



CARING FOR OUR COMMON HOME

Tips and ideas to help you cut your carbon footprint
and bring Laudato Si' to life in your parish

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

At SCIAF we want to stop climate change in its tracks because we've seen the devastation it's already causing to people in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

We've put together this short guide to help people think about how we can all live in a more environmentally friendly way – for the sake of the poorest of our sisters and brothers and the protection of God's creation. We hope you will find it useful.

Extreme and unpredictable weather affects us all, but it's the world's poorest people – those who've done least to cause the problem – who are suffering most. Farmers are finding it harder to grow enough food, and droughts and floods are becoming more frequent and severe.

Recent events have highlighted the interconnectedness of our world and the duties and opportunities this brings. The Amazon Synod (2019)

emphasised our global responsibility to undergo a profound transformation – away from overconsumption, greed and colonialism and towards respect for all people and creation. In 2020, we saw the COVID-19 pandemic spread quickly across continents and cause huge amounts of suffering. It has also given us reason to hope: a different world is possible and now is the time to put people and the planet first.

Pope Francis' encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*: Care for our Common Home was a rallying call to each and every one of us to hear "the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor". In it, he asks us to be ecological citizens, to come together to deepen our commitment to protect the goodness and beauty of God's great gift. He asks us to recognise the need for climate justice, and to do everything we can to pursue it.

While we can't attribute a single disaster to climate change, we do know that typhoons, floods and droughts, are becoming more frequent and severe as global temperatures rise.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



The first few pages of this guide set out the case for action. Pages 10 to 13 will give you some ideas for getting started in your parish. The rest covers what we can do to cut our footprints in the areas of energy (14 - 15), travel (16 - 17), food (18 - 19) and the other things we buy and use (20 - 21). Page 22 gives you ideas about the next steps you could take and includes a note on sources. Look out for examples from Catholic parishes in Scotland which have already taken fantastic action to care for our common home.



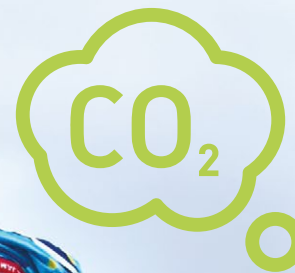
RECOGNISING THE NEED TO CHANGE OUR LIFESTYLE (LS 23)

The world is in a state of climate emergency. Extreme weather events and changing weather patterns are threatening the livelihoods and wellbeing of the world's poorest, and countless future generations. To solve this crisis we must reduce our emissions as quickly as possible. In the 2015 Paris climate summit, world leaders agreed to work towards this goal. We all have a part to play in holding them to account, and to remember that action to reduce emissions should be taken primarily by the richest countries, who are the most responsible for causing this crisis.

“While the existing world order proves powerless to assume its responsibilities, local individuals and groups can make a real difference.” (LS 179) - By acting in our parishes and communities we can not only decrease our own carbon footprint but lead by example to inspire more people to do the same. The good news is that adopting eco-friendly habits can be really rewarding. It often involves us trying new things, and reconnecting with nature and our communities. Living deliberately and reflectively in the pursuit of the common good also brings us closer to God. Pope Francis writes in *Laudato Si'* that living by the ancient lesson that “less is more” is liberating: “It is not a lesser life or one lived with less intensity. On the contrary, it is a way of living life to the full.” (LS 223)

At SCIAF we're always looking for ways to protect our planet, for example by divesting from fossil fuels to ensuring staff can access a cycle to work scheme.

