

# Province 'Caring for our Common Home' Policy

## Communal discernment summary

### Introduction

On the 19<sup>th</sup> February a letter was circulated by Provincial Leonard Maloney inviting people to participate in a communal discernment on a Caring for our Common Home Policy. Nearly 60 people were involved in this dialogue, which took place over 17 small consultation groups as well as a number of individual discussions, over the duration of two months. This also included a zoom meeting with students from Belvedere and Gonzaga where they were given an opportunity to present ideas of what they would like to see in their schools.

Clear themes emerged through the discussion process. This document is arranged to reflect each of these as well as highlight how they interconnect with each other. Throughout this document there are themes that relate to both structural change and behavioral change. A clear consensus across the discussion emerged that a higher priority needs to be placed on 'Caring for our Common Home' in the overall agenda for the Province. While a number of positive actions and initiatives were shared during the consultation process (Appendix 1), the increased role the Province needs to play in the response to the climate and biodiversity crisis was articulated. It was also acknowledged that a general lack of energy around environmental issues is a significant barrier to environmental action within the province and any implementation plan will need to incorporate activities which enable this energy to be built and maintained.

This communal discernment activity is the first stage of an ecology project which will develop and implement a Caring for our Common Home policy. The next stage in this process will see this document refined after feedback from all the participants in the consultation process and used to write a policy document and implementation plan. A working group will be gathered to facilitate the process once the policy document is developed to ensure the implementation strategy and plan are as comprehensive as possible.

This document represents a comprehensive summary of all the emerging trends from this first round of discussion. The themes are explored in terms of how to structure and implement the policy, the importance of measurement, the role of communication, the need for pastoral engagement, the opportunities presented by the schools, and the practicalities of purchasing, land management, transport, food, waste and then larger but significant questions about divestment, physical infrastructure, the place of the Irish language and how this work must be developed as an expression of our commitment to the Universal Apostolic Preferences. The suggestions listed here are thus attempts to record ideas that have been generated in the dialogue. These proposals are not formally presented for implementation, but rather gathered and shared here as an essential step towards that process of communal interpretation. Much work will need to be done to prioritize these ideas and actions, as well as developing and expanding on specific issues, before a coherent and implementable policy can be developed.

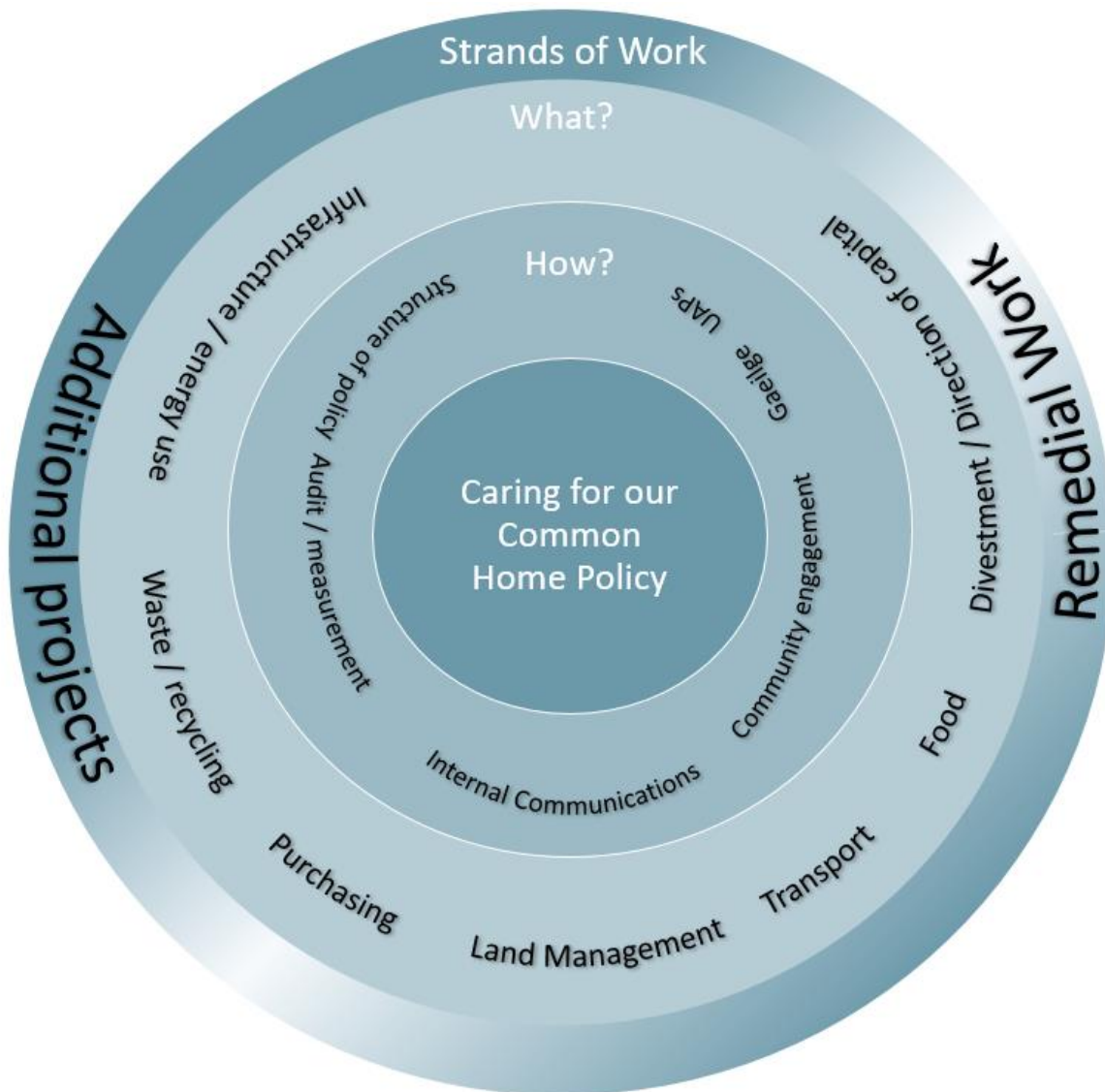


Figure 1: Summary diagram of Caring for our Common Home themes identified during the consultation process

