

New Season for the Diocesan Environment Group

The Diocesan Environment Group (DEG) said a fond farewell and thank you to some of its long standing members with a blessing from Bishop Paul at an online Farwell party (*pictured right*). The group which has been running for at least 10 years reminisced over photos from annual eco visits which ranged from biodiverse churchyards to the Viola Recycling and Waste Recovery Center in Leeds (*pictured below*).



As environmental issues have moved from a minority concern to the ever-present backdrop of our ministry and mission the role of the group needed to change too. The DEG has over the years been effective in highlighting the role Christians can play in leading on environmental matters and how our faith is enriched when we connect with Christ's creation.

The group recognised the need to change from this advocacy role to one where they could help deliver the changes needed in parishes to respond climate and ecological breakdown. Going forward the DEG membership will be made up of a team of skilled practitioners who



will be able to can come alongside parishes to assist with their eco mission and carbon net zero ambition.

The new group met for the first time in June and are preparing to support parishes as the diocesan carbon net zero strategy *Saving Creation: Strategic Action to combat Climate Change* is launched in Creationtide along with a toolkit to help churches plan for carbon neutrality.

We would welcome new members to the DEG and if you can fulfill one of the roles described below the terms of reference please do get in touch with Jemima Parker at jemims.parker@leeds.anglican.org



Diocese of Leeds Environment Group

Terms of Reference

(This document should be read in conjunction with the Diocesan Environmental Policy March 2019 and the Saving Creation: Strategic Action to Combat Climate Change document May 2021)

Overall Aim of the Group

- In conjunction with the whole of the Anglican Communion, Leeds Diocesan Environmental Group (DEG) will “Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth” (5th Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion).
- The DEG will encourage the parishes to preach and live the gospel within the context of the climate and ecological emergencies.
- In response to the national Church of England call to be carbon net zero by 2030 and in line with the *Saving Creation: Strategic Action to Combat Climate Change* initiative, the DEG will support parishes to develop and implement zero carbon plans.
- The DEG will support the implementation of the Diocesan Strategy, with particular reference to churches for Goals:
2.6 Churches, cathedrals, chaplaincies and church schools can evidence the positive impact they are making on the environment.
2.7 Churches, cathedrals, chaplaincies and church schools can evidence the positive impact they are making on their local community.

The Group will work within the following Terms of Reference. It will:-

1. Be proactive in offering training, help and advice to parishes on the adoption and implementation of zero carbon plans, attaining Eco church status and other environmental activity.
2. Identify churches with relatively high carbon emissions and seek to proactively support them to adopt and deploy decarbonisation strategies.
3. Share information about examples of good practice and environmental action from the diocese and elsewhere, working ecumenically where possible.
4. Look for opportunities to work in partnership with other organizations both at a parish and Diocesan level, such as the Green Journey. Share news of the activities and campaigns of other organizations with similar aims (eg Christian Aid).

5. Advise the diocese of its responsibility to care for creation and actions that it can take to reduce its carbon footprint.
6. Encourage, support and advise the Diocesan Environmental Officer (DEO) in his/her work of developing environmental awareness and action across the Diocese of Leeds.
7. Discuss and agree environmental strategic priorities annually with the DEO.
8. Keep updated on national policy affecting environmental issues and resources/funding.
9. Assist the DEO with reviewing and updating the Diocesan Environmental Policy every 2 years.

The Structure of the Diocesan Environmental Group

Delegated Authority: The DEG is a delivery and advisory group which was formally directly responsible to the Lead Bishop for Environment and the Diocesan Secretary.

Membership of the Group: the DEG is made up of the DEO, Area Environment Champions and members with other roles.

Chairing of the Group: The DEG will be chaired by the Lead Bishop for Environment

Frequency of Meetings: The DEG will meet at least 4 times a year.

Record of Meetings: The minutes will be recorded and will be available to the Diocesan Secretary, Bishops and Diocesan Carbon Net Zero Scrutiny Group.

Group Composition

The group will comprise of a team of people with specific roles, each of whom are willing and able to be proactive in offering training, support and advice to parishes as required. Where necessary there may be two or more members who fulfil the same role in order to provide adequate capacity or geographical coverage across the five episcopal areas of the Diocese. Additionally, one member may hold two or more roles if they have the time capacity and expertise to fulfil each role.

- Chair. Lead Bishop for Environment -
- Diocesan Environment Officer (DEO)
- Five Area Environment Champions (AEC). One for each episcopal area, with the exception of the Ripon Area where the extensive geographical area may require more than one AEC
- Five Area Assistant or Co Environment Champions.
- Communications Advisor
- Theology/ Spirituality Advisor
- DAC Link
- Funding Advisor
- Project Management Advisor
- Travel Advisor
- Climate Resilience Advisor
- Community Engagement Advisor

- Civic Partnerships Advisor
- Training Advisor
- Biodiversity Advisor
- Children and Youth Advisor
- Technical Advisor

Role descriptions

A role description already exists for the DEO and AECs .The following generic description would apply to all Advisors in the group. Listed below this are specific description for each individual Advisor role.

