



Esgobaeth Llanelwy / Diocese of St Asaph

Newyddion Ymweliadau visitation news

Take the Next Step on your Eco Journey



Last year, we celebrated receiving a Bronze Eco-Diocese Award from Arocha UK and I'm asking you now to support us and most importantly support the planet in seeking a Silver Eco-Diocese Award. To do this, more of our churches need to have achieved an Award and more of us need to have embedded climate-friendly ways into our lifestyles.

Given the nature of the climate emergency, Arocha UK has recently increased the targets.

40% of local churches must be registered. So far, we have 70 which is roughly 35%. This means we are still a long way off the next target of having 30% of our churches achieving an Award! Of that 30%, at least one third should be Silver or Gold. So far, we have eight churches with Silver Awards, and 15 with Bronze.

It is worth remembering that this journey is not about promoting Eco-Church for the sake of promoting Eco-Church. It is about embedding environmentally responsible practice and behaviour into everything we do. We need to ensure that caring for God's creation underpins our faith and informs our way of living.

If your church has registered but hasn't achieved an Award yet, I'd encourage you to complete the questionnaire. You will be amazed how much you already do to care for God's creation and how simple changes to worship, activities and life can make a big difference to your Eco-Church status.

Included in this edition are three stories from churches in the Diocese of St Asaph who have achieved an Award – two Bronze and one Silver. Each writer was surprised just how much their church already does to care for God's creation, how easy it was to achieve an Eco Award and how they are inspired to continue their climate justice journey. So go on, take the next step on your Eco journey!

Nigel Williams is the Dean of St Asaph Cathedral and chair of the diocesan Eco-Church Group.

Cymerwch y Cam Nesaf ar eich Taith Eco

Y llynedd, roeddem ni'n dathlu derbyn Gwobr Efydd Eco-Esgobaeth oddi wrth Arocha UK ac rwy'n gofyn i chi yn awr i'n cefnogi, ac yn bwysicaf oll, gefnogi'r blaned wrth geisio am Wobr Arian Eco-Esgobaeth. I wneud hynny, mae angen i ragor o'n heglwysi gyrraedd y Wobr ac mae angen i ragor ohonom wreiddio ffyrdd hinsawdd-gyfeillgar yn ein ffordd o fyw. O gofio natur yr argyfwng hinsawdd, mae Arocha UK wedi cynyddu'r targedau'n ddiweddar.

Mae'n rhaid i 40% o eglwysi lleol fod wedi'u cofrestru. Ar hyn o bryd, mae gennym 70 sef tua 35%. Mae hynny'n golygu ein bod yn dal gryn dipyn o ffordd o'r targed nesaf o gael 30% o'n heglwysi'n cyrraedd y Wobr! O'r 30%, dylai o leiaf draean fod yn Arian neu'n Aur. Hyd yn hyn, mae gennym wyth o eglwysi gyda gwobrau Arian a 15 gydag Efydd.

Mae'n werth cofio nad hyrwyddo'r Eco-Eglwys ohono ei hun yw diben hyrwyddo Eco-Eglwys. Mae ynghylch gwreiddio ymarfer ac ymddygiad cyfrifoldeb amgylcheddol ym mhopeth rydym yn ei wneud. Rydym angen sicrhau fod gofalu am gread Duw yn sail i'n ffydd ac yn hysbysu'n ffordd o fyw.

Os yw'ch eglwys chi wedi cofrestru ond heb gyrraedd y Wobr eto, byddwn yn eich annog i gwblhau'r holiadur. Byddech yn synnu faint rydych eisoes yn gofalu am gread Duw a sut y gall newidiadau syml i addoli, gweithgareddau a bywyd wneud gwahaniaeth mawr i'ch statws Eco-Eglwys.

Yn gynwysedig yn y rhifyn hwn mae tair stori o eglwysi yn Esgobaeth Llanelwy sydd wedi cyrraedd y Wobr – dau Efydd ac un Arian. Roedd pob awdur yn synnu cymaint mae ei heglwys eisoes yn ei wneud i ofalu am gread Duw, pa mor hawdd oedd cyrraedd Gwobr Eco a sut maen nhw'n cael eu hysbrydoli i barhau ar eu taith cyfiawnder-hinsawdd. Felly ewch amdani, cymerwch y cam nesaf ar eich taith Eco!

