



DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD



DISCOVERING
THE HEART OF GOD



GROWING
DISCIPLES



REACHING
NEW GENERATIONS



TRANSFORMING
COMMUNITIES



PRACTISING
GENEROSITY

The Church of England

around Staffordshire, northern
Shropshire and the Black Country

Diocesan Environmental Action Plan

Diocesan Synod, March 2020

Our Policy's Theological Foundations

We believe that "the earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it" (Ps 24:1). God has set humans firmly within this creation (Gen 2:15), and God's people are marked by the way they act with compassion and justice towards their fellow creatures (Pr 12:10; Dt 20:19). As we are increasingly aware, humanity is not living up to this vocation and so we live in a time of great environmental crisis.

This policy sets out some of the ways in which we as a diocese aim to follow Christ in caring for the world he has made. In our diocesan vision, "we pray for a church that partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as people of hope." We are guided in particular by the Fifth Anglican Mark of Mission, "to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth." Our concern for God's creation takes us beyond a response to the environmental challenges facing our world today; it leads to the heart of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. As we grow deeper in our love for Jesus, we learn to love our neighbour all the more. This applies to the whole of creation as much as to our human neighbour. The everyday choices, habits, actions and decisions that we make as Christians, and as churches, have far-reaching impacts on others in our world.

This affects our lives as individuals as well as our life together and calls us back to the original human vocation to be stewards of God's good creation. Some may have particular vocations in this area, which we should celebrate. However all followers of Jesus are called to love, pray, and care for the world around us.

As the church reaches out in love and care to the world, it will enable people to make connections between spirituality seen in God's big book of creation and the story of Jesus proclaimed in the little book of scripture. Such care for creation is in harmony with St Chad, who witnessed through the simplicity of his humble lifestyle and whose awe of the natural world expressed the depth of his spirituality.

As we look at some of the practical steps we can take as a diocese, we want to celebrate the many ways in which churches and individual Christians across the diocese are already living this out these principles. This policy is accompanied by a rolling Environmental Action Plan which, led by the Diocesan Environmental Advisory Group, will guide and focus the way we carry out our work in this area.

Practical Steps

As a Diocese we will...

- Work towards applying for Bronze Eco Diocese accreditation by Easter 2020.
- Produce and promote Creationtide resources, and encourage churches to engage with the season which runs from September 1st to October 4th
- Build up a team of environmental officers, including a Diocesan Environmental Officer, Deputy Diocesan Environmental Officer, DAC Sustainability Advisor, Churchyard Environmental Advisor and a support network of Environmental Champions across the diocese.
- Resource, through the appointment of an Evangelism Enabler with an Environmental Focus, the engagement of parishes, Fresh Expressions, chaplaincies, schools and the cathedral with environmental issues as part of inspiring evangelism
- Form and develop relationships with other organisations - including Caring for God's Acre, the Mother's Union, local academic institutions, and our ecumenical and other faith partners - to demonstrate the wider significance of environmental action.
- Highlight individuals who are caring for the environment in different ways through the CHAD Living videos.
- Aim to reduce our carbon footprint—in line with the Church of England's aims—to net zero by 2030, and put systems in place to measure and track this.
- Take environmental sustainability into consideration in the maintenance of diocesan property, including clergy housing.
- Encourage and facilitate car-sharing and the use of public transport for diocesan events and activities.
- Embed environmental issues within clergy and lay training curricula.
- Manage our diocesan investments ethically, in line with the ethical investment policies of the Church of England
- Explore the option of a Natural Burial Ground within the diocese.

We will encourage, support and resource parishes, chaplaincies, schools, and fresh expressions to...

- Register and work towards Eco Church accreditation.
- Participate in the season of Creationtide.
- Take practical steps towards environmental sustainability, supported by a diocesan small grants scheme.
- Celebrate environmental care through the Churchyard Awards Scheme.
- Measure, record, and reduce their energy use and carbon emissions.
- Feed back, through deanery & diocesan synods, ways in which this policy is being implemented.

Departments

Our Diocese departments are undertaking the following actions in response to this policy:



Central Administrative Support Teams

Finance

The Finance Department is committed to good environmental policies and practices at a diocesan and departmental level. Recent actions include a meeting on ethical and environmental investments, and incentives to reduce mileage, including encouraging conference calls, walking, public transport, and car-sharing, We introduced the Bike to Work scheme.

