





1. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

In 2015, Pope Francis issued his encyclical '*Laudato Si'* "On Care of Our Common Home". This Environmental Policy is our response, based on the Gospels and Catholic Social Teaching and it forms a crucial part of our mission to all people of goodwill in the area of the Diocese of Leeds. This policy is the cornerstone of our intent, as a body of people committed to 'hearing the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth' and working for climate justice at this critical time. Through this policy we commit:-

- To look at all our activities to identify, understand and work out all the direct and indirect environmental effects of these activities and prioritise action to minimise this impact.
- To reduce energy and resource use by promoting effective and efficient reduction methods.
- To reduce our impact upon the environment by minimising our use of the earth's natural resources and by reducing our carbon footprint.
- To minimise the impact of waste through avoiding waste generation and through recovery, re-use and recycling when wastage is unavoidable.
- To make the best and most efficient use of the finite natural resources used in all of our activities.
- To not only comply with all legislation and regulations about the environment but to exceed these requirements where appropriate
- To influence our suppliers and contractors to ensure that goods and services we obtain support the environmental policy and, in turn, that our suppliers and contractors progressively improve their own environmental performance.
- To enhance the biodiversity of all Diocesan-owned grounds and gardens
- To study the scriptures, Catholic tradition and environmental issues with subsequent theological and practical reflection, leading to regular thanksgiving for creation, confession of the sin that damages it and prayer for the natural world and for those involved in its use and care so that all in the Diocese of Leeds appreciate the importance of demonstrating 'care for our common home, the Earth.
- To ensure the mission of the church locally and on a diocesan level includes speaking about the urgency of environmental concerns in line with the living out of the Gospel in people's lives, and exercising the prophetic voice of the Church in support of appropriate environmental action, such that the views of the Church are heard and widely understood.
- To measure and reduce our environmental footprint related to:
 - Travel to and from Diocesan properties and locations
 - Energy use
 - Water use
 - Waste and
 - Other materials use and associated emissions
- To regularly check our way of working at Diocesan and parish level so we know whether we are achieving the objectives set out above.

Progress against the Environmental Policy and related actions will be reported on each year in the Annual Report of the Diocese of Leeds.



✠ Marcus Stock
Bishop of Leeds

2. GUIDANCE

The tables below give practical examples of the actions that can be taken by individuals, parishes and s and organisations that operate at diocesan level, including the Leeds Diocesan Curia.

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
Energy		Carry out a systematic energy audit of buildings and follow the strategies outlined below for reducing their carbon footprint.	
		Support or initiate local community enterprises that reduce energy consumption or transition to renewable energy generation.	
		Explore or continue to buy energy from green providers. Install solar panels where possible and appropriate.	
		Consume less energy through, for instance, high-standard insulation, low energy lighting, reducing thermostat temperatures, better use of heating timer controls.	

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL	
Materials, Resources & Procurement		Adopt a 'Reduce, Re-use, Recycle' approach in how we buy and use material resources.		
		Commit to the purchase of local, environment-friendly, fairly-traded goods.		
			Offer electronic communication as an alternative to paper for those who are suitably equipped.	
		When we buy goods, we validate the practices of the producer. We will look to support those that produce sustainably instead of those that exploit labour and/or the environment.		

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
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Water	Adopt water-saving methods where practical and appropriate. For example, install water-saving devices to taps or auto-off taps or drinking fountains in buildings such as offices.
	Avoid pollutants entering the drainage system and soil by, for example, using eco-friendly cleaning products and pesticides.

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
Food	Encourage the use of seasonal foods and locally-produced food.		
	Calculate the carbon emissions of food production for any catering.		
	Reduce our consumption of meat, which will help to reduce methane gas and make more land and grain available for people.		

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
Buildings, land and the natural environment			When selling church owned land or thinking about its use, take into account how this can contribute to sustainability and encourage an enjoyment of Nature.
		Use sustainable building supplies whenever possible and take into account the 'whole life' costs of materials when repairing, altering and rebuilding premises.	
	Avoid the use of pesticides that have a detrimental effect on bees and other pollinators.		
	Take care to use plants indigenous to the UK wherever possible.		
	Encourage pollinators and other plants that encourage biodiversity – such as the actions taken by Our Lady of Kirkstall parish in Leeds. Use plots of parish land to grow vegetables such as the smallholding developed at St Benedict's Garforth.		

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
Travel	Use cars less and maximise other forms of transport where possible.	Provide bicycle racks. Encourage the use of public transport and car sharing.	Adopt ways of working within church structures that reduces the need for travel, particularly by car, and encourage use of public transport and travel by bicycle and on foot.
	Give careful consideration to whether you need to fly to a particular destination – especially if you are a frequent flyer.		

