



## The Shore Community Church – Environmental Policy

### Our principles and values

- **The Shore Community Church is committed to minimising our impact on the environment.** We believe in the Christian values affirmed below, which form the basis of our concern for the environment. We take our environmental impact seriously. We take the approach that we are responsible for our own environmental impact and we are therefore also responsible for mitigating it. This policy statement summarises key principles by which all trustees, volunteers and employees seek to operate.
- **God created the world and everything in it.** As Christians it is our responsibility to care for creation, using resources wisely in order that climate change is mitigated, biodiversity protected or enhanced, finite resources conserved, and waste and pollution minimised.
- **Seeking climate justice is part of Christian discipleship and practice.** Following Christ's teachings means loving our global neighbours, and caring for creation. The climate crisis both reflects and feeds off inequality, exploitation and greed: often the communities who are suffering the most from its effects, particularly in the Global South, are those who have done least to cause it. We will aim to act in accordance with this, making changes to improve our sustainability, and to show solidarity with those across the world who are suffering in this crisis. Our policy as well as being a practical response to the environment, as a Christian community, is grounded in our faith in our Creator God. As such our practical response flows out of our discipleship.
- **We see this as part of the Church's worship and mission.** We will seek to ensure we undertake the 5<sup>th</sup> *Mark of Mission*; 'To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth'. Our faith teaches us that we are part of creation, not above or beyond it. We therefore aim to affirm this in our mission, worship, preaching, and learning together.

### Areas of application

We are committed to applying these principles in the following areas:

- **Leadership and church members:** All trustees, staff, and church members will be informed about this policy through a leadership and a church meeting. We will communicate our biblical understanding of responsibility to God for all that is entrusted to us through creation and the parts we can play individually and collectively.

- **Travel:** We are committed to encouraging the use of walking, bicycles, public transport and car sharing where possible, to reduce our carbon footprint. We will encourage video software to complement face-to-face meetings where appropriate.
- **Finance:** We will seek to use ethical banking where appropriate and will endeavour not to invest or deal with companies or organisations whose activities significantly conflict with our own environmental policy.
- **Waste:** We are committed to reducing, re-using and recycling waste as far as practically possible and offering our recycling centre to the wider community. This includes avoiding the purchase of products and packaging that use non-recyclable and non-biodegradable materials, if other realistic and affordable alternatives are available.
- **Paper:** We will use recycled paper wherever feasible, and otherwise use paper derived from sustainably managed forests. We will continue our shift to electronic filing (e.g. Google Drive) where possible, to reduce paper use.
- **Food and drink:** We will encourage practical application of Green Christian's LOAF principles - local, organic, animal-friendly and fairly traded - at all meetings that involve the purchase and consumption of food and drink.
- **Procurement:** Our procurement decisions will minimise negative environmental impacts, where feasible, and will aim to encourage positive action by suppliers and partners. Strong preference will be given to suppliers who take environmental responsibility seriously.
- **Buildings and Office Space:** We are committed to minimising energy consumption in the church's worship and other spaces through responsible use of heating, cooling, lighting, ventilation, water use and office equipment.
- **The Shore Café:** The café will be the window/insight into the church for many people in the wider community. Considering this, we deem it essential that the café follows the same application as other areas in the church. Food and drink provided is to follow the LOAF principles where possible. It will be committed to reducing waste - avoiding the purchase of products and packaging that use non-recyclable and non-biodegradable materials. It will aim to minimise energy consumption.
- **Policy management and monitoring:** We are committed to developing and monitoring the implementation of this policy. The ongoing development and monitoring of the policy will be the responsibility of the Eco Steering Committee who will review this policy as appropriate.

## Eco Steering Committee

This group is committed to overseeing and coordinating the church's responsibility for creation care. It is committed to the following goals:

- We will identify environmental issues within The Shore Community Church and recommend appropriate action.
- To provide opportunities for the exploration of ways to deepen the relationship between our faith and concern for God's creation.
- Having undertaken the A Rocha 'environmental audit' of our premises and property we will seek to improve on our results year on year.
- We will highlight the most significant aspects for which we are responsible and devise appropriate plans to care for them.
- To respond in any other appropriate ways to environmental matters as part of our ongoing mission