

What are the aims of Action for Hope? (By 2030)

- Assets
 - Energy used in buildings and travel = net zero
 - All Methodist events = net zero
 - Methodist investments having a positive climate impact
- Wisdom
 - Worship and study resources supporting eco theology
 - Churches signed up to Eco Church
 - Updating of Hope in God's Future
- Lifestyle
 - Smaller carbon footprint for Methodist members

The Methodist Church

Creation Matters

Newsletter of the Southampton Eco District

*To the Lord your God belong
the heavens, even the highest
heavens, the earth and
everything in it.*

Deuteronomy 10:14

*He has shown you, O mortal,
what is good. And what does
the Lord require of you? To act
justly and to love mercy and to
walk humbly with your God*

Micah 6:8

Hamish Leese (LeeseH@methodistchurch.org.uk),

newly appointed to the post of **Director of Environmental Engagement** of The Methodist Church, explained to us how the church intends to address its goal of achieving Net Zero by 2030 using the summary presented above. Hamish framed the Net Zero target as Mission. This he illustrated with a quotation from Deuteronomy asserting that the heavens and earth belong to God; the second quotation from Micah 6, describes the response expected by God, and is a core text of the Justice Seeking Church.

*Closing our ears to the voices
of those most vulnerable to
climate change would be
nothing less than giving up our
claim to be disciples of Christ.*

[Hope in God's Future](#)

The imperative of linking discipleship with a response to climate change was owned by The Methodist Church when it adopted the report *Hope in God's Future* at Conference in 2009; the third edition (2020) is available on-line in the link provided in the margin.

Hamish emphasised the importance of forming local teams to monitor, understand and tackle the net energy consumption of churches, circuits and districts.

New Ecochurch survey

You have until
the end of
January 2025
to complete an
existing survey

The new Eco Church survey -

At the end of January 2025 the new Eco Church survey will replace the previous one dating back to 2016. Present awards will continue to be recognised but submissions for awards offered after the end of January should use the new survey.

The themes of the survey are only slightly changed. The five categories now are:

- Worship and teaching
- Buildings and energy
- Land and nature
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

Community and global engagement

The aim of this category is to enable churches to make the commitment shown in the margin. They follow the Methodist Way of Life (MWoL).

Many questions are of a different style to those in the previous survey. Rather than having to opt for a single option in a multiple choice format, responses allow building up points by providing multiple answers (“choose all that apply”) to the question. The survey questions guide progress in these themes:

1: Awareness raising - getting people on board

This theme provides guidance for gathering the support needed to take action.

(MWoL stations Flourish, Notice, Care)

2: Taking action

This is the meat of the category and impinges on a spectrum of consequences of church activities: advocacy, partnerships, events, finance, food, transport and waste reduction.

(MWoL stations Challenge, Serve, Open)

3: Communication

You are asked which methods you use to engage, and to share the actions you take as part of your Eco Church journey in order to inspire others.

(MWoL stations Share, Live, Tell)

Commitment:

Our church recognises the impact of the climate and nature crises and has a plan or strategy to take action **LOCALLY** and/or **NATIONALLY** and/or **GLOBALLY**.

Methodist Way of Life

Lifestyle

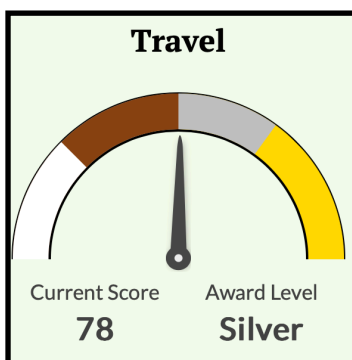
Commitment:

Our church has a strategy or plan to promote ethical and environmentally aware consumption patterns by individuals and households.

Personal carbon footprint

Wild Christian

Creation Care



The aim of this category is to enable churches to affirm the commitment shown in the margin:

There are four themes to be espoused in the strategy:

1: Influence

This theme probes the track of influence from the Eco champion/team through the leadership of the church to its community with regard to promoting a more ethical and sustainable lifestyle.

2: Carbon footprint

There are two questions on this theme testing the promotion of recording individual/household carbon footprints and the recognition of the scale of carbon emissions from heating and lighting.

3: Personal choices

This theme investigates how a church promotes sustainable lifestyles in terms of food, transport, finance, consumption and waste.

4: Nature

Finally, this last theme provides an opportunity for churches to record their enjoyment, promotion and protection of creation and also that it encourages members to participate in community ventures and to manage their own outdoor space.

Helpful links for the Lifestyle category include A Rocha's Wild Christian programme:

For individuals and households to assess their own pathway, Creation Care, provides an EcoChurch-like survey scheme. Two of the categories are common with Ecochurch (Worship and Prayer; Community and Global Engagement), but the other five are a breakdown of personal lifestyle:

Home Garden Travel
Food Possession

Sometimes this can reveal aspects of one's lifestyle that might benefit from further consideration. Such guidance may be kept personal but even so the overall effect is that the collective church Lifestyle has indeed been guided.

What's going on?

Eco Church venturing beyond Bronze

[Southampton Eco District Events](#)

In this last of the presently planned Eco District webinars, we offer the opportunity to learn from the experience of two churches that have taken these steps already.

Jim Gillings leads the Eco group at Salisbury Methodist Church (SMc) in Wiltshire. SMc were registered for Eco Church in January 2020, and awarded their Bronze award in August 2022. That formed the platform for their Silver award in October 2023.



Rose Gosling leads the Eco team of Summerbridge Methodist Church in North Yorkshire. Summerbridge was registered as an Eco Church in January 2019, and their next milestone was a Gold award in August 2020, being the third Methodist Church in England and Wales to receive such an award.



The webinar is on Zoom, starting at 7.30pm on Monday, January 20, Please book via Eventbrite. A link to the event in the collection of Southampton Eco District events using the link in the margin.

Steps towards for an Eco District

We would love to have your views on how the Eco District group can assist you in your humble walk of discipleship “to the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.

Your own stories with a picture or two can be a unique testimony worth sharing across the Southampton District and beyond.

John Evans, Eco District champion

Creation Matters is the newsletter of the Southampton

Eco District group:

Eco District pages are to be found from the Ministries tab of:

<https://www.sdmc.org.uk/>

Facebook:

[southampton.ecodistrict](https://www.facebook.com/southampton.ecodistrict)

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ecodistrict@sdmc.org.uk