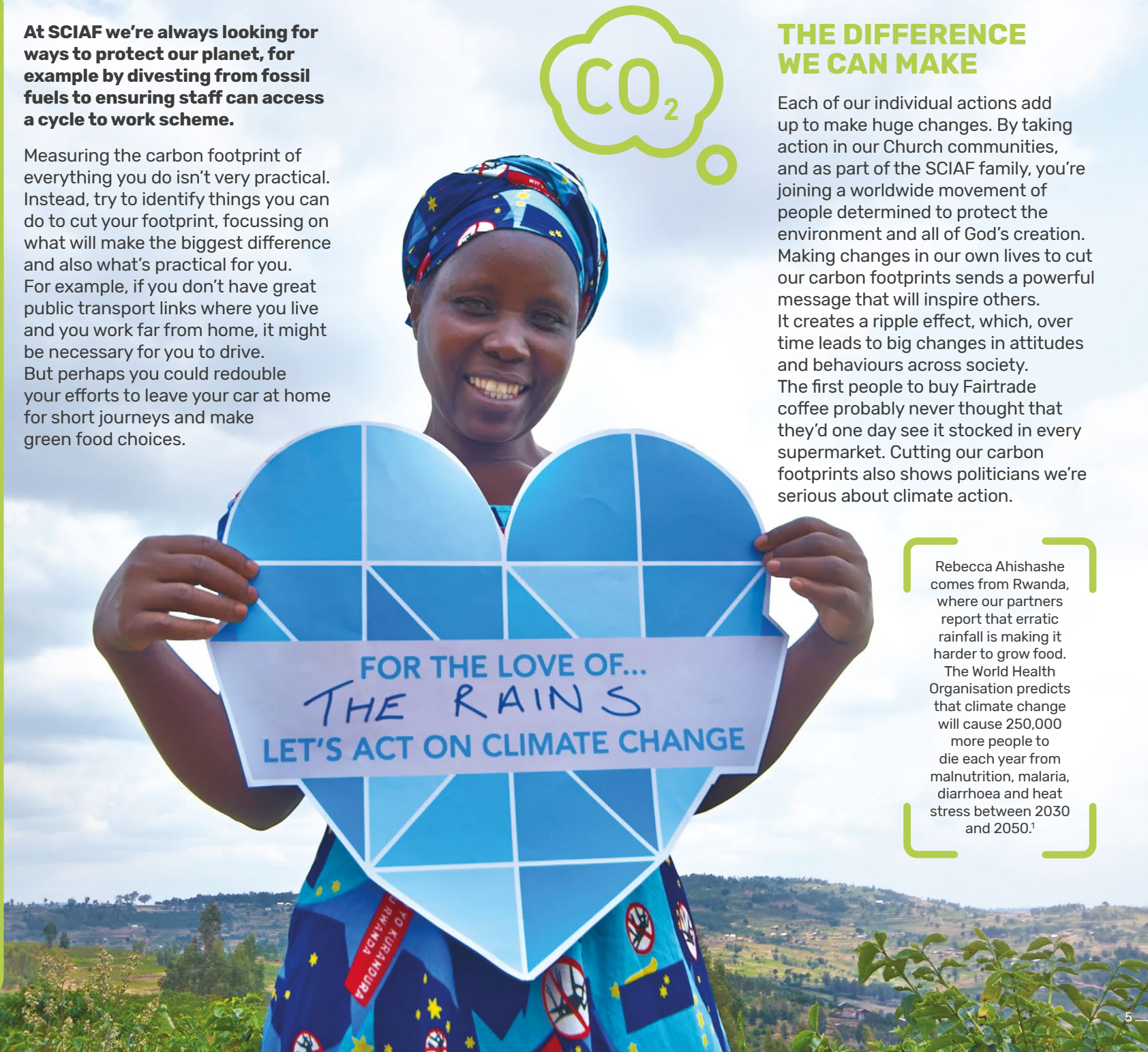
Measuring the carbon footprint of everything you do isn't very practical. Instead, try to identify things you can do to cut your footprint, focussing on what will make the biggest difference and also what's practical for you. For example, if you don't have great public transport links where you live and you work far from home, it might be necessary for you to drive. But perhaps you could redouble your efforts to leave your car at home for short journeys and make green food choices.



THE DIFFERENCE WE CAN MAKE

Each of our individual actions add up to make huge changes. By taking action in our Church communities, and as part of the SCIAF family, you're joining a worldwide movement of people determined to protect the environment and all of God's creation. Making changes in our own lives to cut our carbon footprints sends a powerful message that will inspire others. It creates a ripple effect, which, over time leads to big changes in attitudes and behaviours across society. The first people to buy Fairtrade coffee probably never thought that they'd one day see it stocked in every supermarket. Cutting our carbon footprints also shows politicians we're serious about climate action.

Rebecca Ahishashe comes from Rwanda, where our partners report that erratic rainfall is making it harder to grow food. The World Health Organisation predicts that climate change will cause 250,000 more people to die each year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress between 2030 and 2050.¹



Be inspired by environmental activists around the world...

THE RIVER GUARDIANS, COLOMBIA

For many years, communities living in the region of the Atrato River basin have been facing threats to their natural environment and livelihoods due to the degradation of the river and forests. The effects of climate change are now exacerbating these problems. The Guardians of the River Atrato lead the fight to defend this vulnerable ecosystem and its people in courageous ways. We hope that reading their inspiring story will encourage you to support them and to work towards climate justice in your own parishes and communities.



