



MARK'S MESSENGER

*The Parish Magazine of
St Mark's Church, Broomhill and Broomhall, Sheffield*

February 2023 *Donations welcomed and can be made via the app below*



THE CREATION TAPESTRIES



GREETINGS FROM ENVIRONMENT GROUP



We are delighted to host this edition of Messenger and thank everyone who has contributed. The articles collected here showcase the range of work that our church members are doing within our community and beyond to further the goal of a more sustainable and just world – from growing food and sharing it, to working for women and families in Nepal, to engaging with the key writers and politicians of our day, to drawing on our creative talents to celebrate what we treasure, and to doing all we can for the nature around us. Adults and children alike.

Environment Group is working still to progress our Eco-church programme and to try for GOLD. We have programmes mapped out for all sections in our church life:

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Management of church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

Of these, planning for our building to get to Net Zero is the most challenging, as with many large city churches. Talk to us if you would like to know more.

Going into 2023, we have a sense that the whole church is committed to environmental and ecological sustainability: we are no longer the focus group trying to galvanise others. Instead we are enjoying the multiplicity of ways that individuals and groups in our church are working to enhance our worship and enrich our lives, and those of others, and the natural spaces around us.

It is a core part of our Christian mission to do this work, as outlined in the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Church:

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
To respond to human need by loving service
To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

We hope you enjoy the articles, and feel encouraged.

Margaret Ainger

All Things Pray

It is not we alone who pray;

All things pray.

All things pour forth their souls.

The heavens pray, the earth prays.

In all life, there is longing.

Creation itself is but a longing.

A prayer to the Almighty.

What are the clouds, the rising and the setting of the sun,

The soft radiance of the moon, and the gentleness of the night?

What are the flashes of the human mind

And the storms of the human heart?

They are all prayers –

The outpouring of boundless longing for God.

Unknown Author
(<http://www.arroc.au/jewish-prayers>)

NET ZERO BY 2030



YCCN relay to COP26: +Pete with local MP Olivia Blake and Catholic Bishop of Hallam alongside other faith leaders.

Cathy Rhodes, Diocesan Environment Officer, writes:

Sheffield Diocesan Synod declared a climate and ecological emergency in November 2020, and formally supported Eco Church and the CofE General Synod Net Zero by 2030 commitment. This was the foundation for the work I have done as volunteer DEO since March 2020. I've visited many churches and spoken at meetings (in person or virtually!) all over the Diocese. At the Churchwardens meeting last November we discussed the serious challenges of decarbonising in the current energy and cost of living crisis. Two buildings officers are supporting this and Jo Edwards is allocated to Hallam Deanery. We have a Diocesan Net Zero steering group chaired by +Sophie, who is chairing an open net zero meeting on 2 February. Speakers include Canon Flora Winfield (Third Church Estates Commissioner) and Jo Chamberlain (National Environment Officer)

The Church Commissioners have committed £30m to initiate a net zero programme in 2023-25: the total commitment is £190m until 2031. We are

currently preparing bids for triennial money towards net zero (NZ) resource and capacity building. All Dioceses can access a £15,000 initial grant to fund planning and work towards a larger bid when plans have been formulated. We will also need to find other funding sources. This is a huge and challenging task for our churches and I do not underestimate it. As a Diocese we need to know what our emissions are and where they are produced. To do this it is very important to measure carbon footprints across the Diocese using the Energy Footprint Tool and Toolkit, to track progress and focus attention and resources on the higher emitters. The 2022 data can now be entered via the Parish Returns system.

The 2021 data is being checked for local churches. We will then focus on the top 20% of churches who emit ~60% of our CO₂e, while still encouraging lower emitters to maintain buildings and reduce energy use. We hope a Net Zero Project Officer will be appointed using the initial £15,000 of funding and use the final data to support churches and other buildings with their plans. The National report showed that in 2021 our Diocese had a carbon footprint of 6,040 tonnes CO₂e, one of the lowest in the country (partly due to our size). The buildings below are in scope.

Net carbon footprints for all building types for Sheffield Diocese (in Tonnes CO₂e) – 2021

Diocese	Church Buildings*	Schools	Clergy Housing	Other Buildings [^]	Travel**	Total
Sheffield	2,000 (33%)	2,700 (45%)	1,100 (18%)	220 (4%)	20	6,040

* Includes churches, church halls, and all other church buildings.

[^] Includes Cathedrals, Royal Peculiars, Diocesan Offices and all other Diocesan Property.

** Work related travel for which expenses are paid ie Diocesan staff

Eco Church

I pay tribute to the work done by Michael Bayley and others from St Mark’s who have always been at the forefront of environmental work in the Diocese, which includes the fantastic organisation Hope for the Future.

When I started the role of DEO in March 2020 and looked at the A Rocha map, there were 16 Eco Church markers (including St Mark’s!) and we had 4 awards. But less than three years later, there’s a wonderful view of 51 markers crowded together including 20 awards. Despite the pandemic and all the pressures churches are under, the number of Eco Churches has tripled and we have five times as many awards. I’m so pleased this is across the whole Diocese and all Deaneries. As part of our mission to sustain and renew God’s beautiful earth,

our church communities are committing to care for Creation one step at a time, and now a quarter of our churches are Eco Churches. This will help us apply for our Bronze Eco Diocese award soon! A Rocha Eco Diocese Criteria are at <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/denominational-awards/eco-diocese/>

The Eco Diocese work includes Nature Recovery Sheffield (the Diocese is a founding member) which is a great chance to connect with partner organisations like the Wildlife Trust. This featured in the Church Times Green Church Showcase awards at COP26. I recently represented the Diocese at several public events for Great Big Green week including a film night at the Showroom with Nature Recovery Sheffield on nature heroes with some of our churches. St Mark's featured on the film and is part of a group of Sheffield Churches working together for nature. The films can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzrMzAokFaU>

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLk_r32OmnXIG5dDWFmeaaBko34yWdQBUY

Please email me or Sally Hunter if you need help or advice, or to join the green mailing list/Eco Church Facebook Group. We give thanks for the work at St Mark's and all our church communities.

