



## **ST JAMES'S CHURCH, PICCADILLY**

### **Biodiversity Policy (for Staff Handbook)**

The Biodiversity policy, along with the Sustainability and Procurement policies, is informed by the content and tenor of the Environment policy and so needs to be read in conjunction with this policy.

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Biodiversity refers to the variety and diversity of all life on earth, from human beings to other animals, plants and fungi, to micro-organisms. It also refers to genetic variation within species. Biodiversity includes the habitats and ecological systems which support living things. Biodiversity sustains life on earth.
- 1.2 The Church site provides a range of habitats for a range of living things despite its urban location in one of London's busiest, historic, commercial centres. As well as a garden, the site includes a heritage building, courtyard and offices, all of which welcome a significant flow of visitors during the day. The primary green space is The Southwood Memorial Garden, formerly the Church's burial ground. The garden occupies approximately 25% of the site's overall footprint and is surrounded by London Plane trees and laid to semi-formal planting and paving.
- 1.3 Biodiversity benefits to St James's Church
  - An improved and distinctive outdoor space for pleasure, well-being and spiritual reflection.
  - A more integrated approach to managing and developing the site.
  - Opportunities to learn about biodiversity.
  - A demonstration of the Church's celebration of biodiversity and its intrinsic value.
  - Evidence of the Church's commitment to working with others to extend biodiversity.

#### **2 Policy statement**

- 2.1 The Church acknowledges its responsibility towards the conservation and development of biodiversity and is committed to managing the ecology of its site in a way that provides a meaningful contribution to bringing about positive environmental impact.
- 2.2 The Church sees the enhancement of biodiversity on its site as contributing to the provision of an exceptional, distinctive and sustainable venue to which it welcomes people.
- 2.3 Although the main focus of the Church's site-specific Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is the Southwood Memorial Garden, this policy's overarching remit is to consider the site *as a whole* and ensure no opportunities to improve biodiversity are overlooked.

- 2.4 This policy is informed by national and local policies and strategies as well as the Church of England's 'Shrinking the Footprint' campaign.
- 2.5 The BAP will provide the framework for the care and development of our site and recognises the importance of taking a long-term approach to the development of natural habitats.

### **3 Policy aims**

- 3.1 To conserve and develop biodiversity across the site.
- 3.2 To take a consistent approach to biodiversity with regards to how decisions are made.
- 3.3 To promote awareness of the Church's commitment to supporting biodiversity.
- 3.4 To encourage an understanding of biodiversity amongst the community, staff and visitors.

### **4 Policy objectives**

- 4.1 The Church will implement good practice with regards to biodiversity and the maintenance and development of its site.
- 4.2 The Church will draw up a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) with regard to:
  - Working with the community, staff, visitors, partners, tenants and residents, to enhance the biodiverse and ecological capital of our estate.
  - Promoting an understanding of biodiversity, including the role it plays in: sustaining the earth's ecology, food production, and the health and well-being of people; as well as raising awareness of the actions the Church is taking to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
  - Conducting a habitat survey of the Church's site.
  - Managing and developing the range of species and habitat biodiversity.
  - Participating actively in local and national initiatives for the enhancement of biodiversity.
  - Monitoring levels of biodiversity to assess the effectiveness of our actions and sharing findings with relevant organisations.
  - Developing an understanding of how improved biodiversity on our site can help mitigate environmental impacts of climate change.
  - Use the opportunity of the Wren Project to:
    - enhance biodiversity policy on a more ambitious and comprehensive scale;
    - understand how the Wren Project's delivery of an enhanced level of biodiversity could help the Church achieve an accredited sustainability building status.
  - Keep up to date with research, policy and practice on biodiversity.