The Atrato River is situated in Chocó on the northwestern Pacific coast of Colombia. The river flows through Colombia's Pacific rainforest – a biodiversity hotspot of global significance. For the communities living along the River Atrato, 'the river is life' – a means of transport, a source of sustenance, health and sanitation, as well as spiritual life. However illegal mining, deforestation and Colombia's long-running internal conflict have caused devastating social and environmental damage in the region. Climate change has further exacerbated these problems, with the normally wet region experiencing several droughts in recent years

causing homes to lose their water supply, fish supplies to dwindle and transport to be made more difficult.

In 2016, together with our partners, SCIAF helped to achieve the landmark Colombian Constitutional Court Ruling T-622. The ruling recognises the River Atrato as a bearer of rights and identifies the rights of communities to physical, cultural and spiritual survival, guaranteeing their traditional livelihoods on the Atrato. The ruling also established the 'River Guardians' as key protectors of this critically important ecosystem – for those whose daily lives rely on it and for the fight against climate change. The Guardians have achieved a lot and

shown great courage in monitoring the implementation of the judgement. With a focus on community empowerment, a 'citizen science' programme has enabled communities to take environmental management into their own hands. Those living along the river contribute to research into its condition by doing the measuring and sampling themselves. In addition, the Guardians highlight the importance of supporting the local economy. The promotion of alternative livelihoods and support for rural economies is essential for the area to be able to move away from an economic reliance on mining and to ensure food security for the river communities.

Throughout this the Guardians have emphasised that "We are all Guardians of the Atrato" – the river is not only in the hands of the Guardians themselves, but it is everyone's responsibility to take care of it – from children, to older men and women, and decision makers.





Celebrating the River

In 2019, the Guardians organised 'Atrato Fest' as a space for a musical and cultural celebration of the Atrato River and the communities' relationship to it. Almost 3000 people participated in activities held all around the river basin, including workshops for children, a walk to the source of the river, concerts, seminars and a market which sold typical products from the rural area of the river. The Guardians also set

the Atrato river as the theme of the annual San Pacho Festival in the region's capital, Quibdó. The festival engaged communities around the T-622 ruling through reflecting on the river's history, biodiversity and cultural wealth. Parish priests were supported to include the ruling, and the importance of creation, in the local masses, using *Laudato Si'* as a mandate for this.

What we can learn

The Guardians are an incredible example of what communities can do to protect the natural world, and they do this despite facing danger in speaking out. The effects of environmental degradation are felt first-hand by those who rely on the Atrato river for their way of life.

In Scotland we are so far more distanced from the damaging effects

of climate change. But we have a duty to act like the River Guardians, to engage and educate our communities and to campaign for a fairer and better world. The story of the River Guardians is a call to action in our own communities - to celebrate and protect creation and defend the rights of those people most vulnerable to the damage that we are all causing.

The following are all activities the River Guardians have organised which you could try in your own parishes and communities:

- Set up a social media page, or regular feature in a parish bulletin, to keep people updated with what you are up to.
- Organise education and awareness-raising activities including games to bring environmental issues to life for children.
- Organise a creation Mass and celebrate the Feast of St Francis on 4th October (Quibdó's annual San Pacho Festival is in honour of St Francis).
- Hold environmental stalls at local fetes and events, and support the local economy by encouraging others to source food and supplies from local providers.
- Organise a cleaning event at your local river, beach or park.
- Engage and educate the younger people in the parish through youth groups, the children's liturgy, and events in local schools.
- Remind the parish that 'we are all guardians of creation' - it's everyone's responsibility to take care of it.
- Involve and educate your communities about climate change and its far-reaching effects.



IDEAS FOR GETTING STARTED IN YOUR PARISH



Register your parish with Eco-Congregation Scotland

Eco-Congregation is an ecumenical Christian initiative which helps churches of all denominations to improve their environmental impact. More than 500 churches in Scotland have already signed up, including at least 30 Catholic parishes.. You don't need to have taken any action yet to register, but you'll have the option of working towards an Eco-Congregation award. As part of this will you'll be supported to do an environmental check-up on your church to help you prioritise what activities you'd like to concentrate on. Whether or not you choose to go for an award, you can be put in touch with a mentor from an existing local Eco-Congregation and there are regional networks all over the country which can provide inspiration and support. Eco-Congregation Scotland also has lots of great resources for helping you cut the carbon footprint of your Church's activities and its buildings.