Dr Cathy Rhodes, DEO

environment@sheffield.anglican.org

Sally Hunter, Environmental Project Support

environment.admin@sheffield.anglican.org



Photo by Hannah

WHAT THE CHILDREN HAVE BEEN DOING...



Wet New Year Day Walk

One of the great gifts over the last couple of years for the children and families has been the development of celebrating nature and worshipping out on the green. I am delighted to share that we have managed to sustain this new strand of provision alongside re-connecting with many of the best indoor elements which were so missed.

This is enabling us to continue spending time together across the ages

as the green allows us enough space to work creatively with each age from the tots to teens and beyond! It has also enabled us to recognise the changing seasons as we meet monthly on the green. In addition to this we dedicated the full six weeks of summer holidays to meeting on the green and exploring the creation story which felt so much more relevant when using our surroundings to connect with each day of the creation story. For example, on the first week we played with light; making shadows and creating sun print pictures.

Most recently, a group of us met out in the Peaks to celebrate New Year's Day with a wonderfully wet walk which was brief but thoroughly enjoyed! Hopefully this will be the first of many so that we can expand our horizons throughout this year's seasons and make the most of being so close to such beautiful countryside.

In continuing to discover and enjoy these opportunities, I hope that we will continue to light our individual and collective passions for this Beautiful Creation, inspiring us to play our part in its conservation.

Hannah Jones
Children and Families Worker

INSECT SOS

Insects are one of the building blocks for life and without them life on earth would collapse. Over the past decades there has been an unprecedented collapse in the insect population. This is due to a wide range of factors including overuse of pesticides, agricultural practices, global warming and loss of habitat which mean that insects have fewer places to eat breed and hide. Here in the UK research by Bugs Matter and Kent Wildlife Trust show that the UK's flying insect population has declined by as much as 60% in the last 20 years.

Not everyone is a fan of insects but they are vital to life on earth:

- Insects form the base of the food chain providing food for larger animals such as fish, birds, bats, reptiles, amphibians and mammals. Sixty percent of the world's birds are insect eaters and many of those that eat seeds as adults must feed insects to their young. It is estimated that 200,000 insects are needed to raise a single swallow chick.
- Insects keep harmful organisms in check and are a natural way to keep pests under control. A ladybird will eat up to a thousand aphids during its larval stage of development. One wasp can eat 2 pounds of other insects in a 2,000 sq ft garden.
- Insects pollinate 85% of wild plants and 75% of agricultural crops. Without them we wouldn't be able to grow onions, cabbages, broccoli, chillies, most tomatoes, coffee, cocoa, most fruits, sunflowers and rapeseed. Apart from providing honey, bees also pollinate cotton and flax and without them we would be dependent on synthetic fibres for clothing.
- Many insects will spread the fruit and seeds from plants. Ants disperse the seeds of about 11,000 different plants.
- Insects, fungi and bacteria break down organic matter and recycle nutrients into the soil. They clean up our waste, some insects can even thrive eating polyethylene, the material that is in single use plastic bags.

What can we do?

Growing insect friendly plants in a garden or in a window box will provide food for pollinating insects.

Cutting the grass less encourages the growth of wildflowers that pollinators and other insects depend on. If you are able to have an area of the garden where long grass can grow it will provide somewhere for insects to lay their eggs and a place for them to hide from predators.

Having a log pile can help protect beetles, or you can get creative with a bug hotel.

Take part in citizens science projects such as the Bugs Matter survey counting insect splats on vehicle number plates to keep track of what is changing in Britain. www.buglife.org.uk/get-involved/surveys/bugs-matter/

What are we doing at St Mark's?

Over the past 2 years changes have made at St Mark's to try and help wildlife. The Green now has a wildflower area, the grass is mown less often and the bank leading up to the memorial garden has been left uncut to allow the grass to grow taller and for wildflowers to make it their home and to provide a refuge for insects. Fruit trees have been planted and the leaf and log pile provide a welcome place for insects, bugs and hedgehogs to hibernate. During the winter months, food is put out for birds and we have taken part in the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch. The Environment Group is now looking into how to install swift boxes on the tower.

How to make a Bug Hotel



A bug hotel can be as simple or complicated as you want to make it.

Collect together natural things which insects like eg leaves, pinecones, bark and twigs, moss, wood chips, nut shells, bamboo, grass, shells, or small stones. These can then be put into a container. The internet is full of images of inventive things people have used as containers. If you have the space palettes make luxury large bug hotels with ready-made spaces to stack natural materials, but small containers are just as good

and don't take so much room. Old drain pipes, plastic bottles, milk cartons, bricks, string bags, plant pots, old tyres, a shoe box, or anything that could be repurposed and would provide shelter.

Margot Fox

TWO ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS RECEIVE AWARDS

Friends of the Porter Valley:



On Wednesday, 2nd November, Professor Dame Hilary Chapman DBE RN, the Lord-Lieutenant for South Yorkshire, accompanied by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Sheffield, attended the group's AGM at Bents Green Methodist Church as His Majesty's representative, to present the Friends of Porter Valley with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The award is the equivalent of an MBE and has been given in recognition of the contribution made over many years by the charity's volunteers. Last year they gave over 5,000 hours to a variety of tasks in support of conservation and restoration of the beautiful landscape and cultural heritage of the Porter and Mayfield valleys. The Lord-Lieutenant acts on behalf of the sovereign, presenting honours and awards to individuals, voluntary groups and business organisations and encouraging charitable work and local initiatives within the county on behalf of King Charles. The Award is equivalent to an MBE and is awarded for the lifetime of the organisation. It retains its title, despite the death of the late Queen Elizabeth, for whom a minute's silence was observed during the meeting.

Dez Martin



The crystal award and accompanying certificate.



