



## **Eco Circuit/Eco District – The Methodist Church**

### **Background**

Eco Church is an award scheme run by A Rocha UK in partnership with the Church of England, Christian Aid, the Methodist Church and Tearfund. Its goal is to be a vehicle that will help churches of all shapes and sizes integrate caring for the wider creation right into the heart of their church lives, impacting their whole church programme.

Since its launch, hundreds of churches have registered and churches are regularly gaining bronze, silver and gold awards. Eco Church has become a key tool encouraging and celebrating the engagement of Methodist churches in England and Wales in wider creation care.

### **Eco Circuit/Eco District**

Emerging from the growing interest in Eco Church has been a number of requests for a component within the scheme whereby a Methodist circuit or district could register and work towards becoming an Eco Circuit or Eco District.

Eco Circuit/Eco District will *not* be a whole new scheme, with its own Eco Survey etc, but something much simpler whereby a circuit or district can register its interest in and work towards an award. This acts as an incentive to be working both at circuit/district level and encouraging local church-level engagement with Eco Church.

To become an Eco Circuit/Eco District, the circuit or district needs to:

1. Have registered its intent.
2. Have established a point person or group to act within the circuit or district.
3. Have written an environmental policy that has been agreed by a circuit meeting or district synod. This should include points on travel, the environmental performance of manses (taking into account the Methodist Church standing order guidelines on Energy Performance Certificates<sup>1</sup>) and a commitment to reducing carbon emissions.

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<sup>1</sup> The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church, Book VII Part 2, Guidance on Provision of Adequate Accommodation for Manses (See [http://www.methodist.org.uk/static/rm/guidelines\\_for\\_manses.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/static/rm/guidelines_for_manses.pdf), page 14)

4. Have achieved the EC Bronze/Silver/Gold level in the Buildings category for its district/circuit offices (where appropriate) and land (where appropriate).
5. Have gained a number of Eco Church awards across the circuit or district according to the criteria listed in the appendix below.
6. Have sought to ensure that environmental issues are embedded within the curricula of ongoing presbyteral and local preacher education and support.
7. Have managed any circuit or district investments with due consideration to the environmental implications/opportunities of such investments, taking into account the climate change investment policy of the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church<sup>2</sup> and the resources available within the Ethical Money Churches project.<sup>3</sup>
8. Be working with other denominations and/or other faiths to promote environmental awareness and Eco Church.
9. Be recording and celebrating individual environmental initiatives.

These criteria closely reflect those of the Eco Diocese scheme adopted by the Church of England (see <http://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/eco-diocese/>).

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/ethics/>. See also the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment <http://www.methodist.org.uk/jacei>

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.yourfaithyourfinance.org/>

## **Appendix**

### **Bronze, silver and gold award criteria relating to the number of churches within a circuit or district registering or receiving an Eco Church award**

#### **Circuits of 1 to 10 Churches**

Bronze – at least 15% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award

Silver - at least 30% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award

Gold - at least 60% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award

#### **Circuits of 11 to 100 Churches**

Bronze - at least 10% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award

Silver - at least 20% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award

Gold - at least 40% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award

#### **Circuits/districts of over 100 Churches**

Bronze – at least 10% of churches registered and 5% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award

Silver - at least 20% of churches registered and 10% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award

Gold - at least 30% of churches registered and 20% of churches awarded an Eco Church/Eco Congregation award