Find your team

Ask your priest to help identify people in your parish who would be keen to form a 'green group' or 'care for creation team'. If you've already got a SCIAF or Justice and Peace group it might be worth adding green items onto the agenda rather than starting something new. Don't worry too much about numbers, you can start small with whatever you've got. As you develop, it might be useful to make connections with other Eco-Congregations, the wider community and even the local school to extend your reach. Try to meet regularly to keep up your momentum.



Agree your purpose

The first thing is to find where your group's enthusiasm lies. There's so much you can do, you're best to work on areas where there's energy. You might want to agree a purpose and some goals as a group.

The following might give you some ideas:

- Reconnect with nature
- Make the link between faith and care for creation through prayer and reflection
- Instil environmentally friendly habits in daily lives of the community

Take one topic at a time

Choose a theme, like transport, food, or zero-waste living and make that your focus for a few sessions before moving onto the next area. Consider what opportunities there might be for encouraging these behaviours in the parish. There are some ideas to get you started on the next page. You could speak to your priest about putting tips and ideas in the parish bulletin on a regular basis, and see if a member of your group can share your activities and successful 'climate-hacks' on the parish website or social media page. Our Lady of Loretto and St Michael in Musselburgh have an interactive board in the parish hall on which all members of the community are invited to jot down their ideas on how to reduce their carbon footprint. This simple visual idea is a great way to give everyone the opportunity to contribute to the shared goal of combatting climate change.



Build in prayer and reflection

Build prayer and reflection into everything you do, spreading the message that caring for our environment is a fundamental part of living our faith. Pope Francis' Prayer for Creation at the end of this guide might come in handy.

The Global Catholic Climate Movement also has a useful list of liturgical, prayer and spiritual resources, including a guided rosary on caring for creation. **Go to www.catholicclimatemovement.global/liturgical-prayer-and-spiritual-resources.**



The Parish Eco Group at St Peter's, Edinburgh use the parish's Facebook page to regularly share updates on what they've been up to and invite more people to take action, and reflect on, care for creation. They also encourage people to write to their MSPs, MPs and Councillors about the importance of putting the environment at the centre of economic strategies. This focus on both individual and political action makes sure that everyone is answering the call for climate justice.

IDEAS FOR GETTING THE WHOLE PARISH INVOLVED



Make your parish a home to wildlife

This could be great for getting people of all ages to come together to connect with nature. Eco-

Congregation's guide to encouraging wildlife in church grounds can help you do everything from cultivating wild patches to making a bird box. Go to www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/ideas-for-action/. St Margaret's parish in Lochilphead are working on their church garden – encouraging biodiversity, engaging young people and using it as a starting point for education on climate change. Sacred Heart parish in Edinburgh have helped to set up a 'Greening our Street' group with lots of other volunteers and together created a lovely wildflower plot in the local park complete with a beautiful handpainted sign (created by Greyfriars Kirk's community workshop).



Care for creation Mass and meal

Hold a special Mass of thanksgiving for creation and have a dinner afterwards in the parish made mainly of low carbon locally grown food. You could hold this during the Season of Creation which runs from September 1st to October 4th each year. You could incorporate a session on how to cook delicious vegan meals from local ingredients to give people the confidence to try out new, low-carbon recipes at home.

Connect with your community, other parishes and eco-congregations

Make the most of being part of a global movement by organising events with other parishes and the wider community. St Peter's Church in Edinburgh have connected with other eco-congregations to share tips and ideas and Sacred Heart Lauriston have organised a series of discussions on Laudato Si'.



Do Christmas differently

Use the excesses of Christmas to refocus on the real meaning of Advent and look for ways to cut back on the amount of stuff you buy. www.alternativity.org.uk has lots of resources including an advent meal pack. For example, Sacred Heart Parish in Edinburgh organised Christmas craft activities for parish children to promote recycling and the true message of Christmas. You could encourage people to swap some of the material gifts they would usually buy for homemade presents or charity gifts like SCIAF's Real Gifts. Lent is another good opportunity to try to give up climate-damaging habits and include more reflection on the gift of creation in your prayer time.



