



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Kelso

Diocese of Edinburgh

*An Open and Inclusive Church*

**Harvest Service 2/10/'22**

**Eco-congregation Discussion booklet**

*Welcome to our Harvest Service and Discussion about Eco-congregation.*

The aim of this booklet is to bring you up to speed with St Andrew's progress to date and with what opportunities lie ahead, whilst seeking to raise and address frequently asked questions ('FAQs'). Primarily, this is YOUR opportunity to ask whatever questions you like, in addition to those below, so that we all better understand and embrace each other's perspectives.

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  - links to resources, using clickable internet addresses.

## **WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR**

- Spring '20: Our Eco Committee was set up and we registered as an Eco-congregation, alongside 362 others in Scotland alone, across 7 countries globally. The Committee reports to each Vestry, six times a year. Our Eco Committee provides a focus for Vestry, Clergy and you, its members, to explore and improve our environmental awareness and impacts – physical, social, lifestyle and spiritual.
- **Our buildings & activities:** Most church windows have 'Lexan' secondary glazing. The Rectory has secondary or double-glazing throughout.
- The church gas boilers were installed in 2014: subsequent efficiency gains have covered the capital outlay. The twin boilers give 95%-96% efficiency at 70% capacity. Temperature is set at 14°C, with required uplifts controlled via smart phone ('HIVE').
- There is a timer on the porch light and a sensor for lighting the body of the church. Almost every light uses an LED bulb
- The Office & Garden Room were refurbished/rebuilt with high insulation.
- We commissioned reports on our buildings from Zero Waste Scotland and by Church of Scotland's 'Better Heating Scheme' consultant, providing us with several ideas for improvements in operation, insulation, own power generation and fossil fuel reduction/avoidance.

- We procured a quotation for a more detailed feasibility study on the various practical options for reducing our carbon footprint to zero by 2030 (see Synod decision below).

These activities aim to reduce our buildings' heat and carbon emissions, reduce light pollution, reduce costs and help towards achieving a 'Net Zero' objective.

- Our Tea & coffee purchases are Fair-trade products. Compostable cups are used for refreshments after services.
- Consumables are sourced locally, wherever possible (office, facilities, cleaning).
- Stationery is sourced locally. Envelopes are recycled paper. To optimise storage, copier paper is ordered in batches of 10 reams. Copier paper is at least 80gsm, with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) trademark.
- We are actively involved in supporting local environmental initiatives. We are cultivating an 'Eco Garden' at the north end of the church premises.  
These activities support wider environmental benefits, reducing waste, supporting sustainable products, services and community activities

- **Our investments:** Scottish Episcopal Church's Ethical Investment Advisory Group ('EIAG') has worked with SEC's Investment Committee in influencing how Baillie Gifford manages the Unit Trust Pool ('UTP').
- Although the EIAG's authority does not extend to SEC's Pension Fund, the latter's trustees are very aware of ethical investment and the role played by its fund managers, Schrodgers.  
These activities will improve our investments' leverage for more environmentally friendly financial markets.

- **Helping each other's understanding:** Care for Creation & the Environment are reflected in our prayers, bible studies & sermons.
- We conducted an anonymous Questionnaire in spring '21, whose responses place us clearly towards the 'greener end' of the spectrum: on a scale of 0 to 10 (where 0 is anti, 10 is pro and 5 is ambivalent on Eco issues) we are at 7.6 on the extent to which Eco matters are deemed relevant to life at St Andrew's and at 6.3 on the detailed questions combined.
- Suitably inspired, we publish weekly 'Eco-snippets', for which contributions are welcome.
- We have deliberated a Discussion Paper on the challenges & opportunities we face, agreeing that a clear Strategy needs to be formulated to guide further activities and investments. With guidance from members at or after this Harvest Service discussion, we hope to progress the drafting of such a Strategy.
- Does this brief but wide-ranging summary of our various achievements to date risk complacency or shine as a testament to how well we are able to react, with even greater challenges ahead?

## CURRENT POSITION, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

- SEC's Synod of 2020 passed a motion to aim for 'net zero carbon emissions' by 2030.
- Synod 2021 then backed a 10-point guidance plan for its churches on achieving that goal.
- This year SEC has made available various resources and established committees to help achieve this goal, including the Provincial Environmental Group ('PEG') and Diocesan Environmental Group (Edinburgh, 'DEG').
- These resources include:
  - 'Towards Net Zero 2030 Toolkit & Checklist', an initial populated version already shared with Vestry. Ready to be progressed with population of sections for tasks that could be done now and for consideration over the medium & longer term.
  - 'Energy Footprint Analyser' populated with our current 'starting position' and submitted to PEG in May. This calculates our 'baseline average annual carbon emissions over 3 years' at 19.5 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide per annum. Our challenge is to reduce this to zero over the next seven years.

