

## DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The Diocese exists to proclaim the Gospel and nurture the Kingdom of Christ in Wiltshire and Dorset. Because of this mission our Environmental Policy is based on the 'Five Marks of Mission' (Lambeth Conference in 1988).

We acknowledge that God is in communion with all life, and that all life exists in an intimate, mutually supporting relationship sustained by and reflective of God's love. The action of human beings is placing the whole community in peril. We wish to turn to Jesus for inspiration to be a medium for change. We understand the need to seek ways to translate our commitment into actions that demonstrate our love and care for the earth which in Christ accompanies us in our active hope in His approaching kingdom.

### **We see our objectives as being:**

**To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom:** to celebrate the gift of Creation and show its spiritual and practical value to all.

**To teach, baptise and nurture new believers:** to promote environmental mindfulness as an intrinsic part of our approach to Christian life.

**To respond to human need by loving service:** encouraging a way of living and ordering one's life in community, with care for the land and all its creatures in response to problems such as climate disruption, water scarcity, flooding and habitat destruction as they impact on the world.

**To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation:** by seeking to value the 'free' nature of environmental resources and challenging the economic structures that take advantage of this at Creation's expense.

**To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth:** by establishing the Diocese's own environmental impacts through our Church buildings, many of them listed, ministry houses and Church schools. Using this understanding we plan to devise a strategy to improve their environmental performance.

### **The Diocese commits itself to:**

- bring God's great love for the whole of Creation by incorporating wider environmental concerns into theological and liturgical life.
- understand how the Diocesan buildings, land, travel and other activities impact on the environment and devise a strategy to manage these issues.
- support the National Shrinking the Footprint team in their target of reducing the whole of the Church of England's carbon emissions by 80% by 2050, with an interim target of 42% by 2020.
- provide examples, materials and encouragement to parish Churches to engage with broader aspects of their environmental and ethical practice.
- make a special focus on caring for creation annually at Creationtide
- seek to achieve Eco Diocese status
- support the Diocesan Environment Group in its work

Policy updated by the Diocesan Environment Group v7 14th February 2017

Approved by Diocesan Synod 4 March 2017.

# APPENDIX 1

## DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT GROUP AIMS FOR 2021

- 1) Encouraging parishes to engage with A Rocha UK's **Eco Church scheme** – say at least 10% of parishes by end of 2017 and 20% by end of 2020
- 2) Facilitating the Diocese to achieve **Eco Diocese** bronze level – needs 10% of parishes engaged with Eco Church (5% with awards) and to fulfil a number of other diocesan criteria (see second Appendix) – and then to work towards silver.
- 3) Encouraging parishes to adopt **green energy** supplies – say at least 15% of parishes by end of 2017 and 25% by 2020
- 4) Encouraging parishes to adopt **Creationtide** as a special time of focus on teaching about God the Creator and our responsibilities as Christians
- 5) Creating and sustaining a **network of 'green champions/promoters'** recognised by their local parish and prepared to help their church engage with caring for God's creation supported by regular news, materials and story sharing
- 6) Encouraging **senior clergy and staff to be modelling by speaking out** regularly and in particular in Creationtide about the need to engage in caring for God's creation as a part of our normal discipleship with a strong emphasis on climate change and global warming as a major issue of our time
- 7) Encouraging widespread adoption by congregation members in parishes of **pledges to change their carbon-rich lifestyles** (Similar to Truro Diocese's "Top 10 pledges" )
- 8) Encouraging and facilitating parishes:
  - a) **to link with their local CoE schools** to teach and learn the distinctly Christian reasons for caring for creation, perhaps as part of a Creationtide focus.
  - b) **to be actively involved with other community green movements and activities** eg Transition Towns, clean-up actions, community energy schemes
- 9) Encouraging Diocesan staff to:
  - a) include a 'caring for God's creation ' module in **Ministry and Lay training**
  - b) include **best environmental** policies, practice and initiatives in their functions
  - c) give the **best environmental advice to parishes**
  - d) have explored opportunities to **investigate the potential of church land** being used for low carbon projects and activities
- 10) Facilitating the offering of **sustainable weddings and funerals**
- 11) Encouraging all levels of the diocese to **cooperate with other churches, faiths and community groups** in environmental initiatives.



## APPENDIX 2

# ECO DIOCESE REQUIREMENTS

Eco Diocese is an initiative to encourage diocesan-level engagement with Eco Church, and promotes parish participation in the scheme.

Eco Diocese status will be given to your diocese when it has:

1. Registered its intent to become an Eco Diocese
2. Commissioned an individual or group to coordinate progress within the diocese.
3. Written an environmental policy that has been agreed by Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod (this should include points on travel, the environmental maintenance of vicarages, and a commitment to reducing diocesan carbon emissions).
4. Gained the appropriate levels of Eco Church parish registrations and Awards  
Bronze Eco Diocese: 10% of parishes registered; 5% of parishes awarded  
Silver Eco Diocese: 20% of parishes registered; 10% of parishes awarded  
Gold Eco Diocese: 30% of parishes registered; 20% of parishes awarded
5. Achieved the relevant Eco Church Award level in relation to its Diocesan House (where appropriate) and Land (where appropriate)
6. Embedded environmental issues within the curricula of its ongoing ministerial education
7. Managed diocesan investments ethically in line with the ethical policies of the Church of England national investing bodies, including on climate change, guided by the recommendations of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group
8. Worked with other denominations and/or other faith groups to promote Eco Church and continuing to do so
9. Established the habit of recording and celebrating individual environmental initiatives