### Implementation / Structure of policy

The issue of how to implement a ‘Caring for Our Common Home’ policy arose in nearly every conversation in the consultation process, identifying it as one of the most important aspects of this policy development process. A policy is meaningless unless there is thought and effort put into implementing it. It is important that the practicality of structure is thought through.

This structure should ensure its prioritization from the top while providing support at the bottom for actions that are happening. Implementation cannot be only top down, but demands engagement from across the Province at grassroots level, with leadership shown at every level.

### Care for our Common Home needs to become a top priority in Province

- The Provincial should include ecology in visitations agenda and give clear direction that this is important for every aspect of the Province and is not a voluntary aspect of Province functioning.

- A working group will need to be established to develop and drive an implementation plan. Members will need to be representatives from across the Province.
- Appropriate implementation and accountability authority
  - o The people responsible with ensuring this policy is implemented will need a certain level of authority as a reflection of the priority that this is held within the Province. An identifiable Curia arm could be delegated responsibility of the ecological functioning of the Province by the Provincial. This would not only ensure the proper implementation of the policy but would also function as a strong signal of the importance of Caring for our Common Home.
    - This could result in an ecology office located in the Milltown Complex. Learnings could be taken from the Safeguarding office.
  - o Superiors of communities need to be involved in the implementation of the policy, with someone within the community responsible for the day to day ecological running of the community. This would ensure systems are in place which allow the policy to be followed easily. This ecological champion or leader within the community (or works) could be an interested Jesuit or a lay person with implementing the Caring for our common Home policy as part of a new or existing job with clear roles and responsibilities.
  - o Include ecology and Caring for Our Common Home in formation of Superiors.
  - o Need to find the balance of engagement and regulations (carrot and stick). Rather than enforcement, we could reward schools / works for projects. Specific funding for small ecological projects could also keep implementation energy up.
- Identify key people in the Province who makes decisions at all levels including house managers, staff, those responsible with purchasing and budget etc. and actively include them in the implementation of the policy.

#### Integration across the Province

- Policy needs to work across the entire Province. A key example of this is fostering Caring for our Common Home into the education system and into retreats.
  - o Policy should inform and line up with schools' own ecology policies.
- This policy should aim to integrate ecological practice and not treat it like a separate project, the aim is to make best-practice presumed. Increasing awareness about that is currently happening (mirroring Chapter One of *Laudato Si'*) and developing projects to actively address some of the issues would be the natural place to begin an implementation policy but the actions needed to Care for our Common Home needs to become enculturated over time.
- Policy also needs to match what is coming from Rome.

#### Structure of policy document

The policy can be separated into two different aspects:

1. Remedial work – What activities can we improve on to bring to an acceptable baseline?
  2. What are the new things (including increased outreach and community engagement) that we can do to help the environment? Projects such as community gardens promote interconnection and would be an example of this kind of work.
- Policy should also concentrate more on organizational responsibilities and expectations, less on individual behavior responsibilities

- Policy needs to be delivered in phases, along a defined timeline, with review points built into the policy. However, the implementation also needs to be iterative and evolving to respond to review stages and the changing realities of the Province. We need to celebrate progress but recognize that there are always opportunities to improve. Policy and implementation plan needs to identify the easy-to implement actions that can get the process going.
  - o Perhaps we can incorporate the “See, Judge, Act” model into the review process?
- Policy should aim to be comprehensive, covering procurement, suppliers and electricity and renting cars etc. This will reduce individual research time and allow for best practice procedures to be carried out across the province, reducing duplication of effort. This will mainly cover the day to day policies of bringing Province to an acceptable baseline of functioning.
- A good example of a sustainability strategy can be found here: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/media/sustainability/files/Final-Sustainability-Strategy-17-11-2020.pdf>

### Environmental audit / measurement

An ecological audit of some kind was also mentioned in every conversation in the consultation process and measurement was highlighted as key to implementation to ensure that actions were making an identifiable difference. Establishing a baseline against which our action can be measured is a vital component of implementing an ecology policy, an audit will also help guide our implementation efforts where they will be most effective. This requires conducting an initial environmental review as well as regular internal environmental audits. Areas that were identified as being key areas to audit are listed below with the recognition that buildings are key in the context of the Jesuit Province for climate action. Reductions in emissions could be aligned with National targets of a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030. Once an initial audit is carried out and the problem areas are identified there needs to be an expectation to follow up on actions that reduce their impact. The information gathered can also be used to educate staff and students within the Province of the need for Climate Action. There are existing tools and platforms that could be used for this audit including the ‘Footprint Tool’ that JESC is developing. The European ‘Eco-Management and Audit Scheme’ is also a framework that could be used as we audit out Province.

