

Diocese of Coventry

Environmental Policy

The Diocesan Environment Group (DEG) developed an Environmental Policy for the Diocese of Coventry, which was adopted by the Coventry Diocesan Synod on 14 November 2009. The policy is set out overleaf.

The role of the DEG in implementing this policy includes:

- 1)** Providing a lead within this diocese in addressing climate change
- 2)** Developing a programme to aid understanding of key environmental issues among Churches in the Diocese and their congregations
- 3)** Undertaking a carbon audit throughout the diocese for all church and diocesan buildings to facilitate future carbon reduction.
- 4)** Promoting churches who will act as models of best practice

Diocese of Coventry Environmental Policy

Theological basis

The biblical stories show creation to be a gift and inherently good. God delegates a share of responsibility to care for the earth to humanity. The actions of humankind have led to the abuse of the earth and a fracturing of the relationship that humanity has with all that provides security and truth. The continuing biblical narrative demonstrates the hope of that relationship restored and creation renewed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As Christian people we have a faith imperative under God to share in the care and nurture of creation. God has appointed us as stewards. We are called to celebrate the presence of God in creation and to protect the gift we have so that all can contribute in the diversity and rhythm of birth, growth and death. We do this in the experience of God's grace and the knowledge that our first accountability is not to governments or pressure groups but to God.

We therefore strive to take seriously and responsibly our God-given vocation to care for the earth and to demonstrate that care among those with whom we share our lives:

Our intention:

1. We affirm the diocesan strategy to 'transform communities' and thereby 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth' as central to our worship, life, work and mission.
2. We take environmental concerns fully into account in our mission, worship, study, education, training, pastoral, administrative and other programmes and projects.
3. We encourage our Diocesan Environment Group to raise environmental concerns and opportunities through the communication structures of the diocese, and on behalf of the church with other partner organisations.
4. We ask all members of the Coventry diocese to consider their personal impact on the environment in their daily lives, and to bring about change as a mission imperative.

Our practice:

1. We will identify environmental concerns and projects in our local and wider community and participate in appropriate action in response to them.
2. We will undertake an environmental audit of our churches and buildings. We will devise appropriate responses to lessen environmental damage and abuse and seek to reduce our carbon footprint.
3. We will monitor the environmental impact of our policies and plans, accepting that additional costs may be incurred in any resulting revisions.
4. We will promote locally sourced foods and produce.

Our learning:

1. We will seek appropriate information from Christian environmental groups and keep abreast of current thinking.
2. We will support and promote the work of local, national and international environmental agencies.
3. We will engage in an environmental debate and discussion as required, and model that principle in deanery synods and parochial church councils.

Having adopted this policy we shall not be afraid to publish it and to be held accountable to it by other agencies and partners, our families and colleagues, and all those who contribute to diocesan life and witness.

A Carbon Action Checklist for churches in the Diocese of Coventry

Please note the checklist is neither comprehensive nor prescriptive and will depend upon your particular situation. The key action is the first

1. Measure your church's carbon footprint and plan the most cost effective way of reducing it in *your* situation
2. Install energy saving bulbs throughout church buildings
3. Ensure the heating system governed by a time switch so that it is used only when necessary and introducing zoning system where appropriate
4. Introduce car sharing scheme to get people to and from church
5. Celebrate Creation Tide in Sept/Oct
6. Establish a church allotment
7. Introduce lagging and cavity wall insulation where appropriate
8. Host parish event, showing eg the films *An Inconvenient Truth* or *The Age of Stupid*
9. Switch to a green energy supplier e.g. Good Energy or Green Energy
10. Replace heating system if boiler is more than 15 years old
11. Circulate information to build understanding of climate change
12. Introduce a system for monitoring your progress

A Carbon Action Checklist for schools in the Diocese of Coventry

- Food eaten. Invest in local sustainable produce.
- Help children to grow and prepare their own.
- The school run. A dedicated bus scheme or better still 'walking buses'.
- Save energy, use renewables.
- Reduce waste.

Appendix

Measuring and Reducing your 'Carbon Footprint'

Your carbon footprint is the measure of the detrimental impact you (a person or a building) are having on global warming, by measuring the amount of carbon dioxide you produce. By becoming more energy efficient, or by using renewable sources of energy, you can reduce your carbon footprint. In many cases, becoming energy efficient will also reduce your fuel bills too.

Reducing your carbon footprint doesn't have to be expensive. There are many small activities that you can do that can be very effective. Your first step would be to identify how big your carbon footprint currently is. You can do this by: -

- 1) *Undertaking an energy audit*: calculate how much energy is used in your church using existing fuel bills. A carbon calculator can be found at:
<http://www.carbontrust.co.uk/solutions/CarbonFootprinting/FootprintCalculators>
- 2) *Commissioning an energy survey of the church*: there should be a local energy efficiency advice centre that will be able to help with this.