



EcoChurch Gold award winner St Catherine's, Burbage, Diocese of Leicester celebrating a Green Communion

'Care for God's creation and the people who inhabit it is instrumental to the life of faith'

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby

Creationtide 2018 - In 'Creationtide' or the 'Season of Creation' (from 1st September to 4th October) Christians around the world unite to pray and care for creation. New resources for Creationtide are now available. In addition to the existing materials there are [new liturgies and a daily actions and reflections sheet](#). You can also find links to the EcoChurch Green Communion resources, the ecumenical material on the Season of Creation site and the registration for daily reflections from EcoChurch Southwest.

Some of the [Letters for Creation](#) that have come in from around the Anglican Communion are also available to read on the Creationtide site. These demonstrate the dramatic affect that climate change is already having on our sisters and brothers across the world. We will continue to expand this global conversation as we move towards the next Lambeth Conference in 2020.

Song for Creationtide - Following the success of their Plastic Free Lent initiative St Brides Church Choir are making plans for next year which will include a new song especially commissioned for choirs and choral groups to sing in Creationtide services. More details in our next newsletter.



Church Investment and Climate Change -

The [Transition Pathway Initiative \(TPI\) tool](#) helps to guide investors by providing a thorough analysis of company performance and management helping establish which are transitioning to a low carbon economy. This tool was established by the Church of England and Environment Agency and is now supported by asset owners with over £7 trillion of assets under management. This is a huge and influential programme. The C of E also continues to challenge and engage with companies over their approach to climate change, recently backing a [shareholder resolution at Shell](#).

[Speaking at the TPI Climate Summit](#) Archbishop Justin called climate change an 'existential problem for the entire global community in a way that nothing else is' and urged investors to act.

[General Synod](#) saw a continuation of the focus on investment with a powerful debate of the [Oxford motion](#) calling for divestment from those fossil fuel companies not aligned by 2020 to the Paris Agreement to restrict global warming to well below 2°C. The session included a report from the National Investing Bodies of the C of E on the progress of fossil fuel company engagement and the TPI. The Oxford motion was rejected but an amendment to change the deadline from 2020 to 2023 was passed allowing time for engagement with and full analysis of companies while still retaining an urgency in taking action.

The other major environmental discussion at Synod, the [London/Truro motion](#) on environmental programmes was adjourned to February 2019. However there was an appreciation in the debate of the need to increase action within the church, putting our own house in order, if we are to hold companies to account. In addition to the debates there were three seminar sessions given by members of the Environmental Working Group featuring theological reflection and discussion of current work around buildings, land and community. [Hear the inspiring contributions to the debate here.](#)

3 years on from Laudato Si - David Shreeve the Archbishops Council's Environment Advisor was invited to the Vatican to join in the celebration of the 3rd Anniversary of the publication of [Laudato si](#). The international event entitled '[How do we inspire a massive movement for the care of our common home?](#)' attended by Catholics from around the world included presentations from Lord Deben chair of the UK's Committee on Climate Change, Prof Nicholas Stern and Prof Celia Dean-Drummond. The event included an Audience with Pope Francis.



St Paul's Church Camden Square

Green Health Awards - The benefits of engaging with the natural world for mental, physical and spiritual health is increasingly recognised. The Green Health Awards, run in partnership with the Church times, will celebrate those churches who make use of their outdoor space to promote the links between natural environment and health. The awards are still open but [get your application in](#) fast, the deadline is 31st July!

Grow Wild Seed Kits - [Kew Gardens](#) and the Big Lottery have released another batch of free wildflower seed kits and lots of useful advice on autumn seed sowing. Get your church group, community project or local schools involved. You can [register online](#) to be in with a chance of getting some free seeds.

Powering God's Northern Powerhouse - a [conference on sustainable church heating and lighting](#) for churches from across the northern dioceses. This event is run in partnership with Leeds Diocese and will take place on 1st December in Wakefield Cathedral.

Eco Church - [Over 900 churches](#) and growing [Eco Church](#) is a great tool for engaging congregations with environmental issues.

Get into nature - Looking for ways to entertain children this summer. The [RSPB](#) and [Woodland Trust](#) have inspiring resources for getting your kids outside to enjoy creation.