### Residential / Building Energy usage (GHG emissions)

- Electricity and Heat generation
  - o Identifying and eliminating causes of energy wastage (e.g. poor windows, gaps in fittings etc.).
  - o Identifying building usage at different parts of the day / overnight.
  - o Effective use of meters and monitors.
  - o How much energy is used when schools are empty? An audit in schools could be a science project for the students.
  - o Assessing what behavioral change or changes in how we use high energy appliances can reduce our energy usage (e.g. are we using our heating controls properly?)
- Audits can be done across the Province using informal tools or for particularly high emitting buildings of concern, professional audits could be commissioned. These audits can be an opportunity for engagement within the Province. Instead of a self-assessment a Jesuit environmental officer could go around to each community and works to complete audit.
- Identify the large users within the Province and carry out the most appropriate works (e.g. replace windows, additional insulation, replace boiler with heat pump or extensive

retrofitting) or replace appliances (e.g. high consuming ovens and gas hobs could be replaced by induction appliances or biogas hobs).

#### Water usage

- All building need to be assessed for leakages (utilize water meters if installed).
  - o Dripping taps etc.
  - o Leaking pipes on the premises.

#### Chemical use

- External use:
  - o Are pesticides or herbicides used for gardening?
  - o What chemicals are used to clean outdoor areas?
  - o What wood treatment / paint is being used in outdoor spaces?
- Internal use:
  - o What cleaning materials are used?
    - Manresa has successfully shifted to EcoKem.
    - What paints are being used internally?
    - What aerosols are being used (e.g. air fresheners)?

#### Waste generation and materials used

- As further discussed later in the document, food waste was identified as a particular issue in schools and communities. An audit of the type and source of waste would be useful to decide on the appropriate actions to take.
- What volume of plastic is produced from different sources? Can we focus initially on eliminating food packaging and single-use disposable plastic?
- What stationary and office supplies are used?
- Might some of the publications consume large amounts of paper?
  - o What paper is being used and how is the waste paper being disposed?

#### Spending

- What proportion of the budget goes on environmental friendly activities / purchases?
- What is the best use of money in terms of 'Caring for our Common Home'?
  - o Are all large purchases environmentally proofed?
  - o Are our investments furthering the work we are doing?
- Can money be used for structural change?
- How many staff hours are used for ecological work compared to other work?

#### Biodiversity

- Depending on the size of the land being audited different measurements could be assessed e.g. Clongowes might be different from Gonzaga.
- Habitat mapping exercise for every green space:
  - o % of land managed for biodiversity; # flowering plants in lawn; trees; % land for food growing.
  - o Could some space that has been set aside for cars – car-parking / tarmacked areas – be converted into green spaces / seating areas / bicycle parking areas?

#### Transport energy usage

- Do we know the number and type of cars in Province?
- Do we know the number of kilometres driven?

- Do we know the number of flights taken?  
(In all these measurements we must be careful of our baseline year!)

#### Agricultural emissions

- Emissions from the agricultural activities in Clongowes would need to be assessed as this has the potential to be a significant contributor.
  - o Methane from livestock.
  - o Emissions from soil / drained land.
  - o Emissions for fertilizer use / manure.

#### Internal engagement and communication

Internal community and momentum building around the ecology policy was identified as a vital component of the implementation of the ecological policy. The best policy without the energy or will to implement will not be effective and will not lead to personal conversion. The importance of sharing good news and finding ways to disseminate the Caring for Our Common Home Policy cannot be underestimated. Common ideas that crept up in every conversation is the idea of using finance (what we use our money for) and food (what and how we eat, how is it packaged, food waste, growing food) as 2 key ways for the message to be carried. These two themes intersect with local action as well as global injustices. They can also relate to many aspects of the 'Caring for our Common Home Policy' including land management, energy use, waste etc. The overall aim of this section is to increase awareness in communities and the Province works in general.

#### Dissemination of policy / guidelines throughout Province

- Who will have the responsibility within each community / works in ensuring this policy is implemented (links in with implementation structure)?
- How will new people hear about this and know where to find resources?
- Easy access to up-to-date information / guidelines / advice / supplier list / videos / social media posts / cheat sheets:
  - o This could be through an internal space on the Jesuit.ie website or a person or group of people that can be contacted.
  - o Guidelines must be clear and easy to follow.
  - o Inventory of ongoing projects and action from across the province so the ambition is visible across the entire Province. This will also make interlinkages and collaborations easier to identify.
  - o Share interesting links for further information e.g. videos on wildflower meadows in the pollinator plan.
- 'Caring for our Common Home Policy' should be presented to boards of all the schools and the Jesuit works.
- Regular meetings at community and team level meetings to discuss progress of implementation within each works/community. This needs to include staff as well as Jesuits.

#### Celebration

- Policy should be launched with everyone in the Province invited to participate.
  - o Articulate why we are doing it.
  - o Highlight the good work that is already being carried out.
- News of achievements and good works should be shared across the Province
  - o The audit and continuous measurement process would be an appropriate medium to collect this information. Data can be recorded and shared as appropriate.
  - o This can be done through regular meetings or newsletters.

