

Eco District Bronze Award ASSESSMENT



Name of District: Southampton

Contact person: John Evans

Date of bronze application:

Date of EC review meeting:

Outcome:

	Notes and Evidence	Observations and feedback
Ownership Registered its intent to become an Eco District	<i>Demonstrating a District commitment to the process.</i> <i>Minutes of meeting with group/individual identified as coordinator within the District</i>	John Evans is identified as the Eco District Champion and Convenor of the Southampton Eco Diocese Steering Group. It's great that this work is coordinated by a dedicated group.
Policy Written an environmental policy	<i>Current Environmental Policy including, where appropriate, points on travel, the environmental performance of Manses (re: Methodist Church standing order guidelines on Energy Performance Certificates), and a commitment to reducing carbon emissions</i>	This is a strong policy clearly underpinned by theology and integral, as stated, to the Methodist Way of Life. It is very positive to see a commitment by the District to support circuits and churches practically by '[..] employ(ing) its mechanisms of guidance, resources, and grants to aid circuits and churches in these steps.' The policy contains clear targets for church engagement and the District as a whole. The Methodist Church has committed to encouraging its members to reduce the impacts of their lifestyles, and it's good to see this included in the District policy as well as ideas around intergenerational engagement. It would be good to see a review date for this policy and a mechanism for monitoring its implementation.
Eco Church awards	<i>List of churches with registration and dates awards attained.</i>	The threshold of 10% and 5% of church registrations and awards, respectively, has been met.
Relevant Circuit Office award Achieve bronze award for District Office (where appropriate) and land (where appropriate).	<i>Completed sections of Buildings and Land section of Eco Church survey.</i> <i>Certificate of award or email from EC</i>	We note that the District office is virtual, and thank you for providing details about the manse.

<p>Training and development Embedded environmental issues in ongoing presbyterian and local preacher education and support</p>	<p><i>Evidence that local preachers have access to materials to support theological reflection on our care for God's creation. See the Methodist church Worship: Leading & Preaching course, Singing the Faith Plus, and Eco Church "Worship and Teaching" resources.</i></p>	<p>A good series of videos providing insights and an overview of EC. Last November's training day on Environment, Ecology, mission and ministry looked excellent and targeted at ministers and worship leaders, etc which this section is most about. I understand that it didn't take place in the end but it would be great to see more days like this scheduled in the future.</p> <p>The Creation Monday webinar series sounds great and thank you for clarifying that local ministers are invited and do attend these sessions.</p> <p>Whilst the direct training of ministers is a connexional matter, the District's level of engagement with this and the addition of the Southampton Regional Theology Forum, for example, sound very positive.</p>
<p>Finance and investments Managed district investments ethically</p>	<p><i>Policy on investments (taking account of the CFB climate change policy on investments)</i></p>	<p>Funds are invested via the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church. Interestingly, this climate change policy statement looks a little dated and perhaps the District could enquire as to when it might be updated.</p> <p>Although banking is not explicitly mentioned in the scope of the bronze Eco District awards, it is an area that will likely be strengthened for silver.</p>
<p>Collaboration (e.g. with other districts, faith groups) Works with other districts and or faith groups</p>	<p><i>This includes promoting Eco Church as a helpful tool to encourage greater environmental action within the district and beyond. Examples of collaboration are regular network meetings between circuits, districts, and other denominations and interfaith meetings with the environment on the agenda.</i></p>	<p>We are very appreciative of all the work that John Evans continues to do to support other churches and networks through his support of ARUK's work. It would be good to build on John's involvement and for others in the District to take more of a role in cross collaboration. The link to the Learning Network on the website does not appear to be working but might this be a place to facilitate further collaboration?</p>
<p>Celebrating creation Established the habit of recording and celebrating individual environmental initiatives</p>	<p><i>Use district communication to promote and raise awareness of creation care and environmental issues, share resources and celebrate achievements.</i></p> <p><i>Links to evidence OR list</i></p>	<p>It's great to see a range of stories so readily accessible on the District website and the Creation Matters newsletter looks to be a good addition to this.</p>

Further comments and observations

There is a very strong foundation and much positive work to recommend across the District as a whole. It's encouraging to see an emphasis on practically supporting churches and the recent grant proposals being more closely aligned with the Environment Policy. Creation Mondays and Creation Matters both look to be excellent additions as tools for further equipping and engaging churches.