



Welcome to September's **Faith in Maintenance** email bulletin.

Every month we try to provide you with some useful ideas to make sure that your place of worship stays in tiptop condition. You can also view an illustrated version of this bulletin [online](#).

This month our subject is **sustainability**. If you have a topic that you would like us to cover let us know by emailing the team at info@spabfim.org.uk.

Things to think about...

Although sustainability might seem like a fairly new issue, it's a theme that has been at the heart of the SPAB's work for the for the last 130 years. On founding the SPAB in 1877, William Morris spoke of the need to "*stave off decay by daily care, to prop a perilous wall or mend a leaky roof*". He saw that the best way to preserve the character and significance of an old building was to ensure that it was protected against the worst that time and the elements could throw at it. Preventative maintenance is therefore an inherently sustainable activity.

All old buildings contain embodied energy (the amount of energy that was required to extract the materials and construct the building). If we allow old buildings to deteriorate all this energy will go to waste. It is therefore far better to keep our existing buildings in use and in a good state of repair. This will reduce our need for new materials, which will in turn reduce processing and transport requirements as well as reducing waste and energy use. So maintaining our buildings is the first step on the path to sustainability. However there are further steps that we can take, such as reducing the energy consumed by our places of worship. The websites listed below give advice on some of the options available to faith communities.

Things to do...

[Eco-Congregation](#) is an ecumenical programme helping churches make the link between environmental issues and Christian faith. The Eco-Congregation website includes an environmental toolkit for churches which contains a series of twelve modules looking at the environmental issues that affect the different strands of the life and work of faith communities. [Module 7: Greening the Church Building](#) includes extensive resources to promote good environmental practice for managing church premises.

[Shrinking the Footprint](#) is the Church of England's national

strategic campaign to enable its members and institutions to address the pressing issue of climate change. It aims to challenge, encourage and support the whole body of the Church to shrink its environmental footprint by reducing its carbon emissions to 20% of current levels by 2050. Individual churches can make a difference by following the *Shrinking the Footprint Path* - a series of simple steps to reduce consumption of non-renewable resources.

The Parish Green Guide has been created by the Church in Wales with the aim of providing guidance to Parochial Church Councils on policies and actions to reduce the environmental impact of their activities. The guide seeks to establish the environment as a key issue and aims to inspire churches to take on their own green initiatives. It offers a simple way of moving forward in an area that can seem very daunting to many volunteers.

Creation Challenge is the environmental network of the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and the Baptist Union. The priority for the environmental network is an email newsletter featuring news, events and items related to climate change, energy use and the environment.

Operation Noah is a Christian organisation which provides focus and leadership in response to the growing threat of catastrophic climate change. The website offers a number of resources including notes on the science of climate change, articles, speeches, video blogs and much more.

English Heritage has set up a dedicated **Climate Change** section on its website too. It includes information about a wide range of environmental issues including the impact of climate change, flooding, saving energy and current research work. English Heritage also produce a series of **advice leaflets** that may be relevant to those considering steps to reduce energy usage in older places of worship.

Need more help?

If you have any questions about maintenance or repair issues contact our **Technical Helpline** for advice and guidance. This service is normally available on **Fridays** between **9.30am and 3.30pm** on **0207 456 0916**. Alternatively you can mail your questions to advice@spabfim.org.uk. Copies of the SPAB's range of Technical Pamphlets and Information Sheets are available to purchase from our **online bookshop**.

Sara Crofts Faith in Maintenance Project Director

Stave off decay by daily care ~ William Morris 1877