

Eco Church award for office

Further Information for Eco Diocese award criteria

	Criteria	Notes	Example of evidence
Bronze Eco Diocese award	Achieve Bronze Eco Church award for Church House/Diocesan Office.	Completed sections of Buildings and Energy and Land and Nature sections of Eco Church survey.	<i>Award certificate or award reference.</i>
Silver Eco Diocese award	Achieve Silver Eco Church award for Church House/Diocesan Office and promote an understanding amongst all staff of Eco Diocese goals.	For an 'office' environment to become truly sustainable, all staff need to understand the direction of travel and why this matters. It cannot be left to one individual to champion and own this across a whole office team.	<i>Award certificate or award reference.</i> <i>See further notes below on evidence for the office award.</i>
Gold Eco Diocese award	Gold criteria pending		

What is the Eco Church survey?

The Eco Church survey provides a framework to support churches and their leadership to take practical action on caring for God's earth. The survey covers five key areas of church life: Worship and Teaching; Buildings and Energy; Land and Nature; Community and Global Engagement; and Lifestyle. It is an award scheme whereby churches are encouraged to progress from bronze through to silver and gold awards as they do more to care for God's earth. Please refer to our [website](#) for an overview of each of the survey categories and downloadable PDF versions of the questions.

Is there a special survey for offices?

The Eco Church survey is designed for churches specifically, but can also be used by some of the office entities within a diocese. The [Routemap to Net Zero](#) makes specific references to milestones for offices to achieve:

Milestone 4.6.1 All offices to register for Eco Church during 2022 and aim to achieve a bronze Eco Church award by 2023 and silver by 2026

NB This section applies to Diocesan Offices, Church House Westminster, and to any other office (for example bishops' offices and cathedral offices) which are not already part of a building covered elsewhere in the Routemap.

The following offices are able to register and apply for Eco Church awards: Diocesan Offices/Church Houses, Bishop's Offices and Westminster Church House. (Cathedral Offices will generally have been included in their Cathedral application.)

Other offices (e.g. Deanery) or buildings (e.g. Bishop's Lodges) are **not eligible** for awards. They may choose to use the survey questions as a guide for good practice, but may *not* apply for the awards.

What if we have two offices?

The diocesan office or Church House is the administrative centre of the diocese. If you have an office split between two (or more) buildings or sites (but all **the policies and practices are united**) please complete **one** survey. In this instance, you will need to reflect your overall situation as 'a blend'. For example, if you have an office with no double glazing and a second office that is all double glazed, you will respond 'partly' when asked about double glazing. If you have two offices, **operating individual policies and practices**, please complete TWO separate surveys.

How do I start a survey?

Register your office on the [Eco Church platform](#) to get started. Once you've registered you can start your survey to see your progress and use the questions to prompt further action. You can revisit the survey at any time to make updates. This information sheet will help you apply the survey to your office and there is further helpful information about the survey on our User Guide [here](#).

How do I apply for an award?

Once you have reached the required threshold (bronze or silver) for the **two required categories (Buildings and Energy and Land and Nature)**, and completed as much of the other categories as possible, you are ready to submit your survey. As you probably have not reached the required threshold in *ALL* the categories you will be unable to submit your application online, therefore please **send a separate email to ecochurch@arocha.org to let us know you are ready to apply for your award**. Your application will be reviewed manually and we will get in touch with you if we require any further information or clarification.

What if I need help with registering or completing the survey?

You can also watch our video tutorial for guidance on registering a new account, logging into your account, registering a new church, and accessing an account if your church/office is already registered, available [here](#).

Do I have to fill in all sections of the Eco Church survey?

There are five categories in the Eco Church survey (Worship and Teaching; Buildings and Energy; Land and Nature; Community and Global Engagement; and Lifestyle). As you complete the Eco Church survey for your office please read 'office' for 'church'.

For a **Bronze or Silver office award** the **two essential** sections to be completed are Buildings and Energy and Land and Nature. However, we **encourage you to complete as much as you can in the other sections too** as this will help you embed creation care in the office life, celebrate what good things you're already doing and identify other opportunities. We have lots of information about the topics covered in the survey categories on our [resources](#) page.

Do I need to make additional comments on the survey?