Dame Hilary Chapman,
Lord-Lieutenant for South Yorkshire

HERB (Helping Environmental Regeneration in Broomhall):



HERB volunteers and local residents join in with the planting of the tree.

HERB were given a multi-stemmed Rowan tree (*Sorbus aucuparia*) – one of the 350 'Tree of Trees' trees from the Queen's Jubilee, which will form the 'Queen's Green Canopy' across the U.K. – to plant in Broomhall. We arranged a small ceremony on Sunday, 20 November 2022 to celebrate this and to plant the tree. John Cowling, one of the Deputies to the Lord

Lieutenant in Sheffield, made a short speech about the Queen's Canopy and presented HERB with a framed letter of thanks from Windsor Castle. Paul Blomfield, MP for Sheffield Central, then said a few words about HERB and the contribution of local groups to their communities. Angela Argenzio, Green Councillor for Broomhill and Sharrow Vale, several local residents, as well as lots of HERB volunteers, came along and everyone joined in with the planting of the tree and watering it well. HERB had also prepared a display to show before and after pictures of the projects they have undertaken. It was a really happy event (despite the rather dismal, damp day!) and the tree is doing well - waiting for some warmer weather for its well-formed buds to burst open. The tree is planted to the right side of the crossing over Hanover Way at the bottom of Broomspring Lane, near Monmouth Street; do go and have a look.

The lead deputy lieutenant for South Yorkshire hopes to get embossed stainless steel plaques set on stone plinths for the South Yorkshire trees and should know in the next few weeks if this is possible. The aluminium pot, in which the tree came and which is embossed with the Queen's cipher, will be placed in the Broomhall Centre office and the local Ward Pot has provided funding for us to buy a variegated Weeping Fig - *Ficus benjamina* Twilight - to plant in it. The framed letter from Windsor castle will be hung on the wall above it.

As well as funding for the Weeping Fig, HERB has been awarded Ward Pot funding to plant non-prickly native hedging around the site at the corner of Havelock Street and Holberry Gardens, where the fencing is rotting, which will continue to provide a protective barrier to the roads for children playing as well as enhancing bio-diversity. We will also be installing a support structure for the grape vine growing on the same site and replacing a bench for the residents of Gloucester and Dorset Streets, where many elderly people live. If you are interested in volunteering with HERB, you will be very welcome. We meet every Friday between 9 and 11 am. Contact Polly Blacker at polytone@doctors.org.uk.

Polly Blacker

PHASE: AN UPDATE



House destroyed by landslide and its owner

St Mark's has generously supported Phaseworldwide's work in Nepal over the past few years. Last year St Mark's gave £1100 to Phase, from the Home and Overseas annual budget.

Phase works through improving access to health, education and livelihood enhancement in remote mountain communities in Nepal which is ranked in the top10 of the world's nations in terms of its vulnerability to climate change. Measuring vulnerability by country is difficult and inherently flawed; climate change is felt by people not nations.

Nepal's diverse geo-climatic system, which combines heavy monsoons, steep terrain, and remoteness, renders the country vulnerable to natural disasters. Nepal goes from true rainforest in the south to Everest – the world's highest peak – in the north, in less than 100 miles. The impact of disasters is most pronounced in marginalised populations, who are already hampered by poverty and disempowerment. Nepal's greatest risk is flooding, including glacial lake outburst flooding and landslides, but also droughts in the Terai, and waterborne disease. The monsoon period usually extends throughout June to mid-September but has been erratic of late. Phaseworldwide started sending GPs again this October after 3 years of restricted travel due to Covid. Some of the first doctors were unable to reach their health posts due the roads and paths being blocked by landslides caused by the late monsoon rains. The communities supported by Phase are subsistence farmers with little or no commercial commodities except for surplus vegetables and handwoven carpets, for sale locally.

The following is a report from Rudra Nupane, CEO Phase Nepal, in October 2022.

Rugin Village and landslides

This year's late monsoon was worst for the people of Far West Nepal who were living with limited resources. Several people were killed by landslides, houses and farm land washed away, roads blocked, school and health facilities damaged. However, this was not a large enough scale disaster to attract regional or international attention for relief and recovery.



School at Borta after landslide

One of the communities worst affected by the heavy rain between 5 and 9 October 2022 is Rugin, a village in Bajura district, where, 28 houses were destroyed and 139 others heavily damaged and not safe for occupancy. Thus about 900 people including 115 under five children, 14 elderly persons, 7 persons with disabilities and 17 pregnant/lactating women from 152 families from the six settlements forced to move into temporary shelters. Seventeen families lost their cows, goats and poultry due to the landslide. Fifteen families are still using the damaged houses, 27 families are in tents and others are with relatives/neighbours. There are hundreds of families who lost their farm land and some of their crops.

A government school, teaching up to grade 8, in Borta, has also sustained massive damage. The health post in Rugin village has been damaged.

Similarly, the drinking water system of Nandapata village was also damaged heavily. The Rugin village had got electricity through a small hydropower station construction completed this year. After the landslide they have no electricity again as more than 50% of its canal has been destroyed. 10 families in Sipa are also affected by the landslides (houses damaged). There have been no human casualties in our project area but many animals and poultry were killed by the landslide.

Local government has provided tarpaulins and some food to the affected families as emergency support and is looking for resettlement but it may take a long time. PhaseNepal has dry food items ready to distribute to the affected families. The distribution was planned for 17-20 December. Food items included: rice 50 kg, pulses 5 kg, cooking oil 3 litres, chickpeas 5 kg and 2 kg to the 152 affected families.

Phase conducted a quick survey in November with the affected families and they said food was the first priority for now. Out of 131 respondents of the survey, 37 families asked support for house construction/maintenance, 71 asked for clothes and 21 asked for utensils.

