



MEETING
Northern Dioceses Environmental Group (NDEG)

'COP26 - Hopes and Realities.'

Meeting Record

Date: Wednesday 27th October 2021 from 10.30am-12.00 noon by zoom

Present

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| Emma Gardener | Head of Environment, Diocese of Salford |
| Edward de Quay | Carbon Transition Officer, Laudato Si Research Institute, Campion Hall, University of Oxford |
| Fr Hugh Pollock | Lancaster Faith & Justice Commission |
| Trish Sandbach | Leeds J+P |
| Chris Myers | Hexham and Newcastle Diocese J+P |
| Steve Atterton | J+P Archdiocese of Liverpool (retired) |
| Stephen Garsed | Lancaster F+J Environment Group |
| Mark Wiggin (Chair) | Caritas Diocese of Salford |
| Anthony Brown | Our Lady of the Valley Parish (Diocese of Salford) |
| Bob Turner | GCCM (UK) |
| Bernadette Jordan | St Marys, Horwich, Bolton |
| Anne Peacey | Diocese of Hallam J+P Commission |
| Columba Timmins | Diocese of Hallam J+P Commission |
| Sue Grubic | Faith and Justice, Diocese of Lancaster |
| Justine Silcock | J+P Liverpool and Live Simply Award assessor |
| Steve Allerton | Liverpool Archdiocese |

Apologies

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| Paul Kelly | Climate Change group - Leeds J&P Commission and NJPN Environment Group. |
| Ben Gilchrist | Caritas Diocese of Shrewsbury CEO |
| Fr Eamonn Mulcahy | Spiritans, Manchester |
| Sarah George | Caritas Bolton & St. Osmund's Church |
| Patrick O'Dowd | Caritas Diocese of Salford Director |
| Joseph Howson | Lee House Centre for Mission Awareness |
| Margaret McSherry | Lancaster Faith & Justice Commission Environment |
| Ladislav Maluch | Lalley Centre Allotment Project |
| Katheryn Ansley | Caritas Diocese of Salford - Catholic Social Teaching |
| Christine Matthewson | St John the Baptist parish, Rochdale |

& others

Apologies for those left off the Present and Apologies lists or inaccurate roles attached to them! Please contact m.wiggin@caritassalford.org.uk to correct details.

Agenda

1. Welcomes
2. A reflection on Climate justice
3. 'For the Beauty of the Earth' – The recently launched Year-1 Environment programme – Dr Emma Gardner, Head of Environment, Diocese of Salford
4. Guardians of Creation, Journey to 2030 and carbon accounting guide updates – Edward de Quay, Carbon Transition Officer, Laudato Si' Research Institute, Oxford
5. COP26 - Hopes and Realities – an opportunity for participants to share
6. Newsround and activities updates
7. Next steps – next date

Opening prayer – from Cafod on the Feast of St Francis of Assisi (4th October)

Purpose of the meeting

1. To update on developments of the Laudato Si' Centre and outreach work
2. To be briefed on the Guardians of Creation, Journey to 2030 and carbon accounting at an inter-diocesan level
3. To share inter-diocesan news; hopes and realities about COP26

1.0 'For the Beauty of the Earth' –Year-1 Environment programme – Dr Emma Gardner, Head of Environment, Diocese of Salford

1a. The Laudato Si Centre, Wadley Hall, Salford is concerned with connecting the 'Cry of the Earth' to the 'Cry of the Poor'. In addition to offering a centre where activities can take place and where good practice can be showcased, its mission is to also reach out to the community, parishes and schools of the Diocese of Salford. There is also an important role to work nationally to support practices that will reduce the carbon footprint of diocesan properties including schools. Programmes cover a wide range of issues and currently include spirituality and nature, nature based therapies, support to refugees and asylum seekers as well as welcoming visitors.

1b. 'For the Beauty of the Earth' is a diocesan year-one programme, that has been developed to provide support as we put our faith in action to heal and care for our common home, as an expression of our commitment to love God through loving and caring for creation and one another. It has been informed by the good work already happening across the Diocese and several engagement activities carried out during 2021. Throughout 2021/2022 there will be further engagement and opportunities to respond and feed into the September 2022 'For the Beauty of the Earth' update, which will include a 2030 vision supported by a three-year action plan.

1c. Green Homes Grant

Also, information re: Green Homes Grant that Salford Diocese has received confirmation presbyteries can apply for. We are looking at a programme for the Diocese of Salford. For other dioceses, link [here](#) to the scheme and regional contacts. Information sent from E.ON:

Green Homes Grant customer journey (presbyteries) for their landlord (Diocese) process. There is a £500 deposit required before the initial retrofit assessment and technical survey and then a 1/3rd of the costs.

Salford Diocese will be doing an audit of parishes hopefully early next year which will identify interventions that could be taken to reduce carbon.

Please also see the attached resources from Emma

2.0 Guardians of Creation; carbon accounting guide updates; Journey to 2030 – Edward de Quay, Carbon Transition Officer, Laudato Si’ Research Institute, Oxford

Guardians of Creation

2a. Guardians of Creation. The Catholic church is committed to reducing its carbon emissions in line with a global aspiration and targets. The Guardians of Creation is the initiative of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales along with CAFOD, the Laudato Si’ Movement, St Mary’s University and the Diocese of Salford. Guardians of Creation is a collaborative project that aims to help the Catholic community in England and Wales work towards a carbon-neutral and more sustainable future, inspired by the teachings of Laudato Si’.

