

## **NORTHERN DIOCESE ENVIRONMENT GROUP**

### **MEETING (by Zoom)**

**Date** Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024

#### **Present**

Mark Wiggin (Chair)	Caritas Diocese of Salford (volunteer)
Paul Kelly	Climate Change group - Leeds J&P Commission and NJPN Environment Group.
Emma Gardner	Head of Environment, Diocese of Salford
David Ryan	Archdiocese of Liverpool Laudato Si Group
Clare Myers	Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle
Davinia Jackson	Lancashire, Citizens UK
Bernadette Jordan	St Marys, Horwich, Bolton
Grace Fellows	Our Lady of the Valley, Clitheroe & Laudato Si Animator
Minnie Fraser	Property Surveyor & Environment Lead Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle
Anne Litherland	Laudato Si Animator Diocese of Shrewsbury
Joe Burns	Diocese of Leeds Justice and Peace Commission
Bob Turner	Laudato Si Animator, Plastics awareness action & Cafod volunteer
Barbara Hungin	Diocese of Middlesbrough Environment Lead
Francis Stewart	Diocese of Lancaster & Cafod
Maggie McSherry	Diocese of Leeds Justice and Peace Commission
Ellen Teague	Columban Missionaries and Laudato Si Animator

#### **Apologies**

Thanks to many whose apologies were received including Joe Howson (Lee House), Colette (Southern Diocese Environment Network), Sue Grubic and Steven Garsed (Lancaster Diocese Justice and Peace Commission), Anthony Brown (Laudato Si parish group Clitheroe), Pablo Guidi.

#### **Agenda**

12.00	Meeting opens with prayer and reflection.(Paul Kelly)
12.10	Welcomes and introductions (Mark)
12.20	Diocesan Environmental Leads - their roles and activity (Emma)
12.50	Plenary discussion - How can we support this work? (Mark)
1.10	News events round up (All)
1.20	Next meeting proposed Preston Sat 18 <sup>th</sup> May in-person (Paul)
1.30	Closing prayer

## Opening Prayer

Paul Kelly opened the meeting with a reflection and prayer.

## Diocesan Environmental Leads - their roles and activity

The meeting was a great opportunity to bring together some of the 'Diocesan Environment Leads' from the 8 northern dioceses to have a dialogue about what they do and what is happening in the dioceses and explore how our networks can support their developmental work. Also some of Laudato Si Animators were able join the meeting. Emma Gardner introduced the leads and said that all dioceses in England and Wales have an environment lead. The Northern Dioceses Environment Leads are:

- Lancaster: Steven Garsed [stephen.garsed@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.garsed@gmail.com) & Sue Grubic [ldfjsue@gmail.com](mailto:ldfjsue@gmail.com)
- Hexham and Newcastle: Minnie Fraser [minnie.fraser@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:minnie.fraser@diocesehn.org.uk)
- Middlesbrough: Barbara Hungin [bhungin@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bhungin@yahoo.co.uk) & Glen Melvin [surveyor@rcdmidd.co.uk](mailto:surveyor@rcdmidd.co.uk)
- Leeds: Rowan [environment@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:environment@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)
- Liverpool: Pablo Guidi [p.guidi@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:p.guidi@rcaol.org.uk)
- Hallam: Columba Timmins and Angela Powell: [environmentalleads@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:environmentalleads@hallam-diocese.com)
- Diocese of Shrewsbury: Carol Lawrence COO
- Diocese of Salford: Emma Gardner [emma.gardner@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:emma.gardner@dioceseofsalford.org.uk)

Their role is to:

- Share best practice
- Support Bishops in implementing aspects of Laudato Si and Care for Creation
- Meet every 6 weeks as a group

The diocesan context within which the Leads are operating vary greatly as each diocese operated differently and have different priorities and strategies. For example, Hexham and Newcastle Diocese have developed a "Small Things" environment guide to assist parishes and people to make energy savings and contribute to making important changes. The Diocese is focusing on investment and disinvestment in properties with the plan to carry out a carbon reduction audit. The Diocese of Salford has a coordinating role with the Leads and focuses on the impact of climate change and strategies to reduce carbon emissions.