The road connecting Kolti with Nepalgund and Kolti with Rugin, and Jaira was also damaged. Now it has come into operation. But the road connecting Gamgadhi and Sorukot (Natharpu) has major landslides at two places, one near Gamgadhi, and another near Sorukot .

Support is needed to recover livelihoods and for the protection of farm lands and has been requested from the local government by our field staff. We will collect detailed information during and immediately after the first distribution of food items and share with our funding partners.

Dilys Noble



Rugin in 2017

A SNAPSHOT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Broomhill Litter Picks – These are co-ordinated by Broomhill library and usually take place on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 10.30 – 12.30. Just turn up with a pair of gloves and the library will provide a litter picker and bags.

The Bishop of Sheffield's Annual Lecture, – 21st February 2023 on 'The Church in the Anthropocene: being human, being holy.' Wisdom for living in a climate emergency. Speaker Hannah Malcolm. Booking via Eventbrite. Free

Fairtrade Fortnight – 27th Feb-12th March. www.fairtrade.org.uk

Schools Climate Education South Yorkshire Conference – 2 March 2023 at the Victoria Hall. Aimed at pupils from Y5 – Y10 and is free to all schools. Topics to include sustainable food, connecting with nature, climate anxiety, and the new National Education nature park and climate leaders award.

Earth Hour Event. – A WWF initiative involving 180 countries. At 8.30 on the last Saturday of March you are invited to turn off your lights for an hour. www.earthhour.org

Sheffield Environment Weeks – 29th April-5th June 2023. Lots of things will be organised. For further details look at www.sheffieldenvironment.org

Great Big Green Week – 10th-18th June. The UK's biggest celebration of community action to tackle climate change. www.greatbiggreenweek.com

Plastic Free July – A global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution. www.plasticfreejuly.org/getinvolved/what-you-can-do/

Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust have an online recording system, 'Nature Counts', which enable you to submit your wildlife sightings to them to help them make better more evidence based conservation choices on their nature reserves and beyond. <https://record.wildsheffield.com> .

FOOD WORKS



If you're looking for an extra bit of hope that local community action can work to make a difference across a whole spectrum of important issues, Food Works is a pretty good answer. From climate change to waste reduction to the cost of living crisis, this inspirational organisation is one of the things that keep me believing that things can change for the better.

The home donations group agreed with a proposal from the environment group that one of the chosen charities each year should have a role in tackling the climate crisis, in line with our church's formal acknowledgement that we are

facing a climate and ecological emergency. We decided on Food Works, a local social enterprise that is working to 'build a fair and sustainable food system for everyone in Sheffield.' Their work includes collecting perfectly good food that would otherwise go to waste from supermarkets and food suppliers. They then distribute it to anyone who wants it on a pay as you feel basis at their market in Handsworth. This can help provide an alternative to food banks for families in need, but also generates income from those who can afford to pay more. They also upcycle the food into nutritious and affordable meals at their cafés in Sharrow and Upperthorpe and they create ready meals. In addition, they grow environmentally sustainable local food at their farm at the Manor.

Food Works is growing at an incredible rate since opening in 2015 and they save around 500 tonnes (the weight of 3 blue whales) of food waste from landfill every year! This is crucial, because if food waste was a country, it would be the world's third biggest producer of carbon emissions, after the US and China.

I was invited to join their community meal as a representative of the church as



a thank you for our donation, and I was greeted by a beautiful, passionate community of people interested in creating a fairer, kinder, eco-conscious society, and I was immediately inspired to get involved. They believe that the sharing of food and of stories can help to build empathy and understanding, can heal divides, and can help the invisible feel seen. Which made me think it's exactly the kind of thing Jesus would have been excited by too.

If you would like to find out more or get involved, please come and speak to me or check out their website. They are always looking for volunteers to cook, collect surplus food, serve in the cafes, grow on the farm, and much more.

Emma Castle

CHRISTIAN CLIMATE ACTION

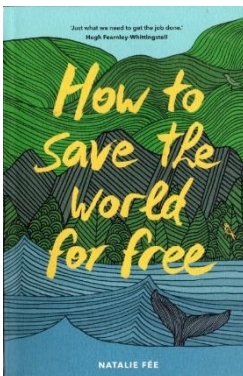
There has never been a more urgent time to read, think and talk about our planet. Over the years, there have been various books added to the Library here at St Mark's, with the one by Greta Thunberg – ***No-one Is Too Small to Make a Difference*** – causing the most interest. We have now taken delivery of her latest book – ***The Climate Book*** – for you to update yourself.

There are other new books too, just browse the shelves. Time too to revisit ***There is No Planet B*** - a real influencer still. Michael Miller has written an excellent review which is inside the book: **“This is undoubtedly the best and the one I would recommend that everyone should read, including those politicians”**

Please look at the display that is on the shelves at the moment. Come and sit with your cup of coffee after the service, pick up one of our books and just take time to browse. There is always one of our team around to help and to chat.

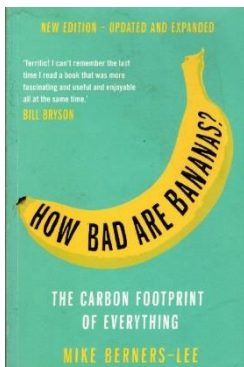
Maureen Bownas

The Messenger book review, by David Castle



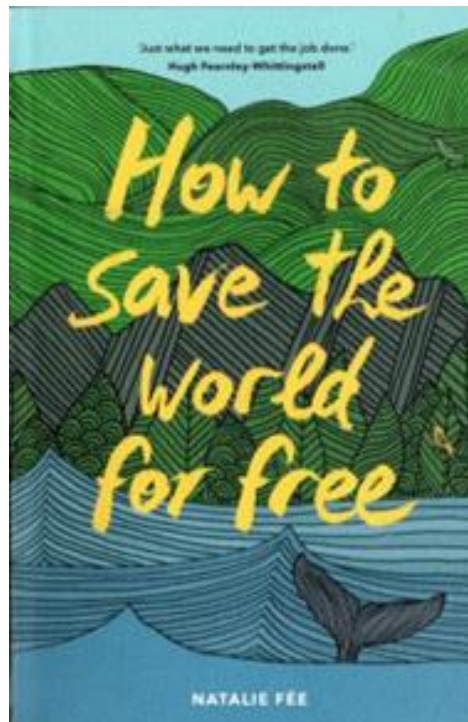
This month we have not one but 2 book reviews for you. The first book, “How to save the world for free” by Natalie Fée, starts by exploring what needs to be saved before going on to describe how to do that in different areas of life.

