

### What is an Eco-Club?

Hello, my name is Lydia and I'm from the Kettering and Corby Circuit. I have been employed by the Northampton District as one of two Green champions as part of the Young Leaders Scheme. My job is to help promote green activity within our District to help reduce the churches negative impact on our planet. As part of my role I hope to start an eco-club to help Christians build their knowledge on the current climate crisis and encourage lifestyle changes that benefit the planet. We have adjusted the way we do things due to the COVID-19 climate that we are in. This resource is designed so that you can be a part of the Eco Club from your own home. You might also want to talk with your family, friends and fellow Church or Circuit members (via the phone or online) to share your experience. This resource suggests some changes that you can make at home and could encourage conversations about the climate with friends and family. There will be other people across the District participating so I hope that you feel a part of something bigger. I'll be sending this out regularly in the coming months so please look out for more!

### But Why?

It's important as Christians for us to live under Gods example and show love and kindness to all people and animals. One way we can do this is by reducing our damage to the planet whilst showing future generations that with God behind us, we really can achieve anything we believe in. The climate is changing, destroying animals' habitats and people's livelihoods and it's just getting worse! But we have the power to change this, by working together and making changes to our lifestyles we can help preserve the beauty of the earth so it can be enjoyed by people for years to come.

### How to reduce your carbon footprint

Carbon is everywhere, in every living thing, in fact it makes up about 1/5<sup>th</sup> of a human body. However, when combined with oxygen it forms Carbon dioxide. This traps heat and energy from the earth and is one of the gases behind global warming. We create CO<sub>2</sub> in almost everything we do but there are a few changes we make that reduce our emissions.

A main producer of carbon emissions is travel, so next time you have somewhere to go consider walking or cycling. Not only will it benefit the planet but it's a great way to keep fit. If its too far to cycle, consider taking public transport. When we can finally go on holiday again, how about staying in the UK or look at alternative ways to travel out of the country like train or boat.



Another huge offender when it comes to carbon emissions is food, Greenhouse gases are released in all parts of the food process, from growing to cooking, one way to reduce the impact is to shop locally. This cuts down the food miles and it's great to support small local businesses. You could plan your dishes to use seasonal ingredients so less food is needed from overseas meaning less travel. Meat is a huge contributor to Carbon emissions, and although it may be hard to cut out completely, it's a good idea to reduce the amount of meat you eat. Another way to cut down your emissions is by switching to a green tariff so that more of your energy comes from renewable sources. Switching to LED lightbulbs can reduce your emissions by at least 80% compared to a traditional bulb. There are few smaller changes you can make as well, such as taking shorter showers or making sure you turn lights off when you leave a room.

### The impact of Corona virus on the environment

The corona virus has completely changed every aspect of our daily lives and although it is very difficult to feel positive during this time, while we have all been in our homes outside our environment is thriving. Dolphins have returned to Venice and greenhouse gas emissions have dropped significantly. Compared with this time last year, levels of pollution in New York have reduced by nearly 50% because of measures to contain the virus. Although this is temporary, it shows how our actions directly impact the planet. However, increasing numbers of face masks and gloves are being found washed up on our shores as an effect of the outbreak. When people abandon used gloves and masks in car parks or outside shops they can be blown into nearby waterways and picked up by marine life. It is important that people understand how to correctly dispose of their protection to avoid ocean pollution.

### What can I do at home?

There are plenty of things to get on with whilst still at home, such as gardening. Now is the perfect time to grow some vegetables. How about some lettuce or Radishes? If that's not your thing, there are many environmental campaigns you can join. For example, friends of the earth have loads of great campaigns on their website

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/about-us/our-campaigns>.

Maybe you could build a bug hotel in your garden using strips of wood, moss, dry leaves and old pots or roofing tiles. These work best in the sunlight or light shade.



### Get in touch

We want to hear from you! If you have any feedback, ideas, questions, or environmental news please don't hesitate to email me!

lydia.barratt@northamptonmethodistdistrict.org.uk