

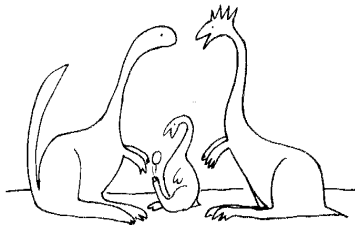
Diocesan Environment Link

[Bath & Wells Diocesan Environment Group]

Environmental news from the around region and beyond

Newsletter number 26

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'I SEE THERE'S A REPORT SAYING
WE'RE FACED WITH A DIFFICULT
AND UNCERTAIN FUTURE'

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Diocesan Environment video is going well

More than 200 copies of the DVD *Love for the Future* which members of the Diocesan Environment Group has been involved in writing, filming and recording over the past year have so far been distributed. DEG chairman David Osborne reports that the feedback is very encouraging. A copy can be obtained, free of charge, by e-mailing your details to loveforthefuture@bathwells.anglican.org.

A preview of the DVD can still be seen on the Bath and Wells diocese website. Go to www.bathandwells.org.uk and the links *mission/environment/Love for the Future*. Initially designed for use during Lent, the course is equally suitable for use by groups at other times in the future as the topics it covers become more urgent and widely discussed.

The aim of the DVD and study notes provided is to open up the issues relating to the environment and our responsibilities, and to help people learn from God through study time. The six sessions cover six topics with each session identified by a one-word name: Respect, Compassion, Justice, Simplicity, Repentance, Hope.

There is more than enough material provided for each session and it is intended that different groups will be able to use it in differing ways. It includes discussion questions, bible study passages and worship material. Also because of the large number of people who were involved in producing the DVD and support material there is a list of credits.

Any Green Questions?

Wednesday 24th February Pilton Village Hall, near Shepton Mallet, 7.30 to 9.00pm.

An opportunity to question prospective parliamentary candidates concerning their position of environmental issues. DEG Chairman David Osborne writes:

'Some time before the summer there will be a general election. Many of us are interested to know what the attitudes and the policies of the different parties are with regard to environmental issues. Everyone now talks about sustainability, but what do they intend to do?'

Any Green Questions is a chance for local electors and others in the Wells constituency to put questions to a panel of representatives of the main political parties. The Prospective Parliamentary Candidates for the Liberal Democrats, Labour and the Green Party, and representatives of the Conservatives and UKIP are expected to be there.

The members of the panel will be given the questions at 7.15, so they have a few minutes to think about them. If you would like to put a question please e-mail it to osbornepilton@ukonline.co.uk or place it in the box in the foyer of Pilton Village Hall.

During the meeting each member of the panel will be invited to respond to the chosen questions for one minute to begin with. This might then be followed by discussion or subsequent questions from the meeting on the same subject.

David Osborne will be in the chair to ensure fair play and strict timekeeping. It should be an interesting and enlightening evening. Do come. Booking is not necessary. The meeting is open to anyone in the constituency. Any Green Questions is organised by the Go Green Group.'

[Edited from The Roundabout and North Wootton News, February 2010]

CEL – Cheltenham meeting (Late notice - 19th February)

19 Feb - Cheltenham - The Old Priory, St Gregory's Church, Clarence Street for 7:30 - Cheltenham CEL: Learning to Tread Lightly in God - Tom Cullinan will be reflecting upon his experiences at Copenhagen, where he was part of the CAFOD delegation (having been with CAFOD on the Wave) . Tom was a monk of Ampleforth Abbey for 50 years and is now a monk-priest of Liverpool RC Archdiocese. He has been involved with Oxfam, CAFOD and Justice and Peace for many years. www.christian-ecology.org.uk/tread-lightly-poster.doc

Carbon Fast for Lent 2010

The Church of England and Tearfund have jointly produced a thought provoking resource to help us reflect on and reduce our impact upon the world's poor & the environment, with simple actions for us to undertake day by day through Lent. For details see www.tearfund.org/carbonfast or contact Dr Charles Reed of the Archbishop's Council on 020 7898 1533 and ask for a Carbon Fast pamphlet.

John Ray Initiative food futures conference

A Future Foods day conference organised by the John Ray in partnership with Redcliffe College, CMS, and the Agricultural Christian Fellowship will be held on Saturday March 6 2010 at Redcliffe College, Gloucester. Its aim will be to provide help in responding to the growing number of media reports that herald the end of cheap food and warn us that the global food system is becoming more fragile.

The conference will look at what scripture says about our relationship with food and those that produce it and what can be done to improve global production, food security, and patterns of trade. The speakers will be Revd Dr Mike Rayner, director of the British Heart Foundation Health Promotion Research Group; Patrick Mulvany, senior policy adviser to Practical Action; and Ruth Valerio who runs A Rocha's Living Lightly initiative. The cost of the day is £35.

Details and booking form at www.redcliffe.org/foodfutures.

