

Torbay Christian EcoAction

November 2024 newsletter

This is our November newsletter.

As previously, this newsletter is coming in PDF form but also with a link at <https://davidhodson.com/torbay-christian-ecoaction-november-2024-newsletter/> if that is easier for you to distribute. If you want a word version, let me know. If you want to unsubscribe, email me. If you know of anyone whom you think would like to receive, again let me know. As previously, it is a mixture of events, resources and news. If anyone has anything they would like appropriately publicised, please let me know.

Tear fund quiz: 16th November at 7:30 PM: **this coming Saturday!**

For any who haven't already signed up to come along! I attach the poster which can also be found here: <https://davidhodson.com/torbay-christian-ecoaction-tearfund-quiz-16-november-2024/> and let me know if anyone would like it in any other format e.g. jpeg. Here is the just giving page: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/eco-action-group-st-matthias-torquay-1727862195317>. It's the same format as previous years. Teams of 6 or so. Various prizes. Quiz to appeal to different ages and interests. Bring your own but also half-time refreshments. If you'd like to know any more, email me please. Do inform your churches and we would love to see as many as possible from around the bay. An overall fun evening. A good chance also for us to meet up.

How green is your garden: 18th January at 2 PM

This event is also going ahead, Saturday 18th January at 2 o'clock until about 5 PM at St Matthias in Torquay. The programme is mostly finalised but we are still looking for speakers on, first, gardening in a coastal environment such as where we live here in Torbay and, secondly, to talk about the peat free compost and similar type issues. If you know of anyone, please let me know urgently. The programme and other publicity will be circulated in early December. Please put in your diary. We will have a variety of talks planned including edible gardening, what to do with only a small garden, gardening for well-being, wildlife gardening and similar. It should be a fascinating time. Many love gardening but how can we do this with an environmental awareness

Torbay Climate Partnership

We are delighted to say that Torbay Christian Eco-Action has been invited to join the Torbay Climate Partnership organised by the council and comprising organisations across Torbay working in the environmental and climate change arena. We regard this as excellent news. We will be able to share with churches across Torbay better what is happening and we can give our own input. The first meeting is on 6th December and more in the next newsletter

Torbay new climate action plan: a Greener Way for our Bay

You will remember the consultation on this at the end of last year and I know a number of us took part and tried to encourage others to do so to support the environmental work for our council. Their plan has just been produced and can be found here <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/pr9190/> and I encourage us all to read at least the summary if not more. It says it plans to make homes more energy-efficient which is a big issue for us here in Torbay as the housing stock is very heat inefficient. It wants to protect the natural environment, help businesses to become more sustainable, encourage public transport and similar. It has immediate action and long-term plans. Interestingly, the 2030 net zero target has been dropped and now it looks to a national 2050 net zero target. My feeling is that although 2030 was now effectively impossible, putting it back to 2050 is far too long away. In fairness, they have targets for interim progress in 2035. The report is 49 pages long and very readable and I commend highly. It sets out 10 key things to help reduce Torbay carbon emissions. I'm setting them out at the end of this letter and do read. I suspect we would all be supportive. What's crucial is what happens next. There is a timetable of action within the report and I anticipate that will be at the discussion at the meeting in December and I will report back

COP29 Azerbaijan

This annual United Nations climate change conference is taking place this week in Azerbaijan. A number of us expressed considerable scepticism about holding it in a country which has its wealth based entirely or almost entirely on fossil fuel production. Surely some conflict? It hasn't helped by news predictably coming out that one of the organisers from Azerbaijan was caught in a sting operation by a reporter trying to push contracts for fossil fuel for his country. Nevertheless, it is a vital gathering annually. Not least as we have seen the appalling impact of the rain and floods in Spain in these past couple of weeks. There is hope apparently that there will be some progress notwithstanding that seemingly the 2030 date for net zero has been largely abandoned. More in December when we know what has transpired from the conference. Please pray for it. Tear fund have put a prayer on their website which you may find helpful:

Lord God, we come before you ahead of the United Nations climate summit, COP29, which will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan. Lord, guide the hearts and minds of world leaders, scientists and activists as they work towards solutions for our planet's future. Grant them wisdom, compassion and unity in their efforts to address climate change and protect creation for future generations. We especially lift up those living in poverty, who bear the heaviest burden of climate change despite contributing the least to its causes. May their voices be heard, their needs be met, and justice be at the heart of every decision. Inspire us all to be better stewards of the environment, working together in peace for this beautiful world you've given us. Amen.

INC- 5 South Korea

This meeting, 25th November, is to continue negotiations on a global plastics treaty. This has featured in previous newsletters. Tearfund have created a prayer guide on how to pray for the negotiations:

https://www.tearfund.org/stories/2024/11/how-can-i-pray-for-the-global-plastic-treaty-negotiations?tf_source=161020&utm_source=One+Voice&utm_campaign=583aa01a92-One+Voice+Weekly+%E2%80%93+08+11+2024&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ff3e17b03a-583aa01a92-34416100&mc_cid=583aa01a92&mc_eid=9d20059db6

International carbon literacy action day: 14th November

This is described as the world's largest climate education and action training event of its kind: <https://carbonliteracy.com/carbon-literacy-action-day/> . They save from every corner of the globe, thousands of people are gathering and uniting to train, analyse action and develop positive change. There are a series of events in respect of the above including the following to which I have signed up and we will see what it's about but please do join me:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/thecarbonliteracyproject/1430131>