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| 1 | Key relationships | <p>The Advisors would work with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish Environment Officers (PEOs), Parish clergy and other contacts in parishes • Area Deans • AECs and other DEG Advisors • Diocesan Environment Officer |
| 2 | Principle Task | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support clergy, PEOs and congregations in delivering environmental impacts • To be an active member of the DEG, working in collaboration with other advisors |
| 3 | Time Commitment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variable and flexible. Anticipated to be on average at least 2 hours a week for most Advisors. • The flexibility to accommodate attendance at evening or weekend events would be welcomed |
| 4 | Costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role is voluntary and as such will be unpaid. However, all expenses incurred when fulfilling the role can be claimed eg travel and resources. |
| 5 | Skills, knowledge and aptitudes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and knowledge of the issues around climate change • Able to influence, lead and achieve support for agreed strategies • Excellent written and verbal communication skills. • Good online working and presentations skills • Knowledge of the structures of the Church of England at local and diocesan levels • Some experience in relating to parish clergy and laypeople |
| 6 | Qualifications, Training and Experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise and experience in relevant area of advice • Keeping up to date with best practice in area of expertise |

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| 7 | Personal Attributes | <p>The Advisor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a person of integrity; • Have an understanding of confidentiality issues and the use of discretion; • Be sympathetic to the needs of others; • Have an openness to learning and change; • Have good interpersonal skills; • Have good organisational skills. |
| 8 | Disposition and Attitude | <p>The Advisor should have a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to and enthusiasm for the objectives of the DEG • Willingness to work collaboratively |

While some face to face visits and meetings may be required, it is anticipated that much of training and support will be offered remotely, thereby role modelling low travel/carbon working practices.

Biodiversity Advisor

The Biodiversity Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: assessing the level of biodiversity currently on their church land; assessing the level of carbon sequestration from church vegetation and soil; and advising on how to enhance biodiversity and carbon sequestration. They will work with the DAC Tree Advisor and potentially with external organisations such as the Yorkshire Naturalist Society and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

Children and Youth Advisor

The Children and Youth Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: advice on teaching and applying the gospel appropriately for children and young people within the climate and ecological emergency context; how children and young people can be empowered to advocate and act for climate justice; and how to engage with a wider audience of children and young people within the community, such as through church schools, uniformed organisations, local climate action groups etc. They will work closely with the Diocesan Children and Youth Team.

Civic Partnerships Advisor

The Civic Partnerships Advisor will advise parishes on the appropriate links and routes to partnerships with Local Authority and other civic bodies. It is anticipated that this may be an occasional role.

Climate Resilience Advisor

The Climate Resilience Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: understanding what Climate Resilience is and how it might apply to their church; and how to develop and implement a Climate Resilience plan. They will work with the DAC and its advisors.

Communications Advisor

The Communication Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: how they frame their communications around the climate and ecological disaster both to the internal church audience and the external community; how, where and when to share good news eco stories; and link parish stories to the diocesan and wider communications strategy. They will work closely with the Diocesan Communications Team.

Community Engagement Advisor

The Community Engagement Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: developing creative thinking and vision for taking eco good news beyond the church community, encouraging a “have a go” approach; sharing stories of eco mission from a wide range of contexts; and giving advice on the development of community projects to ensure they are well managed to achieve the desired impact. They will work with the Church Growth Advisor, Wellsprings Coordinator and Director of Ministry and Mission.

DAC Link

The DAC Link will provide connection to the wider Diocesan Advisory Committee’s (DAC) work on implementing the DAC Environment Policy. They will work with the DAC Advisors to provide advice to parishes, in particular: the DAC Heating Advisor; DAC Sustainability Advisor; DAC Electrical Advisor; DAC Engineering Advisor; and DAC Tree Advisor.

Funding Advisor

The Funding Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: advice on different funding options available for parishes; where to seek grant or loan funding for particular eco projects; and when and how best to apply for such funding. They will work with the Diocesan Stewardship and Income Generation Team.

Procurement Advisor

The Procurement Advisor will be able to assist parishes with; the ethical purchasing of energy, goods and services; suggest low carbon procurement options; and suggest ways that a parish can use its purchasing power to leverage environmental change from its suppliers. They will work with the Green Journey Scrutiny Group and Diocesan Stewardship and Income Generation Team

Project Management Advisor

The Project Management Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: the objectives and development of a project; planning and project management; and monitoring and evaluating the success of a project. It is anticipated that the advisor may be required to support parishes with heating, lighting or other decarbonising schemes. They will need to work with the DAC, Funding Advisor, Technical Advisor and Diocesan Stewardship and Income Generation Team.

Technical Advisor

The Technical Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: providing information and advice on new technologies which may be unfamiliar to parish personnel, for example low carbon heating or electricity generation technologies; communicate in a manner that assists effective decision making;

keep abreast of development in equipment and the use of existing technology that may be appropriately used for church decarbonisation. They will work closely with the DAC team and Project Management Advisor.

Theology/ Spirituality Advisor

The Theology/ Spirituality Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: the theological framework that underpins Christian action on climate and ecology; training and resources for preaching and communal worship; and the wider spiritual implications of living in a climate and ecological emergency such as pastoral care needs. They will work collaboratively with the DEG Worship Subgroup and the Diocesan Spirituality Advisors.

Training Advisor

The Training Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: identifying the training needs of their personnel to adapt to the current context of the climate and ecological emergencies; direct them to appropriate training; keep abreast with diocesan and national eco training provision; identify gaps in training provision; and assist in the delivery of training to parishes. They will work with the Diocesan Lay Training Team and the Clergy Development Team.

Travel Advisor

The Travel Advisor will be able to assist parishes with: how to measure the carbon emissions of their travel; advice on low carbon travel options and how to encourage church users to adopt them; low carbon travel infrastructure that may be appropriate to churches such as bike racks and EV charging points; and potential local authority or government travel schemes that parishes can participate in. They will work with the Diocesan Finance Team and HR Team as appropriate.