Nigel Williams yw Deon Eglwys Gadeiriol Llanelwy a chadeirydd Grŵp Eco-Eglwys yr Esgobaeth.

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Silver in Prestatyn

The two Church in Wales churches in Prestatyn have both achieved Silver Eco-Church status. Here, the secretary of the Church of the Holy Spirit, **Sharon Ing and her husband, Steven**, explain how their church's Eco journey started.

We came across the A Rocha Eco-Church initiative during our Mission Area Lent course in 2021. We were intrigued and downloaded a copy of its statements for achieving an Award, as guidance for taking positive steps towards tackling climate change. At first it felt overwhelming, but after reading through we realised we could make things easier by:

- **highlighting in orange everything we already did**
- **highlighting in yellow everything we could realistically do.**

The next step was to bring it to the attention of as many members of our church family as we could. It is amazing the diversity of strengths, knowledge and gifts that emerge! There was so much more that we could achieve with faith and ingenuity.

It is important to think outside the box and always keep your eyes and ears open. For example, we were struggling with the concept of a water butt, as we have metal drainpipes, but on a holiday, we saw water being collected on a cliff-edge allotment with drainage running along hedges. We adapted this idea for our window ledges.

The whole process pushed us into firmly embracing Fairtrade and becoming a Fairtrade church. We regularly have Fairtrade displays, incorporate it into outreach events and set up seasonal pop-up shops.

We are linked up via email to WWF, RSPB, Church of England Environment and Tearfund, enabling us to support their current campaigns and continually be proactive. All events are posted on our specific 'Creation Noticeboard'. Tearfund linked us with 'Toilet Twinning', and we simply twinned our fridge, bin and garden as well as both toilets, which helped us become aware of global needs.



Locally, we are now engaged with 'Hedgehog Help' and have two hedgehog houses and a hedgehog feeding station in our garden. A local builders' merchant provided the concrete slit complete with hole, to link us with the hedgehog highway.



The wonderful thing about this journey is that you never reach the destination; there are always positive and exciting steps to take. We began planting fruit trees last autumn and now we have plans for more fruit trees. Our first raised bed has been embraced by strawberry plants and now we have fledgling tomato plants and sweetcorn seeds ready for the next raised bed. And, having welcomed hedgehogs, we are now in discussion with a local beekeeper! There is plenty to keep us busy and keep us green!





Congratulations to our national winner!

Last year, we launched our 'Good News' competition – and now we're proud to announce the national winner.

We asked for stories about your church community – written in the style of a newspaper article, and accompanied by a photograph and a suitable headline. We were looking for uplifting tales – of battling to achieve something special for the parish, perhaps, or tireless volunteering, or dedication to your congregation or wider locality. And we were inundated with amazing entries.

Our judges worked hard to select five regional winners from the huge list, and we announced this at the end of last year, giving each regional winner £1,500 towards church funds as part of Ecclesiastical's aim to donate profits to transform lives and communities.

Now – with the help of the public, through a show of support for their online story – the overall winner, who will receive a further £6,000, has been chosen.

A big congratulations to the national winner

Penlee Cluster Churches, down in the far west of Cornwall – St John's and St Mary's in Penzance, St Peter's in Newlyn, and St Pol de Leon in the village of Paul.

Determined to bring their community together during those difficult months, they launched a fantastic 'Never Alone' initiative. This multi-faceted campaign saw church members team up with local businesses to take pub meals, Cornish pasties, and fish and chip suppers to elderly and vulnerable people. Read their story and those of the other regional winners at:

www.ecclesiastical.com/churchcomp



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Our Church Insurance Consultants are a friendly and approachable team of highly knowledgeable insurance experts who are right on your doorstep and ready to offer guidance and help with any insurance or risk-related issues you might have.

From a simple explanation of the basics of your policy, to guidance on how to combat thieves and vandals, guard against fire, and improve general health and safety, they are there for you, free of charge.



The team – (from top left) Chris, Rebecca, Heather, Lynne, Peter, Nicky, Kay and Derek – are all deeply passionate about customer service, and our country's amazing churches.

