



The Diocesan Sustainability Management Group has published a helpful guide of things we can do to save energy and money whilst reducing the impact on Our Common Home

We are living in a time of crises – climate, cost of living and energy among others. The consequences of these crises are truly terrifying for many people, some of whom may wonder how they will cope. In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis calls on us to reduce our consumption and to live simpler lives.

Reducing heat loss

- insulation
- air leakage
- where are the cold gaps?

Reducing and decarbonising energy usage

- heating
- hot water
- lighting
- appliances

Reducing over-consumption and waste

- reduce
- reuse
- recycle

Value water

- only 2.5% of earth's water is fresh
- turn off taps while brushing teeth; wash vegetables in a bowl
- say a prayer of gratitude every time you turn on the tap
- support CAFOD, WaterAid

Flora & Fauna

- develop ideas for more bee-friendly plants
- grow vegetables and flowers for church/community use
- build bug and hedgehog 'hotels'
- compost fruit, veg and garden waste

Get costs and savings from installing solar panels

Look at replacing a gas or oil burner with a heat pump

It can all seem a bit daunting but there are many ways for us to engage with Pope Francis' call. So how do we start?

One of the best ways is to start praying and talking about this and invite a few people to come together – a *Green Team* if you like. Include people of all ages.

They could find out what is already going on in our homes and in our parish. They could look at some of the areas overleaf

For example:

- how much gas & electricity do we use?
- what food do we eat & where does it come from?
- how do we get to work & school?
- what flora & fauna live here?
- which things are we reusing and recycling?

The next stage is to decide which one(s) to begin doing something about. Using the RRRR principle (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Renewable energy) helps to focus and identify benefits and savings.

Of course, these savings go beyond merely the financial. A Green Team can be a brilliant way for a parish to cut back on its carbon footprint too. Building a sustainable parish includes more than just the environmental and economic aspects. There is also a social side too; a sustainable parish is a community.

Campaigning for Ecological Justice

Some parishioners will already be involved nationally e.g. CAFOD, and locally e.g. ecumenical and other ecological groups.

Ask them how their engagement could be supported and extended?

Links to more detail, information and resources about many of the areas overleaf are available on the Diocesan web site:

<https://www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk/environment/>

You can also email environment@dioceseofleeds.org.uk

Thanks to members of the Leeds Justice & Peace Commission Climate Action Group and to Minnie Fraser, Diocesan Environmental Lead for Hexham and Newcastle, for material used in this leaflet