

Scotland District Environmental Policy



1. The Scotland District affirms the 2019 Methodist Conference's recognition of a Climate Emergency and its call for the UK to achieve net zero emission well before 2050¹ The District embraces the aspirational target of the Methodist Church to become a net zero carbon emissions church by 2030.²
2. To achieve this vision, the Scotland District:
 - (a) Affirms its commitment to supporting local churches, beginning with encouraging them to register with 'Eco-Congregation Scotland'²
 - (b) Will appoint an environmental group to monitor, encourage and report to the Synod on progress within the District towards fulfilling the objectives of this environmental policy.
3. As part of its commitment to being an Eco District, the District Synod will:
 - (a) Manage the District manse in a manner which is mindful of environmental issues.
 - (b) Provide information, resources and material from the Connexion, other denominations and Eco-Congregation Scotland throughout the District to enable ministers and church members to reflect theologically on environmental issues and prepare local plans aligned with the net zero carbon emissions target of 2030.
 - (c) Maintain its finances through the ethical funds provided by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes and CFB. It will also review its current bank account for their ethical credentials.
 - (d) Ensure all property consents and grants take into consideration their environmental impact.
 - (e) Work with other Districts, faith groups and civic agencies to encourage environmental action.
 - (f) Record and celebrate environmental initiatives within circuit and local churches.
 - (g) Encourage thought to be given to the appointment of an environmental officer or small group to act as a focus for related work in the circuit and to liaise with DPC.
 - (h) Aim to exceed the Methodist Church targets of having 50% of churches registered for 'Eco-Congregation Scotland' and working towards an award, by 2026.
 - 50% of registered churches to have achieved a bronze award
 - 20% to have achieved silver.
4. To promote greater awareness of environmental issues in the District, the Synod will:
 - (a) Invite local churches from time to time to integrate environmental concerns into their worship planning.
 - (b) Make use of Zoom or other appropriate video conferencing for District meetings wherever possible to minimise carbon emissions, and generally use electronic communications in preference to paper.

- (c) Encourage catering at Synod and district meetings to use vegetarian and LOAF food, especially fairly traded tea, coffee, and biscuits. (LOAF is an acronym for Locally produced, Organically grown, Animal friendly, Fairly traded.)
- (d) Promote the principle of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle in the provision of catering and printing and encourage the use of environmentally friendly cleaning materials.
- (e) Encourage District meetings prayerfully to consider our human impact on the environment as an integral part of their agenda.
- (f) Encourage local churches to consider switching to a renewable energy provider and where practical use low carbon technology.
- (g) Follow the Methodist church guidelines for travel.⁴
- (h) Invite local churches to adhere to the above principles and develop their own environmental policy.
- (i) Encourage everyone to review their own personal impact by following the guidance on the Methodist Lifestyle page.³

5. The aim of this environmental policy is for local churches and church members in the District to:

- (a) Recognise that Christians are responsible for the good stewardship and care of God's earth reflecting on the environmental consequences of our decision-making.
- (b) Make care for the environment integral to our worship of God and teaching.
- (c) Actively progress the implementation of sound, sustainable environmental practice in all our activities.
- (d) Reduce the environmental impact of church buildings and activities.
- (e) Develop church land in ways that benefit the environment and the local community.
- (f) Engage with local and global agencies in seeking a fairer, more environmentally friendly world.
- (g) Engage with political debate and processes to generate action to protect and restore the planet.
- (g) Develop lifestyles which reflect the aims and objectives of this environmental policy.

Policy to be presented for adoption at the District Synod on 21st September 2024

Policy to be reviewed by the District environmental group before September 2025

Notes:

¹ [Methodist Church recognises a climate emergency](#)

² [Eco-Congregation Scotland](#)

³ [Lifestyle](#)

⁴ [Travel](#)