Swap shop

Ask people to bring in all the clothes, books and bric-a-brac they don't use to a gathering in the parish where they can exchange them for something that they like. Give whatever's left to a charity shop. You could even take this a step further and include a workshop on how to mend and upcycle unwanted items, like the parish of Our Lady of Loretto and St Michael, Musselburgh.



Little Susie Sews – Make Do and Mend Stall at the Our Lady of Loretto Swap Night.

"Our parish organised a 'Swap Night'. We had a mini fashion show, a quiz about landfill and recycling and a make do and mend presentation with fashionable upcycling ideas"

– **Karyn Porteous**, Our Lady of Loretto.

Get growing

Encourage home-growing by organising a seed giveaway and a gardening demonstration. You could hold a gardeners' market where people sell what they've grown.



Take part in environmental advocacy

We don't have long to make the system changes that are urgently needed to avoid climate catastrophe. As well as encouraging your parish and wider community to take steps to reduce emissions, make sure to involve decision makers, both at the local and national level. This will amplify and extend the positive effects of your actions. The Justice and Peace group at St Margaret's parish in Lochilphead regularly update their MP on their climate action and why it's important. They also involved the local council in their 'reduce, reuse, recycle' event and resources. You can also take part in SCIAF's campaigns for climate justice. You can find out more at www.sciaf.org.uk/get-involved/campaign.

ENERGY

The energy we use in our homes and parishes through heating and electricity accounts for almost a third of our carbon footprints. The good news is, there's so much we can do to save energy and money, and it doesn't have to mean being cold.



St Margaret's Justice & Peace Group in Lochilhead have come up with lots of great ways to support the community to be more fuel efficient. This has involved organising an open event on fuel poverty and creating a leaflet with tips on how to save energy, including information on the local advice and support available. They have been sure to relate these issues back to the bigger picture of climate justice.

Get free expert advice!

Home Energy Scotland can give you free impartial advice on how to cut your fuel bills and they can tell you which loans and grants you might be eligible for if you want to install solar panels or insulate your home. If you're interested in taking any of the steps below we recommend you speak to them for free on 0808 808 2282.

Heat smart and lock in your heat

- Turn down your heating thermostat to between 18°C–21°C.
- Insulate your roof, loft, cavity walls, floors, tanks, pipes and radiators.
- Draught proof windows and doors.
- Install double, triple or secondary glazing and get heavier curtains.

Save electricity

- Washing at 30° will cut the footprint of your wash by up to 40% each time, and you shouldn't notice a difference in results. Plus, your clothes are likely to wear less quickly.
- If you have a dishwasher, don't set it higher than 50° and always opt for a full load.
- Don't leave your appliances on standby.
- Always choose the most energy efficient option when buying any appliance. Some new grade A-rated appliances may use only 50% of the energy it takes to power an older model. They might cost a little more but you'll save a lot on energy bills in the long run. This is especially important when you're buying things you keep on all the time like fridges and freezers. Choosing an A+++ fridge freezer over an A+ model could save you up to £190 in energy costs over its lifetime, and around 650kg of CO2.²

Change your energy source

- Switch to a green energy supplier and get involved in a local community energy project at www.localenergy.scot.
- Replace your boiler for a more efficient condensing boiler or better still, generate your own energy from wind or solar power.
- Ensure your church is running on green energy.

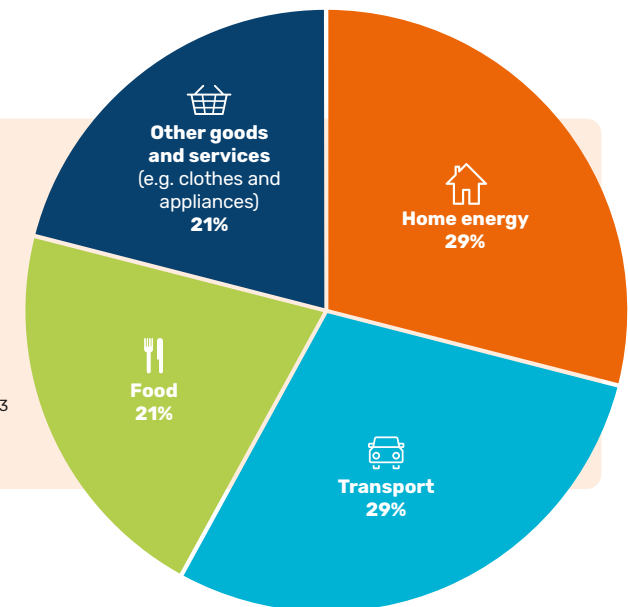
1 AND IF YOU DO JUST ONE THING...