- This should also include achievements of the students and schools.
- Achievements should also be communicated to wider community / public e.g. Manresa is currently involved in Pollinator Plan. This could be advertised at the gate or on their website. Every website, where appropriate should include the ecological action that particular work is undertaking. This would also be a way of highlighting how every works is associated with the UAPs.
- Certain ecological action could be seen as an act of celebration in and of themselves (e.g. planting trees or any action that enhances biodiversity)
  - Celebration, wonder at the natural world, art and science are all interlinked within integral ecology. These concepts could be used in schools and Province events.
- Could incorporate wonder at the natural world and biodiversity action into retreats for staff.
- Small ecological actions or symbols can function to act as a constant reminder of our commitment to Care for our Common Home.

### Support Groups

- Peer mentoring and peer-to-peer support groups were suggested as a good way to keep people motivated and to ensure that people have the support they need:
  - Example would be all the community chiefs and cleaning staff would have their own support network where they can talk about issues arising.
  - A support network for house managers and community superiors could also encourage collaboration among houses.
- These support groups could also provide an informal way to raise issues or make suggestions in the implementation of the ecology policy.
- Teachers involved with Green Schools or that have an interest in ecological education could also benefit from an organized support network between the schools. Increased collaboration in completing the Green Schools programme as well as increased interaction between the students would be extremely beneficial in terms of reducing duplication of work and sharing resources.

### Education

- Need to communicate the 'Why' as well as the 'What' in the policy document. Need to connect the dots so people are engaged.
  - Why are we doing these specific actions?
  - Why is it important?
  - Why should you care?
- Compulsory training in ecology and sustainability for all staff and community members.
  - This training could be complemented by regular seminars focusing on particular issues in the policy e.g. water issues, biodiversity etc.
  - This could include inviting other religious orders who are on a Caring for our Common Home journey to present their work.
- Could also provide information and advice on living sustainably at home for staff:
  - Information on grants available for solar panels etc.
  - List of eco-friendly shops people could use etc.
- Also important to educate on global dimension of climate action:
  - Impact of throwaway culture / consumerism e.g. clothing, tech, plastics.
  - The human rights and environmental impacts of mining, for example: lithium and other rare-earth minerals for batteries.
  - Campaign on international legislations and agreements e.g. COP proceedings.

- The consequences of ill-thought out climate solutions e.g. building wind farms on peat lands leads to a huge amount of carbon dioxide emitted which may offset any carbon saving benefits of renewable energy.
- Use the ecological audit and data gathered to make Jesuits and staff aware of energy used and waste produced.

### Pastoral care / community engagement / outreach

Spreading the good word and finding ways to engage with the community was identified as an important intersectional aspect of the Caring for our Common Home Policy. This is an area where the other UAPs of walking with the excluded, journeying with the youth and showing the way to God intersect with Caring for our Common Home very clearly. It is also important that if we are asking people to experience an ecological conversion and be willing to change their behavior, then the Jesuits and the Province in general need to start and lead by example.

- Aiming to include Caring for our Common Home in pastoral work throughout the Province including sermons, retreats etc.
- Community engagement should be explored:
  - These could include engaging with vulnerable communities within the vicinity of communities, in particular Gardiner Street.
    - There is an opportunity to allow the Gardiner Street primary school to use the community garden as part of their biodiversity / ecological education.
    - A gardening club could invite vulnerable members of the community to work in a green space.
    - Litter picks or other conversation works within the region.
  - Collaborating with already existing groups and clubs e.g. Belvedere Youth Club
- Part of this outreach work could include writing to local councilors and TDs about climate and environmental issues as well as engaging with the local biodiversity officer and council.

### Community engagement / outreach

Community engagement was identified as an important aspect of a Caring for our Common Home as not only does it interconnect with the Walking with the Marginalised UAP but is also an important aspect of Parish work. Community engagement and collective action is also recognised as being a vital part of climate and environmental activism. We need to invite people along in our journey of ecological conversion.

- The ACRE project is an excellent example of the Jesuit Province engaging with marginalised communities in ecological work.
  - This work needs wider recognition across the Province in order to embed itself within the Province body of work. It could also be used as a model across the entire Province where positive environmental action can be taken in collaboration with community groups.
- Engaging with nature is a huge opportunity in terms of engagement with communities:
  - Opening up green spaces (e.g. Gardiner Street garden) to schools and marginalised communities (people living in homeless hostels, recovering addicts etc.).
  - Hosting nature walks / events / activities in the Jesuit grounds (including Manresa, Gardiner Street, Clongowes).
  - Gathering a group of volunteers to do conservation / environmental enhancement work (e.g. invasive species clearance, collecting fallen leaves for compost, biodiversity and local clean up groups).



- Work with other religious organisations on ecological projects.
- Community garden and gardening clubs can be an excellent way to increase a sense of community.
- Increase communication with community based newsletters:
  - There are opportunities available where Gardiner Street news can be shared with local news letters and public papers.
- Engage with already established community groups including Belvedere Youth Club.
- Redistributing excess food and clothes with the community. This could include sharing food harvested from the garden or pollinator plants planted by the student's / gardening club. A lost and found take shop could also be established for students starting in any of the schools.

### Publishing

- Interest in ecological issues has increased since the publication of *Laudato Si*.
- A policy might aim to have a minimum number of ecological articles annually.

### Supporting schools / education

A lot of the work currently being done in relation to Caring for our Common Home is coming out of the schools. This includes involvement in Friday for Future protests, earning different Green Flags as part of the An Taisce programme, Urban Farms and different biodiversity initiatives. There is a huge amount of energy here with amazing potential to both make our schools more environmentally friendly as well as integrate Caring for our Common Home into students' education. It was also clearly identified that a strong Caring for our Common Home Province policy would influence the Board of Management and schools' environmental policies helping to ensure that it is a top priority. More work is needed, however, to foster an ecological conversion so that the disconnect that exists between students' lifestyle and the ecological activities they do at school is acknowledged and worked on.

