



## THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

## THE DIOCESE OF BUNBURY

**REPORT TO THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD  
PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT CANON 2007****PREAMBLE**

The Diocese of Bunbury adopted The Protection of the Environment Canon 2007 at its Synod in 2008. Its report to the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of The General Synod is provided in compliance with this Canon.

**REPORT**

In 2018, Bishop-in-Council established a Sustainable Living Working Party to report on a regular basis to Bishop-in-Council on the work being done in parishes and on the leadership provided by this group on behalf of the Diocese, to support the objectives of this Canon. This Working Party commenced in January 2019.

The Working Party is supported in its work and communications by the Diocesan Secretary as a formal resource to enable matters to be progressed.

The Diocesan Website [www.bunburyanglican.org](http://www.bunburyanglican.org) has information and audit material for parishes. The Sustainable Living Working Party regularly publishes articles in Diocesan communications such as the Bishop's monthly newsletter to parishes.

The Working Party's purpose is to provide practical assistance and advice to the Diocese of Bunbury and its parishes by:

- supporting the reduction of environmental impacts on global warming
- meeting the expectations of the GS Canon Protection of the Environment 2017
- providing assistance and advice for parishes and the Diocese in energy conservation activities
- giving guidance on the use of resources for God's creation
- promoting a Christian theology of the environment

**Strategies currently include:**

- a) Raising awareness in the Parishes and across the Diocese
- b) Changing behaviours in parishes and by individuals to support the objective by:
  - Providing resources for parishes which are now being developed for broader use by schools, businesses, community groups and in homes.
  - Creating a community of practice across the Diocese
  - Providing resources through the website
  - Ensuring a theological foundation for the work at all times
  - Speaking and engaging with the younger generation
  - Establishing link people in each parish to share resources, ideas and contacts

- Engaging with a Regional Climate Change Working Group formed by five shires in the Bunbury Diocese and also the Regional Waste and Recycling Working Group.

### **ACTIONS UNDERWAY**

In 2019, the Sustainable Living Working Party developed an 'audit' document for use by parishes and for individuals to help them focus on saving water and energy as a community and individually. This was disseminated to all parishes in the diocese and was made available to attendees at the Diocesan Synod in October 2019. The take up was not high and in reviewing the activity it was felt the lack of use of the audit did not reflect the actual practices of many of the parishes. It may have had more to do with the length and layout of the publication. Anecdotal feedback from parishes suggests that awareness of and concern for environmental matters is increasing, and Parish Councils are actively responding.

The approval process for new building developments in the Diocese considers appropriate site-specific environmental strategies to limit the impact of excess water and energy.

The Chair of the Sustainable Living Working Party has also visited some churches to discuss matters relating to sustainable living.

Liturgies are also being explored and particular Sundays are being offered to provide parishes with days, liturgies and prayers to encourage a focus on the issues. A Lenten Study from the Church of England was also one of the options for parishes to use during the 2020 Lent period. Film nights have been looked at to support discussion groups and assistance. The diocesan prayer diary also includes prompts to pray for environmental issues.

Churches are encouraged to relate to sustainable living during annual events such as World Environment Day, Plastic Free July, National Recycling Week etc. In 2021 many churches rang bells on the eve of COP26 Climate Conference.

Many parishes and Anglican Communities have limited resources to respond, and parishioners have a range of opinions on these issues. The Diocese covers both metropolitan, regional, rural and remote communities and the strategies need to reflect this geographic and demographic diversity.

Through this group, the Diocese is seeking to promote actions that can be done by individuals and Parishes which will help raise awareness.

These include among a range of actions:

- Removing plastic bags from Op Shops and not using plastic bottled water
- Using native vegetation in church property grounds
- Movement sensor lights in parish buildings
- Locating new buildings make best use of the sun
- Installation of solar panels in a number of parishes church properties, halls, rectories and Op Shops and such installations being approved by the Diocese. The Anglican Community Fund used by the Diocese also has a number of eco-loans which parishes are accessing for such building projects.
- Supporting recycling initiatives such as "Containers for Change"

The Revd. Nick Freeland  
Diocesan Secretary and Registrar