2b. Carbon accounting. The Catholic church, through diocesan buildings such as schools and parishes has a significant carbon footprint and work is underway to reduce this significantly to be in line with the 1.5 degrees’ centigrade target by 2030. Action includes:

1. Developing diocesan policies to address this target
2. Setting boundaries and parameters for the work such as an inventory of properties and/or using diocesan insurance schedules
3. Scoping out what can and should be measured such as energy use in buildings and what is more difficult to measure such as car emissions.
4. Setting target dates for zero net emissions that may be in line with local authorities such as Manchester which is 2038.
5. Establishing an annual reporting system to capture data evidence of progress.
6. Developing procurement so that energy providers such as green gas etc are in place and can be used. The Church Marketplace is developing lists to assist here. For example, larger plants such as schools may move to underground heat sources but will need to know who to go to for advice etc.
7. Audits will need to be carried out and advice made available to diocesan officers responsible for properties, finance and there is a need to ensure they are joined up nationally with others.

At the NDEG meeting there was a call for parishes to be made aware more of what the Bishops are doing as this is a good news story worth sharing. Details of all the Guardians of Creation information and guidance that might be of interest can be found at:

<https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/areas/theology-and-ethics/guardians-of-creation/about.aspx>

2c. Journey to 2030. A Parish Guide to Laudato Si’ has been developed and is designed to get communities involved in caring for creation. It offers insights, resources, and inspiring

stories to get people started in transforming the lives of our communities to help address the cries of the earth and the cries of the poor. It is in effect an online encyclopaedia for parishes trying to respond to the Pope's teaching on care for our common home, pulling together inspiring stories and practical actions, wisdom and goals in one place.

Quoted from the website: 'With our church buildings, halls, and gardens we have the physical resources to both serve and enable others to take action. A parish should be a place that equips people with all they need to flourish. It should be a place that enables great projects, provides education, and allows encounter with neighbours and nature; breaking us out of our little bubbles. Above all, a parish praises God, with appreciation of the gift of our common home and human family'.

To find out more visit <https://journeyto2030.org>

3.0 Feedback from participants

- Anne Peacey – shared reflections on the NJPN conference 23rd-25th July held at Swanwick, Derbyshire. 'Action for Life on Earth 2021' was a carefully prepared conference to ensure as far as possible a 'Covid-free environment' and was a financial risk that paid off as attendance was 180 delegates. Notable was the testimonies of young people at the conference who spoke passionately and eloquently of their activity in campaigning for change. The next theme that NJPN will lead on next year is 'HOPE'.
- Anthony Brown - shared the Our Lady of the Valley website that has a strong Laudato Si' and environment section.
- Bob Turner – is looking into the carbon footprint (buildings only) for parishes and Emma will be doing an audit of parishes likely early next year, which will identify interventions that could be taken to reduce carbon. Bob recommended the development of eco-councils at deanery level.
- Fr Hugh – emphasised the need for the laity to take and keep a lead in environment matters at parish level.
- Sue Grubic, Faith and Justice, Diocese of Lancaster is engaging parishes and schools in the work of justice and peace.
- Chris Myers shared his experience of the European ecumenical pilgrims to COP26 who travelled through the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. It was inspiring to spend time with people who walked, prayed, eat and lived together for the journey to COP26. Pilgrims from Sweden walked for 103 days; those from Poland for 77 days! An environmental policy is also ready for trustee approval.
- Stephen Garsed – in relation to Laudato Si' is a school governor and will be focusing activities on wellbeing, art and craft, science and nature and other curriculum topics. The school is piloting programmes this year. If you are interested to find out more, please contact Stephen.
- Columba Timmins - has been following the Young Christian Climate network pilgrimage from Truro to Glasgow. It has been joyful, inspiring and ecumenical.
- Steve Atherton- fed back that his parish met with the local MP (about COP 26) who agreed to look after the concerns of the poorest countries and to promote retro fitting in the Northwest.

Joe Howson writes that a **Swift Conservation Project** will be rolled out across the Diocese of Salford and beyond - if we can interest other dioceses! As you may be aware, Swifts are in serious decline for a number of reasons - one being the lack of habitat. Church buildings can often provide nesting sites that are conducive to Swifts. To this end we started a pilot project at St Wilfrid's in Longridge - placing twelve Swift nesting boxes in the church belfry- we worked closely with the RSPB. To our delight Swifts nested in the boxes and reared their young.

We engaged the local primary school in the project and we now hope to identify other church buildings across the diocese where we can install Swift nesting boxes - engaging parishioners and local schools in the project. This is a very practical conservation (eco) project that is ideally suited to church communities/buildings. To find out more about this project please contact Joe at joehowson@googlemail.com

THE NEXT MEETING – DATE TO BE AGREED

Please let Mark Wiggin m.wiggin@caritassalford.org.uk know if you do not want to be on this address list to receive correspondence from the NDEG. Thank you.

ADDENDUM

Net-Zero and the Catholic Church: 'Guardians of Creation' project releases guidance.

Guidance has been released for the Catholic Church in England and Wales on carbon accounting. *"Guidance on Catholic Diocesan Carbon Accounting"* is the second paper from 'Guardians of Creation,' a collaborative project from Salford Diocese with St Mary's University and the Laudato Si' Research Institute.

The guidance discusses setting a carbon footprint baseline, monitoring, and setting net-zero targets, and follows a previous paper on strategy for decarbonising diocesan building stock. Both papers can be found here: <https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/areas/theology-and-ethics/guardians-of-creation/resources.aspx>

Over the past year the dioceses of Plymouth, Westminster and Birmingham have announced their carbon ambitions for 2030. Brentwood and Salford dioceses have both recently released guiding documents for their environmental efforts, and 'The Journey to 2030,' a project run by Catholic laity, has launched a new website to help parish communities respond to the ecological crisis at www.journeyto2030.org



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