

# DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

## Purpose and Scope of the Programme

The Environment Programme aims to implement the [Diocesan Synod resolution](#) of 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020 reflecting our Christian commitment to live as Lights for Christ and care for God's creation.

It has three main parts:

- Work towards the Diocese reaching 'Net Zero' carbon emissions by 2030, in line with the February 2020 General Synod resolution (Appendix 1)
- Developing other aspects of creation care as an A Rocha Eco Diocese (Appendix 2)
- Supporting local churches in becoming and developing as Eco Churches.

Responsibility for working towards the Net Zero goal lies with the Net Zero Carbon Steering Group, set up to research, draw up and deliver a strategy to achieve the 2030 target and then to implement it in the Diocese. General Synod called upon all parts of the Church of England to achieve year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently examine what would be required to reach net zero emissions by 2030 so a plan of action can be drawn up to achieve that target. The National Environment Working Group will report back to General Synod every three years from 2022. Each Diocesan Synod and Cathedral Chapter must address progress toward net zero emissions every 3 years.

Responsibility for supporting other aspects of creation care as Eco Diocese and Eco Churches lies with the Diocesan Environment Officer (DEO) supported by the Diocesan Environment Working Group (DEWG). This includes developing partnerships with a wide range of local and national like-minded organisations. The Environment Programme builds on the previous work of the Diocesan Environment Group (DEG).

## **Terms of Reference for the Net Zero Carbon Steering Group**

The [Diocesan Environment and Climate Justice policy](#) states that the Diocesan Net Zero Carbon Steering Group will work with churches, schools, property managers and other relevant bodies to:

- prepare an action programme to achieve the net zero target and fulfil the relevant commitments above
- co-ordinate and facilitate delivery of the programme by all diocesan agencies
- record progress in achieving its goals including independent verification.

Its membership includes senior representatives of teams and other groupings with authority to initiate the actions required to work towards the Net Zero goal. Some roles can be represented by more than one person to maximise attendance.

- Bishop of Doncaster (Chair)
- Diocesan Secretary (Deputy Chair)
- Director of Finance
- DAC Secretary
- Director of Education
- Diocesan Surveyor
- A Buildings Officer
- Diocesan Environment Officer
- A member of parish clergy
- A member of parish laity
- Environment Project Support to convene and minute meetings

Others with specialist knowledge will be invited as and when required. Meeting notes and documentation will be circulated to the Archdeacons for information only. Each attendee should have a nominated deputy to represent them if unable to attend. The Communications Team will be kept informed to ensure clear lines of communication with the wider Diocese.

Meetings would normally be every two months though subgroups for specific purposes might meet separately at frequencies appropriate to their tasks. Annual meetings will be open to anyone who wishes to attend for transparency and to engage with and inform the wider Diocese.

The Steering Group will work within the framework of the Diocesan Strategy and the Lights for Christ initiative. It is accountable to the Bishop's Senior Staff Team and, through them, to the Bishop's Council. In line with the Diocesan policy, the Steering Group will provide them with an annual report but will also seek their strategic guidance as and when required.

The Steering Group will seek funding from the national church institutions and other relevant agencies. It will also report at least annually to the Finance and Property Committee and Bishop's Council regarding resources and budgeting, and to other committees and boards as required. The Diocesan Synod will receive a progress report from the Bishop of Doncaster and the Diocesan Environment Officer at least every two years and recommend changes accordingly. Frequency and structure of reporting will be updated as needed following national or General Synod recommendations.

Subject to funding, the Group will be serviced by a Project Manager, who will be responsible for preparing, monitoring and updating a comprehensive Project Plan, and will:

- prepare a brief setting out the overall scope of the project
- assign tasks and timings to agents (providing them with the initial overall Project Plan)
- consult on their priorities and capacity to meet the programme
- make adjustments to timings where tasks on critical paths cannot be delivered as initially proposed
- report to the Steering Group about the proposed resolution and trade-offs.

If it is not possible to appoint a Project Manager, these functions will be carried out by members of the Steering Group and the Environment Project Management support administrator.

Once a year, the Steering Group meeting will take the form of a Net Zero Carbon **Advisory Forum** meeting, to which all who are working on the Net Zero programme will be welcome. The Forum will enable increased transparency and wider discussion of policy and operational issues. The Forum will receive an update on progress, and there will be opportunities to offer advice and explore new possibilities. Partners with specialist experience might also be invited.

Commitments in the Diocesan Environment and Climate Justice policy that are particularly relevant to the Net Zero Steering Group are:

- making creation care an issue for our financial policy, including ethical management of Diocesan investments in line with national church policy
- promoting environmental care across schools in the Diocese
- working to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030, including churches, clergy housing, church schools, theological education, work-related travel and Church House through:
  - energy savings
  - more energy-efficient buildings and use of buildings
  - the use of renewable energy
  - offsetting net emissions that we are unable to eliminate through a sound and appropriate scheme
- reducing emissions from transport by:
  - avoidance of unnecessary travel
  - use of public transport
  - car sharing
  - travel by bicycle and on foot
  - use of more energy efficient vehicles
  - switching to electric cars using renewably generated electricity

Appendix 2 has further details of section 5 of the A Rocha Silver Eco Diocese requirement to have agreed carbon reduction targets and develop an action plan to get there. This also informs the work of the Steering Group.

