

ALL SAINTS' ECO-BULLETIN Issue 4 WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Cop26 seems a long time ago and despite all the hype didn't achieve as much as was hoped. Climate change already no longer seems to be at the fore front of the world news but we must hope and pray that all nations are keeping it at their fore front and are working to keep the promises that were made and more.

As a church we are prioritising and moving forward on the issue with this month's sermons concentrating on what we as a church and a congregation can do.

The PCC agreed in its final meeting of 2021 to establish an Environment Sub group whose first task is to prepare a report for the March meeting recommending adoption of an Environmental Policy containing an overall summary strategic approach with aims and objectives, actions and programmes. This policy document will be based on the model provided by the Diocese of Leeds and the proposed strategy recently agreed at General Synod.

The group is headed by Clive Brook, who reminded the PCC that Climate Change and the associated challenge of environmental degradation (biodiversity & habitat loss) and the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities constitutes the greatest social justice and existential crisis facing this and future generations. The Church in all its forms must play a pro-active part and it must be a firm component of our outreach & mission.

It needs to be a 2-pronged approach, from the bottom up and from the top down. We all need to take responsibility for our choices and action, encourage others and try to influence changes. We have seen many times what public protest & pressure can achieve, (although we may not condone the way in which some of these have been executed). At the same time governments and organisations need to take action so that some changes are forced upon us. Should we have the choice of picking up the convenient plastic bag of carrots sitting right next to the loose ones? When shops introduced the 5p charge for plastic carrier bags that was an inconvenience but the public quickly adapted & what a difference it made.

It might seem daunting but there are success stories. To highlight just a few that have come to my notice recently with respect to biodiversity & habitat:-

- Belize has stopped all oil exploration off its coast to protect the world's 2nd largest coral reef.
- the tiger population in Nepal has doubled from 120 in 2009 to 235 in 2021.
- In 2020 The World Land Trust purchased 64,826 additional acres to protect wildlife across the world

Are you aware that the UK is one of the worst countries for biodiversity? Even our most treasured and familiar wildlife species like the croaking common frog and the buzzing garden bumblebee are beginning to fade away from our gardens. As keen birdwatchers we have seen a noticeable decline in the numbers of common birds visiting our garden in recent years. Human activity is forcing wildlife to the fringes of survival & our landscape is becoming more devoid of nature. It's hard to comprehend what's missing when it is gone. Younger generations will not be aware of amazing wildlife spectacles that would have once been commonplace as each generation inherits a world more devoid of nature than the last.

We all have a part to play, however large or small that may be in reversing environmental decline in terms of enhancing our landscapes and natural areas. We welcome the requirements introduced by the government that all new housing developments are required to provide biodiversity net gains and the major expansions that have occurred of protected areas such as National Parks etc which bring the UK's protected areas very close to the 30% target which was set. Let's hope that this is just the beginning.

RECYCLING

The news that we will be working with Milestones to facilitate more plastic recycling is great. They have been doing a sterling job and have been ahead of the supermarkets for recycling a lot of soft plastic waste. But in our excitement that we can now recycle so much more, let us not lose sight of the fact that this does not actually make the use of plastic ok.

Remember - **REMOVE-REDUCE-REUSE-RECYCLE.**

Top Tip- have you exchanged plastic bottles of liquid soap for bars of soap? And washing up liquid for soap bars? If so, you may be interested in eco soap pads which keep the soap dry & lasting longer. Available from Amazon (apologies!) or Etsy. If anyone finds a local source please let us know. Search for eco soap pads.

Stop press – if you have been searching for somewhere to recycle those silver lined cardboard Pringles tubes, search no more! The Pringles company has joined with Terracycle to provide a nationwide network of recycling facilities so you can take your empty tubes to North Parade Car Park, Cattle Market St, Otley LS21 1BQ. For a full list of recycling sites is you want to encourage others living elsewhere, go to the Pringles website.

CARBON FOOTPRINTS

This is something that all churches are required to calculate and assess where savings can be made.

Have you looked at your carbon footprint? Have you considered offsetting your unavoidable emissions? The World Land Trust has a carbon balancing program which uses money donated to protect habitats which are under threat and to restore degraded habitats.

2022

Whilst it is bit late for New Year resolutions, it is never too late to make new resolutions. Why not make 2022 a year of climate & environmental resolutions? Maybe making 1 change or taking 1 action every month. Why not share your ideas & achievements to publish in what I hope will become a more and maybe more widespread Eco-Bulletin. E-mail kathrynallen82@yahoo.co.uk or lisacoe1@gmail.com with these or any other ideas or suggestions.

The 3 bulletins issued in 2021 are available in the News section on the church website.

A Prayer for Wisdom to Care for the Earth

Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and till it.
Help us to act now for the good of future generations and all your creatures.
Help us to become instruments of a new creation,
Founded on the covenant of your love. **Amen**

- From The Cry of the Earth