The second book, “How bad are bananas – the carbon footprint of everything” by Mike Berners-Lee, is the most authoritative publication for finding the carbon footprint of anything you want.



I find that these books are useful to have as a pair. Natalie Fée gives you the direction, whilst Mike Berners-Lee gives you the detail you need to make the least planet-harming choices in your life. Both books are available in second-hand channels, either on line or (better) by browsing in a shop, but do make sure you get the latest editions, as things are changing rapidly in climate science.

How to save the world for free: Natalie Fée



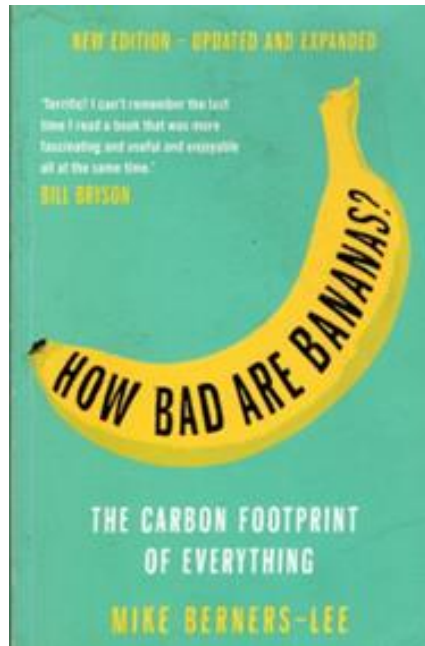
The book's 14 short chapters are arranged in 3 sections. The first section has a single chapter entitled "The seven things we need to save", such as Oceans & Seas, The Atmosphere, Plants & Animals etc. Each is described with an explanation of how it works and why it is important that we save it. You won't be surprised to find that they all link together in many ways – after all, that is how the natural world works.

The second section covers all key areas of our lives, from food and clothing through politics and sex to banking and travel, with 12 short chapters exploring each in turn. They may be short on words but Natalie Fée packs in the ideas at a terrific rate of knots with well researched explanations that leave you in no doubt about the facts and how to go about making incremental changes to the way you live.

The final section is again a single short chapter entitled "Maximise your impact". This is an important chapter, because there are lots of ways that we can amplify our individual actions and these are explored here. The author covers sharing your views and the changes you are making, through petitions to taking direct action – the choice is yours!

So I heartily recommend this book to you. If, like me, you find it difficult to read long books then this one is for you! Dip into it for inspiration, or when you feel moved to take another step towards your new life.

**How bad are bananas – the carbon footprint of everything:
Mike Berners-Lee, revised 2020 ISBN 978-1-78816-381-1**



If the name Berners-Lee sounds familiar then you may be thinking of the inventory of the World-wide Web, and you'd be right. But this Berner-Lee isn't *that* one; it's his brother, and his book "How bad are bananas" seems to be a perfect companion to "How to save the world for free".

Having given us a brief guide to what is meant by "carbon footprint", Mike Berner-Lee examines in minute detail the carbon footprint of a wide range of common, everyday items and activities, in ascending order of harmfulness. It seems there is nothing too insignificant to include, for instance an apple plucked from your garden scores 0g of CO₂, whereas shipped in out of season chalks up a weighty 290g. On the other hand, 1 tonne of recycled steel costs the earth 400kg CO₂ and for virgin blast furnace steel its 2.3 tonnes CO₂. And a 8oz UK-reared steak has the same impact as about 50 bananas, or 150 bananas if it comes from Brazil. So what becomes increasingly clear is that CO₂ emissions are often more to do with how a product is produced, packaged and transported than the product itself, although there are exceptions – fossil fuels for instance.

Berners-Lee concludes with 2 short chapters, one on negative emissions that describes how CO₂ can be removed from the atmosphere in a number of ways, and then a chapter entitled "What can we do?". It boils down to 2 things – cut your own carbon and push for change. Simples.

Oh, and how bad are bananas? You'll have to read the book.

CREATION TAPESTRIES – PROGRESS UPDATE



Here is Diane demonstrating a carbon neutral way of transporting the tapestry between homes!

Many of you will be aware that there is a winter project to stitch some beautiful tapestries depicting the 6 days of creation to honour our 60th anniversary and our beautiful world.

28 of us have signed up and we are working in teams on each piece. For most, it is the first time they have done such a piece so support from Jennie, Briony and the Craft Group has been invaluable.

Here we are enjoying some practice stitching, each other's company and a coffee.

Margaret Ainger

THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY – WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT – APART FROM WORRY?

It is very easy to be discouraged when wondering what we can do about the climate. So, is there anything we can do? The answer is: 'Yes. But nothing effective is going to be done until we get our politicians really committed.'

The political landscape is changing and I think most people agree that Labour have a good chance of becoming the next government. This means our top priority should be doing what we can to make sure that Labour's climate policy will really do what is needed to bring about the big changes that are required.

Paul Blomfield, the Labour MP for Sheffield Central, said in his leaflet for his autumn Big Conversation that Labour's plans include:

- Creating 100% fossil-free electricity system by 2030 – quadrupling offshore wind, doubling onshore wind, tripling solar power and investing in new green energy technologies;
- Investing £28 billion a year insulating 19 million homes;
- Setting up a publicly owned green energy company, to provide jobs, innovation, investment and energy security.