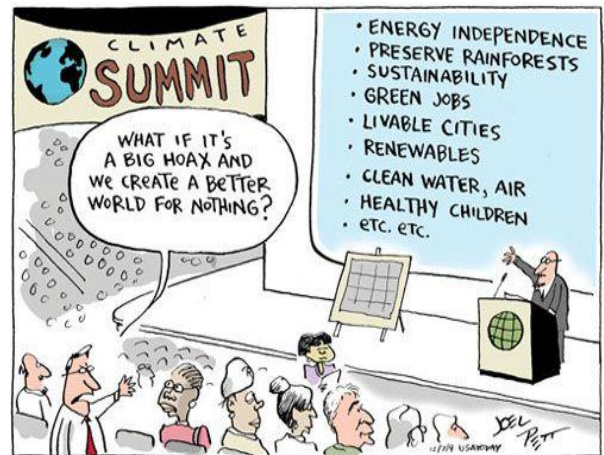
Has your MP signed up to net zero emissions by 2050? - Check the [Climate Coalition's list](#) and if not use their resources to get in touch! Don't forget that [Hope for the Future](#) also have some excellent materials for engaging with your MP.

Resources:

The moral case for Christian action - 'we ask that you remember us – the human faces of climate change. See us. Partner with us. Rise with us.' [An article](#) from Joseph Sapati Moeono-Kolio from Samoa on the state of our common home and our duty as Christians to protect it.

Pray and Fast for the Climate - Don't forget that there are some [fantastic resources](#) available to help you pray and fast on the 1st of each month.

Carbon Literacy Project - this Manchester based project offers training to those who work, live or study in the city and surrounding area. It has some great material online including the [top 5](#) films, books, websites and TED talks about climate change. It also has a huge number of climate change [cartoons!](#)



John Ray Initiative new briefing papers and blogs - '[Travelling Light](#)' – a [theological reflection on modern transport](#) briefing paper by Revd. Dr. John Weaver and three blogs, two on [animals and ethics](#) and one on [Psalm 19](#) are available now.

ECIU Briefings - The [Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit](#) provide some excellent briefings which distil complex issues into straightforward and accurate articles.

Climate Visuals Webinar - 'From images to film: Research lessons and campaign insights'. If you missed it you can [watch again](#) now.

Communicating environmental and Sustainability Science - a [new report](#) from Climate outreach explores key trends, themes and findings in environmental science communication.

Global Neighbours - a new school accreditation scheme run by Christian Aid in partnership with the C of E's Education Office, to encourage a deeper understanding of global injustice and the Christian response to it in primary school pupils across England. Schools can register [here](#). There are also some great resources from the long running [Eco Schools programme](#) including an interactive tool and take a look at [Diddy Disciples](#) for worship and storytelling materials.

Community Energy - Forum for the Future have created a new project (PowerPaired) that pairs buildings with potential for renewable energy with interested local community groups. If you want to investigate this, with no obligation, [let us know](#). Be inspired by [Power Up North London's](#) work with St Anne's Highgate.

Tenants of the King - is a new Bible-based, Jesus-centred resource from [Operation Noah](#) is now [available](#). This four-part study series is designed to help you and your church consider what the Bible has to say about today's climate crisis through interactive group sessions, video interviews with leading Christian thinkers and insightful Bible commentary.

Focus Piece: Managing churchyard grassland

Since the 1930s, 97% of England's wildflower-rich grasslands have disappeared, which has led to similar reductions in the animals that rely on this habitat such as insects, bats and birds.

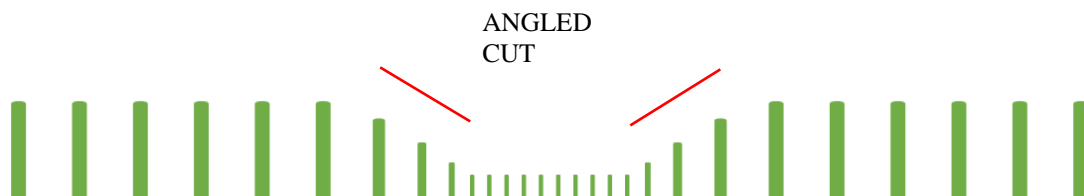
If we are to reverse the declines in our wildlife, we need to change our approach to managing our churchyard grasslands. Every grassland is a potential nature reserve that can be a home to plants and animals that are struggling in our countryside. We can still keep paths cut short and maintain grassland around graves which are regularly visited but we should be letting everything else grow.



