

Eco Group Report

HBC is signed up to the Eco Church Award scheme and, having achieved the bronze level award in 2022, church members have agreed that we should work towards the silver. Based on biblical principles of loving God and our neighbour, this scheme helps churches to understand how they fit into the present climate and nature crises and what they can do to actively make an impact on averting the more serious consequences at both collective and individual levels. The role of the Eco Group is to facilitate this.

Throughout the year, a number of sermons drew on the themes of creation care and climate justice, reflecting how God's concern for his creation is so interwoven throughout the Bible. Notably, in September, Chris ran a sermon series picking up on the theme of Creationtide. Intercessory prayers in services have regularly included care for God's creation.

Conscious that the wildflower area needed attention, work was undertaken in the spring, along with planting of further pollinators.

We continue to use the newsletter with regular Eco Prayers, Eco Tips and information about local events that may be of interest.

At the start of 2025 a major update to the Eco Church questionnaire was released, much of which is appreciably more challenging. An underlying theme of this is for churches to adopt a simple Environmental Policy. Such a policy would build on the commitments contained in our Vision and Values statement and we are currently working on drafting this. Earlier this year the Eastern Baptist Association adopted its own Sustainability Policy.

Alongside this we are working on developing a carbon footprint study of the church, its facilities, who uses our premises and how often, and what demand is placed on our energy and materials consumption. This will provide a baseline going forward, against which we can measure our improvements.

Whilst there are important steps the church as a whole can take, the greatest impact will come from each of us, as individual church members, feeling empowered to take small steps in our own lives to reduce our impact on our planet.

Those of us in the Eco Group are very happy to talk with church members about these issues, and we would love to hear your stories, suggestions, questions, and feedback. We welcome new members, and have a WhatsApp group for those interested in keeping in touch. Our email address is:
ecochurch.group@histonbaptist.org.uk

Tony Russell