



Speak out for climate justice

**Calling on all religious to come
together in a lobby of Parliament on**

Wednesday 23 April 2008

This lobby of Parliament is facilitated by CAFOD, the Conference of Religious and Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Links. Many religious have already registered to attend - if you have not already done so we would urge you to complete the enclosed form. Associates and companions of religious orders are also welcome to join us.

Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will meet with us - join us and make sure he hears your concerns.

Climate change is an issue of justice

God has created a beautiful world, which we all have a responsibility to cherish and protect. Climate change is threatening the future of the planet that we all depend upon for our water, food and shelter.

Rich countries consume the majority of the earth's resources, while the world's poorest people bear the brunt of extreme weather conditions. As a result, the efforts and progress made in reducing poverty could be wiped out by floods, droughts and extreme weather.

Out of compassion and in solidarity with all of God's people, our faith calls us to act.

"A way of life that disregards and damages God's creation, forces the poor into greater poverty, threatens the right of future generations to a healthy environment... is contrary to the vision of the Gospel."

(Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, *The Call of Creation*, 2002)

The UK Climate Change Bill

This Bill, currently on its way through Parliament, presents a unique opportunity to make significant progress in tackling climate change. But at the moment the Bill is not strong enough. This religious lobby occurs before key parliamentary votes on the Bill. Now is a limited but crucial moment to press MPs to strengthen the Bill.

Make your voice heard

As religious women and men, we are in an important position to highlight the moral imperative rich governments like ours have to tackle climate change. Make your voice heard. The Gospel asks this of us.

"The joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ."

(Gaudium et Spes)

How to lobby your MP

Lobbying is not a specialist skill. It simply means explaining your views to your MP, and asking him or her to act on them. MPs are our representatives and it's their job to make sure that the Government hears the concerns of ordinary people.

You don't need to be an expert, you just need to be willing to ask your MP some questions and communicate your views to them.

Arranging to meet your MP

Once you have registered to attend the lobby **it is very important to contact your MP in advance to arrange a meeting** on the day. A sample letter is set out below. Be persistent. If you don't get a reply, call your MP to arrange the meeting. To find out who your MP is, call the House of Commons on 020 7219 4272 or visit www.parliament.uk.

If you haven't managed to make an appointment, you can ask to see your MP on the day. House of Commons staff will direct you to the Central Lobby, where you can fill out a card requesting a meeting. Staff will then attempt to find your MP to arrange a meeting.

Example letter to an MP requesting a meeting

XXXX MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Your name and address
Your phone number
Your email address

Dear XXXX MP

Re: Religious Lobby of Parliament on Climate Justice Wednesday 23 April 2008

I am writing to request a meeting with you on Wednesday 23 April 2008 to discuss climate change and the impact it is already having on the world's poorest.

This event is facilitated by CAFOD, the Conference of Religious and Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Links. Many religious women and men will be travelling to Westminster on that day to meet their MPs.

I believe that the Climate Change Bill is a welcome first step in tackling climate change. However it needs to be strengthened if the UK is to properly do its part in preventing dangerous climate change. I will be attending the lobby to express my concerns. I would very much like to hear your views on the Bill and how we in the UK can ensure the efforts and progress made in reducing poverty in developing countries are not wiped out by climate catastrophe.

I will be at the House of Commons from 1.00pm to 4.00pm. I would be very grateful if you could contact me, using the details above, with a time and venue that is most convenient for you.

Yours sincerely
Your name

If you are not able to attend the religious lobby

Then it is still important to make sure your MP knows you feel very strongly about this issue. Please use the template letter enclosed to contact your MP. Remember to insert your MP's name and your name and address. On the day of the lobby we ask that you remember communities across the world affected by climate change, and this lobby of Parliament in your prayers.

Events taking place of the day from 11.00am – 5.00pm will include:

- 11.00am to 11.30am - Arrival and teas & coffees in Methodist Central Hall, Storey's Gate, Westminster, SW1H 9NH (map on reverse)
- 11.30am to 12.50pm - An opportunity to prepare for the lobby, hear from Fr Seán McDonagh, Fr Christopher Jamison, Mark Dowd, and Chris Bain and a chance to have lunch - **please bring food with you or you can visit the Methodist Central Hall café**
- 12.50pm to 1.00pm - Move to the Houses of Parliament
- 1.00pm to 4.00pm - A mass lobby of MPs by religious congregations
- Plus a meeting with Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to lobby him on how climate change is already affecting the world's poorest communities
- 4.00pm to 5.00pm A closing liturgy at Methodist Central Hall

- For more information or to register to take part, please phone CAFOD on 020 7095 5692 or email campaign@cafod.org.uk.
- You can also register by filling in the form below.
- You should then contact your MP using the sample letter enclosed.
- CAFOD, working with the Conference of Religious (CoR) and JPIC Links, can then supply you with further information and advice on meeting your MP.
- If you are unable to join the lobby you could arrange to meet your MP later on 23 April - voting usually takes place at 7.00pm so MPs will be available during the evening.
- This event will be accessible for people with disabilities - please advise if you will require assistance.



I would like to register to attend the religious lobby of Parliament on 23 April. Please send me further details.

Name of Congregation/Community: _____

Number of attendees: _____

Contact person: Title _____ Initial _____ Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

- Please send me a Climate Change Bill Lobby Guide and MP Briefing (tick box).
- Please keep me updated about CAFOD campaigns (tick box).