Here are some tips for managing amenity grasslands for nature:

- Choose areas that will be kept short (e.g. paths, areas around graves that are regularly visited) and cut these as normal but on a slightly higher setting – above 40mm will enable some wildflowers to survive and the higher you can cut, the more survive.

These cut areas will ensure your site looks managed and will 'frame' your wildflower grasslands. It is worth cutting the edges of paths and smaller areas on an angle (see image below), using a strimmer, to prevent tall grasses and wildflowers falling across the path.



- Choose the areas you would like as wildflower grasslands - these should be areas that aren't regularly used by people. Allow them to grow from April through to at least mid-July but preferably later. This may alter each year depending on the weather and site requirements. Historically, hay meadows were rotated with pastures and so many of our native plants have adapted well to a rotational management.
- Once these areas have flowered, cut them using a strimmer, a scythe, or an Allen scythe type mower which doesn't smash up the cut grass. Cut no lower than 50mm (2 inches) but preferably higher than this to ensure wildflowers can survive. Leave the cut grass (or hay) for a few days to dry and drop its seed – this will save you re-seeding, make the hay lighter to move and ensure all the wildflowers can set seed. Then rake off the hay and remove – this makes an excellent community or volunteer day. This can be stacked in a corner to create a wildlife habitat or given away or sold as hay.
- If grass growth is vigorous in September, consider mowing once lightly to control. This mimics 'aftermath' grazing that has been practiced by farmers for centuries.
- When sowing new grassland areas, use a wildflower-rich mix with native grasses and flowers matched to the soil in your area. Try 'over-sowing' – adding some wildflower seed

to existing grassland. Molehills and bare patches are ideal places to add seed. If you want to over-sow a larger area, cut it down tight (and remove cuttings) to expose any bare ground. If there is little bare ground lightly rake through.

- Avoid spraying with pesticides. Weeds like thistles, nettles and docks are a sign of where management isn't quite right yet. Control them by pulling or cutting individually – or just leave them as these are great for insects.
- Tell people what you're doing. Use leaflets, notices and signs (in keeping with the site) to explain the change in management and why. Try to involve local community as much as possible through volunteering to manage and survey the site. Organise walks, talks, and events to engage people in the site.

Finally, consider grazing. Many churchyards, parks and village greens use sheep to keep down the grass, giving grazing to local farmers or smallholders. This would require ensuring a stock-proof area, although temporary fencing could be used for this. Time the grazing to that of a hay cut or slightly later – so mid-July onwards – and ensure the sheep are removed before they can graze the grass too tightly. This requires a good relationship with the grazier and obviously a bit of thought about how the public will react.

With thanks to David Curry, Devon Living Churchyards and Devon Wildlife Trust.

Dates for the diary:

- 20 July - 12 Aug. [Big Butterfly Count](#)
- 1 Aug. [Pray and Fast for the Climate](#)
- 1 Sept. - 4 Oct. [Creationtide](#)
- 3 -7 Sept. [Zero Waste Week](#)
- 12 Sept. [Hook Lecture: Jonathan Bartley: Working for the Peace of the City](#), Leeds Minster
- 14 – 17 Sept. [Great British Beach Clean – find your nearest event](#)
- 15 Sept. [Green Christian “On the Road Together”](#), Derby
- 16 Sept. [Nicola Peel: Finding solutions to key ecological issues](#), London
- 22 Sept. [World Car Free Day](#)
- 29 Sept. - 5 Oct. [Good Money Week](#)
- 2 Oct. Green Health Live Conference, London
- 6 Oct. [Green Christian “On the Road Together”](#), Bristol
- 6-10 Oct. [‘On the way to economic and ecological justice – ‘To give you a future with hope’ \(Jer 29:11\),’](#) 12th European Churches Environment Network Assembly, Katowice (Poland)
- 8 Oct. [Release of IPCC report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C](#)
- 15 - 19 Oct. [Green Great Britain Week](#)
- 13 Nov. [Passivhaus Conference 2018](#), Leeds
- 17 Nov. [Green Christian 2018 Annual Members’ Meeting](#), London
- 1 Dec. [Powering God’s Northern Powerhouse](#), Wakefield Cathedral

Diocesan Environment Officers - Do you know who your DEO is? Check [here](#). If your diocese has a vacancy could you become the DEO or environment link? [Get in touch](#).

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