This is an encouraging start. We will need to ask how this is going to be done and where the money is going to come from. The New Economics Foundation has also suggested that we need to redesign our financial regulations so that businesses no longer invest billions in dirty, polluting projects, and instead put their money towards clean industries; make our taxes more progressive and greener; give more power back to the UK's devolved nations, regions and localities et cetera et cetera.

It is a huge agenda. The key to tackling it is that we do not need to ask our politicians to do a little bit here and a little bit there by way of concession but the entire economy and the government's overall policy needs to move us to a position where we are confident that we will be able to pass on to future generations a planet in which they can flourish.

One major worry about Labour's policy proposals is that Keir Starmer is still talking uncritically about the need for growth. Just putting 'green' in front of growth does not make it sustainable. We need to ask hard questions about how this will work in practice. It is probably the most difficult and most critical question.

We all need to ask these questions of the Labour Party, regardless of which party we support, because the more pressure they come under the better.

However, we also need to recognise that in the long run, and preferably in the short, a powerful and effective climate policy has to have cross-party support so we need to ask these questions of all the parties.

But how do we set about this? It is no use drawing up a list of demands and going and shouting at our politicians. That will only put their backs up we will get nowhere. We are fortunate in having good links with Hope for the Future, a charity, which has its origins in St Mark's, which has devised a brilliant approach to working with politicians which does just that – it works WITH politicians. The whole approach rests on building a relationship with our MP and finding ways in which we can support and encourage them in developing and implementing the policies we need. It may well be that we will find ourselves working with the Diocesan Environment Group and possibly other people on this.

A small subgroup of our St Mark's environment group is about to start meeting to work out what we want to say to Abtisam Mohamed who has recently been elected to stand as Paul Blomfield's successor as he stands down at the next election. If you are interested in joining this group contact me via the parish office by phoning (0114) 266 3613 or emailing office@stmarkssheffield.co.uk .

We are regularly told by our politicians that they do not get much mail about the climate emergency. From time to time, we may ask you to write to your MP or councillor. Doing so could make all the difference. Also, if there is an issue about which you are particularly concerned please contact one of the members of the group and if anyone else would like to join us they will be most welcome. There's a lot of work to do.

Michael Bayley



Photograph by Hannah Jones

THE COMPENDIUM



This year we are celebrating the 60th anniversary of St Mark's with a number of events and activities. Some are just single occasions, while others are more in the nature of ongoing projects. One of the latter is the compiling of contributions from many members of the church community to create a cookery book for our times. Not just a collection of recipes, useful though those can be, but more in the nature of a resource brimming with ideas for good things to grow or buy, how to turn those into simple healthy meals that you and your family can cook and enjoy together, how to reduce waste and/or food miles – in fact all the themes and concerns that are so much in our minds at present, and that embody the spirit of Living Thinking Loving Faith.

To reflect this range of topics, and to enhance the collection, we'd also like to include brief anecdotes about food and you, brief quotations, reflections, poems, graces and also some illustrations to accompany

our themes. We'd be especially pleased to have some contributions from younger members of the St Marks family. We are calling the resulting book 'The Compendium', to give an idea of the width of scope and topic that we hope you'll send to us. Our plan is to arrange the material under the headings of the four seasons, so this theme might be a useful guide to your ideas.

So please – we need as many contributions as possible sent to us (Briony & Pauline) by the end of February. If you'd like more information, or would like to get involved, please come and talk to one of us after the service on a Sunday morning. We want to hear from as many of you as possible, so that the book represents all ages, tastes, and stories.

We'd especially value contributions from members of St Marks who come from different culinary traditions and can share something of these with us. Get thinking, get writing, get sketching and get your ideas to us as soon as you can. But note, in the time-honoured phrase 'the editors' decision is final' – if, as we hope, you inundate us with material, we may not be able to find room for everything!

Thank you.

Pauline Miller (pauline@mm1728pm.plus.com)

Briony Tayler (briony@professor3.f9.co.uk)



THE YOUNG ADULTS GROUP AND THE ENVIRONMENT

As the 'young adults' group, environmentalism is really important to us and has been a main focus for some of our meetings in the past few months. At one of our meetings in October we had a discussion about the role of the Church in the climate crisis, both in terms of our responsibility in stewardship, and also the role of faith in providing a sense of hope in this often very disheartening and overwhelming topic. We also discussed the positive changes that St Mark's has made to be a more eco-conscious church, and why it is important that churches lead the way in this. And we debated the importance of the Church of England as a whole taking steps (e.g. fossil fuel divestment) to protect the environment into the future, including investing in climate disaster prevention programmes rather than just disaster relief.

We followed up by watching part of the film *Demain (Tomorrow)*, a French documentary from 2015 which provided some positive examples of ways communities can take action to become more sustainable, in particular in relation to local food and community gardening. We have reflected on how sustainability relates to our daily lives, in our different jobs or studying, and at home. We also recognise elements of social injustice in how many people across the country are not necessarily in a position to make a lot of changes, particularly given the cost of living crisis. We have talked about the importance of political action to make larger sustainable changes, and also to protect vulnerable communities who will face the brunt of climate change impacts first.

As young adults we will be likely to see many of the consequences of the global response to climate change. It is really important for many of us that the church we attend prioritises environmental issues and recognises their role in working for a more sustainable future.

Bethany Leake

MY PhD – THE BENEFITS OF URBAN HORTICULTURE

I'm in my second years of a PhD at the University of Sheffield, studying the health and wellbeing benefits of urban horticulture. As the climate warms and we face more challenges with our national and international food supply chains, local food growing is going to need to play an increasing role, particularly in cities. We know that urban food growing can help to supplement people's diets, as well as providing mental health benefits, and a form of exercise. Gardening also has a huge benefit to urban biodiversity, and can provide other community

benefits such as social connection, and improving neighbourhood aesthetics. Allotments are a key space for urban food growing, but community gardens and home gardening also play a really important role.