John Ray Initiative – Its Copenhagen report

The JRI January newsletter contains powerful assessments of the Copenhagen Climate Change conference from science journalist Dr Tjirk van der Ziel and Sir John Houghton. The reports are on page three of the newsletter which is attached.

Bishop of London: Lords debate following Copenhagen Conference.

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Richard Chartres, Bishop of London, spoke in the Lords (14 January) in the debate on the Copenhagen Conference on climate

change initiated by Lord Stone of Blackheath. The opening paragraphs of the bishop's contribution are given below and the full text is attached.

'The Lord Bishop of London: My Lords, I, too, am grateful for the constructive way in which the noble Lord, Lord Stone, introduced this significant debate. Clearly, post-Copenhagen we need to find ways of making progress that will lift spirits. A recent Brookings Institution paper by Alex Evans and David Steven, entitled Hitting Reboot, is the best analysis that I have read, recommending 12 specific ways forward.

There are many other people in your Lordships' House much better qualified to speak about the specifics. We have already heard the noble Lord, Lord MacLennan, talk about the necessary work in transforming our global institutions and we have heard something about the confidence in the scientific consensus, which, if opinion polls are to be believed, is under threat. I look forward to hearing the noble Lord, Lord Rees, in particular, reflecting on that.'

And the World Development Movement writes:

'The Truth from Copenhagen: The shambolic climate conference in Copenhagen last December was far from what was needed to bring us back from the brink of climate catastrophe, with leaders failing to agree a pathway for the rich country emissions cuts, or for them to pay their climate debts to the global south. Go to: [Find out more about the rich country leaders' outrageous behaviour](#)'

Green roof features in Clevedon church expansion plans.

Christchurch, Clevedon has launched a £1.5 million expansion scheme to meet the needs of its growing congregation as well as provide new facilities for the town. Plans include a rebuilt hall to provide new meeting rooms, offices, toilets and kitchen, removal of the pews to make the Church a flexible and multi use space, an improved sound and IT system and better access for disabled people. Also the roof of the new hall will be covered with eco-friendly Sedum grass.

The new building will improve the visibility of the east end of the mid-Victorian Grade B listed church with its stained glass windows becoming more prominent to passers-by. External changes to the historic Church will be limited to adaptations to the access from the hall complex. A planning application for the work has been submitted to North Somerset Council. More than £1 million has already been raised by the Church and it is hoped that work will start this autumn.

Christchurch is an Anglican-Methodist Ecumenical Partnership formed nearly five years ago by joining together the much older Linden Road Methodist and Christ Church Anglican Churches. Present membership is 220 adults and is growing. For more information contact: Hugh Stebbing Chairman, Christchurch Regen Project. Ph: 01275 872683 E-mail: christineandhugh@gmail.com

2010 is IYB

2010 has been declared the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) by the United Nations. A good starting point to find out more is the Natural History Museum at www.nhm.ac.uk or its companion website www.biodiversityislife.net. Here it is stated that :

'Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth. It is essential for sustaining the natural living systems or ecosystems that provide us with food, fuel, health, wealth, and other vital services. Humans are part of this biodiversity too and have the power to protect or destroy it. Currently, our activities are destroying biodiversity at alarming rates.

'These losses are irreversible, impoverish us all and damage the life support systems we rely on. But we can prevent them. We need to reflect on our achievements to safeguard biodiversity and focus on the urgent challenges ahead. Now is the time to act.'

IYB and A Rocha.

In its February newsletter the Christian conservation organisations suggest that one way to be involved would be to support the scientific work of an A Rocha project. www.arocha.org.uk

Church yards – don't mow, manage

This is the message being sent out by the CofE's national environmental campaign Shrinking the Footprint as it signs up to the United Nations' International Year of Biodiversity (IYB). It is seen as a way of giving space for endangered plant species.

The CofE is one of 300 UK partners who have joined the global campaign involving almost 1000 organisations celebrating "the variety of life on Earthessential for sustaining the natural living systems or ecosystems that provide us with food, fuel, health, wealth, and other vital services."

An estimated two thirds of the CofE's 16,000 churches (around 10,000) have churchyards which collectively cover the area of a small National Park. Around 6,000 of these are already contributing to the biodiversity of the country – both in rural and urban areas – while remaining respectful to its users particularly family and friends of those buried there.

David Shreeve the CofE's National Environment Adviser said: "Churchyards can be a vital biodiversity resource often containing a variety of wildlife which are unique to the area and many manage their land in such a way to celebrate the diversity of life. Whilst there are areas needing to be mown, many churchyards can also be managed to provide excellent wildlife areas. Advice is available from many local wildlife trusts and nationally from Caring for God's Acre."

Is there a role for wind energy in Bath?

The first BetterBath meeting for 2010, on Monday 1st March, will consider whether wind energy has a role to play in meeting Bath's future energy needs. An opening presentation by Martin Holley from the Bristol based Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) will explain the key technical issues, opportunities and constraints associated with wind energy. CSE (www.cse.org.uk) is an independent charity that helps people and organisations to meet the challenges of rising energy costs and climate change.

