PARISH OF THE ASCENSION ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
(CHURCHES OF ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY and ST GILES, and ST LUKE's LEP[1])

The Parochial Church Council will:

1. Take environmental concerns fully into account in our care of the church buildings and churchyards and in our catering, projects, community activities, mission, worship, study, education, training, pastoral care, administrative and other programmes. Specifically, we will
   - encourage all users to follow our Environmental Policy;
   - undertake an 'environmental audit', list significant aspects of the natural world for which we are responsible, and devise appropriate plans to care for them;
   - consider the environmental impact of all our policies and plans, and accept that additional costs may be incurred by minimising that impact;
   - support the work of local and national environmental organisations as appropriate;
   - debate environmental issues and policy at least once every three years;
   - ask the Archdeacons to include environmental policies in their Articles of Enquiry to the parishes on a regular basis, and to review and assess the answers received;
   - pay attention to environmental concerns in our banking and investment practice, use only the ones recommended by the Church, and continue to pay regard to the national church ethical investment policy; and
   - encourage environmentally friendly forms of transport (walk, cycle, public transport), share cars and offer lifts, keep journeys to meeting venues short wherever possible, and keep fossil fuel emissions as low as we can.

2. Look for economies in energy consumption by
   - technical improvements to thermostats;
   - improving the lagging of our pipes;
   - replacing covers that reduce the efficiency of radiators;
   - fitting low-energy light bulbs;
   - improving insulation and draught-proofing;
   - installing secondary glazing where appropriate and affordable; and
   - using energy efficient heaters and controls.

3. Seek ways to reduce the impact of our activities by, wherever possible by
   - using email, keeping papers short and only printing and photocopying when necessary;
   - using recycled paper and minimising use of paper;
   - repairing wood and other items;
   - recycling waste in correct, well-labelled bins and checking any plastic items for 'recyclability';
   - using low-environmental impact cleaning materials (avoiding chlorine-based and phosphate-rich powders);
   - minimising use of disposable items;
   - not using artificial fertilisers and pesticides, replacing with liquid seaweed and chicken pellets;
   - using wood from sustainable sources; and
   - turning off computers, lights and electrical appliances when not in use, installing more automatic timers.

[1] Local Ecumenical Partnership (United Reformed Church with Church of England)

4. Wherever practical,
   - seek to purchase food and drink that meets the LOAF principles (Locally-sourced, Organically-grown, Animal-friendly, Fairly-traded), avoid over-catering, use seasonal foods, and compost green materials;
   - encourage the use of locally sourced and garden flowers and greenery when decorating the churches;
   - avoid using water unnecessarily and collect rainwater for use in churchyards; and
   - minimise the effects of traffic pollution on people, especially children, by maintaining planted and wild areas within the churchyards and maximising green boundaries around them.

This policy is reviewed annually. Policy adopted: 14 May 2018. Last approved: 20 February 2025. Next review date: February 2028.