My work so far has mainly focused on getting individuals and families involved in food growing who haven't had much experience in the past. We designed a project, Urban Harvest, which was a collaboration between the University of Sheffield and Foodhall, Food Works and Heeley City Farm in Sheffield. Urban Harvest provided home food growing kits (Grow-Kits) to participants, to try growing a small amount of food in a home or garden. The kits provided everything the participants would need to grow five crops each, including seeds, plant pots and compost. We managed to distribute 189 Grow-Kits to participants across Sheffield in May-June of 2022, which included a total of 14,000 litres (8.5 tonnes) of compost! In providing the kits to households, the project aimed to reduce any possible barriers that might prevent people from getting involved, whether that be finances, time, or knowledge of what kind of equipment they would need to get started. We're hoping Urban Harvest can provide an example (that could be used by other cities) for increasing home food growing, and how to best support newer growers.

There is obviously a huge element of food justice in this type of work, and trying to find ways to improve access to fresh food (and the other many benefits of food growing) to as many people as possible. My work will hopefully add to this area of research on alternative food systems, aiming to increase the sustainability of cities and improving the health and wellbeing of the people who live in them.

We've recently launched a new study looking at the effects of allotment gardening on diet and nutrition in Sheffield. If you would like to find out more, you can get in contact with urbanharvest@sheffield.ac.uk .

Bethany Leake



RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS THROUGH STUDY AND LEARNING



Photograph by Hannah Jones

Though we do organise some events, mainly seminars, the Study and Learning Group also tries to make sure that important issues, such as the climate crisis, are addressed by groups within St Mark's, and are available and accessible to the church community and beyond. So, in this regard, we are delighted to encourage the work of the Environment Group both in bringing the issues to our attention, and in ensuring that we don't just say – 'the task is too big for us'.

But there are, and have been, ways in which we can contribute directly to helping people grapple with the problem. Back in 2014 (admittedly before the group was formed but very much in tune with what it is about), the whole of a Lent Course was devoted to how we treat the natural environment. It was called *earthing our faith, cherishing God's creation*. Other Lent courses have also touched on the subject, sometimes in passing, sometimes by devoting a whole session to a subject such as the session on Honouring our World in 2019. 2020's course – *enough is enough* – made us think of our underlying attitudes as Christians, important in determining how we see our Christian faith being worked out in the world.

In 2019, when we conducted a questionnaire about the study and learning provision and needs at St Mark's, many of the individual responses highlighted the need and desire to tackle climate and environmental issues; this information was passed on to the church as a whole. So, though not necessarily at the heart and centre of what we have been doing, responding to climate change has never been far from either the agenda or the provision overseen by the Study and Learning Group.

Finally, we have over the last few months been undertaking a project called *Faithful Living* which is about Christian ethics in the contemporary world, engaging with a number of ethical issues currently commanding our attention from the distinctively open, inclusive and questioning stance we have at St Mark's. Among leaflets we hope to publish this year (online in the first instance at <https://stmarkssheffield.co.uk/faithful-living/>) is one on Caring for Creation.

John Schofield

GREEN INVESTING

The climate of opinion on the urgency of global heating seems to be nearing a tipping point when public support for curbing emissions may finally force governments to take effective action; COP26 gave a just-in-time opportunity to avoid catastrophic temperature rise. However, we can also play a part when we decide how to spend or invest our money. Many of us have been choosing energy efficient household equipment; in the five years I have owned a plug-in hybrid electric car it has saved me about £1750 in petrol costs, and thus prevented those emissions, and it has been almost entirely charged from renewable sources. In effect it was an investment to reduce both my ongoing motoring costs and my carbon emissions. Sadly our governments are still subsidising fossil fuels by much more than for renewables. But it behoves us also to examine our own money investments and how those interact with fossil fuel use.

You may say you don't have any investments, but all of us with bank accounts or pensions are indirectly investing in the world of business (I have written several times urging my own pension provider to disinvest). Banks vary in how ethically they invest their funds or provide finance for companies. The 255 page report *Banking on Climate Chaos* published in March 2021, as a joint effort between organisations such as Rainforest Action Network, BankTrack, Indigenous Environmental Network, and the Sierra Club gives invaluable information analysing fossil fuel financing from the world's 60 largest commercial and investment banks; they put a total of \$3.8 trillion into fossil fuels from 2016–2020. Unsurprisingly, US banks top the list, but Barclays and HSBC are also large providers of fossil funding. You may want to take account of this when choosing a bank or pressing for changes in their policies. You can see the report at <https://tinyurl.com/5yvr2a43>.

Similarly, you might like to pressure your own pension fund, whether as a contributor or a pensioner, to disinvest from fossil fuels (Nest and Scottish Widows reputedly are good ones). Not only is it now unethical to be aiding carbon fuel production, there is also a growing risk that such investments could rapidly become worthless as governments take action to curb emissions. Biden is proposing major changes in the US and the CBI's *Seize the Moment* report says 2021 must be a turning point for the UK if it is to address geographic inequalities, decarbonisation and innovation challenges. There have also been investor revolts at ExxonMobil where an activist investor group won two places on their board, and at Chevron when investors voted in favour of forcing the group to cut its carbon emissions; a Dutch court in 2021 ordered Shell to cut carbon emissions by 45% by 2030. The writing is on the wall.

If you do have money to invest there are several ways you can use it for good purposes. It is calculated that, for the next 30 years, £12bn will need to be invested

annually in a range of alternative generating technologies; you can get involved via a unit trust. There are a growing number of these 'ethical' funds, e.g. Axa 'Evolving Economy', Jupiter 'Sustainable Equities', but do check how genuine their green commitment is. A good example is a new fund specifically devoted to companies presenting solutions to climate change, Clim8 Invest with its focus on clean energy, clean tech, clean water, and clean mobility companies. Their funds, like all stocks and shares, can go down as well as up, but over the long term these almost always provide better returns than interest on cash, and renewables are undoubtedly a growth sector.