Rubbish, or more precisely recycling

Devon county council apparently has the second-highest recycling rate in the country; 63,000 tons of material going through its household waste recycling centres. I can't find any distinctive figures for Torbay Council, and there may be none, and I presume as part of the amalgamation it will be part of Devon county council hereafter anyway. If anyone has these figures or knows more, please say. But in another development, apparently new rules come into place in December

for those wanting to recycle upholstered furniture to suitable places, including for example the local Rowcroft shops. Regulations will demand that sofas, armchairs and furniture are stored and transported separately from other non-recyclable waste because of toxic chemicals in upholstered furniture. Apparently fewer recycling centres will be able to accept them. In Devon out of 19 centres, only 8 will be able to do so. There has been criticism but it looks rather late in the day now. And then thirdly, and very depressingly, only two fly tippers have been prosecuted in the last year despite more than 5400 incidents across Devon County Council and Torbay Council areas. Although 712 enforcement actions were carried out, only 81 fixed penalty notices were issued, equivalent to about 1% of the incidents, and only 2 people were prosecuted. This is thoroughly depressing. I suspect sadly we have all seen deposits of waste bags, furniture, and much else on the side of the road in an area of green space or just simply abandoned. In all instances it's an eyesore. It's thoroughly unfair on those who do recycle. It's a huge burden on councils. Recycling and refuse places are relatively close to most people but it might be thought that making it difficult to use e.g. upholstered furniture as above, only exasperates the problem and the risk of fly tipping.

The Climate and Nature Bill

This private members piece of legislation, previously the Climate and Ecology Bill, has been introduced to Parliament on 16th October. It is said that it would put the UK back on course to meet international climate and nature targets. It would establish a representative climate and nature assembly to make proposals. It has been drawn 3rd in the private members bill ballot and therefore has a fair chance of debate. I myself will need to look into this further but I flag it up for information and to look out for it on the news

Fairtrade

A number of us and a number of our churches use Fairtrade products. They have just launched their first campaigning newsletter which can be found here and do subscribe for more information on their campaigns and other organisations with which they are connected:

<https://donate.fairtrade.org.uk/page/email?mid=3598781ada654556a4bd429bf6e3f81a>

A Rocha Eco Church

They run the accreditation scheme for eco-churches and several of us have bronze accreditation and are working towards Silver. They have just launched a survey to find out more of what is happening around the country completed to help build

up a better picture: <https://mailchi.mp/arochoa/new-eco-church-survey-go-live?e=50ef6b4fa9>

Exeter Diocese creation care newsletter

I mentioned previously that the Exeter diocese has revamped its creation care work and has launched a regular newsletter known as "Seasons". Not just for Anglicans. If anyone would like to subscribe, let me know.

One Torbay: Torbay Council weekly newsletter

Our local council produces a weekly newsletter of developments. I include some in these newsletters although I'm conscious to avoid any suggestion of political elements. But there is a strong environmental theme to the newsletter. May I recommend strongly subscribing. It really is most informative. More details here

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKTORBAYCOUNCIL/subscriber/new?preferences=true>

Similar work from our friends in Plymouth and Exeter

On this rare occasion our newsletter is going out before that of our friends from Plymouth churches green action and from Exeter. When I receive each I will forward on. Both always contain valuable information about other events in Devon.

Thank you for getting this far.

Please let me have any items you want me to distribute including from your organisation or church or news items for information.

Best wishes

David Hodson

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10 key things to help reduce Torbay carbon emissions from the Torbay climate action plan

1. *Help more people live and work in homes and buildings that are energy efficient – priority areas will include insulation of existing buildings, transitioning to heat pumps and setting high standards for new buildings built in Torbay.*
2. *Make sustainable transport and public transport more accessible and affordable – the aim will be to give people more choice on how they travel, focusing towards sustainable, low-carbon travel options.*
3. *Ensure that roads and paths are safer and more accessible for cyclists and walkers – making it easier for people to cycle or walk will improve both air quality and public health, and for provide accessible, affordable, and efficient travel options for all residents.*
4. *Reduce waste and increase recycling – the amount of waste we create, especially food waste, needs to be reduced and the Action Plan aims to reduce this and also encourage local growing.*
5. *Enjoy and protect our marine and natural environment – projects include a new comprehensive plan to restore and protect natural habitats within Torbay and projects to help our local sea grass thrive.*
6. *Help ‘green’ our businesses and create new jobs with the environment at their heart – Initiatives include helping around 250 businesses by 2025, led by the Make it Net Zero Torbay, and launching a green tourism programme.*
7. *Ensure the community is at the heart of local action – actions include community, schools and business engagement to raise awareness and promote saving energy, reducing waste, growing food, protecting and enhancing the natural world and walking and cycling.*
8. *Monitor progress and set up initiatives that celebrate success – the Action Plan will be reviewed annually and the Torbay Climate Partnership will celebrate Torbay’s successes by sharing stories on social media and other channels.*
9. *Help everyone understand why change is needed and how sustainable choices will make a difference – this will be done on an ongoing basis via publicity, and engagement with partners and the community.*
10. *Work with nature and the local community to prepare for a changing climate – While reducing carbon emissions is essential, Torbay's plan also includes adaptation measures to prepare for climate impacts. This involves assessing risks to public health, infrastructure, and biodiversity, and helping us to prepare and be more resilient.*