Amongst them are theologians, choristers, regular churchgoers, and people who have worked with Christian charities here and abroad, so they really understand your specific needs. And because they're based at regional locations all over the UK, they're also able to tailor their advice to your local requirements.

They have decades of combined industry experience – and standing behind them is Ecclesiastical's 135 years of unrivalled expertise and insight in dealing with everything life might throw at you.



Where possible, the Church Insurance Consultants love to meet customers and talk face-to-face, and are happy to host networking events where you can get to know people from other parishes and share experiences, ideas – and smiles.

If you are unable to meet them in person, they're still there, offering exactly the same services online or over the telephone.

To find out more about the team, and how they could help you and your church, please visit: www.ecclesiastical.com/cic or email meetus@ecclesiastical.com (please include your contact details, the name of your church and parish, and policy number if possible), or call them on **0345 777 3322**.

Contains promotional material

Café raises funds – and spirits

When lockdowns led to a dramatic fall in revenue, one church came up with a way to raise funds and create a much needed local community space.



Christ Church in Lofthouse (near Leeds) was struggling for funding, and the village itself had been cut in half by the arrival of the M26 motorway many years ago, leaving its people without a proper place to meet. So the Reverend Mandy Rhodes and others put their heads together and decided to open the TLC Café in the basement of their church.

“Villagers still talk fondly about the old cricket club which was lost when the motorway came through,” said Mandy. “That was where people would meet up for parties and get-togethers. But since it went there hasn’t been anywhere suitable. Like most churches, we were hit really hard by the lockdowns – and we still are, with quite a few of our elderly parishioners now in the habit of joining services online. So we wondered if there was a way we could address both problems, and the café was born.”

They teamed up with CLO Coffee – a Leeds-based Christian coffee shop and roastery – to source a machine and barista training, and redecorated the basement hall, which is the former crypt. In November 2021, they opened the café – and it has gone from strength to strength.

“There’s a lovely, relaxed atmosphere,” said Mandy. “We’re seeing a real group of regulars building – people just like having somewhere to meet up again. After paying off our original outlay we’re now turning a profit, which means we can be more confident about paying our Parish Share. “We have local artists displaying their work here – our current exhibition is of art produced by a local head injury charity – and we take a small 5% cut of any sales, which helps. We have a charity shop and our food bank too. We’re running mother-and-baby drop-ins, and I’m looking at starting baby massage sessions. I’d say the future is bright!”

Especially in rural communities, church buildings are much more than just bricks and mortar. They offer vital spaces for quiet time, reflection and connection, as the TLC Café demonstrates.

From listening to customer feedback, we know that it’s not always easy to pay for the upkeep and care of rural churches, or for the ministry that happens in them.

We asked for your feedback on our printed toolkit – Fundraising in a Box – that was sent to all church customers in January 2021. You told us you liked the toolkit style, but guidance especially for rural parishes would be a helpful addition to our support. That’s why we’ve created a fundraising toolkit for rural churches, full of useful links and expert advice. **You can find it on our Church Fundraising Hub at www.ecclesiastical.com/rural-parishes**

More fundraising support

There are plenty of useful resources and handy templates for all types of churches on our Church Fundraising Hub at www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising

Our Movement for Good Awards open for entry



Charitable giving is at the heart of what we do – and has been for over 135 years. For the past three years, Ecclesiastical Insurance has run the Movement for Good Awards programme, giving away £3 million to great causes.

Did you know?

In 2021, we were delighted to award £25,000 to church-related charities. Please take a look at our winners’ map to see which charities and churches we have helped in your local area: winnersmap.benefactgroup.com

The Awards are back and this year we have over £1 million to donate, but we cannot do it without you. This year, you’ll find information on the awards on our parent company’s website.

Visit: www.benefactgroup.com/movement-for-good to find out more.





Have you heard the e-news?

E-news is a monthly email full of tips and information and monthly risk reminders for all of our customers and anyone in your church community. To receive it is easy – **all you need to do is register on our website at: www.ecclesiastical.com/signup** and if at any time you decide you no longer want to receive it, you can click the 'unsubscribe' button at the bottom of the email. Feel free to pass on the sign-up link to anyone you think might like it.

'Made Simple' guides



We know that understanding the insurance responsibilities for your church can be complicated, that's why we've created our 'Made Simple' guides.

