



St Mary de Haura - Eco-Church Report 2023

Eco Church is a diocesan supported initiative which encourages churches to become more environmentally aware and active. The scheme is run and supported by A Rocha, a Christian environmental charity. Churches complete an online questionnaire and depending on the results are awarded Bronze, Silver or Gold status. The questionnaire covers the following areas of the church's life: Worship and Teaching; Buildings; Land; Community and Global Engagement; and Personal Lifestyle. In 2019 St Mary's achieved Bronze status but not a lot had happened since then due to the pandemic.

In January 2023 an Eco Church Working Party (ECWP) was formed to work towards the Silver award. This group has met every 3 months and had wide membership from across the congregation. Our first activity was to repeat the survey and the result was still Bronze.

It was realised early on that there would be problems trying to improve our score for Buildings with the church being a Grade I listed building and the future of the Church Hall still uncertain. The decision was therefore made to concentrate our activities on the other areas. These have included:

- Submitting monthly articles on Green issues to the Church Magazine
- Linking up with other local environmental groups
- Reviewing the arrangements for coffee and refreshments in church
- Reducing printing costs in the parish office; using recycled paper
- Making the churchyard an even more environmentally friendly place than it is at present.

A sub group has been set up to draft a Churchyard Management Plan (CMP). This group has representation from both the church and the wider community, including Adur Council (who have responsibility for the upkeep of most of the churchyard), the local ward councillor, the Shoreham Society and the Sussex Wildlife Trust. The CMP once drafted will go for approval to the PCC.

In 2024 we hope to run a range of activities during The Great Big Green Week (8-16 June).

If you would like to know more, please contact Anthony Rathbone on 07773 363754 or rathbonear@gmail.com

For general information about Eco Church, go to <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>