



Working towards a greener church – An eco-update from St Katharine's

Internationally -

As powerful forces around the world continue their attempts to stop ecological advances by gutting clean energy programmes and opposing green alternatives, there are successes being achieved all the time which should give us hope. Earlier this month, for example, thousands of indigenous peoples gathered in Brasilia to demonstrate against the demarcation of indigenous lands, the rise of illegal gold-mining and other harmful activities which attack vital eco-systems and undermine the long-term stability of the climate and biodiversity.

And it is now not only environmental campaigners but also the International Energy Agency who are reporting that governments around the world are changing their minds about fossil fuel energy. The wars in the Middle East and Ukraine are focussing the minds of the industry on the unreliability of oil and gas supplies and on the logic of switching to more trustworthy renewables.

The Iran war has certainly triggered a global surge in demand for electric vehicles, solar panels, heat pumps and other fossil-free technologies. It is a great pity that economics always seems to have greater influence than the terrible cost in human lives, but environmentalists who were long dismissed as unrealistic now look like pragmatists and true patriots. We should continue to support people who demand an energy transition that makes environmental and humanitarian sense.

Nationally and locally -

The Eco Church community is celebrating 25 years of A Rocha UK, and 10 years of the Eco Church movement, in which MGMT plays a part. Look out for their useful Eco Tips Calendar, which we have displayed on our noticeboards.

The Team Ministry has been invited by Bishop Martin to a reception, the **Southwark Diocese Green Garden Party**, on 13th May, to celebrate our eco-achievements, so we will be sending a representative.

Several churches in the area are holding events offering an opportunity to see and discuss a film called **'The People's Emergency Briefing'**. This is an eye-opening 45 minute film featuring nine leading UK scientists and experts, updating us on the latest in the climate and nature crisis and its impacts on everyday national life, including such issues as extreme weather, food insecurity, health and cost of living. There is an opportunity afterwards to participate in facilitated discussion. The next local events are:

- 5th May in Dorking - contact dorkingcommunitynetwork@gmail.com
- 5th June in Caterham – contact gill@planetfox.uk

There is also a showing at The Light in Redhill.

The latest news and advice from **Surrey Wildlife Trust**:

- Look out for skylarks, woodlarks and woodpeckers in the countryside at the moment, but stick to paths when walking, so as not to disturb them,
- Keep an eye out for bees and create homes for them. The vast majority of UK bees – more than 250 species – are solitary. We can boost bee diversity by creating an area of bare ground in a sunny spot, drilling a variety of holes in a wooden post or log, and planting native pollinators.

At St Katharine's we were invited by the **Surrey Climate Commission** to endorse their Our Future Surrey Pledge campaign. This enables us to stay in touch with more local initiatives for mutual support.

Instead of participating in the annual Churches Count On Nature, this year we plan to conduct regular seasonal **wildlife surveys** throughout the year. There is plenty otherwise going on, including our contribution to the **St Katharine's Church Fete and Flower Festival** over the weekend of **20th/21st June**, so the first of the wildlife surveys is likely to be in September.

In the meantime, the children's Forest Church activities during team services and the Church In The Woods events remind us of the wonderful opportunity we have to thank God and enjoy nature in our churchyard and grounds.

Jill Gunn jill@gunn.org
Judith Hanson judithvoices@yahoo.co.uk
April 2026