Big
Look into setting up, or get involved in, a community owned renewable energy project

Small
Always wash at 30°

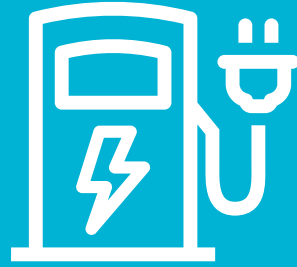
WHAT MAKES UP OUR HOUSEHOLD GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS?

Information taken from the Scottish Government www.gov.scot/Resource/0041/00415744.pdf 2013



TRAVEL

Transport accounts for almost a third of our carbon footprints. If everyone in Scotland drove just five miles less each week, over the course of a year that would be equivalent to taking 70,000 cars off the road.³



If it's not far, leave the car

Ditching your car when you're just nipping to the shops could make a much bigger difference than you might think – and it can make you feel great at the same time. Walking is a great way to exercise, a fantastic stress buster – and it doesn't cost a thing. Greener Scotland has a great mobile phone app and a website which will help you plan your walk and tell you how much carbon you're saving.

Go to www.greener-scotland.org/greener-travel/active-travel.

Travel by bike or public transport to church, work or school

If your journey to work's not that far, why not try cycling or walking? Greener Scotland's Journeys app is a great tool for finding your best bike route, you can find it by visiting www.greener-scotland.org/journeys/. If cycling's not an option, why not take the bus or train and enjoy some quality time with a book and a hot drink? By bringing a reusable takeaway cup you could save on waste too. If public transport isn't an option in your area, you could try

car pooling. Ask around at your work, church or school to find out if you've any neighbours who'd like to save money and cut their carbon with you. For longer journeys, you could try using a carpooling website. A quick online search will reveal plenty of options.

Drive smart

By learning to drive smarter, you could save up to £440 a year (Money Saving Expert).⁴ If your engine doesn't automatically turn off when you're stationary in neutral, cut it out to save fuel. Drive in a higher gear around 2000 RPM and try to slow down! For more ideas, check out the Energy Saving Trust's excellent tips – energysavingtrust.org.uk/transport/ecodriving/driving-advice.

An electric car can also help reduce the emissions of your journeys. They tend to be more expensive than conventional cars, but are becoming cheaper all the time and the Scottish Government offers financial support to help you make the transition. In the long run, your running costs will be much lower too. Find more information at the Energy Saving Trust website under 'electric vehicles'.

Avoid flying

Flying from Glasgow to London has a carbon footprint four times higher than taking the train. The same journey by large four wheel drive is nine times worse than the train if there's just one person in the car.⁵ What's more, taking the train for a journey like this, or between London and Paris by Eurostar, can be even quicker than flying as you're able to avoid the time-consuming (and stressful!) security and boarding processes.

Plan climate-friendly holidays

Why not plan a staycation and explore Scotland's breathtaking scenery for your next break? Taking a holiday in the UK instead of abroad can save money, stress and reduce your emissions. If going further afield is your thing, why not try interrail? Travelling abroad by train brings a world of opportunities and new adventures – www.interrail.eu/en.

1 AND IF YOU DO JUST ONE THING...

Big

Always opt for public transport when you can, and book holidays which don't require flying

Small

If you're just popping to the shops, walk instead of driving

A return flight from London to Edinburgh contributes more CO₂ than the mean annual emissions of a person in Uganda or Somalia.⁶ This highlights the disproportionate carbon footprint of the world's richest – those who can afford to fly.



FOOD

Food makes up about a fifth of the average Scot's carbon footprint. The food system uses energy to harvest, store, process, package and transport what ends up on our plates. This system is very wasteful. We already grow enough food for 10 billion people, and yet many people go hungry each day.⁷



In Africa, Asia and Latin America, SCIAF is helping farmers cope with increasingly harsh and unpredictable weather. For example, trenches can help protect crops from being destroyed by flooding and having appropriate storage containers allows food to be kept for droughts.

