

CAMPAIGNING



COMMUNITY & GLOBAL

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WHY?

Lifestyle changes made by individual Christians are important acts of commitment and integrity. Often this is not enough to make a difference at a national or global level. We need big business or government to make a bigger difference. Campaigning helps influence these key players. By raising issues repeatedly and clearly, we build pressure on our political and business leaders to make decisions for an environmentally sustainable future.

Environmental change, climate change and social justice action are the responsibility of everyone. It can't be done by just one person, or even by one group. From grassroots environmental projects to international anti-poverty organisations, each group brings something unique to the table.

Individuals are drawn to different styles of campaigning – some prefer negotiations or letter writing behind the scenes, others want direct action. You don't need to be an expert, just have a desire to share a love for God's creation, and a willingness to communicate, listen and learn.

Christian Aid and its partners have been campaigning on climate change since 2006. 'As Christians we are called to love our neighbours,' said the relief agency. 'If our neighbours are suffering the effects of climate change then we can demonstrate that love by making choices to live our lives more sustainably – and to campaign for our politicians to take action.'

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change-campaign>

HOW?

Sometimes we can be overwhelmed by the number of different problems in the world. It seems there are so many areas which need significant impetus to bring constructive change. We will need to reflect on our own priorities, skills and capacity as individuals, and as churches, to decide where to put our energies and resources.



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A Rocha UK is committed to campaigning. When you are logged into Eco Church, look to the bottom of the 'Dashboard' page where you will see 'Raise your Voice'. Here you will find up to date information about a campaign important to the heart of A Rocha UK.

CAMPAIGNING AROUND CLIMATE CHANGE

The climate emergency has become urgent. Thousands of people and organisations across the planet are focussing energy on bringing meaningful, lasting change in this area. Here we profile a few, showing you how to get involved:

Hope for the Future is a climate charity which works to equip communities, groups and individuals across the country to communicate the urgency of the climate crisis. They help churches campaign and engage with MPs from across party lines on the issues of climate change: <https://www.hftf.org.uk/campaigner-workbooks>

Christian Climate Action is a community of Christians taking direct non-violent action and working closely with 'Extinction Rebellion' (XR). They say 'We are inspired by Jesus Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit. Following the example of social justice movements of the past, we carry out acts of public witness, non-violent direct action and civil disobedience to urge those in power to make the changes needed.' Take direct action with a local group, participate in the 'Saturday reflections' or enjoy daily morning prayer: <https://christianclimateaction.org/>

Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) is an action-focused community of young Christians in the UK aged 18–30, choosing to follow Jesus in the pursuit of climate justice. A relay to COP26 is raising awareness of the imperative to engage in Creation Care theology: <https://www.yccn.uk/>

Operation Noah, is a Christian Charity working with the church to inspire action on climate change. One of their campaigns, Bright Now, calls for churches to divest from fossil fuel companies and invest in clean alternatives: <https://brightnow.org.uk/>



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Tearfund, in partnership with other organisations including A Rocha UK, launched a 'Climate Emergency Toolkit' in 2020 which encourages churches to:

- Prepare (start a conversation and plan a response).
- Declare (an emergency in a way that engages leaders).
- Impact (by connecting with others and using our voice).
- <https://www.climateemergencytoolkit.com/>

The Climate Coalition represents over 140 organisations (including A Rocha UK) and is Britain's largest group of people dedicated to action against climate change. Why not sign the declaration for a 'healthy, greener, fairer tomorrow'?

<https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/>

<https://stopclimatechaoscymru.org/>

<https://www.stopclimatechaos.scot/>

CAMPAIGNING FOR NATURE

Climate change is a major focus for all environmental campaigning. You may be interested in a particular species or wildlife support group. Take a look at these organisations to see what their current campaign work is focussed on:

- RSPB: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/campaigning/>
- Woodland Trust: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/campaign-with-us/>
- Marine Conservation Society: <https://www.mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do/campaigns/>
- World Wildlife Fund: <https://www.wwf.org.uk/what-can-i-do>
- Friends of the Earth: <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/take-part/act-now>
- Greenpeace: <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/>



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CASE STUDIES

Christ Church, Lichfield has been involved in campaigning for 'The Big Shift' for Christian Aid outside their local HSBC branch: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/the-big-shift>

Members of the church also participated in Climate Action Day with their local school: <https://climateactionday.org/en/>. Some of the congregation are also members of XR and have been involved with campaigning in London.

Bramhall Methodist Church, in Manchester, is proactive in praying and taking action to care for the planet: <https://www.bramhallmethodists.org.uk/climate-year>

Richard Baker, from Bramhall Methodist church was interviewed for the Eco Church Fifth Anniversary Online Celebration in March 2021. Here is what he said:

'We're in Bramhall which is one of the leafy suburbs just south of Manchester. We're one of the largest Methodist churches outside London with about 400 members. As a church in the run-up to Cop 26, we decided this year we were going to declare a 'Climate Year' and we've done this in partnership with 35 other churches in a project called 'Make Cop 26 Count'. As a group we've all committed to three things. One of them was to hold a Climate Sunday Service so we held that in early 2021, the other one was to take a practical action which was to sign up to Eco Church and the third one was to take some political action. We're at the moment trying to work out how to best engage with our MP to make our concerns known to her.'

You can watch the longer celebration here and hear the rest of the interview at 35.05 mins in: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twSmXinCiA&t=1856s>



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St Giles Church, Risby in Suffolk is a member of Pesticide Action Network (PAN) and is campaigning for their parish and county council to stop the use of pesticides in the community: <https://www.pan-uk.org/>

St Mary's Church, Wythall, in Worcestershire, supplied their congregation with a questionnaire to understand their environmental concerns; to hear what they would like to lobby MPs about and to ask how they would like to be involved. The most common concerns were plastic usage and the damage to the oceans.

To help the congregation take action, the church used their news sheet to point people to A Rocha International's information about microplastics:

- <https://www.arocha.org/en/projects/microplastics/>
- <https://www.arocha.org/en/news/taking-on-marine-plastics/>

St Mary's also participated in Tearfund's 'This is a Rubbish Campaign'. Campaign cards were provided to help individuals write to multinational companies. They ask the companies to take responsibility for their plastic pollution and waste which often ends up in poorer countries: <https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/rubbish-campaign>