

## Paper 20

### What some churches do to improve the environment

- 1 **Allotments/Gardens:** Make church land productive or rent a community plot to grow vegetables – organics of course. An ideal way of motivating young people.
- 2 **Aluminium cans/foil:** Collect as a way to raise church funds or help a charity, with re-cycling as a valuable by-product.
- 3 **Audit:** Carry out energy audit and encourage church members to calculate their own home energy usage.
- 4 **Bags:** Encourage use of traditional shopping bags and discourage acceptance and use of plastic bags.
- 5 **Banking:** Consider changing to an ethical bank for handling church and personal accounts.
- 6 **Bicycles:** Install cycle racks on church premises and encourage those who are able to use bicycles.
- 7 **Bird boxes/tables:** Install these on church sites or sponsor boxes at local nature reserves. Ensure they are regularly maintained and monitored.
- 8 **Bottles:** Use glass bottles where practical rather than plastic, and take all bottles to the bottle bank when no longer needed.
- 9 **Building materials:** Recycle building materials resulting from any building project, where practical (bricks in particular).
- 10 **Cars:** Encouraging car sharing to church and meetings, and make less use of cars for shorter journeys. Promote less-car Sundays.
- 11 **Cleaning products:** Use environmentally friendly cleaning products, for cleaning and washing up in particular (also eco-balls in washing machines).
- 12 **Christmas cards:** Recycle Christmas and birthday cards through local outlets such as Boots and WH Smiths.
- 13 **Church office:** Apply recycling to all office consumables where possible (paper, toner, cartridges, envelopes). Print double sided where you can.
- 14 **Church yards and gardens:** Make these attractive places for the living, with planting, seating and natural patches to attract butterflies and other wild life as well as making them easily accessible places for rest and contemplation.
- 15 **Composting:** Arrange a composting workshop involving local expertise (gardening club perhaps). Compost all kitchen and garden waste.
- 16 **Community:** Use practical environment projects as a way of establishing closer contact with the community, schools and youth groups.
- 17 **Eco-congregation:** Contact the Eco-congregation organisation with a view to your church becoming recognised as an eco-friendly church.
- 18 **Energy:** Consider changing to a renewable energy supplier (such as Good Energy or Eco-tricity) as your electricity provider. Carry out an energy usage survey.
- 19 **Fair Trade:** Purchase fairly-traded products for use in the church and at home (beginning with tea and coffee).
- 20 **Fashion show:** Plan a fashion show or fancy dress party centred on recycled clothes (charity shop perhaps), or other recycling theme.
- 21 **Free range:** Purchase free range, organic or locally grown food for church use and other events. Support local suppliers, farmers and markets.
- 22 **Ground source heating:** Consider using ground source heating for a new building project (also photovoltaic cells for generating electricity).
- 23 **Information points:** Use information points and notice boards (inside and outside) to provide regular information on environmental issues. Set up an electronic newsletter.
- 24 **Ink cartridges:** Put recycling of ink cartridges to best possible use, to benefit local schools or charities.

- 25 **Insulation:** Make sure all roof spaces are adequately insulated. Enquire about grants available – for private houses also.
- 26 **Lacewings:** Set up lacewing breeding chambers in grounds and gardens.
- 27 **Leaf mould:** Collect all leaves in the autumn to make leaf mould and mulch, as part of the composting routine.
- 28 **Lent and liturgy:** Make Lent a special time to consider life styles as an environmental issue. Take advantage of special occasions to use liturgy with a creation theme.
- 29 **Litter picking:** Take part in and support community clean-up efforts in towns, parks, along beaches, canals and rivers.
- 30 **LOAF:** Arrange meals for church events to be arranged as LOAF meals (locally produced, organically grown, animal friendly and fairly traded).
- 31 **Low energy (long life) light bulbs.** Progressively change to low energy bulbs. Distribute low energy bulbs at appropriate services such as Candlemas.
- 32 **Newspapers:** Recycle all unusable paper to paper bank. Newspapers can also be pressed to form blocks that will burn in wood burning stoves at home.
- 33 **Organic food:** Organise an organic food tasting evening, perhaps with a drama production having an environmental theme.
- 34 **Overseas aid:** Make environment projects an opportunity to support overseas work and to consider the effects of climate change in poorer and low-lying countries.
- 35 **Pill boxes:** Collect for use by medical missions.
- 36 **Plastic drinking cups:** Minimize their use. Use crockery where possible and make washing up a social activity.
- 37 **Policy:** Prepare an environment policy or statement of values. Model it on an existing diocesan or denominational policy, modified to suit your situation.
- 38 **Radiator insulation:** Place insulating panels behind radiators to maximize heat use.
- 39 **Re-use and recycle:** Re-use or recycle everything where possible – books, clothes, spectacles, everything. Make it a culture within the church. Use charity shops both for donating and buying good used products.
- 40 **Remember:** Re-use, recycle, reduce, and in some cases (like plastic bags) refuse.
- 41 **Services:** Take advantage of church services to promote environment issues. Create a synergy between saving people and saving the planet; both are God's handiwork.
- 42 **Simulations:** Use computer simulation programmes to find out how heating and lighting systems can be improved and to assess footprint.
- 43 **Site visits:** Plan visits to other churches where improvements have been made or to eco-projects to see what can be done. Also visit organic gardens and nature sites.
- 44 **Timers and thermostats:** Install timers and programmers on heating systems, and zone buildings to minimize energy waste. Fit thermostats to individual radiators.
- 45 **Tools:** Collect and recycle unwanted work tools for use by organisations such as Tools with a Mission.
- 46 **Traidcraft:** Support Traidcraft by having regular stalls for sales of food and gifts.
- 47 **Trees (and shrubs):** Plant appropriate trees at every opportunity. Support local initiatives to plant trees, in the community and schools.
- 48 **Water:** Meter water usage. Fit existing flushing toilet cisterns with 'Hippos' or other means of reducing water used. Where possible install rain butts in gardens.
- 49 **Windows:** Make double glazing a priority, along with roof insulation; but remember some draughts are useful.
- 50 **Young people:** Involve them. Taking the environment seriously is a good opportunity to involve junior church, youth groups, schools, colleges, young offenders groups and young people in general. It is their future we are trying to save.