a pledge to tackle plastic pollution.

Sharing our own stories helps other churches know how to start. Along the way, you may have picked up expert knowledge that you can impart. Can you offer support and guidance to help other churches start new activities or make changes? You may not feel you have anything to shout about with your own journey but creating a simple forum to share how eco-journeys are going could be really helpful. St Thomas and All Saints Church in Lymington supported a nearby church on their Eco Church journey, during a period when there was nobody leading their creation care team, after the leader moved away.



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### HOW?

There are many ways in which you can promote Eco Church to other churches:

#### LOCAL CHURCHES

Consider initiating conversations and connecting with interested individuals at other churches nearby. Your town or area may have a 'Churches Together' initiative, which is a great place to start. Some churches have set up local Christian eco-groups to work together and share ideas:

- Summerbridge Methodist Church, in Nidderdale, North Yorkshire (Gold Award, August 2020) encouraged the ecumenical 'Church in the Dale' group to get involved, resulting in several churches of various denominations now actively exploring awards.
- St Matthew & St Nathanael's Church, in Bristol, hosted a plant fair in their churchyard as an opportunity to connect with local people and share why they are an Eco Church.
- Romsey Methodist Church (Gold Award, May 2020) made connections with nearby churches at local green fairs.
- Barrow in Furness in Cumbria now has five churches working together on the scheme: <https://barrowbenefice.org.uk/2021/03/eco-church/>

#### CHURCH WEBSITE

Your social media pages and church website provide excellent ways of showing other churches (and your community) that creation care is part of your ethos:

- All Saints with St Frideswyde's in Liverpool have an attractive website full of pictures: <https://assfchurchcrosbythornton.org.uk/going-green/>
- If you don't have your own church website, perhaps your denomination has a system which gives brief information about your church. St Mary Magdalene's near Ipswich has done this on the Church of England tool 'A Church Near You': <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/1899/news/35908/eco-church-up-date-for-the-bildeston-benefice/>



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### SOCIAL MEDIA

- If your church is active on social media, please use the hashtag #ecochurch in your Facebook, Instagram and Twitter posts.

### CHURCH DENOMINATIONAL MEETINGS

Within your local area there are probably regular forums for churches such as synods or circuit meetings where church representatives meet. Some denominations also have national gatherings or networks, which are other great places to share:

- Romsey Methodist Church (Gold Award, May 2020) promoted the idea of becoming an Eco Circuit to Winchester, Eastleigh and Romsey (15 churches). They also proposed that the Southampton District became an Eco District (over 160 churches); this was adopted by the Synod in September 2019: <https://www.romseymethodist.church/news-updates/2020/October/19/journey-to-gold/>
- In Leeds Diocese there are 'Area Champions' who are able to encourage and equip local churches on their Eco journey. St Margaret's Church, Carsington (Silver Award, April 2020), promotes Eco Church to other local churches, and two of their members have helped to lead a diocesan training day on Eco Church: <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/environment>

### LOCAL OR DENOMINATIONAL PUBLICATIONS AND NEWS ITEMS

Is there a monthly village newsletter or a regional denominational magazine where you could share stories from your church's eco-journey? Here are some examples:

- Summerbridge Methodist Church (Gold Award, August 2020) encouraged other churches in their circuit to become involved with Eco Church by writing about it in the '*Circuit Voice*' magazine in March 2020.
- St Thomas Friarmere shared their Eco Church journey through the publication '*Grapevine*', which goes to all nine worship centres within their team, and also into the wider community: <https://manchester.anglican.org/news/latest-news/silver-award-for-st-thomas-delph.php>



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- Devonport Community Baptist Church, awarded silver in November 2019, shared their Eco Church journey with *The Baptist Times*: [https://baptisttimes.co.uk/Articles/560440/Silver\\_Eco\\_award.aspx](https://baptisttimes.co.uk/Articles/560440/Silver_Eco_award.aspx)

### DENOMINATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER

You could also see if there is an environmental officer for your church denomination's local area and ask them if there is anything you could do to help and equip other local churches.

### LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

St John the Baptist Church, Pewsey, and Wimborne Minster, share their eco-journeys and encourage others to get in touch for support or ideas:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXLZ81RyV5E>