

## **Eco-Group Report for the Annual Church Meeting 2025**

During the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, the Eco Group continued to meet to discuss how we can be better stewards of the earth that God created. We continue to work on initiatives to improve the carbon footprint of SAPLC, to encourage members of the congregation to improve their own carbon footprints and to include green issues in our worship and teaching.

We held successful 'Repair Café' events in May and September, with a variety of volunteer repairpeople who were able to carry out repairs on the day as well as instructing attendees on how to do their own repairs and signposting them to other sources of help. We intend to hold these events regularly in future, with the next one to be held on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

On 21<sup>st</sup> July, Jenny Carpenter led an Eco-themed service featuring the Coat of Hopes, an embroidered/patchwork coat that was featured at COP26 in Glasgow.

Members of the Eco Group took part in our Harvest Festival service on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October.

We are glad to report that solar panels have been successfully installed in Shirley House and are producing a useful amount of electricity, and that LED lights have been installed in church, which use less electricity. Timers have also been fitted on water heaters in church. These carbon-saving improvements were made possible by generous donations and grants and we are grateful to John Cripps for his hard work on these projects.

The A Rocha Eco Church survey, which we continue to keep updated and on which our Silver Eco Church Award is based, has recently been relaunched. The new version is much more 'in-depth' than before, and focuses more on the church's strategy and commitment to ecological issues. We have, therefore, updated our manifesto, as a statement of SAPLC's acknowledgement and celebration of God's relationship with, and work in, creation.

We continue to maintain a 'wild' area of the garden for wildlife, to grow fruit and vegetables in the garden and in the compound behind church, to have a regular Gardening column written by Bill Atherton in Nexus and to publish an 'Eco Tip' and 'Green Box' in the Weekly Newsletter to inform and encourage all members of the congregation in ways that they can live a greener lifestyle.

The Eco Group is always happy to welcome new members.

Clare Loughridge, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025