**Environment Policy for St Peter’s Church, South Weald**

**We affirm these elements of our faith:**

• God has created the universe and everything in it and we are but one part of His created order.

• Jesus has redeemed the whole earth through His death and resurrection.

• We recognise that we have a special responsibility to care for the Earth so that human life and all God’s creatures may be sustained in harmony.

**Aim**

As a local church, we aim to take the practical steps necessary to realise the Fifth Mark of Mission, which is “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth”.

**Objective**

As a church community, we will take environmental concerns into account in our mission, worship, study, education, training, pastoral, administrative and other projects and programmes.

**Actions**

1. We will appoint an Environment Committee to lead our programme and encourage them to bring relevant environmental issues and concerns forward to the PCC on a regular basis.

2. We will include our concern for sustainability in our worship and teaching.

3. We will undertake an environmental and energy audit of the church premises and property, identify the most significant issues and impacts which should be addressed and make and implement plans and programmes to tackle them, recognising that some additional costs may be incurred to minimise environmental impacts.

4. We will work with others in our local community to identify environmental issues which should be addressed in our area and help develop actions to tackle them.

5. As the church’s energy use is arguably its greatest environmental issue, we will seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the electricity and gas used in church premises.

6. We will encourage our staff and congregation wherever possible to use forms of transport to work, meetings etc. which have minimum or reduced environmental impact –e.g. walk, cycle, public transport, car sharing electric/ hydrogen vehicles.

7. We will seek ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment.

8. We will avoid using water unnecessarily.

9. We will assess our land and property for wildlife and manage them to conserve biodiversity.

10. We will encourage individual members of our congregations to take actions in their personal lives to complement and supplement these actions of the church community.

11. We will engage with global issues regarding climate change.

12. We will participate in the Eco Church programme.

This policy and programme will be reviewed every three years in light of developments.

Next review date – March 2024

**Actions taken as at November 2022**

1. Environment committee appointed
2. Celebrate Creation Sunday on an annual basis (Second Sunday before Lent)

Hymns on this theme quarterly and prayers monthly

Teaching in Children’s groups at least annually

Teaching in confirmation classes

Lent course 2020

Churchyard prayer trail

1. Eco-church used as a template

Reviewed regularly by Environment committee

Building work will be conducted as sustainably as possible, in line with BREEAM principles

1. Annual litter pick organised by Environment committee

Encourage individuals to enjoy nature – St Peter’s Walkers

1. Switch to “green” energy supplier

Measure energy usage and have plans to reduce

Using thermostats for temperature control

Flood lighting on timer, outside lights on motion sensor, toilet lights on timer

Fitting LED light bulbs in church, low-energy bulbs in Belli Centre

Turning off lights, appliances and computers when not in use

Investigating renewable heating alternatives for replacement boiler

1. Regular eco-tip

Car-sharing campaign

Cycle racks installed

1. Using email rather than sending hard copies for PCC papers

Using recycled paper, double-sided where possible

Using recycled toilet paper

Disposable tableware not used

Environmentally friendly cleaning products used

Providing recycling facilities for crisp packets, toothpaste tubes/toothbrushes and pens/pencils

Vegetarian options provided for all church meals

1. Water is metered

Toilets are dual-flush

Taps checked for leaks

1. Harmful chemicals not used in the management of land (excludes paths)

Composting facilities available

Bee friendly plants grown

Bird feeder kept stocked the whole year

Bird boxes and bug hotel in churchyard

1. Eco-tips provided by environment committee

Encourage members to sign up to Creation Care scheme

1. Church funds held ethically with CAF Bank

Fairtrade tea and coffee used at church events

Toilets twinned

1. Bronze award achieved