### Increased collaboration between schools, communities and works:

- Identify possible biodiversity projects on shared / adjacent land e.g. Gonzaga, Clongowes and Gardiner Street.
- Possible buddy programme between TY students and Jesuits to work on ecological projects.
- Schools should have an ecology person, similar to a Jesuit Ethos person. This person could be point of contact between Caring for our Common Home policy and schools.
- Support collaboration between schools:
  - Network for Green Schools coordinators / staff interested in Caring for our Common Home so resources and ideas can be shared.
  - Host ecology event for Province where students present their work and achievements before the other schools and other elements of the Province. Peer to peer learning an important aspect of ecological education.
  - Already close interaction between schools in terms of writing and art competitions. Opportunity to incorporate science projects, environmental care or climate in these competitions.
- Possibility of JRS or JCFJ offering school workshops on the link between climate and migration.

### Caring for our Common Home in curriculum and school values:

- Trying to instill values which can positively influence parents and communities. Need to bridge the gap between interest and way of life after school.

- Incorporate education elements around environmental management of school:
  - o School visits to waste sorting facilities, create consciousness of where waste is going and the life cycle analysis of products.
  - o Learn about the science and ecology behind composting.
  - o Integrate Caring for our Common Home into debating, religion class, science geography etc.
  - o Jesuit Province could provide resources on Laudato Si and Caring for our Common Home for religious studies.
- Clear understanding between school and parents about emphasis that will be placed on environment in students' education including education, regarding the impact of lifestyle and consumerism on the climate and biodiversity crisis.

#### Supporting staff:

- Time is a huge barrier for staff and teachers. Trying to fit biodiversity projects etc. into after hours and lunch breaks. Caring for our Common Home needs to be timetabled and prioritized as an activity. Support needs to be given to teachers and staff who are driving this work.

#### Purchasing

As mentioned previously how we spend our money can both make a considerable impact and send a strong signal about what is important to the Jesuit Province. There needs to be recognition that every purchase should have the environmental considerations assessed.

- Include in the policy that for large purchases, ecological consideration is needed, as well as price quotes. Having to use the cheapest quotes provided can be a barrier to pivoting towards more ecologically friendly purchases (this should be rolled out across all works including schools).
  - o Office supplies, stationary and printer ink (eg Klee for recycled paper and other eco-friendly items).
  - o Food/drink (organic, plastic free packaging, fair trade, Moyee coffee, refill options).
  - o Cleaning products (EcoKem).
  - o Eco-friendly and locally grown flowers for church.
- Bulk purchasing for offices, communities and schools could be an option for some purchases such as organic vegetables, paper, cleaning materials.
- Promote circular economy by prioritising repairing items where possible and purchasing second hand where appropriate.
- Hire contractors with good ecological credentials including using environmentally friendly cleaning chemicals and equipment.
- Use lowest emission courier option possible

#### Land management

How we manage our green spaces was also raised in every consultation meeting as an important aspect of the policy acknowledging that we are also experiencing a biodiversity crisis as well as a climate crisis. It was identified as a medium that could increase engagement in the overall policy, connections with nature can facilitate the ecological conversion that we will need in order to embrace this policy. There is a large amount of green space in the Jesuit Province, however the size and function of these spaces vary greatly, which offers up different opportunities and challenges. There was general agreement across all the discussions however that concerted efforts need to be made to increase biodiversity and assess how we can maximize our use of green space in terms of

access. These actions can be progressive in terms of starting small and continuously building on sustainable actions. Consideration will also need to be given to whose responsibility it is to maintain these green spaces.

### Biodiversity

- Sign up to the Pollinator Plan and aim to carry out at least some of the actions in all spaces:
  - o Reduced moving of lawns allowing them to flower.
  - o Increased wild areas and in certain circumstances consider the opportunities for rewilding.
  - o No pesticides / herbicides etc.
  - o Developing and maintaining habitats for different fauna including installing insect hotels, bird boxes, bat boxes on old buildings.
  - o Growing flowers for the church.
  - o Increased plants available for pollinators would also benefit the existing bee hives in Belvedere as Gardiner street is in their range.
  - o Opportunity to encourage parishioners to plant pollinator friendly plants or even distribute plants that are grown from seed by school children gardening club.
  - o Change culture away from maintenance for neat and tidy to more biodiverse.
  - o Increase the biodiversity around the pitches in schools.
- Assess areas where more trees could be planted:
  - o This should include both native trees as well as fruit trees which would supplement communities with organic food.
  - o Existing mature trees on Jesuit property should be protected and consideration should be given to allow natural regeneration of woodland (rewilding) in areas where it is possible (by fencing or allowing seedlings to grow).
  - o Include students in all tree planting exercises especially on school grounds. Possibilities to work with science teachers to develop dedicated green spaces where soil quality and biodiversity could be assessed and the different management techniques including animal grazing could be used as education tools.
- Purchasing in relation to green space:
  - o Only peat free compost should be used – using peat compost in gardening has an overall negative impact on Irelands ecological health as bogs are destroyed in order to provide peat moss.
  - o Energy efficient, fossil fuel free, or when appropriate manual equipment should be purchased when replacing older items.
  - o Alternatives to herbicides include acetic acid, boiling water treatment etc.
  - o Prioritize native Irish seeds where possible e.g. Irish Seed Savers.
  - o Recycle / repurpose wherever possible – opportunities here to work with local men’s sheds etc. to build raised beds etc.
  - o Policy on artificial green surfaces e.g. should the Province discourage the installation of artificial playing fields?