These guides take you through potential risks and insurance implications of the day-to-day running of churches, as well as activities and projects that PCCs are often involved in.

They cover topics such as administration, events, community outreach, people on church premises, church property, building works and legal expenses. **You can find them all on our website at: www.ecclesiastical.com/church**

Information at your fingertips

The Ecclesiastical website is largely an online library of guidance and support for you and your church community. You'll find information about church and home insurance, risk management, fundraising and grants and lots more. 'Church Matters' newsletter is also on the website, making it really easy to share with others.

Visit: www.ecclesiastical.com/church

Ministry Bursary Awards

Financial support for 2023 sabbaticals

The experience of a sabbatical can be life-changing and have a long-lasting impact on your church and community. Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards (MBAs) provide financial support to members of the clergy planning to take extended study leave. Applications are open now until the end of September.

Established in 1987 to celebrate Ecclesiastical's centenary year, the Awards have supported almost 1,400 clergy members from Anglican Christian faiths. The sabbatical breaks and projects have varied greatly over the years – from traditional and modern-day pilgrimages to study visits, spiritual retreats and pursuits of lifelong dreams and hobbies.

Like Rev'd James Radcliffe from Lincoln, who worked in sports-based ministry in South Africa, or Rev'd Rachel Dale, who studied dementia and also worked with vulnerable children. One of our most recent MBA recipients, Rev'd Canon Imogen Nay, spent her sabbatical in 2021 looking at rewilding and green churches.

Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards are open for applications until 30 September 2022. Judging of the applications will take place in November and awards will be made during December 2022.

If you would like to read more about James, Rachel or Imogen's experiences and find out more about the Awards including eligibility criteria and application details, **please visit our website: www.ecclesiastical.com/mba**



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As part of a financial services group that exists to give its profits to good causes, one of the ways in which we do this is through our Trust130 Home

Insurance offer. For every new direct home insurance policy taken out, Ecclesiastical offer to donate £130 to an Anglican church or cathedral of the policyholder's choice.¹

Originally launched in 2017 to celebrate our 130th anniversary, we have since donated more than £460,000, helping to support over 2,500 churches. A donation of £130 may not sound much, but churches and congregations have used the donations in many creative ways to fund all sorts of things:

St Mary and Bartholomew Solihull are using their grant to introduce contactless donations to support the church and raise valuable funds for charitable causes.

"This is important for both the church to enable us to continue to raise funds, for the parishioners to enable them to continue to donate in church without having to touch cash/the collection plate and finally to the local (and national) charities we support each year through our charitable giving which is only possible from the kind donations our parishioners make." **Duncan Watson**, Treasurer

St Albans West Leigh, which is located in a growing community, with a new housing development opposite the church and a further development close by in the planning stages, are using the money to welcome the new residents.

"We have decided to use the money to assist in funding welcome packs – which will be a booklet about our church and the locale along with some nice biscuits. The booklet and biscuits enable us to make personal contact with people as they move into our community, and to offer them a warm welcome." **The Rev'd Canon Karina Green**, Priest in Charge St Alban's West Leigh

Most trusted home insurance provider with the happiest customers

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And don't forget, we offer a discount to members of the clergy.

For more information about Trust130 and Home Insurance, visit: www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

¹ Terms may apply. ² www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customer-experience-ratings/home-insurance

A Bronze for Llanwyddelan!

A small rural community in Cedewain Mission Area has achieved Bronze Eco-Church Status. As Michael Lawton explains it was easy to do but now they want to move to the next level and have plans to make changes in their churchyard.

It was very gratifying to hear that St Gwyddelan's Church in Llanwyddelan had achieved a Bronze Award in the Eco Church Awards. In this day of climate change, energy supply challenges and rising costs all round, it is, of course, important to run a church, as well as a house or a business, in the most efficient manner possible, both from a financial point of view as well as that of contributing to the well-being of the local ecology. In a rural area, this is, perhaps, easier than it would be in urban surroundings.



To meet the standard necessary for a bronze award was, as it turned out, less challenging than it might have been. Counting this, looking at that, assessing the other – we were very fortunate in that the requirements for a bronze award were largely in place already, necessitating little more than totting up the points. We are very pleased that we have achieved that standard.

