

AUDITING YOUR LIFESTYLE



LIFESTYLE

ECO  **CHURCH**
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT



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WHY?

Changing our personal lifestyles is essential if we're to worship God with heart, soul, mind and strength – and love our neighbours as ourselves.

'We all need to make a complete, radical and honest audit of our lifestyles, their impact on the poor and on the planet,' said A Rocha UK co-founder Dave Bookless, 'and to ask God to pinpoint where we should start making changes.'

HOW?

It's not always easy to know where to start, or how to get buy-in from other members of the family! A personal lifestyle audit helps you identify where you are doing well and where you could improve. There are many available measuring slightly different things.

Focus on your personal decisions at home rather than corporate decisions of the church body, by using the Creation Care website. The seven categories of questions are in the same areas as the Eco Church survey so the resources we have provided will help you at home as well as at church:

- Worship and prayer
- Home
- Garden
- Community and global engagement
- Travel
- Food
- Possessions

Individuals can take the Creation Care survey alone or churches can register as well. As households participate, the church they belong to, will see the collective impact of individual choices. Creation Care and A Rocha UK, encourage churches and individuals to participate: <https://creationcare.org.uk/>



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Auditing your personal carbon footprint in detail enables you to set goals to reduce it and to offset the carbon you can't eliminate. Climate Stewards have versions of their calculator suitable for individual households: <https://www.climatestewards.org/offset/>

Take action by looking at 'Count us in'. This website recommends 16 manageable steps you can take to reduce your own carbon footprint and to challenge world leaders. Each step shows the impact and the effort required. As you pledge to join, your personal CO2 saving is aggregated with others around the world. It is an inspiring global drive to reduce our collective footprint: <https://www.count-us-in.org/en-gb/>

The audits all point to things you can do to reduce our personal carbon footprint. Top tips are 'consume' (buy) less, eat less red meat and reduce your travel.

Flying particularly is a problem as, mile for mile, it is the most damaging way to travel for the climate. More than 80% of the world has never flown, many of whom suffer most from climate change. If you do fly, air travel will take up a large percentage of your carbon footprint. Offset it into projects which improve carbon efficiency around the world – whether by tree planting or more efficient cooking methods. Offsetting is controversial as it is still better not to fly! Climate Stewards provide an easy way to pay a calculated offset: <https://www.climatestewards.org/offset/> (select the aeroplane icon).

You can find alternative ways to do your journey through websites such as <https://www.rome2rio.com/> or <https://www.seat61.com/>.



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LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

Earth Overshoot Day marks the date when humanity's demand for ecological resources and services in a given year exceeds what Earth can regenerate in that year. In 2021, it was 29 July. If everyone lived the same way as people in the UK, it would have been 19 May; for China 7 June:

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

<https://www.overshootday.org/newsroom/country-overshoot-days/>

Both *The Times* and *The Guardian* newspapers have sustainable or ethical living sections in their papers and on the website. They make thought-provoking and up-to-date reads:

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/environment>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/ethical-living>

CASE STUDIES

Tring Baptist Church encourages church members to take an annual audit. They use this to inspire each other and to inform the activities and resources they plan for the following year: <https://tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Environmental-audit-for-Eco-Church2021ed.pdf>

Salisbury Cathedral have drawn questions from the Eco Church survey to encourage their congregants to think about their home lifestyles as well as the church's impact: <https://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/about/ambitions/green-goals>