### Utilising and access to green space

- We must shift to see gardens as a resource in terms of time and space. Different uses in different parts of the garden and different people using it at different times.
- Explore the possibility of establishing bee hives.
- Establishing additional links between communities and school by exploring projects in common green space areas e.g. Milltown and Gonzaga. This could include sharing staff

resources to manage green space in Milltown complex. On shared land there needs to be clarification of what can be done, who owns the land and a mechanism for how we do shared projects on land etc. Increased communication between communities and schools would remove barriers to exploring these projects.

- Explore the opportunities available to use the Gardiner Street garden:
  - Biodiversity projects for the adjacent primary school. Access to green space for students has observable benefits to their wellbeing. Liaise with teachers to maximize potential of garden (e.g. including students in plan for the garden, getting kids to grow flowers from seed etc.)
  - Opportunity to supplement Urban Farm project of Belvedere College with Gardiner Street garden e.g. planting fruit trees. Possibility of secondary school students working with primary school students on food growing or biodiversity project.
  - Parish Gardening club or providing people living in homeless hostel in the vicinity access to work in garden as part of therapy. Opportunity to provide Spiritual guidance in garden.
  - Different events / activities can be hosted in the garden e.g. BBQ, gatherings after mass etc.
- Rainwater harvesting:
  - For large green areas, large tanks could be installed. This reduces the need to use treated water for outdoor use, as well as reduced the amount of rainwater going into storm drains.
- Farm at Clongowes is currently leased to a farmer. There could be a committee that explores different opportunities, such as a transition to regenerative farming with an ecology center, ecological farming education facility, rewilding or a community farm. Profitability, feasibility and legal issues would need to be assessed with the understanding that any work done here would be a significant long term project.
- A volunteer community outreach could be based in Clongowes which involved art or music and there is an opportunity to include gardening in this project. Extensive engagement with the community, school and Jesuits will be required.
- Although schools are doing a lot there is a lot more that could be done in terms of enhancing biodiversity in their green spaces and incorporating Caring for our Common Home and the Green Flag programme into the curriculum (e.g. science and religion).
- Growing food:
  - Areas that are available and appropriate to grow food, especially low maintenance fruit trees, should be explored in every available green space
  - Properties with a large amount of green space available could look into establishing community allotments for interested community members if appropriate.
  - Greenhouses could be used to grow food all year around, as well as providing shelter for Jesuits who wish to work in the garden. Could also be an opportunity to weather proof part of the garden so it can be used when raining.
  - Excess harvested food could be shared after mass or with people in the gardening club / students.
- Composting / anaerobic digestion can be utilized as both waste processing and source of fertilizer for garden.
- Host walking trails through gardens which could be open to local communities. Erect information boards to link nature's biodiversity to the spiritual aspect. This could be a resource for retreats and novenas.

## Transport

Transport was identified a complex and possibly contentious issue within the Province, but one that would need to be grappled with both in order to reduce emissions and to continue on our journey of ecological conversion. International travel and the school drop off were highlighted as particularly high emission activities with the number and type of cars that the Province owns also signaled as a potential issue.

- An audit of the Province car fleet should be carried out to ensure all cars are essential. The policy of renting cars for visiting Jesuits should also be reconsidered, unless private transport is entirely necessary. Possibility of having open insurance so all cars are available for any Jesuit to drive if required. Included in this audit should be the money spend on car parking spaces (with a recognition of opportunity cost) and the alternative uses of land both in communities and schools
- When replacing cars, consideration should be given to whether signing up for a car-sharing scheme is appropriate or purchasing an electric vehicle (EV). This will depend on the location of the community, with some better connected with public transport and car sharing schemes as well as the mobility requirements of the Jesuits.
- All staff and Jesuits should be supported to use public transport or bicycles for their work:
  - o All staff should receive information on annual tax-saver public transport pass, car-sharing schemes, the bike to work scheme, as well as local bike shops. Explore possibilities of collaborating with local bike shops to rent bikes so staff can trial before purchasing bicycles.
  - o Bike parking infrastructure should be universally available. It is particularly important to increase safe, secure bike parking at schools, where current facilities are oversubscribed. If Gardiner street is going to be a hub, then appropriate bike parking is required for both visitors and staff.
  - o Develop facilities to shower and change is commuting long distances, if required.
- Information in car sharing and bike sharing schemes available to encourage increased usage. Education and information available on the global implication of our transport policies e.g. lithium mining and human rights issues.
- Support advocacy groups looking to improve active and public transport infrastructure (e.g. JCFJ is a supporter of the Dublin “CycleWorks” initiative).
- The increase in SUVs nationally is also obvious during school drop off time which contributes to increasing emissions associated with this activity. Their particular impact might feature in the curriculum, for example in discussing what Pope Francis means by “throwaway culture”.
- Campaign on behavioral aspects of transport emissions:
  - o Reduction in speed.
  - o Not leaving engine idling. Particularly important with delivery vans and school collection times as it contributes hugely to harmful air pollution, noise pollution and increased emissions.
- International travel is a huge contributor to the Jesuit Province carbon emissions. Reduction in international journeys might be achieved by maintaining the use of Zoom post-Covid, as well as encouraging train and ferry to suitable locations. In some Jesuit Provinces Jesuits and staff need to ask for permission to fly for work. This can function to reduce unnecessary trips.

