

Silver Eco Church Award for St Mark's Church, Holbrook



St. Mark's Church, Parish of Holbrook, has won a Silver Eco Church Award, in recognition of efforts to care for God's earth in each of these areas: worship and teaching, management of buildings and land, community and global engagement and lifestyle.

Eco Church is the Christian charity A Rocha UK's award scheme for churches in England and Wales, run in partnership with Christian Aid, Tearfund, The Church of England, The Methodist Church and The United Reformed Church. The Eco Church vision is for churches of all denominations to care for creation, as an integral part of loving their neighbours and following God faithfully. The free online Eco Church survey and supporting resources equip churches to express their care for God's world. Actions count towards a prestigious Eco Church Award at Bronze, Silver or Gold level.

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

Revd Dr Mark Betson, Rural and Environment Officer for the Diocese of Chichester and Vicar of Lower Beeding, presented the Eco Church Silver Award plaque to Reverend Dr Richard Coldicott, Vicar of St Mark's and the certificate to Revd Mike Nelson, Assistant Curate of St Mark's.

Revd Dr Richard Coldicott said: "At St. Mark's we believe it is really important that we are good custodians of the environment and stewards of this earth, and it has been really exciting to engage with the Eco Church Award Scheme. At a time when British wildlife and countryside is under many threats, it has been really rewarding to feel that we can make a contribution to redress that balance in our own community of Holbrook, particularly when we've realised what appear to be small steps can make a real difference."

Karen Park, St Mark's Eco Church Champion, thanked everyone who helped achieve this award including washing up instead of using disposable items, recycling and caring for St Mark's gardens, buildings, congregation and community. St Mark's worship and teaching is already Eco Church Gold standard. The next step towards an Eco Church Gold Award was setting up three hedgehog hotels in St Mark's gardens, a response to the UK's hedgehog population halving since the year 2000. More information about St Mark's Eco Church journey: <http://www.stmarksholbrook.org.uk/eco-church.html>

Revd Dr Richard Coldicott congratulated Brighton Road Baptist Church in Horsham on recently also achieving a Silver Eco Church Award. He also congratulated Revd Dr Mark Betson as he takes up his new role as National Rural Officer for the Church of England in January 2019.

The Revd Dr Mark Betson said: "The Eco Church program has enabled St Mark's to recognize some of the excellent work they have been doing already in teaching and acting out care for our environment, plus has identified new directions to do more. They have joined with Brighton Road Baptist Church in reaching the fantastic level of a Silver Award, showing the Churches commitment in this area. The issue of our environment is something that, particularly through Climate Change, is impacting on people's lives across the world now more than ever and St Mark's is helping to demonstrate that we can do something about it."