Eat local and seasonal

This is your best bet for cutting the carbon footprint of your food. Local, in season produce is less likely to have been grown under energy intensive artificial heat and the food miles will be far fewer.⁸ It's usually healthier and tastes better too. Here are some tips to get you started:

- Use a food calendar to help you get to know when home grown food is at its best. This one from Eat Seasonably is great - eatseasonably.co.uk/what-to-eat-now/calendar
- Find a veg box scheme in your area and have local, seasonal produce delivered to your home.
- Visit your nearest famers' market, you can find it at www.taste-of-scotland.com/farmers-markets-in-scotland/

Grow your own

The greenest option around is simply to grow what you can yourself – and it's so rewarding. Even a small space like a windowsill can be ample to grow herbs and salad. You can find great ideas to suit whatever space you have at www.bbc.co.uk/gardening/digin. If you want to grow more than you've got

space for, a community garden might be the way forward. Set one up in your church grounds or find an existing one near you. Find ideas and tips at www.farmgarden.org.uk/your-area/scotland.

Agroecology - combatting climate change through food production

An exciting movement towards agroecology is taking place right across the world. An agroecological approach to food production supports resilience and adaptation to climate change by eliminating the use of and dependence on agrochemicals, nourishing biodiversity and soils and enhancing the integration of various elements of agroecosystems.⁸ Our partners in Africa and Latin America who are promoting agroecological approaches to food production report increased food security, climate resilience and quality of life. Agroecological approaches are being adopted in Scotland too, you can find out more at www.soilassociation.org/what-we-do/better-food-for-all/transforming-the-way-we-all-farm/what-is-agroecology/.

Reduce your meat and dairy consumption

Livestock accounts for about 15 per cent of manmade greenhouse gas emissions.⁹ Beef, lamb and dairy products are especially intensive because they use a lot of animal feed, produce methane and take up a lot of land and water that could be used to produce food more efficiently.¹⁰ Reducing your meat and dairy consumption is an opportunity to try cooking something new, save money and be more healthy. You can find great veggie recipes at www.meatfreemondays.com. Lots of meals from around the world are 'naturally vegan' – you won't even notice dairy missing from a curry or stir fry. Or stick to your tried and tested favourites but swap some of the meat for a healthy alternative like lentils or a meat substitute. And if you're opting for fish, look for the Marine Stewardship Council logo.



1 AND IF YOU DO JUST ONE THING...

Big
Grow as much as you can yourself

Small
Buy veg grown in the UK when it's available

Plan what you eat to keep food from the bin

Many of us underestimate the amount of food we throw away. Estimates suggest the food wasted around the world could feed 2 billion people.¹¹ Check what's in your fridge before you go shopping and make a weekly food planner. Keep track of your best-before dates and freeze anything you might not eat in time. For more tips on meal planning and cutting food waste check out scotland.lovefoodhatewaste.com.



REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE



We've heard of 'Reduce, reuse, recycle' but we often forget the importance of the order of priority that they come in. Recycling schemes can be energy inefficient and are only a short-term solution to the amount we waste, so recycling should be a last resort.

As well as doing a clothes swap, Our Lady of Loretto and St Michael also included a baby and toddler table, school uniform table and second-hand book stall at their swap party. Handing on school uniforms is a great way to reduce waste and save other parents money.



Reduce

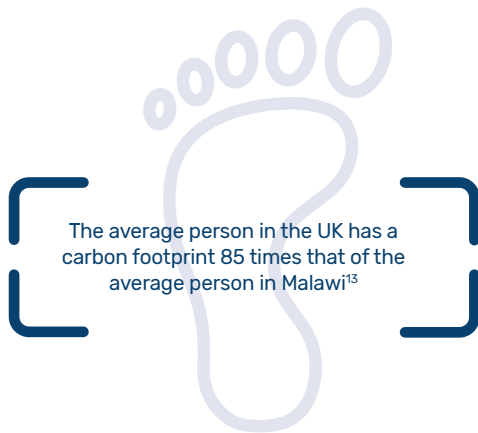
Everything we buy has a footprint on the planet – one of the best things we can all do is to live more simply and buy less. The greed of the richest countries is the main driver of climate change so an internal shift away from consumption and towards a simpler life is essential.

- If you have a particular weakness, say for clothes or regularly replacing your phone, set yourself a target to see how long you can go without. You'll get a great kick from achieving your goal and you'll save money at the same time.
- Try going 'zero-waste' next Lent. It won't be easy at first, but you will learn new habits which will stay with you long term and you can share with others. Check out www.zerowastescotland.org.uk for ideas.
- Consider sharing purchases with others. Does every house on your street really need its own set of power tools, ladder and tent?
- Next time you've got a birthday or special occasion coming up, why not ask friends and family not to buy you anything? They could always cook you a special meal or give a charity gift like a SCIAF Real Gift instead.

