

# Diocesan Ecology Link

From the Bath & Wells Diocesan Environment Group (DEG)

Newsletter number 17

January 2009



**Chairman:**

Revd David Osborne:

([osbornepilton@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:osbornepilton@ukonline.co.uk))

**Editor:**

Brian Kellock:

([brianckellock@brianckellock.plus.com](mailto:brianckellock@brianckellock.plus.com))

**Diocesan Environment Adviser:**

David Maggs:

([david.maggs@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:david.maggs@bathwells.anglican.org))

**Website:**

([www.bathandwellsenvironmental.org.uk](http://www.bathandwellsenvironmental.org.uk))

## Latest on Severn Tidal Energy

*It is expected that Ed Miliband (Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change) and Jane Davidson (Welsh Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing) will be speaking at the Severn Tidal Power Group stakeholder event on Monday (26 January) at @-Bristol. Subject to completion of internal review, they will be launching the study's first public consultation (on a proposed short-list of tidal power schemes and draft scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment).*

## Also in this issue:

**Holy Trinity, Nailsea, seeks Eco-congregation status.**

**Christian Aid says third runway a step backwards**

**Ecominds grants available**

**Free clothing boutique launched in Bath**

**From CEL**

**CEL Storm of Hope Retreat 2009**

**2009 is crunch year says Miliband**

**Encouragement to live low impact lives.**

**Report from Poland's UN talks.**

**Goodbye plastic bags**

**Local events**

**Further afield**

**Other news.**

## **Holy Trinity, Nailsea seeks Eco-congregation status.**

Early in 2008 the PCC of Holy Trinity, Nailsea gave its support to achieving Eco-congregation status. The environment group felt that it should first of all find out what the members of its congregations thought and were doing about global warming and the effects on climate change.

So almost a year ago the group prepared and distributed, with the help of the church young people, a questionnaire to its four congregations. Including daughter church Trendlewood, the membership totals around 350.

The group received back 92 completed questionnaires which were mainly representative of households so perhaps representing about 150 adults and 50 under 18s. After analysing the data the results were fed back to each of the four congregations in the form of a Powerpoint presentation.

Most of the questions related to those everyday important activities like recycling, use of low energy bulbs, transportation and so on. In most cases there was a very high positive response; only the use of water butts and consideration of food-miles hovered around the 50-50 mark.

A broader question that was also very revealing was `So what do you think about global warming?

A large majority thought global warming is occurring (98 per cent), that it is a serious threat to human life (78 per cent) and that Christians have a special responsibility towards caring for the planet (89 per cent). There was also a perceived need for more teaching on Christianity and the environment.

According to environment group member John Hayter: `In many ways the results showed an encouraging level of awareness and personal activity. This level of congregational involvement, together with a number of other environmental activities in the church have led to the recent submission of an application for Eco-congregation status. If granted, this will be seen as a milestone and an encouragement. However the group feels that much remains to be tackled both in our understanding and our action as individuals and as a church.`

## **Christian Aid says: Third runway a step backwards.**

`The Government's go-ahead for a third runway at Heathrow is a massive step backwards in the battle against climate change that will have repercussions far beyond Britain's shore. It grievously undermines the government's claim to be at the forefront of international efforts to combat global warming. It puts the target of reducing UK carbon emissions by 80 per cent by 2005, as pledged in the Climate Change Act, even further out of reach unless the government resorts to widespread carbon off-set with poorer countries.

`And it sends entirely the wrong signal to developing countries about just how far rich nations are prepared to go in reducing their carbon emissions. The decision begs the question – will the government now go further still in ignoring the scientific evidence about climate change and give the green light for a coal-fired power station at Kingsnorth in Kent which would trigger a new generation of such plant?`

## Ecominds grants available.

If you can think of a project which links environmental work with supporting those with mental health issues, then you could be eligible for an Ecominds grant from Mind, the mental health charity:

Ecominds has now been live for two months. Their Grants Team are really looking forward to getting their hands on your applications to assess them.

From now until September Ecominds has over £2 million to give away to organisations and groups of all sizes, experiences, and interests.

If you have any questions regarding your potential application, please phone the Changing Spaces Advice Line on 08453 671 671 or look on the Ecominds website at the Frequently Asked Questions and Helpful Information pages.