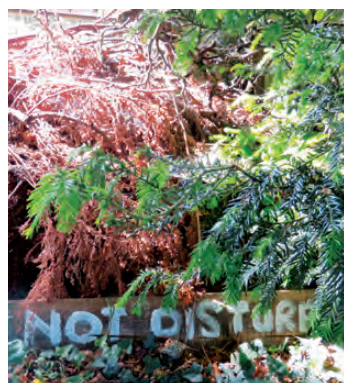
However, a Bronze Award is merely a beginning, a convenient starting point for the work we have to do if we aspire, as we do, for a Silver or beyond. The weakest part of our Eco-Church questionnaire was the churchyard and surrounding areas. There is much to do in the category of wildlife encouragement, for instance. It is planned, this summer, to carry out wildlife surveys of the green areas, look at the results and see what can be done to improve our score. The provision of bird boxes and bat boxes is an obvious task (we have none at present) and it is intended to look at the area with a view to instigating a mowing regime in parts to encourage wildflower growth. To this end, a qualified ecologist will be carrying out a survey.

This is, of course, merely the tip of the iceberg. The more we do, the more we will be able to see what can and should be done.

Watch this space ...



Little Things Make a Big Difference in Rossett



The listed church of Christ Church in Rossett, in Alyn Mission Area, was encouraged to register with Eco-Church after its Quinquennial Inspection last year. As the Churchwarden and Reader, Siân Hatton-Jones explains, registering with Eco-Church was very straightforward while completing the survey required input from across the church.

One evening, I challenged myself to see how much of the survey I could complete in half an hour. With around 20 questions in each of the five categories, it felt like a huge task. I decided to answer what I could, rather than guess what I did not know. The survey saves responses as you go, tracking the totals in each category. A score of over 25% in a category is Bronze, over 50% is Silver and over 75% is Gold. We were aiming for a Bronze in each category. Soon we had a Gold, three Bronzes and a fail! It was time to ask the vicar and Church Council for help, especially those who had previously been Secretary or Warden.

We met to check the survey and fill in the gaps. There was excitement in the air as we noticed that we had Bronze or higher in every category and the website flagged up that we could apply for the Bronze Award. A Rocha UK then confirmed the results with the vicar, and soon after that the great news arrived! It seemed that all along we were a lot more 'eco' than we thought.

The little things we did in lockdown counted for a great deal. We found that the Porch Book Swap and the Bug Hotel were key contributors in certain categories. During lockdown, local people could not access the church book stall, so one day Sheila, a Rossett resident, brought along a red box containing books and asked if we could have a book swap in the porch. Many people passed the porch on their daily walk and could pick up a book. This counted in the Lifestyle category: Our church hosts activities and/or events that facilitate the recycling and/or reuse of goods.

In the churchyard, some wooden benches had to be removed. The Community Payback team enjoyed smashing them up to make a Bug Hotel. One of the team had been watching Countryfile on TV and saw how to make them!

It has been a joy to share this Award with everyone who contributes to looking after the church and churchyard. We are now looking at ways to progress towards a Silver Award, but that is going to take more planning and might involve a tap-twinning project!

Churchwardens – Unsung Heroes!



Churchwardens are some of the most valuable volunteers in any church, bearing much of the responsibility of running and maintaining the building. The wide range of duties Churchwardens undertake makes the role one of the most varied in the church community. From rising damp to blocked drains,

un-serviced boilers to crumbling stonework, they always have plenty on their plate!

Matthew Clements has written a book, *Rotas, Rules and Rectors*, to, "help the Churchwardens of the Anglican church to thrive, rather than merely survive in the role."

With gentle humour based on solid experience and pragmatism, his book unravels what it is that Churchwardens actually do and what their job can entail. There are many pitfalls for the unwary ... and just as many joys as well. Filled with practical wisdom and shrewd common sense, *Rotas, Rules and Rectors* has practical advice for Churchwardens and for those thinking of taking up the role or closely involved in parish work.

Copies of his book can be purchased online at www.beingachurchwarden.com and any proceeds go to the Re-Ordering Fund at St Edburg's Church, Bicester.

For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 **Email:** churches@ecclesiastical.com

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