An early response would be appreciated but please return this form to CAFOD, at the address below, by 1 April at the latest.

Religious Lobby of Parliament 2008, c/o CAFOD, Romero Close, London, SW9 9TY.

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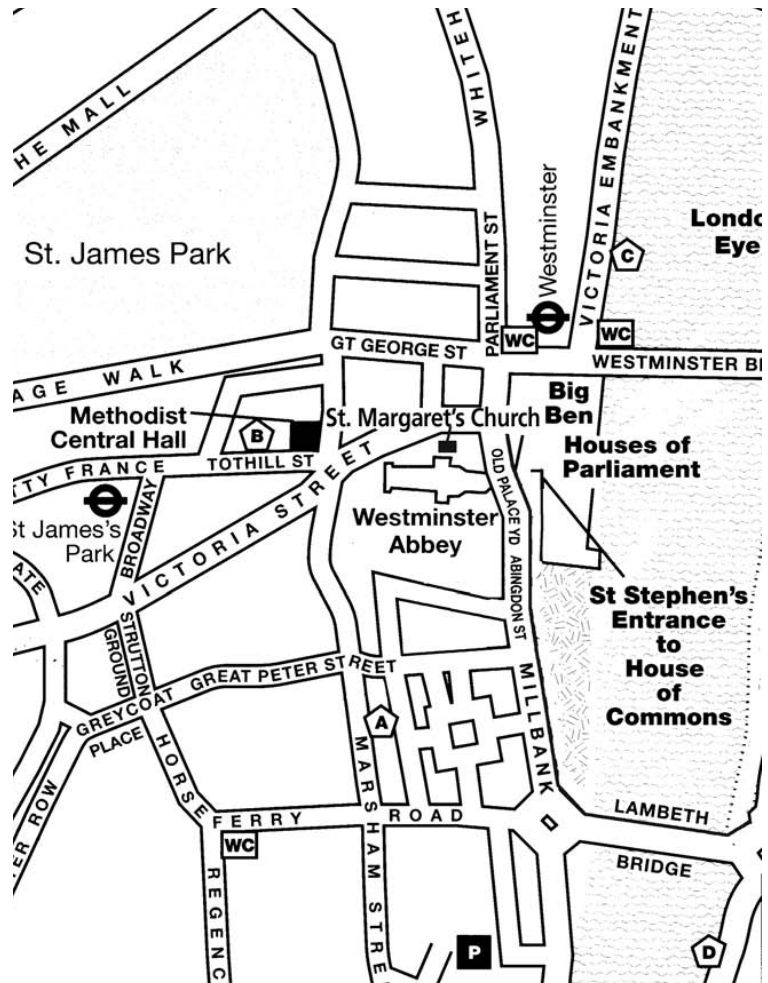
How to get there

By rail: the nearest stations are Charing Cross, Victoria and Waterloo.

By underground: Westminster tube station (Circle, District and Jubilee lines).

By bus: Buses 3, 11, 12, 24, 53, 77a, 88, 109, 159 and 211 all stop nearby.

By car: Driving is not recommended; parking is scarce and expensive in Westminster. You are advised to park your car outside central London and use public transport to reach Westminster.



From:

House of Commons
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dear

I am really pleased that the UK will be the first country in the world to establish a legal framework for binding cuts in carbon dioxide emissions. However I am very concerned that the Climate Change Bill isn't strong enough and, that by voting for it in its current form, MPs risk voting for dangerous climate change.

Climate change is already affecting those in the developing world who, whilst having done the least to cause the problem, will suffer the harshest effects and have fewest resources to adapt.

I am very concerned to hear from CAFOD's partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America that they are already facing challenges caused by changing climate. For example one CAFOD partner, Caritas Cambodia, has written that "One of the biggest challenges we are facing in our development work is the increasing occurrence of natural disaster. What we have achieved over many years is being destroyed by storms and washed away by floods."

If the UK is serious about showing international leadership on climate change and meeting its objective of preventing a global rise in temperature of more than 2°C, the Bill must be made stronger and more effective. As my MP, I would urge you to support the following two key changes to the Bill:

- **Increase the carbon dioxide reduction target to at least 80 per cent by 2050.** The current target of 'at least 60 per cent' is based on outdated science and could lead to global temperature rises exceeding 4°C.
- **Include the UK's share of international aviation and shipping in the reduction targets.** Aviation and shipping are two of the fastest-growing sources of carbon emissions and by failing to include them from the start the Government is risking dangerous climate change.

These changes are supported by an overwhelming body of scientific evidence and by the three parliamentary committees that reviewed the draft Bill. I would be very grateful if you could assure me that you will be supporting these changes as the Bill passes through Parliament.

CAFOD, the Conference of Religious and Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation Links are facilitating a lobby of Parliament on climate change by members of religious orders. This will be taking place on Wednesday 23 April between 1.00pm and 4.00pm. Unfortunately, although I would like to attend this lobby and meet with you to raise my concerns, I am unable to attend. I would however urge you to try to attend the lobby and meet with many other members of religious orders who share my concerns. Please contact Vikki Mills at CAFOD for further information on 020 7095 5413 or vmills@cafod.org.uk.

I look forward to your response and hearing what action you have taken.

Yours sincerely