

Torbay Christian EcoAction

January 2025 newsletter

This is our January 2025 newsletter and belated, end of January, best wishes for the coming year. With another amber weather warning of a storm coming to Torbay, and much of the rest of the country, this weekend, with the fires flamed by the strong winds in Los Angeles and other weather concerns globally, the decision by Pres Trump to withdraw the USA from the Paris protocol was highly depressing for most of us. The last year seems to have seen a pulling back from the 2030 net zero and similar type commitments. It's not a good start to the year.

As previously, this newsletter is coming in PDF form but also with a link at <https://davidhodson.com/torbay-christian-ecoaction-january-2025-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.

Being green doesn't have to cost the earth: series of events and talks on Saturday 15th March at 10:30 AM, Hope Baptist church, Plymouth.

We are delighted to promote the above being run by the Plymouth Christian Green action group. During the day, 10:30 AM-3:30 PM, there is a family friendly day with speakers including Ruth Valerio, who spoke at our EcoFest in Torquay in December 2023. There are many exhibitors along with singing from the Plymouth climate choir. More details **attached**. For those reading online, email me and I can send over. Then in the evening, 7 PM, there will be a talk and questions and answers between Ruth and Sir Ghillean Prance, a prominent botanist and ecologist and former director of the Royal botanical Gardens in Kew. He is now involved in the Eden Project. Again I **attach** details. Please do go along and support. I understand some from our group will be going and I would be happy to put in touch for sharing transport and let me know. It promises to be a great event

We also hope to be meeting up with the Plymouth group sometime in May or June. A chance to combine forces, perhaps go for a nature walk, talk about how we can work better within our communities including our Christian church communities. More details to follow

Climate and Nature Bill: 2nd reading tomorrow

This is a private members bill before the UK Parliament with its 2nd reading tomorrow. It had been before Parliament previously and was reintroduced in October. The purpose to ensure the UK government reduces its green house gas emissions in line with international commitments under the Paris agreement, of which see more below, halt and reverse destruction of the natural world again in accordance with existing international commitments and to establish a climate and nature assembly. The draft bill can be found here:

<https://www.zerohour.uk/downloads/climate-and-nature-bill.pdf> Its relatively short and is specifically placing duties on the government to, in effect, comply with international obligations. Many climate activists many others have urged support. In contrast, the government have threatened Labour MPs who vote for it to risk losing the whip, a very serious state for an MP. Our local MP, Steve Darling, has urged support for it, as I understand it. By analogy with the way the assisted dying legislation was argued, at least it should be allowed to go past its 2nd reading and be debated in committee. It may be that the assembly is optimistic. But compelling government to comply with obligations it has already made internationally must surely be uncontentious? Please pray for this legislation and for our government to comply and play its part internationally. I attach a link for resources and prayers regarding the draft legislation from A Rocha:
<https://arocha.org.uk/support-the-climate-and-nature-bill/>

Creation care: environment as a tool for mission. Online webinar run by the Exeter diocese on 29th January at 7:30 PM.

This is a session exploring the Eco Church scheme and how it can be used as a tool for mission. It helps to increase community engagement in the Church's mission to go green. Unfortunately, the link in the diocese newsletter doesn't take me anywhere and I can't find it anywhere on the diocese website. This newsletter goes to the environmental office at the Exeter diocese and it may be they can help us with a link in which case I will send on immediately.

Southwest Marine Fest 29th May, 9:30 AM, Brixham Laboratory

This event organised by conservation chat UK is to look at the marine environment in the south-west of England. The advertisements say there will be an inspiring lineup of speakers and other events during the day. I intend to go along. More details can be found here. https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/south-west-marine-fest-conference-2025-tickets-713678721267?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR09OInV3qyb_b48DxrWMMoBA7HFdS1ABGsKb4h6inIBIHRqVQhSuK0VgQZk_aem_ns3ZAAulFEbWagbq07BzKg&sfnsn=scwspmo

Sandells: UK showdown with the EU!

I pass on a story on the BBC News website about sandeels, a fish, more probably a form of eel, which finds itself the subject of a dispute going to the International Court of arbitration. We will probably never have heard of the fish because it's not consumed by humans but a favourite food of a number of seabirds. Since leaving

the EU, the UK has banned catching the species to protect marine life that depend on it for food. The EU is challenging this on the basis that it discriminates against Danish vessels that catch this commercially. The hearing is apparently taking place this week and when I hear more, I will share. I understand this is not the only dispute regarding fishing with the EU. I understand the UK government has banned bottom trawling, whereby the sea bottom is fairly mercilessly trawled for fishing stock but in the process destroys all sorts of other wildlife and plant life whereas some other countries are still engaging in this process. This was covered in the newsletter in December. I think these disputes highlight where there will be real tensions in years to come, even if focused on what for each particular issue may be relatively modest. It's the overall weight which will be given to the environmental concerns for the future which must be paramount. Details here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/ce323q4kej1o>

The Paris protocol/agreement

Which leads directly onto the much bigger issue of the immediate decision taken by Pres Trump to leave the above. This is a legally binding international treaty on climate change adopted in 2015 to hold countries to an increase in global average temperature to below 2°C above preindustrial levels, in effect limit to 1.5°C. It had been hoped that far more progress would have been made already, 10 years on. It seems now virtually certain that if we haven't already, we will have reached this 1.5°C within the next couple of years. So the USA leaving is bad news. It's worth looking at the other countries, the USA bedfellows, which are also not part of the Paris agreement and which are not glowing examples of international cooperation and environmental collaboration. The worry must be that some other countries take this as a convenient excuse also to give up on climate targets. I'm certain we must pray for international collaboration for cooperation in aiming at and then meeting these targets. Surely the world has already seen that our failures lead to consequences for other countries. No country can go alone. No country is unaffected. No country can be an island unto itself on climate change. Please pray for more, not less, international cooperation and meaningful progress

EEE Safe and LocalitEEE

This is an initiative by one of our members, Rob Alexander, which we featured a year ago. He is working with Exeter University as one of 5 institutions in the UK producing for the UN International centres of excellence on sustainable resource management. He tells me that the website is being relaunched and in the next newsletter I will send over details. In the meantime here are contact details and some more information.

https://forms.eesafe.com/eesafe/form/SimpleContactusform/formperma/YnAoxzZJXPBjSdqld6uVVw8qItTY3_kKvj9jLR-VEc We wish him much success.

The Church of England environmental days and key events calendar

This helpful calendar gives details of the many key dates in the environmental calendar. They will be of different interests to different people but is very

informative. Once one knows of the events, is easy to find out more via Internet searching of course. It can be downloaded here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/environment-calendar-2025.pdf>

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 relaunched the accreditation schemes and at St Matthias we are looking into what more, or what different, is now necessary as we work towards our silver accreditation. We should have more news next month and it would be of interest to know which other churches in the area are tackling bronze or silver. If any are having a go at gold, please let us know and very best wishes.

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

The January newsletter of the Plymouth churches green action can be found here:

<https://mailchi.mp/718fa45485c8/pcga-eneews-mid-january-2025?e=9dd45dc4a5>

There are lots of events and campaigns and resources set out in their newsletters and it's great to be mutually involved across South 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 and God bless

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