Caroline Kay from the Bath Preservation Trust (www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk) will consider the impact of wind turbines on the World Heritage Site and its landscape setting. The discussion will then be thrown open and the bulk

of the time will be devoted to points raised from the floor. Issues might include the suitability of the Bath area for wind energy generation; the relative merits of large scale turbines versus smaller ones; the whole-life energy costs and benefits of turbines; their potential impact on the built and natural environment; and the role of the planning system in encouraging or restricting the development of wind power. The meeting is at St Michael's Church, Broad Street, Bath BA1 5LJ. Doors will open at 18.00, when tea and coffee will be on sale. The meeting will start at 18.30, and should conclude by around 20.15.

Severn Tidal Power – Resource or ruin?

This is the title of a seminar being organised by TENONS (The Environment Network of North Somerset) for the morning of 20th March at The Blakehay Theatre, Wadham Street, Weston super Mare starting at 9.45 am. This follows on from a similar seminar last year which looked at the technology of the schemes short-listed for obtaining energy from the tides of the Severn Estuary. Speakers will deal with the economic, social and environmental aspects of the schemes' effects on the area, in particular any planned barrage. More details at www.tenons.org.uk.

Biodiversity and sustainability

This is the title of a workshop – Saturday 6th March, 10am to 4pm - detailed in the February newsletter of the South Somerset Climate Action as follows: Free course: Biodiversity and Sustainability – introductory workshop Somerset Skills and Learning, 47 Ditton Street, Ilminster. Call 0845 688 0488 to enrol www.learnsomerset.co.uk/coursefinder - Code SRA09SDF03.

Jonathan Porritt: Hinkley C – What's the point.

Also detailed in SSCA February newsletter: Jonathan Porritt: Hinkley C – What's the Point? - 'STOP HINKLEY'. Temple Methodist Church, Upper High Street, Taunton. 16th March 7.30pm. The former director of Friends of the Earth and the Sustainable Development Commission is an eloquent and informed speaker. <http://stophinkley.org/> Supporters include: Lord Ashdown, Raymond Briggs, Julie Christie, Dr Caroline Lucas MEP, Michael Meacher MP

Scepticism growing, according to BBC poll.

According to a poll carried out by Populus for the BBC at the beginning of February the number of people in the UK who are sceptical of climate change is growing. A similar poll was carried out in November (prior to the Copenhagen climate change conference). The February poll of 1001 adults found that 25 per cent did not think global warming was happening, a rise of 8 per cent since November. And only 26 per cent of people asked believed that climate was happening and 'now established as largely man-made', compared with 41 per cent in November.

The BBC news story points out that in the period between the two polls there have been a number of high-profile climate-related stories 'some of which have made grim reading for climate scientists and policymakers'. But it also says that of those who were aware of the 'science-flaws' stories 73 per cent stated that

the media coverage had not changed their views about the risk of climate change. 'People tend to make judgements over time based on a whole range of difference sources' say Populus.

Low carbon new builds to be 'compulsory'

According to a report in Low Carbon Economy's Weekly Digest for 5th February, all newly built homes in the UK will have to comply with a new code for sustainable homes from spring onwards. Developers will have to make sure all buildings meet the three star criteria under the Code for Sustainable Homes Assessment.

Currently, performance is measured against nine factors. These include the amount of energy a household needs to be run, materials, waste generated from household use and construction, pollution, ecological impact and the effect on the wellbeing and health of the occupants.

The highest possible award for a newly built home is currently six stars – a level three rating is already mandatory for all new social housing developments. Right now, the scheme with its extension to all new private dwellings is only applicable in England, but the National Welsh Assembly recently announced plans to adopt the code. The government aims to make all new homes zero carbon from 2016 with the implementation of the scheme setting the foundation for new developers.

Sainsburys to make biogas from food waste

Also from the Low Carbon Economy Weekly Digest : Sainsbury's plans to turn all of its food waste into biogas by 2012 to be fed into the national grid. Sainsbury's has signed a contract with Biffa to subject the waste to anaerobic digestion (AD), an environmentally friendly means of breaking down waste. Neil Sachdev, commercial director of the chain, said:

"Respect for the environment is one of our key values, and as such, we will completely stop sending food waste to landfill within the next few weeks. We are desperate for greater anaerobic digestion capacity and would therefore like to see greater, clearer incentives for investment in this green technology."

AD is considered one of the most environmental-friendly and cost-effective means of disposing of waste and generating energy. The technology is already in widespread use across Germany, where AD is the fastest growing renewable technology with over approximately 1,000 new digesters being built each year.

The editor of DEL is always interested in hearing about environmental events and projects from around the diocese, in particular work in individual churches and deaneries. And we always welcome new subscribers (free). Send an e-mail to brianckellock@brianckellock.plus.com. Or you can add your name to the subscriber list through our website www.bathandwellsevenvironmental.org

[.uk](#). Back issues and other useful information can also be accessed through the site

