

DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT POLICY

VERSION: OCTOBER 2024

1 POLICY STATEMENT: CARE OF CREATION

The Diocese of Arundel & Brighton embraces effective action in response to the current climate crisis and Pope Francis' call for us all to care for our common home in his document Laudato Si. The Diocese recognises the interdependence of care for the world and care for our neighbours. The Trustees commit to engaging with environmental advisers and encouraging awareness of and concern for the environment within the Diocese. The commitments in this policy apply to the teams of the central Diocesan offices, but the encouragement to engage with reflection and actions about the environment extends throughout the church. Parish engagement with this agenda is seen in the growing uptake of programmes such as Live Simply, and individual projects such solar installations, rewilding and parish vegetable gardens.

2 PROCUREMENT OF ENERGY

We source gas and electricity for parish and central properties from Inter-Diocesan Fuel Management (IFM), a Catholic mutual which sources energy from green sources. Together with ChurchMarketplace, another Catholic mutual owned by the dioceses of England and Wales, which increases our collective purchasing power, we rely on these partners to help us find solutions that will enable the transition to a carbon neutral future. IFM seeks to provide as much energy as possible from renewable sources.

3 ETHICAL INVESTMENT POLICY

Our investment portfolio excludes companies that produce or refine fossil fuels. The commitment to ethical investment is outlined in the Statement of Investment Principles adopted by Trustees and published on the diocesan website.

4 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Building projects undertaken for Central Diocesan properties are designed to improve the energy efficiency of our properties. Actions to improve insulation, heat retention and the amount of energy used for lighting are implemented wherever projects allow this. Parishes commissioning their five-year property inspection survey (Quinquennial) are asked to instruct that the report identifies actions to improve the energy efficiency of premises, in addition to planned maintenance requirements.

5 PROJECT APPROVALS

The Diocesan Finance Committee approves parish property projects on behalf of the Trustees and oversees capital allocation to schools. Parishes and schools proposing to undertake projects are asked to consider sustainability, and to seek specialist advice where necessary. Energy audits are recommended.

6 STAFF SUPPORT AND RENUMERATION

The Diocese supports the Real Living Wage and operates a centralised payroll to ensure that all staff retained within parishes and central offices receive the minimum hourly rate recommended by the Living Wage Foundation. All colleagues have access to an Employee Assistance Programme Help@hand – login credentials are obtained via E: cooea@abdiocese.org.uk.

7 TRAVEL POLICIES AND ELECTRIC CARS

Where possible, all staff are encouraged to use public transport for commuting or business travel. The St Philip Howard Centre provides a shower for staff and visitors choosing to run or cycle to the site.

The Diocese aims to encourage staff and clergy who drive to consider using electric or hybrid models by offering free charging points at The St Philip Howard Centre. Parishes are also encouraged to install EV points, which are free for parish staff and clergy to use. Mileage claims for electric cars are the same as for others – staff and clergy can claim for business journeys at 45p irrespective of whether the parish or diocese provides free electricity.

The Diocese supports staff by enabling flexible working arrangements and the technological means to work remotely. This helps us to reduce the carbon footprint caused by commuting by car. Where appropriate, meetings are offered in online or blended form, to reduce the need to commute to meetings by road.

8 PROCUREMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Central staff responsible for procurement of consumables are to be guided by the following expectations:

- Recycled paper should be used by default
- Single-use plastics should be avoided wherever possible
- Tea, coffee and sugar provided at meetings and events should be Fairtrade
- Procurement from local companies or ChurchMarketplace is recommended
- Recycling facilities are provided at all diocesan buildings

9 FAIRTRADE

- Arundel and Brighton is a Fairtrade Diocese, with many churches certificated as meeting the Fairtrade Foundation criteria. This means that they use products with the FAIRTRADE Mark including tea, coffee, and other relevant products wherever possible.
- As a Fairtrade Diocese we recommend that all parishes should seek this status and embrace their opportunity to support and promote ethical purchasing. It is a good idea for parishes to display literature advertising the fact that Fairtrade products are being served.

10 COMMUNICATIONS

We use all our communications platforms to share information and guidance regarding Care for Creation. This includes providing links to information, good news stories, and campaigns to encourage engagement with environmental issues by our schools and parishes through newsletter and social media channels. Events promoting engagement with environmental issues are regularly promoted through our digital channels.

This policy is due to be reviewed by the end of October 2026.