



27 January 2022

A Rocha UK
80 Windmill Road
Brentford
TW8 0QH

Dear URC Youth Executive and members of the URC Youth Assembly,

We are delighted to have an opportunity to write to you, as you gather for your annual conference, to thank you all on behalf of A Rocha UK for the great leadership that you demonstrate in influencing the whole URC General Assembly to make more significant progress.

Many of you will be aware of A Rocha UK's Eco Church award scheme. It is now a growing community of churches across England and Wales (alongside Eco Congregation in Scotland and Ireland), committed to taking action and learning together how we can have the greatest collective impact in response to the environmental emergency. You may also be aware of the complimentary Eco Synod scheme which encourages and supports grassroots action. Whilst we don't have an award or recognition scheme for young leaders, there is no doubt that the growth we're seeing in Eco Church can only be achieved and sustained by the sort of cross-generational leadership which we know you are demonstrating. So thank you for being such a significant part of this movement and for helping the whole of the URC to respond to the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.

It's clear to us that young people want to see more action from their churches and church leadership on the environment. It is also clear that young leaders have much to offer and teach the older generation. I expect some of you will have been involved in the COP26 climate talks. The presence and engagement of young people was one of the defining characteristics of the talks. Of course, the success of COP26 depends on whether promises are now delivered and failings corrected at COP27. Young people have a key role to play in holding our

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government, which retains the presidency of COP until November, to account for delivering on its part. So in 2022, another critical year for climate change and nature, please continue to make your voices heard, to demand action and accountability from leaders and to take practical actions yourselves such as you are doing in running your event in an as environmentally sustainable way as possible. Leading by example is so powerful.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andy Atkins'.

Andy Atkins
CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Helen Stephens'.

Helen Stephens
Church Relations Manager