## Food / catering

The importance of food, both in terms of climate and environmental impact, as well as a way to engage people and signal an intention was highlighted in several conversations. Catering and food waste was identified as an issue across the province including primary and secondary schools and communities.

- Enabling people to reduce their meat and dairy consumption in communities, retreats and schools.
  - o Ensuring there are healthy, good quality, tasty vegetarian options available. Options that are poor quality will not entice people to pick them and will lead to increased food waste.
  - o Promoting and implementing meat free days.
  - o Work with staff and catering to ensure right skills are present and provide training to staff if required.
- One health food policy
 

*One Health is the concept that the health of humans, animals, and the environment are inextricably linked.*

  - o Food policy should ensure high environmental and animal welfare standards as well as human health standards.
  - o Source only free range meat and eggs.
  - o Choose local, in season and organic where possible.
- Budget accordingly
  - o Budget for food should be holistic in terms of purchasing lower amounts of more expensive higher quality meats, purchasing plant based proteins.
  - o Control budget for food by reducing food waste – both in terms of raw ingredients and cooked food.
  - o Investing in training for cooks and staff in food waste reduction and sustainable proved successful in the past.
- Grow your own
  - o Assess the possibility of investing in growing some food such as herbs and apples etc.
  - o Huge opportunity to convert farm in Clongowes into regenerative farm where food for school and community could be grown.

## Waste and Recycling

Waste and recycling is one area that is recognised as where progress has been made. However, particular types of waste were singled out as being particularly problematic. Certain types of environments, such as schools, were identified as places where much more work is needed in terms of ensuring waste is separated correctly. It was also noted that support should be provided to reduce waste and improve its management. This includes provision of education and an awareness campaign as well as a person within a particular works or community appointed to provide assistance at a practical level in terms of waste management and treatments.

- Food waste
  - o There will be unavoidable food waste from catering kitchens and schools.
  - o Currently there are issues about proper food waste separation and treatment.
  - o Assessment of appropriate food waste treatment on site including appropriate compost bins e.g. standard cold bins, insulated hot compost bins, anaerobic digestion

Food waste from schools, works, and communities was identified as a major source of waste in the Province. Currently the main treatment method is disposal in brown bin. Staff, Jesuits and students all suggested that alternative or additional on-site treatment (anaerobic digestion, hot / cold composting etc.) would be good. For schools, this would represent an educational opportunity. It also generates valuable resources from waste materials.

- Fats, oils and grease from larger kitchens are also a problematic waste which needs systems in place to ensure they are treated properly. These could include grease traps and chemical treatment as well as anaerobic digestion treatment.
- Catering companies and kitchen staff will need to be included in the discussion on reducing food waste. If using an external catering company, then certain stipulations will need to be made clear in terms of quality of food, portion size, packaging and what happens to waste food. Catering companies should be chosen for environmental credentials and not just the cheapest option.
- Treatment of uneaten lunches in all schools need to be considered.
- Can food waste be reduced with more careful preparation or could it be composted in house? Is there training available for staff on food waste and sustainable cooking?
- Selection of compost bins could be used for communities or schools:
  - A Joraform Compost Tumbler (hot treatment composter) could be used to compost food waste from schools and communities (e.g. cooked food, bread etc.).
  - A compost bin / cold treatment composter can be used for garden cuttings and raw fruit / vegetable material.
  - An anaerobic digester can be used to compost all food waste while providing natural gas for cooking as well as liquid fertilizer (<http://www.mygug.eu/index.php>).
  - Worm compost bin can process a wide variety of food waste.
  - Leaf mold compost – can collect from land or adjacent streets and allow to compost. This is an extremely valuable soil amendment and weed suppressant.
- Wide scale reduction in plastic and single use waste across the province is needed:
  - Banning plastic bottles, cutlery and plastic single use packaging in schools and eliminating the use of plastic bottles and cutlery in offices, communities and at events.
  - Phasing out of plastic candles and holy water bottles from the Parish church shop.
  - Establish purchasing protocols which reduce reliance on plastic packaging including buying loose fruit and veg, sourcing bread from local bakers, opting for refillable / plastic free options in hygiene products etc.
  - Where paper towels are currently used are there options to change to using small handtowels including facilities to wash these?
- Clothing waste is a massive issue in schools. Large amounts of uniform items end up in ‘lost and found’, where branding can make it difficult to donate for reuse. New uniforms are also generally bought regularly as older items are out grown.
  - Possible solutions to this include second hand shop for uniforms and encouraging students and parents to purchase second hand as part of an ecological drive and awareness campaign. Money raised could go towards ecological projects or be donated to IJI.
  - Swap shops at the end of the year where older students could give younger students used uniforms would also be possible.
- Textbooks and paper are particularly problematic in schools and publishing works. Efforts should be made to reduce unnecessary printing and photocopying as well as to assess what

changes could be made to text book requirements to reduce this recurring waste. Possibility of transiting into paperless offices for some of the works (e.g. finance records / invoices / timesheets being stored virtually)

- The number of printed magazines (e.g. Working Notes, Messenger, Studies) could be tightened up to ensure minimal waste.
- Engage in campaigns to reduce waste (e.g. zero-waste and reduced consumerism at Christmas etc.)