## FAQs FOR DISCUSSION (*with provisional answers?*)

- What does it mean to you to be an Eco-congregation?
  - *'A Christian charity addressing climate change and conservation.'*
  - *A community acting at various levels to reduce humans harm to God's creation. Please read the messages below from our Bishops Mark and John.*
  - *cf Eco congregation's website <https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/>*
- What does 'net zero' mean?
  - *'Net zero' refers to achieving an overall balance between emissions produced and emissions taken out of the atmosphere.'* (Google answer)
  - *'Net zero means cutting greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, with any remaining emissions re-absorbed from the atmosphere, by oceans and forests for instance.'* (also from Google)
  - *Eco-Snippet: 'What is 'Net Zero?' 'Net Zero' means the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we put into the atmosphere and the amount we're able to take out will add up to zero. Our first step is to reduce emissions by changing our actions and processes, but not all emissions can be avoided. To get to net zero any emissions we create would be balanced by schemes that offset the same amount of greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere, for example by planting trees, restoring peatland or using technology like carbon capture and storage. Reaching net zero is key to tackling the global climate emergency, as well as the changes we need to make now because of the ongoing effects of climate change. Being 'Net Zero' will help transform the way we live for the better, making Scotland a healthier, cleaner, safer, fairer place for us and for*

*generations to come. We must all act now to achieve it.*

*Source: <https://www.netzeronation.scot>*

- *Does this help you understand how we can all contribute or is something else needed?*
- What are our priorities, as St Andrew's church, to become more environmentally friendly?
  - *To reduce further our buildings' harmful environmental loss, minimising emissions of carbon, heat and light?*
  - *To share more ideas and actions for individuals and local communities to adopt to reduce their environmental footprint?*
  - *How do we balance & reconcile the near term with the medium term?*
- If St Andrew's is to reach Net Zero by 2030, what actions do we need to take?
- What practical activities or investments should St Andrew's Vestry be planning for and undertaking?
- At what levels do the various responsibilities and authorities principally lie?
  - *General Meeting, Vestry, Eco committee, Finance Committee, Clergy Team?*
- What are our priorities as individuals to become more environmentally friendly?
  - *Up to each individual and/or through collective contemplation?*
- How far do we go?
  - *What constitutes 'not far enough' versus 'too far' and using what metrics?*
- What will it cost, to take appropriate action?
  - *Cost can be financial as well as moral, short term and long term.*
- What will it cost us, morally and in any other way, **not** to take action?
  - *An individual and/or a collective issue?*

## **APPENDIX**

- **Message from our Primus:**

*"The connection between our scriptures, God's creation and the climate emergency in the world is something that challenges us every day in our worship, in our prayers and in our daily lives.*

*Communities across the world are living with the devastating impacts as changes take place in the environment around them, with those least responsible for the climate and ecological crises being affected the most. Food becomes harder to produce, sea levels rise and drought hits - to name just a few of these impacts; these are not imagined threats of the future, these are things happening now to our brothers and sisters across the world. As part of God's creation and as part of the body of Christ we have a responsibility not only for what happens on our doorstep but also for what happens to the whole of God's Creation.*

*The Scottish Episcopal Church, along with partner churches and environmental groups, has committed to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030, to help limit the changes to the environment and to begin to restore the balance in Creation.*

*For the last few years, the Church in Society Committee has been working hard to help us all to discover ways of achieving this goal. Building on this work, the newly established Provincial Environment Group will provide continuing support to Dioceses and Charges as they engage with the task facing us all.*

*I am delighted to commend this initial part of the Toolkit of ideas and suggestions. The congregations and individual members of the church are often anxious about what it is we need to do and how we get started on this vital journey; this material begins to give us a roadmap of the journey ahead and **I ask you all to engage with the Toolkit without delay and begin to make real change now.***

*People of faith are also people of hope, we believe in the hope of salvation, the hope of God's love and care for us and for the planet. Difficult as some of these changes may be, they are also signs of hope, each step on the road will bring hope to ourselves, to others, and to all of God's Creation."*

*The Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus*

- **Message from our Bishop:**

*"The biggest ongoing challenge facing our world is the climate crisis. For Christians it asks hard questions not only of our lifestyle choices but about what we believe. What does it mean to be good stewards of the beautiful and fertile planet which we share with so many living creatures? What does it mean to say that 'the earth is the Lord's'? I commend this webpage (cf 'DEG' below) to you and encourage you to use it as we journey towards carbon net zero. **We have some hills to climb and corners to turn on this journey but, if we travel together, we shall find much to enjoy. It's a journey we make not just for ourselves but also for people unknown to us and generations as yet unborn.**"*

*Bishop John*

- **Links:**

- Our own website's Eco page, <https://www.standrewskelso.co.uk/eco-congregation> which has further links to:
  - the results of our previous Questionnaire,
  - Synod 2022's recent update on Eco progress,
  - The Diocese of Edinburgh Environment Group's entry page ('DEG')
  - the Eco Congregation website, and
  - our 'Strategy Pyramid' (in simple diagram form), inter alia.
- SEC's/PEG's Toolkit & Energy Footprint Analyser  
<http://www.scotland.anglican.org/news-and-issues/towards-net-zero-2030-toolkit-and-checklist/?fbclid=IwAR3ursVw-FbZTgnL4W03Surri4HDMEIgmfg7oFfFREHg1mbMrVHFLfXUDM>