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
Waste	Invest in longer life goods		
	Establish and support alternatives to the 'throwaway society'. Explore the activities of groups such as 'Make Do and Mend', Freecycle, Give & take days / Thrift Fairs.		
		Maximise the proportion of sustainable materials used, and use recycled materials when this is a viable option by, for example, avoiding the use of disposable crockery and plastic cutlery and by using environmentally friendly cleaning products.	
	Dispose responsibly of what we don't need. Give to charities or recycling organisations instead of 'dumping'.		
	Minimise the use of plastic, including not buying over-packaged products where possible – especially in relation to single use plastic.		

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
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Finance	Find out about the use that is being made of the money in bank accounts, ISA's and personal pensions with a view to investing more ethically.		Keep environmental considerations at the forefront of reviews of the Diocesan Ethical Investment policy.
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AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
Carbon Emissions Mitigation		Set up a programme to systematically reduce carbon footprints by following a scheme such as the Live Simply Award scheme.	Develop and implement ways of calculating carbon emissions by the Diocese. Work, with a sense of urgency, to reduce these emissions as quickly as possible.

AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
Creation Spirituality and Theology of Creation	Say thank you for the food on our table with grace before and after a meal. Using Bidding prayers, penitential rites, homilies and noting/celebrating special days such as Earth Day, World Food Day to focus on and pray about issues relating to our environment.		Joyfully reflect on the beauty of God's creation and give thanks for God's gift of it to us through our prayers and Liturgy wherever possible. Pray for discernment and a reflective attentiveness to cries of the poor and the earth.
	Pray for justice & peace and the integrity of creation; thanking God for the beautiful world we live in.	Provide opportunities to further our understanding of the basis in Church Teaching for taking care of creation.	
	Take time to reflect on the significance of what we learn in relation to Gospel values.		
	Learn more about the state of the world and environment and how Catholic Social Teaching should affect our choices.		

	Make time to wonder at and appreciate the beauty of the earth and to give thanks for it.
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AREA OF CONCERN	INDIVIDUAL	PARISH	DIOCESAN LEVEL
Promotion of Climate Change Action	Engage with local political representatives, urging them to support policies that take ever more effective steps towards realising the commitment to becoming carbon-neutral in the area of the Leeds Diocese.		
	Provide practical support to those in the Leeds Diocese seeking policy change at a national level that will move our country more towards living sustainably with God's Creation.		
	Give particular support to CAFOD in its Climate Change campaigns, its support for refugees and in encouraging parishes to become Live Simply parishes.		
	Develop our understanding and raise awareness of situations and issues that result in injustice, violence and damage to the environment including the exploitative practices of large companies, and the consequences of extreme weather conditions.		
	Take action as a diocese to be open to the plight of people affected by environmental damage and to engage with them. Commit to speak out against unjust policies and structures that are detrimental to people and the environment.		
	Support the expansion of good quality public transport and the provision of improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.		
	Help ourselves and others make the connections, as Pope Francis does, between our disregard of creation, such as the careless use of plastic bottles or leaving lights on unnecessarily and the consequences for the poorest and most vulnerable people in our world.		
	Collaborate with those who have similar concerns within and beyond the Christian family.		

3. Sources of Further Information

Organisation / Topic	Web address	What do they do?
The Carbon Literacy Project	https://carbonliteracy.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Carbon Literacy Project offers everyone a day's worth of Carbon Literacy learning, covering – climate change, carbon footprints, how you can do your bit, and why it's relevant to you and your audience.
The Carbon Trust	https://www.carbontrust.com/home/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They provide services for organisations seeking to reduce their carbon footprint They provide downloadable 'tools' to help organisations calculate their carbon footprint and other energy benchmarking tools
CAFOD Live Simply Award Scheme	https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/How-to-Campaign/Livesimply-award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of how to apply to become a Live Simply parish
CAFOD Laudato Si resources	https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Laudato-Si-encyclical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As well as a link to download the encyclical this web page also has prayers and reflections available for download and a Laudato Si study guide.
The Global Catholic Climate Movement	https://catholicclimatemovement.global/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regularly updated website with ideas for prayer and action at different times of the year and with other calls to action.
Catholic Social Teaching	http://www.catholicsocialteaching.org.uk/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This website provides valuable insights and background to all aspects of Catholic Social Teaching, including care of creation.
Green Christian	https://greenchristian.org.uk/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various resources, study suggestions and suggestions for action around climate change and living more simply.
Joy in Enough	https://joyinenough.org/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An offshoot of Green Christian this website is dedicated to their project looking at ways to counter consumerism within the context of climate change and inequality.
Quakers for Sustainability	http://www.livingwitness.org.uk/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their website contains a useful 'toolkit' that can be downloaded.