### Divestment / Direction of capital

A deep interest in the investments of the Jesuit Province as well as what the Province chooses to spend its money was expressed throughout many of the conversations held. Many of these discussions revealed that Jesuits and staff within the Province were not aware of what type of investments were being made with Province capital. There is increasing recognition that there is a moral obligation to invest in sustaining our common home which is becoming increasingly clear is incompatible with investing in fossil fuel industries, which not only contribute significantly to global emissions but also are associated with a myriad of environmental and social justice issues. The importance of investing in companies that plan for immediate steep reductions in carbon emissions was also noted, as against firms that plan for emissions reductions somewhere in the future. This principle – the time value of carbon – may be factored into investment decisions?

(<https://www.generationim.com/research-centre/insights/the-time-value-of-carbon>).

- Increase awareness across the entire Province of the impact of our investments and the avenues available to direct our investments to be more in line with our values (including avoiding arms, mining that has poor human rights performance, fossil fuels etc). Faith Invest could possibly be used to facilitate this learning - <https://www.faithinvest.org/our-mission>.
- Some suggested facilitating a discussion within the Province about the direction of investment. This could be structured around an information seminar or increased transparency about what stock and investments are being pursued by the finance department. This should also include investments being made through the pensions scheme for all Province staff.
- Discussions need to be had in terms where our capital lies in terms of assets and owning infrastructure or renting infrastructure etc.
- What investments would be needed within the Province to pivot it onto a more sustainable pathway? What are the opportunities to generate long terms savings?

### Infrastructure – energy use and retrofitting

Buildings, including residential spaces, churches and offices, are accepted to be one of the most significant contributors to the Provinces emissions. While this would need to be quantified through the audit / footprint process, the energy it takes to heat and power these spaces make up a significant proportion of the running costs of the Province. Throughout all the conversations, the need to assess this impact and take significant measures to reduce related emissions was prevalent.

- Assess the possibility of mass installation of solar panels on all buildings, including school building for internal use and for selling onto the grid. Grants and supports are available for this.
- Consider changing energy supplier to ‘Community Power’, a community owned renewable energy company.
- All new buildings or infrastructural changes need to comply with a very high standard, which considers embodied energy of building materials, biodiversity, energy efficiency and water



usage. More can be found here [https://www.igbc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Europe\\_Regional\\_Network\\_-\\_What\\_is\\_green\\_building.pdf](https://www.igbc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Europe_Regional_Network_-_What_is_green_building.pdf). This policy should also include choosing eco-friendly alternatives for refurbishing (e.g. carpets, painting, furniture).

- Assess all buildings to see which might qualify for deep retrofitting (including installation of fossil fuel free heating, e.g. heat pumps)) as well as smaller renovations (e.g. installation of new windows, work on optimising ventilation, insulation).
- Investigate water usage in buildings, using Irish Water meters if available. As well as identifying activities which use a lot of water leaks and drips can be identified and fixed.
- Change light fittings in all buildings to energy efficient bulbs and install sensors in appropriate areas.
- Turning off computers and other devices when not in use:
  - o Updates need to be scheduled to ensure that computers can be turned off at night.
- Consideration needs to be given to the type of energy / appliance for food preparation. Are there alternatives for fossil fuel gas hobs? Are the electric appliances highly energy efficient?
- What are the high electricity usage activities (e.g. clothes drying) and are there practical alternatives that could reduce energy usage?

### Gaeilge

As the Amazonian Synod reminded us, indigenous language and culture is an integral part of Caring for our Common Home. Languages that are native to a place have deep connections with its ecology and culture. In Ireland, Irish is a necessary expression of our heritage and can be a powerful tool in the Ecological Conversion that we need to undergo to deeply Care for our Common Home. A common example of this is the understanding of the original meaning of our place names, which give clues as to what was there before. References to wolves, boars, and native woodlands litter place names across the country, but bear no resemblance to what can be found there now. It brings an interesting question to light: how can we care for our home if we don't remember what it was once like?

- Irish needs to be integrated into the Caring for our Common Home policy and part of the communication around the policy. This includes writing the policy in Irish as well as in English.
- Incorporating Irish in an accessible format in to the Province including encouraging its use in everyday activities.
- There should be opportunities to learn Irish for Jesuits and staff.
- Facilitate the communications departments of the Jesuit Province to incorporate Irish into communications.
- Incorporate Irish hymns into Parish mass.
- This aspect of the Caring for our Common Home policy need to be considered carefully – Frainc Mac Brádaigh will take the lead in bringing a group of people together that can develop a meaningful set of actions for the Caring for our Common Home policy.

### Integration of UAPs

A Caring for our Common Home policy, which is developed and implemented through a truly integral ecological lens cannot be separated from the other UAPs, 'Showing the way to God', 'Walking with the Excluded' and 'Journeying with Youth'. Throughout the entire extended dialogue, this was highlighted where many of the proposed policies and actions are embedded not only in Caring for our Common Home but also the other UAPs. This is especially obvious in the areas of education,

schools and engagement with communities. An important note across the entire dialogue was also the importance of highlighting and fostering the spiritual connection of all of these actions.

- Assess projects that specifically address the interconnected aspects of the UAPs (e.g. access to green space and biodiversity for the students in Gardiner Street primary school who are predominately from marginalised communities; retreats in green spaces; community gardens)
- Parish could engage more with Season of Creation, harvest week, Earth days etc. We already have some liturgical elements and novenas that address ecology.