

This spring, the Bishop of Dudley, Graham Usher, has been encouraging congregations to make a difference to their local communities by



communities to join together, walking and praying while collecting any

One church which rose to the challenge was St Peter's Church in Powick in the Diocese of Worcester. The idea to hold the litter pilgrimage was motivated by the vicar who saw an elderly member of the congregation going out of her way, during her regular dog walks, to collect items thrown on the floor. Volunteers from the congregation organised the spring litter pick and involved all ages and different community groups including the local scouts and guides.

The Revd Gary Crellin, Vicar of St Peter's supported the organisers of the project from his congregation and took part in the litter pick with his family. The teams of congregant members of the church in their hi-vis vests were a visible sign of the church making a difference for the community they live and serve in.

Fr Gary shared a prayer when everyone gathered prior to the litter pick taking place.

A total of 24 bags of litter from around the parish were collected during the morning and people of all ages came together to help make their local community a nicer place. The rubbish was sorted by volunteers following the litter pick and recycled where possible.

Another parish in the Diocese of Lichfield, **St Mary's Astley**, also carried out a community litter pick, with 60 members of the congregation and wider community attending. Local school children were particularly inspired by the litter pick and took the campaign into their schools creating posters and raising awareness.

The Bishop of Dudley, Graham Usher, a member of the Church of England's Environmental Working Group, is encouraging congregations from across the Church of England to carry out their own litter pilgrimage:

"Litter pilgrimages are a perfect example of how church communities can make a difference locally to combat the problem of waste and litter in our society. Through litter pilgrimages we can collectively make a difference by walking together, praying together and collecting the litter we find. If church communities across the country engage with this, a lot of small actions could make a big change in our world, reducing our environmental impact and making a cleaner, tidier society for all.

"As followers of Jesus, who saw the beauty of creation all around him, we are called to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth."



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