Dear (MP’s Name)

**COP26**

Our faith communities are united in caring for human life and the natural world. We share a belief in a hopeful future, as well as an obligation to be responsible in caring for our common home, the Earth.

We recognise the opportunities that COP26 brings in addressing the urgent need for action in limiting the effects of climate change and the critical importance of decisions made in this conference to take forward the agreement made in Paris in 2015. People have exploited the planet, causing climate change; and, as so often, the burden of loss and damage has fallen most heavily on those living in poverty.

We are in contact with many of those people through our networks of faith and are also aware of how climate change is beginning to affect life even here in the UK. In response, we are committing ourselves to transformational change in our own lifestyles and those of our faith communities, as well as to prayer, meditation and the work of advocacy.

We recognise that this extraordinary challenge calls for global co-operation of a scale that has never been seen before – and that our ecological crisis doesn’t fit easily with the shorter-term priorities which governments are more used to setting. At the same time the very urgency of the situation is increasingly growing in the public consciousness, and we believe that doing the right thing now will also prove a vote-winner, even if it involves some short-term pain along the way.

We would encourage you to read the IPCC’s August report. “Code Red for Humanity”, which helps spell out the need for that urgency and long-term thinking; and would especially emphasise the need to provide affordable decarbonisation options for all, in homes, diets, transport and work, as well as providing our fair share of the $100 billion a year of climate finance that rich countries have repeatedly promised to help poor countries adapt and find clean ways to develop.

Our collective energy and prayers will be with those involved in the COP26 negotiations as they work towards a successful outcome – and also with you as together we seek a positive future for our children and children’s children.

As local faith leaders, we wish to align ourselves with the global statement put forward by faith leaders meeting at the Vatican this month.

“Future generations will never forgive us if we miss the opportunity to protect our common home. We have inherited a garden: we must not leave a desert to our children. Scientists have warned us that there might be only one decade left to restore the planet. We plead with the international community, gathered at COP26, to take speedy, responsible and shared action to safeguard, restore and heal our wounded humanity and the home entrusted to our stewardship. We appeal to everyone to join us on this common journey.”

Yours sincerely,

Bernard Jones, Secretary, Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum

Christopher Frost, Chairman, Epsom and Ewell Inter Faith Forum

Dr Bibhas Neogi, Chair, Godalming Baha’i community

Dr Syed Naqvi, Chairman, Surrey Muslim Association

Dr Syed Naqvi, Imam, Al Asr Education and Community Centre, Woking

Foad Rahimi, Chairman, Surrey Heath Faith Forum

Hafiz M Saeed Hashmi, Head Imam, Shah Jahan Mosque, Woking

Hayet Shahrezaey, Secretary, The Baha’is of Guildford

Joynal Ahmed, Imam, Epsom and Ewell Islamic Centre

Kawther Akhtar Hashmi, Surrey Faith Links

Margaret Hicks, Chair, Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum

Meeta Joshi, Hindu Chaplain at the Centre for Religious Life and Belief, University of Surrey

Muhammad Husain Kazi, Imam, Ashford and Staines Community Centre

Rabbi Alex Goldberg, Dean of Religious Life and Belief, University of Surrey

Rabbi Kath Vardi, North West Surrey Synagogue

Rajasingam Kunasingam, Chairman, Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman Temple, Epsom

Ray Wicksman, Guildford Synagogue

Rev Philip A. Simpson, Chairman, Woking People of Faith

Rev. Sheena Gabriel, Minister of Godalming Unitarians

Ritesh Aswaney, Trustee, Surrey Hindu Cultural Society

The Rt Revd Dr Jo Bailey Wells, Bishop of Dorking

The Rt Revd. Andrew John Watson, Bishop of Guildford

The Very Reverend Dianna Gwilliams, Dean of Guildford