There are paper recycling boxes in diocesan offices, and stationary is reused and recycled whenever possible. Where appropriate, documents are edited and stored on-line. For hospitality, we expect reusable and recyclable trays and containers.

We have introduced Environmental Grants to help parishes with Environmental projects. The Diocese now pays for the Garden Waste bins at vicarages to encourage our clergy to use the garden waste options for their vicarage, at no additional cost for themselves, the cost being reclaimed via the Stipend budget. We are still looking at putting all vicarages on Water Metres. Other things we want to introduce include changing plastic water cups to recyclable cups, and introducing more recycling bins for yoghurt pots, drinks etc. from lunch time.

Property

The Benefice Buildings Committee will manage the Diocese's Clergy Housing in a manner which is as sensitive, as their resources will allow, to the natural and built environment. In order to achieve this, they will consider and use the best practice and technology that their resources allow. In carrying out their operations they will keep within environmental laws and work to them as a minimum standard. In considering best practice and technology, the Committee will regularly review how it might incorporate the above into the management of clergy housing. To this end, the Committee will permit the property department to explore a number of initiatives proposed to it and report back to the BBC Committee within 12 months with a cost-benefit analysis of the proposals.

In acknowledging the impact that construction has on the environment, the Property department will investigate all or some of the following aspects of its work to test the feasibility of incorporating ecological building materials and methods into the maintenance and improvement of its existing vicarages and the building of new vicarages:

- Test the feasibility of building new vicarages, and extensions to vicarages, with higher standards of insulation and energy efficiency than contained in the most recent Building Regulations.
- Look at the feasibility of Occupiers paying their own water charges and ensuring water meters are fitted on all vicarages.
- Look at the cost of bringing roofspace insulation in existing vicarages at least up to current Building Regulations standards.
- Look at the cost of installing cavity wall insulation in all existing vicarages where possible.

- Look at the feasibility of installing insulation in hard-to-treat properties.
- Look at the feasibility of installing photo-voltaic or solar thermal panels on the roofs of vicarages.
- Look at the feasibility of installing biomass and other, "green energy" methods of space and hot water heating in vicarages.

The Benefice Buildings Committee has an Eco committee. Recent actions include decisions to;

1. Share ideas with other Dioceses about reviewing and revising the model vicarage layout and design as laid out in the Church Commissioners' "Parsonages, A Design Guide" (often referred to as "The Green Guide") which was last revised by the Church Commissioners in 1998.
2. Upgrade the roof-space insulation to vicarages as part of Ingoing works
3. Investigate the feasibility and cost of installing air source heat pumps in vicarages (focussing on those relying on relatively expensive oil fired central heating).

We have been looking at the cost and practicality of using recycled plastic for some of parts of our buildings. We have started to specify porous paving using recycled plastic base units for hard pavings and shed bases. Porous paving also reduces the run off which has been contributing towards localised flooding. We will continue to provide water butts. We will consider the installation of a water recycling system as part of any new vicarage design. We have begun to specify water saving steel baths for bathroom refurbishments. We have allowed the installation, by others, of electric car charging points in vicarages. Finally, we will continue our long standing practice of providing signs made from recycled plastic for vicarages and LDBF managed buildings.

Communications

We will:

- support this plan by publicising key diocesan environmental initiatives and milestones. (Recent actions including publicising this Action Plan, the 20 September 2019 Climate Action Day, 2019 Selwyn Lecture and Lent Book 2020.)
- through the #CHAD Living video series continue to challenge and raise awareness about environmental issues in the context of Christian discipleship. (Recent actions include producing 15 videos, mostly #CHAD Living branded but some diocesan, in 2019 on environmental themes, amassing several thousand views between them.)
- publicise other appropriate environmental resources , events and projects through diocesan channels including social media and the fortnightly e-bulletin – including the above, Creationtide resources and other local events
- seek to keep waste to a minimum in the paper items we produce and seek to use sustainable materials where possible. (Recent actions include printing Spotlight on recycled paper.)

Safeguarding

Transport



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Safeguarding by definition is a person centred activity and often requires face to face contact. This can and has in the past meant significant car mileage being accumulated in order to operate compassionately across the seven counties making up the diocese. Moving forward we propose to try and reduce our departments carbon footprint by committing to the following;

- Where possible we undertake to use e communications when dealing with other organisations such as the Police, probation or social services.
- Where virtual communications are not feasible we will attempt to organise multiple meetings in one locality on the same day and in the same premises.
- When our department is sending multiple staff members to the same event (for example when running safeguarding training), we will endeavour to share transportation and hence increase value for carbon return.
- Where feasible we will attempt to utilise public transport.
- The department will permit where appropriate home working where environmental deficit can be reduced without a cost to business efficiency.

