**Sandhurst Diocese Care for Creation**

**PARISH ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT**

This environmental audit tool is offered for modification and adaptation according to the local needs and circumstances of a parish. To live sustainably, we need to examine the activities of organisations as well as our personal lifestyles. Many organisations and companies around the world now carry out environmental audits to identify ways to minimise their impact on the environment. Here are some questions to ask when doing an environmental audit of your parish, with some suggestions for action. You will come up with others. And remember – what you do as a Parish might also encourage parishioners to live more sustainably in their own lives. With some minor adaptations it may also be helpful to use in homes and workplaces. \*There is no compulsion to do everything.

1. **CHURCH PROPERTY**

Good stewardship of energy and buildings can reduce a parish’s impact on the environment and save money. Assess your stewardship of energy and natural resources, taking into account your Church / hall / all church buildings.

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| **QUESTIONS Do you / could you?** | **COMMENTS** | **REVIEWED** |
| **Energy** |  |  |
| * Read meters to assess energy usage |  |  |
| * Help members do the same at home? |  |  |
| * Monitor energy consumption / identify trends? |  |  |
| * Switch to a ‘green’ supplier/one that provides renewable energy sources? |  |  |
| * Regularly service equipment? |  |  |
| * Choose appropriately sized rooms for activities? |  |  |
| * Timetable meetings   to minimise heat/cooling usage? |  |  |
| * Install timer / thermostat for   heating/lighting? |  |  |
| * Commission an energy consultation? |  |  |
| * Fit draught excluders round doors / windows? |  |  |
| * Fit additional insulation? |  |  |
| * Clean windows to maximise light? |  |  |
| * Encourage users to switch off unnecessary appliances and not use stand-by? |  |  |
| * Use low-energy light bulbs? |  |  |
| **Water**   * Check outletsfor drips / leaks? |  |  |
| * Install water-saving devices? |  |  |
| * Collect rainfall for garden use? |  |  |
| * Avoid excessive water use for lawns and/or review land use for lawns. |  |  |
| **Building maintenance**   * Choose timber / materials from   sustainable or reclaimed sources? |  |  |
| 1. **PARISH MANAGEMENT**   Parishes are responsible for the good stewardship of money and a range of consumables. Some parishes recycle printer and photocopier cartridges, milk cartons/bottles, batteries, greetings cards, stamps, old mobile phones etc. Identify your church’s good practice and identify issues for action. | | |
| **QUESTIONS** | **COMMENTS** | **REVIEWED** |
| **Finance and purchasing**  **Does your parish:** |  |  |
| * Have an ethical investment policy for savings and check your bank’s approach to ethical investment? |  |  |
| * Use environmentally friendly cleaning materials? |  |  |
| * Use recycled paper / envelopes etc? |  |  |
| * Use Fair Trade products? |  |  |
| * Use local suppliers where possible? |  |  |
| **Catering**   * Use crockery/glass rather than disposables? Avoid polystyrene use? |  |  |
| * Use farmers’ markets   and local suppliers? |  |  |
| **Waste minimisation**   * Offer recycling collection areas for church members, building users and the local community? * Use church screens rather than ‘booklets’ and prayer sheets. |  |  |
| * Hold jumble sales / bring and buy sales / commodity exchanges etc to promote availability of goods at affordable prices? Promote ‘Vinnies’! |  |  |

1. **PARISH LAND**

This is about assessing the ecological value of church land. Do you have a management plan to improve the community benefit or wildlife value of the land resource? Many parishes are responsible for land, be it a tiny patch or something a bit larger. Use this section to assess the ecological and community value of your land and its potential to be further developed.

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| **QUESTIONS** | **COMMENTS** | **REVIEWED** |
| **Does/could your parish:**   * Manage land in a way that is wildlife friendly? Eg use of pesticides etc |  |  |
| * Select native plant species to benefit wildlife? |  |  |
| * Maintain grounds using Greenwaste options? |  |  |
| * Offer an area for prayer, outdoor liturgies, contemplation, recreation? |  |  |
| 1. **PERSONAL LIFESTYLE**   More people attend church each week than participate in any other voluntary body. Parishes could publish green tips in their parish newsletter and the local community newspaper. Public events which highlight a particular aspect of ethical behaviour could be organised. Use this section to identify what is currently being done to encourage sustainable living, and what potential there is to develop this ministry. | | |
| **QUESTIONS** | **COMMENTS** | **REVIEWED** |
| **Do you / could you:**   * Publish regular green tips? |  |  |
| * Promote wider awareness through   posters or information from environmental organisations? |  |  |
| * Encourage wider recycling by providing collection points or informing people of local authority facilities? |  |  |
| 1. **PARISH OUTREACH**   Parishes can work with local communities to improve their neighbourhood. Assess the links that your church already has in the local community and potential for further development | | |
| **QUESTIONS** | **COMMENTS** | **REVIEWED** |
| **Does your parish seek to:**   * Advise those who use buildings of your environmental concerns and procedures? |  |  |
| * Link with local groups and support community projects to care for the environment (Clean Up Australia Day, Credit Union, food bank)? |  |  |
| * Work with the local school communities to support their sustainability initiatives and foster projects that bring generations together to work in this area. |  |  |
| 1. **OVERSEAS CONCERNS**   Act locally to promote environmental care globally.  Living simply that others may simply live is a vital facet of Christian living and discipleship.  Some parishes develop Fair Trade / Trade craft stalls and sell these products in the wider community. | | |
| **QUESTIONS** | **COMMENTS** | **REVIEWED** |
| **How does your parish**:   * Support the work of development agencies like Caritas? |  |  |
| * Promote Fair Trade |  |  |
| * Support the work of international conservation and environmental   agencies (Caritas / WWF / Friends of the Earth etc)? |  |  |
| 1. **EDUCATION AND INFORMATION** | | |
| **QUESTIONS** | **COMMENTS** | **REVIEWED** |
| **Does your parish**:   * Work with the community to help   them live lightly on God’s earth? |  |  |
| * Work with and learn from local environmental movements. |  |  |
| * Promote a deeper understanding of   Church teaching on the environment (eg *Laudato Si’*) |  |  |
| **Do your parish members:**   * Acknowledge our role in the care for the worldwide environment? |  |  |
| * Know where to find information about environmental issues? |  |  |
| * Understand that this is a discipleship/ mission issue? |  |  |
| * Try to reduce the impact of their   consumer choices? |  |  |

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