## **Terms of Reference for the Diocesan Environment Officer (DEO)**

The Diocesan Environment and Climate Justice policy states that the Diocesan Environment Officer, supported by the Diocesan Environment Working Group, will:

- promote awareness of the policy and support churches in implementing it locally
- specifically encourage and support participation in Eco Church and Eco Diocese
- work with St Peter's College and any other relevant Diocesan education programmes to embed environmental issues in ongoing training in the Diocese.

The Diocesan Environment Officer will also:

- develop partnerships with a wide range of local and national like-minded organisations
- represent the Diocese at the national DEO annual conference and comparable events.

They will be appointed by the Bishop of Sheffield in consultation with the Diocesan Environment Working Group and be accountable to the Bishop. They will also perform the role of Bishop's Adviser for the Environment and be a permanent member of the Board for Faith and Justice to which they will report at each meeting.

They will offer advice to the Bishop about environmental issues and implications and give advice on behalf of the Bishop to:

- other Diocesan boards, committees and working groups, including the Net Zero Carbon Steering Group
- deaneries, Mission Areas, parishes and other local congregations.

They will work to embed the marks of mission, especially the fifth mark, to 'strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth' in Diocesan strategy and initiatives.

They will identify people with appropriate gifts, skills and experience to serve as members of the Diocesan Environment Working Group, which they will convene.

Commitments in the Diocesan policy that the Diocesan Environment Officer will support at Diocesan level include:

- purchasing goods, where possible, that are sustainably grown, sourced or produced and are fairly traded
- minimising use of plastics and other substances that cause pollution
- using water carefully and efficiently, minimising wasteful use
- using recycled products and reusing goods, where possible
- minimising waste, and recycling wherever facilities exist.

The Diocesan Environment Officer, working with the *Lights for Christ* Steering Group, the Parish Support Team and St Peter's College will support local churches in:

- expressing our gratitude, wonder and awe at creation in our public worship
- making creation and the natural world a more integral aspect of our prayer, preaching, teaching, groups and communication
- adopting more Christ-like lifestyles and attitudes to wealth and consumption
- making creation care an issue for our giving, stewardship and financial policy
- supporting wildlife and encouraging biodiversity in churchyards, green spaces and gardens
- promoting Eco Church and recording and celebrating local and individual environmental initiatives.

They will also:

- work in partnership with other Dioceses, denominations, faiths and secular organisations that are caring for the natural world and its plant and animal life, both locally and globally
- Provide a link with the national Church of England Environment team and the wider DEO network, including disseminating information on funding and other opportunities
- be active in national and global campaigns to tackle the causes of the climate and ecological emergencies and to promote climate justice.

The Diocesan Environment Officer is currently a voluntary role. This influences how much of the role description can be implemented at any one time and the post holder, therefore, needs to identify what is achievable with available resources in discussion with the DEWG and the Bishop. (See below for Resources.)

### **Person Specification for the Diocesan Environment Officer**

The DEO *must*:

- have real interest in and knowledge of environmental issues, some awareness of environmental theology and the energy and enthusiasm needed for the role
- be IT literate, including use of social media
- allow a degree of flexibility about timing and availability (e.g. for daytime or evening visits)
- must be a member in good standing of a church that is part of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and have an understanding of Christian theology and church structures

and *may*:

- share the role with another suitably qualified person, so long as they are able to work and communicate effectively together, with a single person identified as first point of contact.

### **Resources for the Diocesan Environment Officer**

- They will be allocated an annual budget, currently £1,000, to cover expenses and will bid for additional resources as required through the annual budgeting process.
- A shared desk may be available in Church House for hot-desking but the post-holder will need to work mainly from home or other shared office within the Diocese
- Expenses may be claimed for mileage, postage, the Diocesan Environment Officers' annual conference and the occasional other conference, to ensure that they can fulfil the role effectively.

## **Terms of Reference for the Diocesan Environment Working Group (DEWG)**

The Working Group will be appointed by and support the DEO in their responsibilities.

The Group will be convened by the DEO and will meet around every two months.

Every effort will be made to ensure the Group is made up of representatives from throughout the Diocese, including lay people and those in leadership roles. Members from other denominations will be encouraged to join the group. Subgroups may be formed with specific interests or for certain tasks such as producing policy documents or organising an event. Members may be asked to deputise for the DEO as needed.

The DEWG and DEO will:

- communicate with church communities in the Diocese via:
  - the e-bulletin
  - regular mailings to Eco Churches and others with an interest
  - Diocesan social media including the Eco Church Facebook Group.
- work closely with the Diocesan Communications team
- liaise with Diocesan Schools and the Board of Education, to promote environmental care across schools in the Diocese
- encourage schools to:
  - pursue accreditation with an appropriate awarding body (e.g. Let's Go Zero)
  - look for environmental projects and partnerships with local churches.