If feeling more adventurous you can invest, via a fund such as Ethex or Energise Africa, an Innovative Fund ISA, which invests in companies providing home solar energy access to African families. The mechanism is by bonds in each scheme, repayable over two to four years and paying up to 6% interest. Your investments purchase home solar systems, which are sold to households and businesses. They make monthly payments until they own the system outright. It is pleasing to know your investing is doing such a useful job, often enabling their first access to electricity, saving them money in fuel costs, cutting carbon emissions and doing so through small local schemes. Much more locally, look at Energise Barnsley – 'the largest local authority and community energy rooftop solar PV and battery storage project in the UK' at <http://www.energisebarnsley.co.uk/>.

My own investments through Abundanceinvestment.com include:

- Liverpool Community Homes, supporting the construction of 27 green and sustainable affordable homes for long-term social use.
- E2 Energy - a portfolio of eight medium-sized wind turbines located on farms across the north of England. Some of the electricity is sold to the farmers at a discounted rate, the rest being exported to the grid.
- CoGen - waste gasification facilities offering a cleaner and more efficient way of realising the energy value in residual municipal waste compared to incinerators.

Yet more exciting and risky (if a business fails, you could lose the money) are through bonds in start-up businesses. Projects I have put some of my funds into include Orbital Marine Power building a 72m long 2MW floating tidal turbine that can be installed and maintained using small, local boats. Completed after 18 months work, it is currently in position undergoing final trials and tests; it will return my capital plus 12% pa accrued interest on completion. Similar turbines could be installed at other locations.

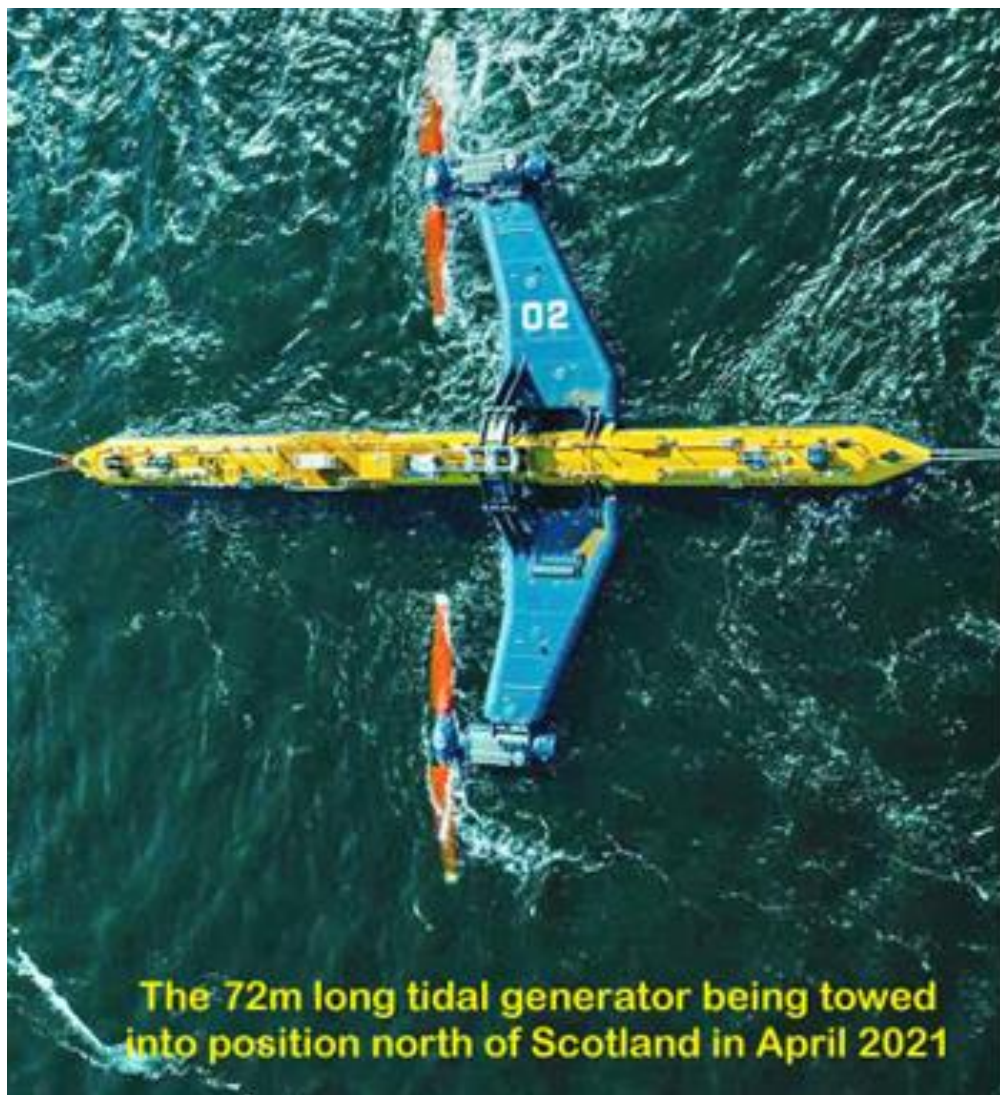
Other projects, through Crowdcube.com, include:

- Future Pump – solar powered irrigation pumps for smallholder farmers.

- RheEnergise – energy storage by pumped hydro using water made denser with minerals enabling more power from smaller dams at lower heights above turbines.
- H2GO Power – being developed by Cambridge University researchers, this combines hydrogen storage by chemical means (rather than compression) with AI technology to optimise generation, storage and energy usage, e.g. lighter weight more powerful batteries successfully trialled in drones.

As you can see there is a lot happening on the renewables and associated fronts, and I personally find it very pleasing knowing I am helping to finance the cleaner future rather than dirty old fossils.

Michael Miller (May 2021)



The 72m long tidal generator being towed into position north of Scotland in April 2021

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