If you need to contact them or find out more, contact: **The Ecominds**

**Team. Mind.** 15-19 Broadway, Stratford, E15 4BQ

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) [www.ecominds.org.uk](http://www.ecominds.org.uk)

## Free clothing boutique launched in Bath

A new initiative has been launched in Bath run by the community arm of Christians Against Poverty in the form of a “boutique” that offers free new or nearly new high street clothing for disadvantaged people. For more information call Matt Banham 07878 736546.

## From CEL.

### 1. ECOCELL PLEA.

Christian Ecology Link is encouraging greater use of its Ecocell resources and is keen to receive feed back from any who have used them. The Ecocell pack on CD is suitable for the running a series of five workshops or discussion groups, and is stated to for a good theme for Lent. Module topics cover waste, shopping and food, energy in the home, water, travel and transport. For more details or to supply feed back information e-mail Pete Redwood at [predwood@christian-ecology.org.uk](mailto:predwood@christian-ecology.org.uk) or see [www.christian-ecology.org.uk/ecocell.htm](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/ecocell.htm)

### 2. COUNTRY LIFE VILLAGE CHURCH AWARD

This could win a parish an award of £10,000 or £5,000.

Country Life Magazine launched their 2009 'Village Church for Village Life' Award in the 17th December edition of the magazine with a closing date in February. Last years first prize went to the Somerset village church; St Philip and St James's Church, Norton St Philip, Somerset.

- First Prize: £10,000
- Size of village: 940
- Total cost of work: £175,000
- Size of benefice: 6 churches

This year the award is being expanded to include projects that make use of

churchyards and those that have attempted to make their churches environmentally sustainable. It proved very successful last year and produced some inspiring case studies.

To see a report on the winners of the 2008 competition go to:  
[http://www.countrylife.co.uk/culture/architecture/article/268732/Winner\\_of\\_Village\\_Church\\_Award.html](http://www.countrylife.co.uk/culture/architecture/article/268732/Winner_of_Village_Church_Award.html).

## **CEL - Storm of Hope Retreat 2009**

Welcome to the Banquet: Risking community: led by members of CEL  
Friday 13 – Sunday 15 February 2009

The retreat will be a follow on from the last retreat, *Staying on the Edge new vision, new energy*. It is based on the premise that we cannot maintain the hope and lifestyle at the edge as isolated individuals. We need community. But what does that mean? What shape can that community take in the 21st century in a network like CEL? We will share worship, silence and the natural world; we will rejoice, lament, learn and, oh yes, eat. The cost is £90.

For more information at any time: telephone 01502 713020, email [info@ringsfield-hall.co.uk](mailto:info@ringsfield-hall.co.uk) or by post to CEL Retreat, Ringsfield Hall, Beccles, NR34 8JR.

## **2009 is crunch year for climate change, says Miliband**

In a year which saw the creation of the new Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), the UK is continuing to lead the world in securing a clean, affordable energy supply and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Miliband said 2008 was an historic year for confronting the twin challenges of developing a low-carbon economy and combating climate change, thanks to the agreement on European energy and emission targets, the passing of the world-first Climate Change Act, and strong growth in the UK renewable industry. He said:

"We have seen significant progress during 2008 in our goals of developing secure, affordable and clean energy, and tackling the threat of global warming. In 2009, the world will meet again to agree a new international deal on climate change, while in the UK we will be laying out the groundwork for long-term energy efficiency improvements and carbon reduction measures.

"However 2009 will be a crucial year when it comes to negotiating a meaningful, binding climate change deal in Copenhagen. There is still much to be done, but I'm confident we can achieve a global deal."

## **Encouragement to live low-impact lives.**

David Shreeve, director of the Conservation Foundation and Church of England adviser on the environment has circulated details of a new initiative that will aim to encourage and help people live lower impact lives. He writes:

This is advance notice of an initiative to be launched soon which is being supported by Defra and being organised by a consortium of NGOs and businesses headed by the National Trust and Kingfisher Group. We Will If

You Will aims to deliver mass mobilisation of sustainable behaviours encouraging and helping people to live lower impact lives.

The initiative will begin with a seasonal eating and growing campaign which will include The Big Lunch on Sunday 19 July. This is being organised by the Eden Project and aims to encourage as many of the 61 million people in the UK as possible to sit down to lunch together with their neighbours. The organisers have high hope and great ambitions, but as many streets may not be suitable for being closed to transport this may be a chance for churches to act as hosts, by either extending existing parishes lunches or making facilities available to the community. Since the plan is to encourage local food production some churches may be able to provide space for food to be grown for the lunch, but plans need to be made well in advance. Hence this note prior to the media launch. It would be good to let churches know of this initiative so that those who would like to be involved in some way get plenty of notice.

To quote from the organisers: "On the day itself, for three or four glorious hours, traffic will stop, technology will be switched off, and people will meet, break bread together, discuss, laugh, and feel hope. However the legacy of The Big Lunch is much bigger. Crucially we hope to make permanent changes in these rejuvenated communities by giving people the tools by which they can strengthen activities such improving local amenities and local environments, share resources and support local charities."

## **Report from Poland's UN talks.**

*Last month Tim Jones, policy officer for the World Development Movement travelled to Poland to attend the UN climate conference talks. Tim is no stranger to going on epic journeys to promote action on climate change. Last year he walked over 1,000 miles on the Christian Aid Cut the Carbon march.*

Here is his story of the Poznan trip as reported by WDM.

`The final day has certainly been the oddest in my time in Poznan. In any fundamental way we are no nearer getting a just climate agreement by the end of 2009 than last year in Bali.

As I write, we are still to have the final wrapping up sessions, but it has been clear for a while that developed countries have come here with no intention of advancing the talks. Australia, Canada, Japan and the US have made no offers on cutting emissions by 2020. And no rich country has meaningfully engaged on developing country proposals for finance and technology.

Meanwhile in Brussels, the EU has reached an agreement which drives a dagger through the heart of negotiations. They have agreed to cut emissions by 20 per cent by 2020 on 1990 levels (40 per cent is needed), and around two-thirds of this can be met through offsets rather than cutting emissions in the EU. And one mechanism in the package actually subsidises new coal power stations – the kind that will be ‘ready’ for carbon capture and storage rather than actually having any.

We enter 2009 without the leadership from Europe so urgently needed.

Inevitably the story of Poznan will be written-up as 'Waiting for Obama'. But what a much better place we would be waiting in if Europe had lived up to its rhetoric of wanting to lead the world in tackling climate change.

Al Gore earlier used a climate change statistic that I am most scared by. Around 1.4 billion are dependent for more than half their water supplies on glaciers in the Himalayas. Those glaciers will be gone if we carry on our current path.

I am a stats person. I like the big picture they give. But ultimately it is stories that move us. I wish the thousands of delegates could meet not here in a sanitised conference centre where stories are so few, but on the shores of Legaspi City in the Philippines, where hundreds of people have to rebuild their homes every time a super-typhoon passes through.

A tear falls down my cheek. Today has been a day of anger. 2009 has to be a year of hope.'

## **Goodbye plastic bag**

According to a press release issued by Defra last month UK's leading supermarkets have made a pledge to cut the number of plastic bags they give out by 50 per cent against the 2006 level by the spring of this year. The Government agreement with the British Retail Consortium (BRC) covers seven of Britain's major supermarket chains. The agreement to reduce the volume of carrier bags provided to customers covers England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The number of bags saved by spring next year through this agreement would fill 60 Olympic-sized swimming pools, or fill the Royal Albert Hall one and a half times.

### ***Also, according to the Daily Mail***

"B&Q SCORES 24M TIMES IN THE WAR ON PLASTIC POISON"

A ban on free plastic bags from B&Q DiY stores has been a huge success, cutting the number given away by almost 60% - 24.5million in 4 months.

Up to 13 billion free plastic bags were given out last year by major UK retailers - over 600 for every household in UK. Most bags are used for just 20 minutes before being discarded. The majority end up in landfill or blighting the landscape, seas & wildlife.

## **Local events:**

### ***TENON (The environment network of North Somerset)***

#### ***Future dates.***

*Meetings at Victoria Methodist Hall, Station Road, WSM unless otherwise stated.*

**29<sup>th</sup> January. 7.30pm.**

**'Message in the Waves'** – the film that motivated Modbury to go plastic bag free. This film is being shown in Yatton in conjunction with Yatton and Congresbury Wildlife Action Group (YACWAG) on the 29 January at 7.30 in the Horsecastle Chapel in Horsecastle Road. Entry is free.

**18<sup>th</sup> February 7.30 p.m.**

**'Packaging unWRAPPED'**

Sally White from WRAP – Waste Recovery Action Programme.

**18<sup>th</sup> March 7.30 p.m.**

**'How should we respond to the dangers of Climate Change'** –

Joe Burlington Chairman of South Somerset Climate Action.

**21<sup>st</sup> March (Saturday).**

Project called Green Talk @ the Blakehay to be held at the Blakehay Centre, Wadham Street, Weston super Mare. Full details still to come, or see

[www.tenons.org.uk](http://www.tenons.org.uk)

## **Further afield**

**Wed 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009** - Dr Elaine Storkey, President, Tearfund "Creation, Ecological Crisis and the Global Poor" York St John University, 7.00pm

**Wed 25<sup>th</sup> March** - Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury "Renewing the Face of the Earth: Human Responsibility and the Environment" York Minster, 7.30pm.

## **After the floods; an ECO FAIR in Evesham**

EVESHAM METHODIST CHURCH AND AVONBANK CENTRE

SATURDAY MAY 16<sup>TH</sup> 2009. 10.30am to 3pm.

To celebrate the reopening of the Avonbank Centre after the floods and for the church receiving its third ECO award Evesham Methodist Church and the Avonbank Centre are hosting an ECO fair. This is seen as an opportunity for the local community of Evesham to show how it can be more self supporting and help solve many of our most pressing environmental problems and for national concerns to display information. More details from Graham Gooderham, 33, Abbey Croft, Pershore, WR10 1 JQ 01386 553930. Or e-mail [suegooderham@btinternet.com](mailto:suegooderham@btinternet.com)

## **Hope for planet Earth – reaches Poole**

*A Christian perspective on caring for the environment*

Monday 9 March – Poole Grammar School

The environment, conservation and climate change are rarely out of the news. We are already starting to see the global consequences of environmental changes, particularly on the poorest nations of the world. But as people who believe that 'the earth is the Lord's and everything in it', are we as Christians

doing enough to lead the debate and make our voices heard? Is there a Christian imperative to act?

**Hope for Planet Earth** is a multi-media presentation put together by a number of Christian organisations (Tearfund, A Rocha, Share Jesus International, John Ray Initiative and The Faraday Institute). Leading experts explore the science and dispel the myths about climate change, its impact on the poorest people and the planet, and our response as Christians. A national tour earlier this year was a great success – but came nowhere near south Dorset! However, 2009 tour will be coming to **Poole Grammar School** on the evening of **Monday 9 March**.

More information about this venue can be got from David and Jean Morgan (members of Saint John's, Wimborne) on 01202 883504  
[dnjmorgan@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dnjmorgan@tiscali.co.uk) 12 St John's Hill, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 1DD

## **Other news.**

### **Regen is to get a cash boost.**

The region's sustainable energy agency Regen SW has received a £2 million investment to continue its work with businesses across the South West. The cash boost, which extends Regen SW's funding by two years until March 2011, comes from the South West RDA, which has now invested more than £5.3 million in Regen SW since 2002.

The extra money will allow Regen SW to deliver a new business plan designed to beef up its support to businesses, including the marine energy sector. It will also look at speeding up the transition to a low-carbon economy in the South West by unlocking sustainable energy opportunities, accelerating the uptake of the region's renewable energy resources, and championing initiatives that reduce energy demand.

The South West's sustainable energy sector is worth over £500 million a year to the regional economy, supporting in excess of 7,200 jobs. The renewable energy sector alone has seen a massive 37 per cent year-on-year growth in employment over the last 3 years. Regen SW will be working to support this trend of rapid growth, as national and international efforts to address the twin threats of climate change and energy security become ever more intense.

---

*The editor of DEL is always interested in hearing about environmental events and projects from around the diocese, in particular work being done in individual churches and deaneries. And we always welcome new subscribers (free). Send information and requests by e-mail to [brianckellock@brianckellock.plus.com](mailto:brianckellock@brianckellock.plus.com).*

**Again with my thanks to Gordon Waddington for the cartoon that this Epiphany month is taken from the Christmas card he sent me.**