

Diocesan Environment Policy

This Synod affirms that 'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it' (Ps 24:1). We are called to conserve its complex and fragile ecology, and thus call upon the Diocesan organisations, congregations and individual Christians to be good stewards and work towards a caring and enriching use of the earth's resources. We therefore

- Accept an obligation to conduct our own business in responsible ways, to assess the environmental impact of all our activities, and to consider ways in which to minimise and mitigate any environmental damage they may cause.
- Encourage all Christians to prayerfully consider lifestyles which promote sustainable, healthy and socially just patterns of consumption for all.
- Co-operate with Government agencies, political parties and non-government organisations which seek to replace present systems by ones which are ecologically sustainable and socially just.

Actions such as these below are encouraged

Awareness and Commitment

- to promote awareness amongst local churches of these aims and of the theology underlying them
- to ensure that all clergy in the Diocese are familiar with this environmental commitment and its objectives, and encourage them to work towards its implementation
- to encourage parishes to think globally and act locally to help counter present threats to future generations

Energy and Water

- to ensure energy is used efficiently and wherever possible reduce its use
- to encourage the increased use of renewable energy
- to use water efficiently and with care
- to avoid pollutants entering the drainage system

Waste

- to reduce the production of material waste including unnecessary packaging
- to encourage re-use, repair and recycling of materials including organic waste
- to dispose of waste in a safe and responsible way

Materials and Resources

- to buy products which are made in accordance with the principle of using material in a sustainable way and to use locally-made goods as far as this is possible and practicable
- to buy products from sources that adhere to principles of fair trade with those within poorer countries
- to take into account the lifetime costs of materials when repairing, altering or rebuilding premises
- to maximise the proportion of paper used from sustainable sources and recycled materials
- to offer electronic communication as an alternative to paper for those who are suitably equipped

Natural and Built Environment

- to take appropriate opportunities to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, especially with regard to churches, church yards, vicarages and glebe fields
- to engage with local planning developments where these affect the urban and rural environment
- to be sensitive to the impact of church activities on the local environment

Travel

- to make every effort to reduce air pollution and carbon emissions by the avoidance of unnecessary travel (especially noting the relative inefficiency of aeroplanes and cars) and by the promotion of the use of more energy-efficient forms of transport e.g. public transport or car sharing.

The text of the above is an adaptation based on the Churches' Environmental Programme "Eco-Congregation" and on motions passed by the Dioceses of Coventry and Newcastle, and the Baptist and Methodist Unions