Overlaps and areas of shared concern might arise between the Net Zero Steering Group and the DEWG but should be capable of resolving through good communications between the two groups with their overlapping membership.

***Note: the full TOR document for the Environment Programme includes TOR for the Net Zero Carbon Steering Group, the Diocesan Environment Officer and the Diocesan Environment Working Group. All three documents are available separately on the Diocesan website, alongside the full document.***

## **Appendix 1: The General Synod Resolution**

In February 2020 General Synod committed to the following motion:

That this Synod, recognising that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation, and a fundamental injustice...

- (a) Call upon all parts of the Church of England, including parishes, BMOs, education institutions, dioceses, cathedrals and the NCIs, to work to achieve year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently examine what would be required to reach net zero emissions by 2030 in order that a plan of action can be drawn up to achieve that target;
- (b) Request reports on progress from the Environment Working Group and the NCIs every 3 years beginning 2022 and;
- (c) Call on each Diocesan Synod and Cathedral Chapter to address progress toward net zero emissions every 3 years.

## Appendix 2: Eco Diocese Criteria updated by A Rocha 30 Sept 2021

Further details at <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/denominational-awards/eco-diocese/>

BRONZE	SILVER
1. <b>Registered</b> its intent to become an Eco Diocese	<b>Registered</b> its intent to become an Eco Diocese
2. <b>Commissioned an individual or group</b> to coordinate progress within the Diocese	<b>Commissioned a group</b> (i.e. rather than an individual) to coordinate progress within the Diocese.
	Provided training and development opportunities for local/regional promoters such as <b>Eco Champions</b> .
3. <b>Written an environmental policy</b> agreed by Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod	<b>Written an Environmental Policy which includes land management</b> with an explicit reference to promoting biodiversity and managing the land for carbon reduction
4. <b>Promote environmental care across schools</b> in the Diocese	The Diocesan Board of Education to have put in place an <b>appropriate environmental policy</b>
5. Commit to develop a <b>plan for carbon reduction</b>	<p><b>Agreed carbon reduction targets and developed an action plan to get there.</b> This should take due note as appropriate of either the Church of England's Net Zero 2030 Target or the Church in Wales proposed Net Zero Carbon Action Plan, such that the Diocese:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Has declared its intention to move towards net zero carbon emissions;</li> <li>2) Has researched and published a plan as to how this is to be achieved and the timescale it is working towards; and</li> <li>3) Is resourcing the achievement of the plan, particularly amongst independent bodies within the diocese, such as schools and parishes, through active Christian environmental education and support.</li> </ol> <p>The Diocese is able to provide clear advice to stakeholders, including schools and parishes giving them roadmaps to carbon reduction. The Diocese is also actively working to inform stakeholders of the Biblical imperative and urgency of action needed.</p>
6. <b>Gained the appropriate levels of local church registrations and Awards for Eco Church</b> 10% of local churches registered; 5% of local churches awarded	<p><b>Gained the appropriate levels of local church registrations and awards for Eco Church</b> 40% of local churches registered, 30% of local churches awarded: a third of these awards should be Silver or higher</p>
7. <b>Achieved the relevant Eco Church Award level</b> in relation to its Diocesan House or Office (where appropriate) and Land (where appropriate)	<p><b>Achieve the relevant award for Diocesan House/Office and land</b> and promote an understanding amongst all staff of Eco Diocese goals <i>Continued...</i></p>



BRONZE	SILVER
<p><b>8. Embedded environmental issues in ongoing training</b> within the curricula of its training for lay and ministerial staff</p>	<p><b>Environmental training should be included in standard Diocesan training</b> for both lay and ordained ministry</p>
<p><b>9. Managed diocesan investments ethically</b> in line with the ethical policies of the Church of England national investing bodies.</p>	<p><b>As a minimum, all Diocesan funds are invested in line with the Provincial ethical investment policy</b>, i.e. in England to start divesting from companies not serious about moving to a low carbon economy (i.e. those not engaged in transitioning); and by 2023 to divest from fossil fuel companies not aligned with the Paris Agreement target.</p> <p>Additionally, dioceses must have made a commitment to pursue investment in at least one of implementation of critical engagement on climate change in respect of the full range of investments, investment in renewable energy and/or woodland; and/or investment in 'deep impact' projects.</p> <p><b>Written an ethical banking and investment policy</b> following established environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) criteria</p>
<p><b>10. Worked with other Dioceses and/or faith groups</b> to encourage greater environmental action</p>	<p><b>Work with partner church groups both locally and internationally</b> to raise mutual awareness in regard to climate change and species loss mitigation and resilience measures.</p>
<p><b>11. Established the habit of recording and celebrating</b> individual environmental initiatives.</p>	<p>Include a <b>clear and substantial presence</b> for environmental issues</p>

Authors: Peter Rainford and Cathy Rhodes in consultation with the Net Zero Steering Group and DEWG.

Version 1: 12/4/22

For revision: 12/4/24