



The Parish of
St Mary the Virgin
STANWELL
&
St Matthew
ASHFORD



Creation Care Policy



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Creation Care Policy for St Mary's and St Matthew's

*for the Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Stanwell and St Matthew, Ashford
(A Parish in the Catholic Tradition of the Church of England)*

Introduction

At St Mary's and St Matthew's, we believe that the care of God's creation is an essential part of our Christian faith. As stewards of the earth, we are called to responsibly manage and protect the environment for future generations. This Creation Care Policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding the environment through sustainable practices, promoting awareness within the parish community, and acting in accordance with our Christian values.

Biblical Foundation

The Bible teaches us that God created the heavens, the earth, and all living creatures. In Genesis 1:28, God calls humanity to "fill the earth and subdue it," and in Genesis 2:15, we are called to "work and take care" of God's creation. As Christians, we are tasked with being good stewards of the environment, ensuring that it is preserved and protected for the benefit of all creation.

Our Commitment

St Mary's and St Matthew's is committed to:

1. Sustainability in Church Activities

- Reducing our environmental impact through energy efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing in church events and activities.
- Encouraging the use of reusable and recyclable materials for church gatherings, meetings, and events.

- Transitioning to greener energy sources where possible, including the use of energy-efficient lighting, heating, and appliances.
- Minimising the use of single-use plastics and encouraging the use of biodegradable or reusable alternatives.

2. Promoting Environmental Awareness

- Offering education and awareness about Creation Care to our parish community through sermons, events, and literature.
- Supporting initiatives such as local environmental groups, community clean-ups, and tree-planting efforts.
- Organising workshops and events that focus on sustainable living, including reducing waste, conserving water, and promoting biodiversity.

3. Sustainable Church Grounds

- Caring for the church grounds in an environmentally conscious way, including using organic gardening methods, reducing chemical pesticides, and promoting biodiversity.
- Developing green spaces for the parish community to enjoy, ensuring that the land is used in a sustainable and responsible manner.
- Composting organic waste where possible and ensuring that waste is segregated to facilitate recycling.

4. Promoting Eco-Friendly Transportation

- Encouraging the use of public transport, walking, or cycling for parish activities to reduce our carbon footprint.
- Exploring the possibility of installing electric vehicle charging points for parishioners who drive electric cars.

5. Carbon Footprint Reduction

- Regularly reviewing and reducing our carbon footprint through energy audits and exploring ways to lower carbon emissions from heating, electricity, and travel.

- Supporting local food initiatives and reducing food waste at parish events.

6. Partnership with Local and Global Creation Care Efforts

- Supporting local, national, and international organisations that work on environmental conservation, climate change, and sustainable development.
- Advocating for environmental justice and collaborating with other faith-based communities to protect vulnerable communities from the effects of climate change.

Implementation and Review

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy will lie with the **Finance, Buildings, and Personnel Committee**. The Committee will:

- Ensure that environmentally responsible practices are incorporated into church activities and operations.
- Monitor progress and suggest improvements where necessary.
- Regularly assess the parish's environmental impact and report back to the Parochial Church Council (PCC).

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually to ensure that it remains relevant and effective in meeting our commitment to caring for creation.

Conclusion

As a parish community, St Mary's and St Matthew's is dedicated to being a faithful witness to God's creation. Through thoughtful and consistent efforts to care for the environment, we honour God's gift of creation and contribute to a more sustainable future for all.

For more information or to get involved in our Creation Care efforts, please contact the Parish Office via the contact details on our website

www.smam.org.uk.

