

# MARK OF MISSION 5

Striving to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the earth...

by engaging with the 'A Rocha UK' Eco Church programme.



St Andrew's Church, Corbridge

One element of mission is recognising our responsibilities towards the integrity of creation. What is our role in protecting, sustaining and renewing the earth? What does good stewardship involve so that future generations inherit a better planet and environment?

How we live on this earth matters. How - and how much of - the earth's resources we consume are spiritual, moral and practical issues. Being good stewards surely involves caring about the people and livelihoods impacted by the dangers of pollution and the ravages of climate change. How we act personally and how we act locally as a church community, will demonstrate our understanding of and commitment to sustaining and renewing an earth entrusted to us by God.

The Church of England as a whole is now working on a wide range of environmental programmes and our efforts will also contribute to this national witness. For example, the C of E has pledged to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030 - probably the equivalent of a couch potato promising to run a four-minute mile but nevertheless showing great enthusiasm which should be supported in every way possible.

## We propose a three-stage approach towards our commitment to this aspect of mission:

**First** - an assessment of what environmental stewardship might mean for our two churches. This will involve looking at how we express our care for the world in our worship and teaching; in how we look after our buildings and land; in how we engage with our local community and in global campaigns, and (yes, this is where it gets personal) in our own lifestyles. There are many resources we can draw on to help this happen and in this



first year we suggest using the Eco Church programme designed by the A Rocha UK project, run in partnership with Christian Aid, The Church of England, The Methodist Church and Tearfund.



**Second (for this coming year)** - we will discuss, agree and begin to apply specific actions. This could be done as part of the Eco Church Award programme if we think appropriate.

**Third (for next year)** - once we feel we have made some specific advances in practical environmental stewardship ourselves we explore some sort of community-wide scheme or perhaps sponsor, as a church, a 'Green Corbridge' competition or award, with perhaps children's and adults' categories.