

ECO-CONGREGATION AWARD CRITERIA



First Award Criteria

To gain the first award churches must be able to demonstrate that they have undertaken initiatives in each of these three areas:

- Helping the whole congregation to make the link between their Christian faith and environmental concerns (***Ideas for Actions - Spiritual Living***).
- Taking practical action in the church and/or church grounds (***Ideas for Actions - Practical Living***).
- Having a positive impact on and/or working with their local or wider community. This must include measuring the carbon footprint of their church buildings and have plans to reduce it (***Ideas for Actions - Global Living***).

Churches must have undertaken one reasonably substantive piece of work or a number of smaller projects in each area. When there is overlap, for example a church involving the local community in improvements to their grounds, the church should be given credit for taking action in both areas.

For their first award, churches may submit information on projects undertaken both prior to and since registering as an Eco-Congregation. The award is valid for three years. Churches may apply for further awards three years after the date of their first award, using the same application form.

Second Award Criteria

For a second award, and in addition to the criteria for the first award, we ask the assessors to look for:

1. Implementation of the recommendations made at the first award assessment, unless there are good reasons why this has not been possible.
2. A continuation/deepening of existing projects (unless there is a good reason why they have finished). These should be more than just maintenance and demonstrate steady growth.
3. New projects
4. Evidence of reaching out to others e.g. through more local community involvement, involving other churches in the programme and / or supporting the local Eco-Congregation network.
5. In addition, the congregation should be able to show that they have taken steps to make a measureable reduction in the carbon footprint of their church buildings.

Third Award Criteria

To achieve a third award a church should have clearly demonstrated a long term commitment to promoting an environmental policy and show that it is an integral part of its way of life and future development.

In addition it must be evident that as an Eco-Congregation the church is:

- Moving On: having carried out the recommendations from the second award, unless there are good reasons why this has not been possible.
- Continuing and initiating projects on a range of environmental issues.
- Supporting Eco-Congregation: showing evidence of having supported the movement through publicity / networking.
- Engaging in outreach work by carrying out environmental work within local communities.
- Measuring, managing and reducing the church's carbon footprint by 5% a year and is encouraging members of the congregation to do the same (using *Ideas for Action* [Managing Your Carbon Footprint](#) or a similar carbon foot printing tool).