It is noted that due to what we do daily there will be occasions where we must meet (for example victims of abuse), face to face. Where this is essential we will consider on a case by case bases how this can best be achieved.

Office consumables and environmental resources.

- The department has sought to minimise use of paper and hard stationary by swapping to computerised records and methods of working. This reduces the need for consumption of perishables.
- We have further determined to commit to recycling consumable and waste within our office to reduce our environmental impact.

Diocesan Secretariat

We will encourage good practice in our own department and throughout all areas of work in the Diocese.

Church Buildings and Diocesan Advisory Committee

The Lichfield DAC Secretariat will:

- Continue to provide parishes, via the DAC's Sustainability Adviser and links on the DAC web-pages, with guidance on potential energy saving measures for church buildings.
- Create written guidance, for hosting on the Church Buildings and DAC web page of the diocesan website, as to how church projects can balance mission, heritage and the environment.
- Encourage parishes to consider environmentally-friendly alternatives to their church buildings proposals, such as adaptation of existing fittings rather than their disposal and the purchase of new items.
- Promote awareness of the new List B items (which can be signed off by Archdeacons) which are of environmental benefit.



- Encourage applicants for faculty to ensure that they have provided full and accurate information on the environmental impacts and benefits of their proposals (as required by section 4.2 of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, 2015).
- Follow up faculty applications for works associated with environmental projects to see how the completed works perform in practice and to feedback this information to DAC members and advisers and parishes.
- Consider how environmental themes may be included in future training events for church officers e.g. on church heating and lighting, church building and churchyard maintenance.
- Encourage parishes to measure, record and reduce their energy use and to encourage their procurement of renewable energy if it is appropriate to their situation.
- Form and develop relationships with other organisations, for example Caring for God's Acre.
- Encourage parishes to register for Eco-church.

Discipleship Vocation Evangelism (DVE)

Mission

Ethos

- base our work and teaching on the understanding that the world is good and given for flourishing, and that damaging it mars that
- consider ways in which we can model changes in action which lessen our negative impact in the environment
- are part of culture change in Three Spires House to encourage a more sustainable way of working

Travel, meetings and networking

- Car sharing where possible
- Clustering meetings in an area on the same day if possible
- Explore use of public transport for meetings, and arrange meetings to enable use of public transport
- Consider the use of Skype etc. to reduce travel for meetings
- Meet several people at once: groups of pioneer leaders, Fresh Expressions etc in local hubs, Messy Meet-ups, learning communities etc.

Events

- Encouraging new groups/ activities and events to use upcycled or preloved resources if possible. E.g. toddler group could ask for donated toys/ resources.
- Create a party/ host box with plates and cups to use/ hire out for events rather than using disposable ones.
- Be aware of available equipment for ourselves and others and enable sharing
- Continue to create events local to the majority of attendees: Pioneer community, Greenhouse gatherings concentrated in deanery local to churches who are participating etc.
- Seek public transport friendly venues

Office Life & Heating

- Reduce use of handouts and printing
- Ensure 2 sided printing when it is needed, and use of recycled paper
- Turn the lights off in the entrance hall when bright outside
- Re-use materials where possible; folders ring binders, scrap paper etc.

Conversations and Advocacy

- Actively promote Climate change as a topic within planning for children and young people's groups and discussions.
- Provide material to support climate change discussions for children, families, youth and adults. (we have some – it would be good to develop these)
- Continue to encourage EcoChurch as a missional opportunity at local level (incl recycling of ink cartridges and crisp packets!)
- Promote Creation Care through emerging Fresh Expressions and Greenhouse project.
- Address chaplaincies on creation care through the Chaplains Bulletin

For wider consideration, or the longer term

- Electric charging point
- form a Climate group amongst Lichfield staff where all those interested can work through and suggest things together



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Vocations and Training

As a Vocations & Training Team we:

Ethos

- base our work and teaching on the understanding that the world is good and given for flourishing, and that damaging it mars that
- consider ways in which we can model changes in action which lessen our negative impact in the environment
- are part of culture change in Three Spires House to encourage a more sustainable way of working

Travel

- minimise traveling where possible
- car share when feasible
- Reader training has reduced the number of sessions people need to travel for and introduced online seminars