## Discussion points:

- Globally we are making progress on global warming moving from 3.7 degrees to 2.5 degrees but we are moving too slowly to reach the 1.5-degree target.
- Most of the dioceses have trustees, senior staff and people with environment knowledge and experience assisting the decision making processes and are well networked in the community.
- Media and promotion work needs to be stepped up to share good news stories
- Link parishes and schools together for joint action
- Increase opportunities to promote the issues from the parish priest (catechesis).
- Take up the Live Simply Award...over 100 schools have the award now.

- Take the opportunities afforded by the Jubilee Year 2025.
- Work with secular environment groups and not just church groups.

Thanks to Minnie, Barbara and Emma that were able to join us and share their work.

## Resources

Hexham and Newcastle Diocese have developed a "Small Things" environment guide to assist parishes and people to make energy savings and contribute to making important changes.

<https://diocesehn.org.uk/news/diocesan-environmental-group-publishes-small-things-guide/>

For funding solar panels this organisation is worth a look <https://bigsolar.coop/>

'Community benefit' societies can be supported by solar energy - usually with schools. The Diocese of Salford have just completed a solar project for the Greater Manchester Faiths Network and received expressions of interest. It has been advised that consumption of at least 60,000kWh per building is needed for the business case. Also see solar panels

<https://energygain.co.uk/about/>

Land ownership is an important point. Are land use decisions made with environmental concerns a priority? Growing vegetables instead of meat is one thing that has been discussed in some circles. See <https://lampoonmagazine.com/article/2022/06/19/catholic-church-land-assets-first-map/>

## News and Events

Ellen Teague of the Columbans shared that **Lord Deben** will deliver a talk at Ampleforth College this Friday on faith and climate change.

<https://www.ampleforthcollege.org.uk/page/?title=Lord+Deben+Lecture+%2D+Friday+1+March&pid=304>

**ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE WIGAN 9th March 2024.** This partnership event between Justice and Peace Commission and Liverpool Archdiocese will bring together parishioners and a space to reflect on climate issues and how our Catholic faith calls us to action. Speakers include Bishop John Arnold (Environmental Lead for the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales); Sr Margaret Aitkens (member of the Community of Augustinian Sisters at Boarbank Hall in Cumbria and Research Fellow of Blackfriars, Oxford); and John-Paul DeQuay from Guardians of Creation.

For more information: <https://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/department/pastoral-development/environment>

To Book: [www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/department/pastoral-development/environment](http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/department/pastoral-development/environment)

## **Stations of the Cross**

Join the Diocese of Salford's Laudato Si' Centre team on **Saturday 16th March** for a special Stations of the Cross in the midst of nature. Experience a reflective journey through the Stations, contemplating the Passion of Christ in the serene setting of the Centre's beautiful woodland. Stations of the Cross at the Laudato Si' Centre, Diocese of Salford, Wardley Hall, M28 2<sup>ND</sup>. For more information about timings and to book your place, please visit <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/lsc-stations-2024/>

The creation of the **North East Mayoral Combined Authority** is an important milestone for democracy and power in North East. It provides an exciting new opportunity to tackle and invest in some of the vital areas and issues that affect people's lives. Tyne & Wear citizens will be presenting their asks to the potential Mayors on **22nd April** 2024, 6-8pm at the Tyne Theatre & Opera House in Newcastle. Tickets are required but can be booked for free here. Click here for details and to RSVP: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/tyne-wear-citizens-north-east-devolution-mayoral-assembly?source=email&>

For **environment courses** and days of reflection at Boarbank Hall visit <https://boarbankhall.org.uk/whats-on/>

## **Welcoming people and organisations to the Northern Diocese Environment Group meetings.**

The Northern Diocese Environment Group first met in 2017 to bring together people concerned about the environment and also active in their own dioceses. It was inspired by Pope Francis's Laudato Si encyclical and created an opportunity to bring together people who care about creation, climate change and poverty. The objectives of the NDEG are:

- Solidarity – between enthusiastic practitioners who are active in the field
- Sharing – knowledge, experience and good practice
- Networking - emphasis on diocese, parish and schools
- Safe space – to raise concerns and find support

Anyone from the 8 northernmost dioceses are welcome to add their name to the mailing list. Contact Mary Scully at [M.Scully@caritassalford.org.uk](mailto:M.Scully@caritassalford.org.uk)

## **Next meeting**

Please note in your diaries that we are planning to have an all day, in-person meeting on **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May at St Wilfred's Parish Centre, Preston** which is situated very near to Preston Railway Station.