

FLORAL SUSTAINABILITY IN OXFORD DIOCESE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE 2023 SYNOD MOTION

Do you know that one imported 'Easter' lily stem, grown unseasonally, contributes 3kg of carbon into the atmosphere?

Glorifying God, sustainably

In February 2023, the Diocesan Synod of Oxford voted to encourage all churches throughout the diocese to embrace floral sustainability* according to the principles of the Sustainable Church Flowers (SCF) movement.

This means that churches of the diocese are invited to consider committing themselves to the elimination of floral foam (Oasis) from their churches and churchyards, to using more locally grown flowers and foliage and to be mindful of seasonality in all their flower choices. These three important actions will enable parishes, as well as the diocese and wider Church of England, to more thoroughly reach their carbon net zero targets, as, together, we live out our 5th Mark of Mission: **to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.**

The motion

That this Synod, embracing the principles of the Sustainable Church Flowers movement, which encourages a living into the Fifth Mark of Mission by promoting the use of local, seasonal and fully biodegradable/compostable flowers and foliage without floral foam,

- 1.) encourages a sustainable approach to church flowers throughout the diocese and
- 2.) strongly discourages the use of all floral foam in churches and churchyards across the diocese.

**Floral foam (trade name Oasis) is a micro plastic held together by formaldehyde, carbon black, proprietary acid catalysts, proprietary surfactant and barium sulphate.*

To find out more, contact the Diocese of Oxford or see Sustainable Church Flowers at suschurchflowers.com



The Carbon Footprint Installation

WANTAGE SUSTAINABLE CHURCH
FLOWERS FESTIVAL 2023

The design of one of the installations at Wantage's Flower Festival highlighted the carbon impact that flowers have on the environment. Suspended from three locally gathered branches were 144 test tubes, sweeping skywards from the ground, each one containing flowers grown within one mile of the church.

Each tube represented a single month until the Diocese of Oxford (together with many other public institutions) has pledged to go **carbon neutral**, in 2035.



Underneath the tubes, waste plastic and floral foam was 'discarded', in smaller and smaller pieces until it could barely be seen, demonstrating that our plastic waste, when not recycled (which floral foam cannot be), remains in the environment long after we've lost our use of it, polluting water courses and entering the food chain at the micro level.

What the motion is asking each parish to do...

Wantage Deanery brought this to synod, having itself embraced floral sustainability throughout its sixteen churches.

This motion encourages your deanery parishes to do these three simple things:

- **ditch all Oasis completely - landfill is the only place for it (non-recyclable) and revive sustainable display methods**
- **buy or use only local or British-grown flowers and foliage**
- **use only flowers and foliage which are in season in the UK (i.e. no lilies this Easter!)**

We are inviting you to work with SCF and the Diocese as it develops a sustainable future. Every parish has capacity to change their practices and, whilst we recognise that this may take both time and energy, we commend to you the importance of making even this small adjustment so that all may enjoy a sustainable future and that **God may be glorified, sustainably.**

For further information and copies of this letter visit suschurchflowers.com