Catering

- when providing lunch we order vegetarian food
- try and use plates, cups and cutlery that can either be recycled or composted where necessary
- avoid food waste by sharing left over food with the rest of the office

Office Life & Heating

- print double sided as standard
- don't print out emails unless absolutely necessary
- offer people options to receive training materials by email rather than providing paper versions as standard
- dramatically reduced the amount of handouts we provide
- recycle used paper/cardboard
- only use the air conditioner/heater if necessary – keep an eye on the thermostat
- have asked for an agreed form of teleconferencing

Conversations and Advocacy

- are aware of the impact of climate change and keep it at the forefront of our thinking when organising events/running training to make small changes where possible
- discuss as a team ways we can minimise our impact within the office and when travelling around the Diocese.

Transforming Church and Communities

We will:

- Support our Diocesan Environmental Team
- Service the Diocesan Environmental Advisory Group
- Lead on Eco Diocese, and promote Eco Church
- Promote worship resources for Creation-tide
- Contribute on environmental themes to #CHAD Living videos
- Manage the Diocesan Churchyard Awards Scheme, encouraging nature-friendly certificates and promoting churchyards' biodiversity
- Partner with Caring for God's Acre



- Develop links between creation care, social justice, and well being

Education

The Christian Distinctiveness Advisers, (CDA's), support all our schools to develop environmental action plans. The CDA team support schools, clergy and the community to explore environmental causes through the curriculum, collective worship and community events.

We explore how the 'Growing Faith' paper, the diocesan direction of travel and other resources such as 'The Kitchen Table Project,' can enable schools and parishes to develop their commitment to environmental change.

We are committed to exploring the possibility of further environment days such as the one at Lichfield Cathedral on the 20th September 2019 where the engagement of local schools, including community schools was really positive and a great field for mission.

Strand 3 of the SIAMS Schedule has a focus on pupils developing their awareness of social injustice which includes concern for God's Creation. Therefore all schools will be invited to explore the environment within this strand.

We now need to identify how the work in schools links to discipleship vocation and evangelism. For example, discipleship – exploring the Biblical text; vocation – exploring what Christians past and present are doing; evangelism – what action are we going to do now and how do we encourage others to join us?

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. (Psalm 24:1)

Finally we will need to measure the impact of this material to be delivered by clergy and how this will be achieved.

St Chad's Academies Trust

Our Academies Trust is committed to caring for the world that God created. It is important for children not only to appreciate the world they live in but also to accept and understand the responsibility to protect and enhance the environment. The academies will achieve this with the support and guidance of the Eco-Schools programme.

The Eco-Schools programme provides a unique opportunity that empowers pupils to lead change within their school and have a positive impact in their wider community. The programme encourages pupils of all ages and abilities to work together to develop their knowledge and environmental awareness.

Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything (Genesis 9:3)



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Further Resources

Caring for God's Acre <http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk>

Caring for God's Acre works nationally, and particularly within Lichfield Diocese, to support groups and individuals to investigate, care for, and enjoy burial grounds.

A Rocha arocha.org.uk

A Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world.

EcoChurch ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

A Rocha UK's award scheme for churches in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth.

National Resources www.churchofengland.org/environment

The C of E's national environmental programme which exists to enable the whole Church to address—in faith, practice and mission—the issue of climate change.

Green Energy <http://www.parishbuying.org.uk>

Parish Buying uses the bulk buying power of the church to negotiate competitive prices with a wide range of different suppliers. 100% of the electricity supplied through Parish Buying is green, all from UK based renewable sources.

Creationtide creationtide.com

Resources for the ecumenical season of Creationtide which runs from September 1st—October 4th and has a particular focus on helping churches pray for, and act on behalf of, God's creation.

John Ray Initiative <http://www.jri.org.uk/>

An educational charity with a vision to bring together scientific and Christian understandings of the environment in a way that can be widely communicated and lead to effective action.

Operation Noah <http://operationnoah.org/>

A Christian charity working with the church to inspire action on climate change.

Baked Alaska ridinglights.org/baked-alaska/

Films and accompanying resources highlighting the breadth of the issues that arise from climate change. Funded by the 2015 Lichfield Diocese Lent Appeal and now free to download for use in churches, schools, youth groups etc.

For further information, please see

<https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/environment/>

Join our Facebook Group – [Lichfield Diocese Environmental Champions](#)