Reuse

A lot of what we throw away in the UK is perfectly usable.

- Organise a swap party where friends bring along items they no longer need and trade with each other, see page 13 for a fantastic example from Our Lady of Loretto.
- When something's broken, always try to fix instead of replacing it. You can find all sorts of tutorials at www.ifixit.com or youtube.
- Find new purposes for old things, for example, you can use jam jars to store herbs and spices and ice cream containers are great for keeping leftovers in the fridge or freezer.



Recycle

You'll be amazed by the range of products you can recycle these days. Find out what you can recycle and where in your area using wasteless.zerowastescotland.org.uk.

And when you do need to buy

- Look at second-hand options first, like charity shops, Ebay and www.freecycle.org or www.ilovefreecycle.org.
- Opt for reusable or refillable products where possible. Buy in bulk in large containers and avoid wrapped items, snack packs and single-serve containers.
- If you have a zero-waste shop in your area, try to shop there when possible
- Try to buy large containers and bulk items.
- Look out for products made from recycled materials.
- If you have a library nearby, use it! There are also toy libraries in many areas which can be a great way to avoid waste and save money if you have children.

1 AND IF YOU DO JUST ONE THING...

Big

Try going 'Zero Waste' for a month and share what you learn with others

Small

Learn how to repair your clothes and repair before buying new

Avoid fast fashion

The fashion industry produces 10% of all humanity's carbon emissions, is the second-largest consumer of the world's water supply, and pollutes the oceans with microplastics.¹² Shopping in charity shops, repairing old clothes and not buying new clothes until your old ones are beyond repair are all ways you can reduce the environmental impact of your clothes.



WE HOPE YOU'VE ENJOYED USING THIS GUIDE!

This guide has been written to help inspire you and show you what's possible. We all start from a different place with our environmental activity and awareness so it's important we bring everyone along with us. We think this quote really captures what taking environmental action is all about:

"The main area that our parish has tried to do is include all the groups in the community and bring them together to be involved in all these projects, give information and empower each other to make changes over time, understand that some may feel overwhelmed by the state our environment is in but are unsure of how to make changes."

- **Karyn Porteous**, part of the Justice Peace & Environment team at Our Lady of Loretto and St Michael the Archangel, Musselburgh.



WHAT NEXT?

- SCIAF is available to support you in your activities. We can help you to organise a Laudato Si' event in your parish, point you to useful resources and help you ground your work in Catholic Social Teaching.
- We'd love to hear how you're getting on with going green in your parish. Please send us your stories and photos of any new initiatives you take on and help to inspire others. Feedback on how we can best support you would also be gratefully received.
- If you haven't already used it yet, you might like a copy of our Laudato Si' study guide. SCIAF also has a range of useful educational resources which you could use if you're involving the young people in your parish or the local school.
- Amplify the impact of what your parish is doing by letting politicians know. Showing them that communities are tackling climate change head on is a powerful way to build the case for political action. We can support you to do this and it can be as simple as sending an email.
- For all of the above contact Jonathan McAveety at jmcaveety@sciaf.org.uk or call 0141 354 5507.
- If you'd like to read more about carbon footprints we found *How Bad Are Bananas* by Mike Berners-Lee a good read.



The Wildlife Garden at Our Lady of Loretto and St Michael, Musselburgh – parishioners have worked in collaboration with teachers at the local primary school to explore key themes of Laudato Si in a child friendly language through the learning of doing, literally planting seeds and appreciating the wildlife attracted by the garden and exploring the biodiversity that is needed to keep life going.

"There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions, and it is wonderful how education can bring about real changes in lifestyle. Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices. All of these reflect a generous and worthy creativity which brings out the best in human beings."

- **Pope Francis**, Laudato Si', #211



A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

By Pope Francis

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

Note on sources and images

Most of the information for this guide was sourced from the Scottish Government, The Energy Saving Trust and How Bad are Bananas by Mike Berners-Lee. All references to carbon footprints of individual actions are rough estimations of their environmental impact.

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⁵ Based on Mike Berners-Lee's estimates in How Bad Are Bananas, 2010, p117. He estimates that a flight from Glasgow to London has an impact of 500kg CO₂e, one person travelling in a train has an impact of 120kg CO₂e and one person travelling in a large four wheel drive has an impact of 1100kg CO₂e.

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