At the end of each set of questions in the category, there is space for additional comments. Additional comments are essential for silver and gold Eco Church awards and will be considered when reviewing your application. **Please use the additional comments space at the end of each category to share what you are doing or expand on your answers**. Here are some examples of additional comments that have been made:

*In the **Buildings and Energy** category one diocesan office noted: 'As part of the induction process for new employees, staff are informed about the "Green Credentials" of the diocese. This includes making staff aware of recycling bin locations, requesting minimising paper usage by printing double-sided and thinking before printing, highlighting that the office runs on 100% green electricity, and the provision of cycle storage to encourage cycling to work.'*

*In the **Community and Global Engagement** section one Bronze awarded diocesan office noted: 'We only use Fairtrade tea and coffee in our office and have twinned our toilets.'*

*In the **Lifestyle** category one diocesan office noted: 'The Diocesan Staff Travel Policy encourages sustainable travel. The policy promotes the Energy Saving Trust's [Sustainable Travel Hierarchy](#), encouraging its use for making travel decisions while considering the greenest mile is the mile not travelled.'*

Another comment in the **Lifestyle category** noted: *‘For our Summer social we held a vegetarian picnic, on the grass in front of our new building, where we also swap the recipes we have used to make the food, to help inspire people to cook more vegetarian meals at home.’*

Further notes about applying the Eco Church survey to an office setting

Throughout the Eco Church survey, there are a few different documents referred to. These may be separate documents (e.g. operations, procurement, recycling etc) or combined as one Environmental Policy for your office.

We highly recommend developing an Environmental Policy for your office. To help you in the process use the [Environmental Policy and NZC Action Plan](#) guidance from the [Buildings and Energy](#) resources.

Action may be prompted by *any* of the questions from the Eco Church survey and applied to an office setting. However, as an office is different from a church, here are a few examples of how an office may embed the Eco Church ethos into their setting.

Worship and Teaching	Buildings and Energy	Land and Nature	Community and Global Engagement	Lifestyle
<p><i>All staff are informed about the Eco Church award process for the office as part of Eco Diocese</i></p> <p><i>Routinely (e.g. at monthly prayer meetings) spend time praying for God’s earth and all of creation; global, national and local environmental issues</i></p> <p><i>Posters/display boards with nature/creation focus</i></p> <p><i>A Carbon Literacy course has been promoted and made available to all diocesan office staff</i></p>	<p><i>Recycling facilities are provided for users of the building</i></p> <p><i>Electric car charge points provided</i></p> <p><i>Our purchase and procurement policy takes a 360° sustainability approach and includes recycling and donation if items need to be replaced</i></p>	<p><i>Created pollinator friendly planters on perimeter of car park</i></p> <p><i>The whole team participates in Big Butterfly Count combined with summer picnic in local park</i></p> <p><i>We have a ‘swap table’ for spare seedlings, sharing spare homegrown fruit and veg. during Spring and Summer</i></p> <p><i>Twice a year we have working parties to keep on top of garden maintenance and enjoy the outdoor space</i></p>	<p><i>Our toilets are twinned</i></p> <p><i>All our tea/coffee is Fairtrade</i></p> <p><i>All staff offered a day per year (or split) to volunteer at local nature conservation projects</i></p> <p><i>At our monthly meeting a different staff member shares news about an environmental project, initiative or news item</i></p>	<p><i>Encourage staff engagement in eco lifestyle swaps by sharing via internal communication</i></p> <p><i>We encourage staff to undertake an annual personal carbon footprint audit</i></p> <p><i>We operate a ‘borrow not buy’ between our team members e.g. sharing of tools or equipment</i></p> <p><i>Bring and share socials/meals are always vegetarian</i></p>

What if we do not own our building?

There are **three pathways** through the Energy and Buildings category. For most offices, pathway one will be the most appropriate, a building that is ‘used regularly (at least weekly) and has energy and water supplies.’ But where the office is rented, then pathway three will be the appropriate option. There is more detail about the pathways in the [Buildings and Energy overview document](#).

What if we have no land?

Land refers to outside areas surrounding your office, owned by the diocese/Bishop such as gardens next to the office, a parking area, ramp or steps to the building. Please note, this does *not* include glebe land, as this is considered in the Eco Diocese award criteria. There are **two pathways** through the Land and Nature category, you may like to try out both pathways, to see which one is most suitable for your setting. There is more detail about the pathways in the [Land and Nature overview document](#).

Whatever pathway you choose, we remind you that any space that can be used to provide a haven for nature - even in the most humble way: some pollinator friendly plants in a planter, a bird feeder and a small water source can make a difference. We appreciate this can be challenging at times but not impossible, as this diocese found:

‘We have had to hold back on some ideas due to the isolated nature of Church House in an industrial area and challenges with people gathering and using drugs and other antisocial behaviour around the building... there is a small hedge and some birds so we will put up birdhouses and bug hotels.’