

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

BISHOP'S COUNCIL & STANDING COMMITTEE

29 APRIL 2009

DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE & OVERSIGHT GROUP THE "ECO GROUP"

Background

The Church of England is taking steps to reduce its carbon footprint at several levels. This is reflected nationally in the Shrinking the Footprint campaign and the establishment of a network Diocesan Environmental Officers (DEO). In Worcester Diocese the DEO is also the Bishop's Adviser on Environmental Issues and a member of the Environmental Strategy Task Group.

The Diocese of Worcester has adopted an Environmental Strategy (Diocesan Synod March 2008) with objectives that present major challenges to diocesan and parochial bodies and church members. Synod asked the Environmental Strategy Task Group to recommend actions to achieve those objectives. Responsibility for the actions to meet the strategy objectives has to rest with the appropriate bodies and individuals where these have been identified. Solutions are not always obvious or capable of immediate implementation and there may be temptations not to progress as rapidly as necessary if resource constraints or attitudes are not challenged and environmental consideration put at the heart of the Church's decision making at diocesan and parochial level.

Aims of the Environmental Challenge & Oversight Group

- to be creative and far-reaching in helping diocesan and parochial bodies develop solutions to the challenges of the strategy and put environmental considerations at the heart of decision making;
- to have oversight of the strategy implementation and to challenge and confront areas of resistance;
- to seek for the diocese to lead the way in demonstrating the values it espouses.

Tasks

1. To track and encourage the progress of diocesan and parochial decision-making and advisory bodies and officers towards meeting the objectives of the Diocesan Environmental Strategy.
2. To continue to develop and make recommendations to the appropriate body or officer for action on the Strategy objectives.
3. To confront areas of resistance to environmental change (economic and other)
4. To look for and evaluate new developments in technology and thinking that might offer opportunities for implementing or building on the Strategy objectives.
5. To co-operate with the Communications Officer and Director of Development to ensure that church officers and councils and church members are sufficiently informed and equipped that they can express their commitment to caring for the earth.
6. To provide information and encouragement so that church bodies and people can engage in public debate, public theology and public action, respond to local and national government proposals and work in partnership on environmental issues

7. To develop a network of experts and concerned lay people who can act as advisors or ambassadors for the implementation of the Strategy.
8. To act as a reference and support group for the DEO.
9. To ensure the Bishops, Archdeacons, Diocesan Secretary and Diocesan Lead Officers Group are periodically briefed on environmental issues and on progress with the implementation of the Strategy and to ensure they are equipped to give a lead on these issues.
10. To model in their modes of working some of the changes they seek to make.

Governance

The Environment Group is charged by Bishop's Council to carry out the above tasks and report to the Council annually.

The Group's expenses are to be met within the budget allocated to the Social Responsibility office.

Membership

Chair/Convenor: The Diocesan Environmental Officer/Bishop's Adviser on Environmental Issues.

Secretary/Administrative support: The Diocesan Social Responsibility Officer (SRO) or his assistant acting with delegated authority.

Any person who served on the Diocesan Environmental Strategy Task Group (2007-2009) may be a member of the ECOgroup. Other members may be nominated by the Bishop's Council or co-opted (including those who volunteer) as the need arises provided by the existing members at the time being.

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