

Birmingham Archdiocese Environmental Policy:

Lines of Implementation and Action.

AIMS: TO REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT BY 50% BY 2030.

This is a more detailed plan for the Diocese.

We believe that the best way forward to achieve these aims is to use the Live Simply programme. This programme, administered by CAFOD, assists Parishes, Schools, Communities to Live more Simply, Sustainably and in Solidarity. Participants will make their own plans, one large aim and two 'smaller' aims under each of these three headings. This means that they will be able to set their own targets from where they are. Many parishes and schools are already engaged in many activities which can be part of the scheme that to participate is not as daunting as it may sound.

We aim to become a Live Simply Diocese by 2030. This means that 50% of Parishes have achieved Live Simply Award.

See Appendix A Live Simply Award

Energy: As the church's energy use is arguably its greatest environmental issue, we will seek to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the electricity and gas used in church premises by asking all parishes and schools and all other institutions to carry out an energy audit. We need to know our energy use. This audit will need to be completed and submitted to the Commission before the end of the financial year, March 2022, and thereafter annually.

See Appendix B Energy Audit.

- The Archdiocese has switched to a renewable energy supplier.
- We encourage parishes and individuals to Switch to "green" energy suppliers (renewably generated electricity and biogas)
- install solar panels
- Use thermostats for temperature control
- Fitting LED light bulbs
- Improve insulation wherever practicable
- Turn off lights, appliances and computers when not in use. Do NOT leave on standby.
- Replace old, inefficient boilers where practicable and investigate renewable heating alternatives

Transport: Transport is a huge contributor towards carbon emissions.

We will aim to hold all meetings online, whenever possible, to minimise travel.

We will encourage Diocesan staff, clergy and lay members, and all congregations to use forms of transport which have minimum or reduced environmental impact – e.g.: walk, cycle, public transport, car sharing, electric/ hydrogen vehicles.

We will investigate the usefulness of installing battery charging points on all Church and School car parking areas, powered by solar panels.

Spending/Consuming: Each person is responsible for how we spend our money, what we buy, and we must consider how these are produced, transported and packaged.

We will seek ways to reduce material consumption and the impact of our activities on the environment.

Food: use the Loaf principle- local, organic, animal-friendly and Fairtrade.

- buy locally produced food where possible
- minimise the amount of red meat and dairy products served (raising cattle and sheep contributes to global warming because these animals produce huge amounts of methane. Large tracts of land in the rain forests of the Amazon are being cut down to provide land for cattle grazing and/or land to grow soya in order to produce feed for animals.
- try for one or two meat free days in addition to Friday abstinence,
- ask “is it necessary to buy the fruit or vegetables produced in countries far away” Buy fruit and vegetables in season.
- only prepare enough food for the meal
- only buy what you need. Avoid the temptation to fill your cupboards ‘in case’, only to throw out unused food later.
- buy organically produced food. Organic means food that is produced without using the harmful pesticides which have killed off large parts of the insect world, leading to decline and extinction of insects and birds.
- avoid food wrapped in single use plastic. If possible, use local greengrocers at the market, farmers markets etc
- choose Fairtrade

Clothing: Do I buy clothes unnecessarily?

Ask do I really need this item?

- Check where it is from and, if possible, how is it produced? Many fast fashion items are produced in ‘sweat-shops’ by ‘slave labour’. Modern day slavery is happening in many parts of the world, including here in the U.K. Be aware, and report suspicions. The Medaille Trust has more information.
- Do I hoard clothes? Do I donate clothes, in good condition, to Charities supporting refugees and asylum seekers, homeless?
- try resolving not to buy new clothes for one year.

Electronics:

- Am I aware of how much electricity I am using?
- when I am offered a 'free' upgrade, do I find out who actually pays for this?
- Do I regularly purchase the latest model of phone, tablet, lap-top?
- Do I re-cycle old items?
- Am I aware of what minerals are used in production of smart screens, phones etc and where these are from?
- Mining for rare minerals is frequently carried out illegally and indigenous peoples are often threatened and even killed.
- do I spend too much time playing games or looking and reading 'social media'?
- Social Media can be used wisely and properly, but it can also lead to harmful practices. Am I aware of my own envy, spite, hurtful thoughts or even hurtful posts?
- using email rather than sending hard copies

Plastic - We should all be aware of the damage and harm caused to our planet by plastic which has been discarded. Plastic which is thrown away literally kills animals.

- In our parish functions, do we use china/pottery cups, saucers and plates which are washed up afterwards, or do we use throwaway plastic cups and plates?
- Do we avoid single use plastic when buying any item, especially food?
- Do we refuse items wrapped in plastic?
- Do we use re-usable shopping bags?
- Do we recycle plastic? If our local Council does not accept plastic for recycling why not? Do we ask for a change in policy?

Water. In many parts of the world clean safe water is just not available. We have seen in our own country how our infrastructure can be damaged and certainly, drought leading to reservoirs drying up can happen. We should use water wisely.

- We will avoid using water unnecessarily,
- We will install water meters where appropriate,
- We will check for leakages and fit water minimising systems to taps and cisterns wherever practicable.
- we will use rain-water to water gardens.
- we will use low environmental impact cleaning materials.

Upcycling

- We will try to repair broken items, or pass them on to a local upcycling group, rather than throw away everything.
- we will use recycled paper
- we will repair shoes

- we will try to find other uses for items which we no longer need.

Recycling

- We will recycle all items possible according to our local Council's Recycling Policy.

We encourage all individual members of our congregations to take actions in their personal lives to complement and supplement these actions of the church community.

This policy and programme will be reviewed every two years. We will monitor and receive updates from Salford Diocese as they implement the Laudato Si' Project.

Next review date – May 2023

Useful Resources This to be reviewed

Laudato Si'

Guardians of Creation (Bishops Conference)

Care for Creation. “ “

Eco Church, A Rocha <https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/>

Diocese of Leeds Environment webpages www.leeds.anglican.org/environment

Shrinking the Footprint, Church Care www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint/about-shrinking-the-footprint

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland environment webpage

<https://ctbi.org.uk/environment-links#ecochurch>

Pray and Fast for the Climate www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/

Green Christian www.greenchristian.org.uk/ Climate Stewards www.climatestewards.org/

Operation Noah <http://operationnoah.org/> Caring for God's Acre, churchyard care

www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk