

# Diocesan Environment Link

From the Bath & Wells Diocesan Environment Group (DEG)

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'I THOUGHT WE WERE  
MEANT TO CUT DOWN  
ON CARBON, NOT  
PRODUCE IT MAUREEN!'

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## **South West diocese plan to work jointly on energy and environment**

Senior members from the six South West diocese plus Oxford met in Taunton last month to agree a common approach to a number of environmental issues. Hosted by the Bath and Wells diocese, the event focused on ways of working together on energy procurement, production and conservation. Those at the meeting included specialists in finance, property, building and environment.

Among items discussed were the various plans and ideas that individual diocese are piloting, also the possibility for a working conference involving specialist groups that would consider opportunities of joint action. A working party was set up to take the ideas forward. Also taking part in the day were Bishop George Browning, convenor of the Environment Network of the Anglican Communion, and Dan Brown, sustainability manager for Wessex Water.

## **BBC interviews DEG following Archbishop's Ebor lecture**

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Ebor lecture at York Minster on the 25<sup>th</sup> March prompted BBC Radio Somerset to contact one of DEG's members for comment. The result was eight minutes of useful air-time for us on The Morning Show two days later.

The title of Rowan Williams' lecture was *Renewing the Face of the Earth: Human Responsibility and the Environment* in which he urged a radical change of heart to prevent runaway climate change. He warned that 'God's faithfulness stands, assuring us that even in the most appalling disasters love will not let us go, but it will not be a safety net that guarantees a happy ending for the world.'

Taking the severe warnings and challenges contained in the lecture, BBC presenter Vernon Harwood devoted his hour-long Friday morning programme to the question '*Are we too selfish or too stupid to save our world?*'

The gist of the reply we were able to give was that:

'We in the West are living at an unsustainable level at the expense of the rest of the world. If that is being selfish then we have to change, and if not from choice then from necessity. The current credit crisis is causing people to make changes to their lives that they would not otherwise choose to make. It will be the same with climate change. We are being selfish and we do have to change.'

The lecture can be found at [www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1301](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1301)

## **Exeter diocese Grade II church installs a wood fired burner**

St Paul, Gulworthy, a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Grade II listed building in the Exeter diocese, has installed a new wood-fired boiler using pelleted timber from the local area. Churchwarden Mrs Mary Ann Furze said the small church believed that combating climate change was part of its Christian mission for future generations. She said the project had taken a lot of hard work but everyone was thrilled with the results.

Exeter diocese has also produced new guidelines to help congregations meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century environmental challenges in ways that work with their historic buildings. Produced by the DAC in conjunction with the diocesan environmental officer Martyn Goss and the Devon Association for Renewable Energy, they are intended for parishes considering renewable energy installations in their church buildings. Downloadable from [www.exeter.anglican.org](http://www.exeter.anglican.org).

## Call for badger control talks mis-reported

A press release last month from the Rural Life Group of the Mission Forum headed *The Bovine Tuberculosis Crisis* stated:

*'The Anglican church in Somerset has called for urgent talks to help solve the problem of TB in cattle. Many believe the disease is caused by badgers but any proposal to cull them is controversial and groups have been formed for their protection. Now the Rural Life Group of the Diocese of Bath and Wells has called for talks between farmers, badger groups and the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.*

*Rural Life Group chairman Mr Tom Done said many farmers face bankruptcy and depression because they cannot sell their stock, and lose many animals which test positive for TB. He added: "The position is what can now be done in the interests of all? It is a fact that no-one including most farmers want to see a mass cull of all badgers but in the interest of cattle, badgers and farmers it will be necessary to control badger population so that we can have healthy setts and herds.*

*'Let us believe that we can have a positive debate between the Badger Groups, Farmers and DEFRA with all sides looking at the interests of one another so we can have healthy wildlife and cattle for the benefit of those of us who love our countryside. The ambition of the Rural Life Group of the Diocese of Bath and Wells during 2009 is to instigate such a discussion.'*

Because subsequent local press reports gave the impression that the Church was calling for a mass badger cull, the diocese rural life adviser Revd Robert Widdowson told the Church Times that such a suggestion was horrendous. 'That is the very opposite of what we want to do.... We simply want to get people round the table to have some sensible conversations.'

## Write a letter to Gordon Brown about Copenhagen

A Church of England letter writing initiative.

Decisions about international climate policies – good or bad – will be made by politicians at the climate change summit in Copenhagen in December 2009. Environmentalists are arguing that making a fuss in December is leaving it too late to have much influence. It is now, they say, that people are working on the policies. So the C of E has initiated a mass letter-writing campaign designed to influence the UK Prime Minister concerning the climate change summit.

It has prepared two letters, not for copying but to be used as a basis for individual letter writers. These can be found at these addresses:

The first letter – more a document than a letter – is for church leaders, and offering detailed analysis: <http://tinyurl.com/cudo3g>. The second much shorter letter and analysis, is for congregations and networks: <http://tinyurl.com/bmjh4p>.

Here is what Operation Noah has to say about the two letters.

*'The key objectives of both letters is to frame the decision that EU leaders will take at the Spring European Council on the outcomes of the Copenhagen Climate*

*Change talks in December. The Church of England also hopes that this letter writing initiative might prove a useful vehicle to engage congregations, churches, and Christians at grass roots level on the climate change debate.*

*A number of C of E experts on climate change met in February to look at ways in which European Churches could make representations on the elements to be adopted by EU Heads of State and Government at the Spring Council which was held in mid-March. The initiative began in response to the European Commission's proposals for the EU negotiating position in Copenhagen.'*

### **A Rocha regional event coming to Bath**

Bath is the venue for one of a series of regional meetings being planned by the Christian environment organisation A Rocha. These carry the strap line *Connecting Locally – A Rocha UK in the regions*. The one intended to cover Wessex is scheduled to take place at Saint Luke's Church Centre, Bath on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 10am to 4.30pm. Cost is £7 including light lunch, tea and coffee. Further details can be obtained from Elaine Brown, 64 Queens Avenue, London N3 2NO or e-mail [elaine.brown@arocha.org](mailto:elaine.brown@arocha.org).

Dates and venues of the other events still to be held are:

East Midlands (Derby) 11<sup>th</sup> April.

Scotland (Pitlochry) 9<sup>th</sup> May

East of England (venue to be announced) June.

### **Futureshape – a new resource from the BMS**

BMS World Mission (Baptist Missionary Society) has released a new resource concerned with creation care and the environment. Called Futureshape it features studies for groups and individuals, video comments from experts in the field and a meditation video featuring a song by Pete James.

Futureshape has been produced in partnership with the Baptist Unions of Great Britain, of Scotland and of Wales, and with A Rocha. Studies were initially created by Alan Pain, director of the BMS International Mission Centre, and were then made available last summer for comment and debate among ministers. So the resulting synthesis of ideas is a collaborative resource.

Video contributors include Dr Elaine Storkey, Dr Vinoth Ramachandra, Revd Dave Bookless, Sir John Houghton and Revd Prem Mitra. Full information concerning this new resource can be had at [www.futureshape.org](http://www.futureshape.org).

### **Mendip Society – nuclear energy round up**

In addition to carrying an informative two-page centre spread outlining the 1100 years of history of Wells Cathedral, the Mendip Society's March newsletter provides an update on nuclear power in the area. It says British Energy and EDF are both consulting on new stations at Hinkley Point while the old nuclear sites of Berkeley and Oldbury (in Gloucestershire) still await takers.

Mendip Society sees nuclear as an adjunct rather than an alternative to a big tidal scheme, providing the base load when no hydro-energy is available while the basin fills. Power from a nuclear station could also be used to aid pumping to fill the basin faster at times outside electricity consumption peaks.

‘The public mood on nuclear seems entirely different,’ it says, ‘to that of the 1980s when Hinkley Point C was approved but not built.’ It adds, ‘Coal now attracts the protest camps, not nuclear.’

### **Bristol City Council says “Sign up to ‘Green Pledge’ and boost your business”**

Businesses across Bristol are being encouraged to embrace green policies and programmes to win new customers, reduce their own costs and make themselves more resilient to the current economic downturn. It suggests one way of sending a powerful message to customers and staff about their commitment to environmental issues is by signing up to the Bristol Partnership’s Green Capital Pledge. The aim is for Bristol’s business community to help the city achieve a low carbon future, with the aim of a 60 per cent cut in emissions by 2050 compared with 2000.

### **Future Events**

#### **Hilfield Day Events update April – June.**

18<sup>th</sup> April. Muslim and Christian sharing in caring for the environment.

Hosted by the Hilfield Project and the London Islamic Network for the Environment. An opportunity to join in work and discussions taking place through the day. The morning will involve exploring personal stories and the Friary grounds, with the afternoon given to working on some particular outside project. From 9.30am to 5pm, lunch and refreshments provided.

4<sup>th</sup> May. Dawn chorus breakfast (4.30am).

*‘What could be better than having a great excuse to get up early and experience the Bank Holiday before everyone else is awake. Come and benefit from the expertise of Nigel Spring and the natural world around Hilfield Friary comes to life.’* Followed by a cooked breakfast. Recommended donations £4. Booking necessary.

23<sup>rd</sup> May. What’s the point of nettles?

*‘Come and discover the wonders of this annoying weed, be transformed by a nettle lover.’* An afternoon lead by Richard Thornbury, a volunteer at Hilfield Friary, 2.30pm. Booking necessary.

7<sup>th</sup> June. Moth Trap (see Hilfield website for details)

20<sup>th</sup> June. Grass identification, with Debbie Watkins of the Dorset Wildlife Trust (see Hilfield website for details).

All these activities take place at the Friary, normally meeting in the car park. For booking contact Sarah, the Friary of Saint Francis, Hilfield, Dorset. 01300 341741. e-mail [hilfieldproject@franciscans.org.uk](mailto:hilfieldproject@franciscans.org.uk). [www.hilfieldproject.co.uk](http://www.hilfieldproject.co.uk)

### Community Food in Action – Dig where the potatoes are.

Davis Hall, West Camel near Yeovil. Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April, 9.30am to 3.30pm. Cost £25. Lectures, workshops, displays, plant swaps and the Rebecca Hoskins film ‘*A farm of the future*’ – with producers, distributors and community food groups. Booking and conference queries to Somerset Community Food (01458 832983), [communityfood3@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:communityfood3@tiscali.co.uk). [www.somersetcommunityfood.org.uk](http://www.somersetcommunityfood.org.uk).

### Green Fair and Scythe Festival

At Thorney Lakes, Nr Muchelney. Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June. 10am to 6.30pm. Workshops, activities, displays, stalls, good food and drink and entertainments to raise environmental awareness through fun activities, promote sustainable projects, revive rural skills and engage the local community in green issues. To book a stall (no later than 15<sup>th</sup> May) or for further information call Louise Finnis (01308 425018) or e-mail [finnisl@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:finnisl@yahoo.co.uk)

### Homes for Good exhibition.

Westpoint Arena, Exeter. Friday 17<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 10am to 4pm. Admission £5.

Sustainable construction and gardening techniques, local and natural materials, energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technology – life style that helps reduce consumption, save energy and make sustainable living easy – valuable and inspiring information for all, from self-builders, garden designers, planning officers, architects, landscape architects, construction engineers, developers, industry, councillors, householders and home owners. Contact Ecos Trust in Langport (01458 259400) or [corina@ecostrust.co.uk](mailto:corina@ecostrust.co.uk). [www.homesforgood.info](http://www.homesforgood.info).

### News from BetterBath

The first BetterBath meeting for 2009 will take place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April at the Building of Bath Collection, Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapel, The Vineyard, the Paragon, Bath BA1 5NA, at 10.30am for 11. This is a change from the normal venue. This meeting is being organised in association with the Bath Preservation Trust as part of a wider programme of events to celebrate World Heritage Day (18<sup>th</sup> April). The subject for discussion will be Bath’s World Heritage Status, what does it mean for the city. And in the chair will be Sam Holliday, editor of the Bath Chronicle. More details at [www.betterbath.org.uk](http://www.betterbath.org.uk) or ring 01225 427497.

### Lock-in Energy workshop

Bath-based Lock-In Energy is running an introductory energy saving workshop in the Percy Community Centre, New King Street on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April from 10am. The workshop will aim to provide knowledge about low-cost ways of saving energy, how to get better deals from power companies, grants available and basic renewable energy. For more information e-mail [john.ingham@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:john.ingham@yahoo.co.uk).

### SBAE says council must take its cue from scientist over airport

Campaigners opposing the expansion of Bristol Airport are demanding that North Somerset Council (NSC) says no to plans which could see passenger numbers grow from the current 6.2 million to 10 million by 2016. This follows warnings from scientists at the Copenhagen congress on climate change last month.

The Stop Bristol Airport Expansion group (SBAE) said that North Somerset Council must take the message from Copenhagen on climate change into account when it comes to consider the airport's imminent planning application for massive growth.

The 2500 scientists meeting in Copenhagen last month directly called on politicians to stand up to vested interests that increase greenhouse gas emissions. Only by taking such a stand could dangerous climate change be prevented. The campaigners highlighted that emissions from flights are the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases.

If all the UK airports continue to grow according to Government projections, by 2050 they will account for 50 per cent of UK emissions. For fuller details of the Copenhagen congress referred to see newsroom at <http://climatecongress.Ku.dk>.

### **Wave Hub choose Orecon as new device developer**

Wave Hub, the pioneering wave energy project on course to be built next year off the coast of South West England, has announced another wave energy development partner. Orecon Limited will occupy the fourth berth of the Wave Hub which aims to be operational by August 2010.

Based in Bodmin, Wave Hub was founded in 2002 as a spin-out business from the University of Plymouth. Last year it succeeded in raising \$24 million of private investment for the development of its wave energy buoy, which is expected to be capable of generating enough power for 1000 homes. Essentially it will be a giant electrical socket on the sea ten miles offshore and connected to the National Grid. Wave energy device developers can plug their devices into it to carry out large-scale pre-commercial testing.

### **Six sustainable tourism proposals submitted by the SWRDA**

The South West Regional Development Agency reports that six wide-ranging tourism proposals that between them will benefit every county in the South West have a good chance of sharing £12.8 million of sustainable tourism funding from the Rural Development Programme for England. The proposals relate to off-road cycling, water-based recreation, historical and archaeological sites along the South West coastal path, World Heritage mining sites, rural sports tourism and Camel and Tarka trail links. All submitted proposals are expected to have high impact on tourism but have low carbon and low environmental impact.

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*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 by e-mail to [brianckellock@brianckellock.plus.com](mailto:brianckellock@brianckellock.plus.com). Or you can add your name to the subscriber list through our website [www.bathandwellsenvironmental.org.uk](http://www.bathandwellsenvironmental.org.uk) Back issues and much other useful information can also be accessed through the site.*

**Again with my thanks to Gordon Waddington for the cartoon.**