



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD AND ABBEY CHURCH ARBROATH

ECO-AWARENESS NEWSLETTER

February 8th 2015

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Be Brilliant This EARTH HOUR

By Alex Robertson

Eco-Congregation Scotland continues to support WWF's Earth Hour. This year the event takes place on March 28 at 8.30pm.

Last year 130 eco-congregations registered to take part in Earth Hour and 986 schools in Scotland also participated.

Over 100 iconic buildings switched off their lighting in Scotland and 100% of local authority areas participated.

Over the last few years Old and Abbey Eco-Awareness Group have organised Earth Hour events.



This year during the morning service on Sunday March 22 Earth Hour will be highlighted and a prayer card and a tea light candle will be issued to each member of the congregation.

They will be asked to turn off their house lights on Saturday March 28 from 8.30pm to 9.30pm and to ignite the tea light candle.

We are asked to do this as a simple demonstration of how each of us can save a little energy and so reduce our carbon footprint.

The fact that this is done all over the world reduces the carbon footprint greatly.



protect God's creation.

It is essential that we all as individuals try to reduce our energy use and so

Well Done St Andrew's!

Congratulations to our neighbouring church St Andrew's on achieving their first eco award.

This means Arbroath now has 3 eco congregations, ourselves, St Andrew's and St Thomas.

Eco Congregation Scotland are trying to encourage churches of all denominations to come into the fold.

We, as an established eco congregation, will do our utmost to encourage the remaining churches in Arbroath to establish an eco psychology and eventually become established eco congregations.

Hopefully, in the future, all the Arbroath churches can participate jointly in projects of an ecological nature.

Our grateful thanks to our sponsors:

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INCREASE IN OLD AND ABBEY CARBON FOOTPRINT

Unfortunately, our carbon footprint for 2014 has increased, mainly because the heating system was kept on whilst work on the new audio/visual system was being undertaken during the cold weather prevalent at the time.

In 2013 the carbon footprint from gas usage was 1.56 tonnes. Last year the figure was 2.83 tonnes, that is a huge increase of 1.27 tonnes.

We now have a wonderful audio/visual system, for which we must be grateful, and hopefully this year we can get back on an even keel and start reducing our energy use by 5% as directed by Eco Congregation Scotland.

There was also a small increase in electricity usage, our carbon footprint in this respect rising by 0.25 tonne, from 6.993 tonnes in 2013 to 7.243 tonnes last year. Perhaps this links with the aforesaid audio/visual work and maybe an increase in hall usage. However this electrical increase is not too high. Alex Robertson, Energy Officer

THE ANSWER IS BLOWING IN THE WIND . . . OR IS IT?

By Alex Robertson

Love them or loathe them wind turbines are going to multiply in number over the next few years, both on land and in the seas around our shores, but, hopefully, not until their positioning has been carefully looked into, giving due consideration to local communities' concerns and the welfare of animals and birds.

The hoped-for creation of plentiful Tayside area jobs linked to wind turbines has yet to materialise. During the oil boom, not that many jobs really came to Tayside either or if they did they did not last long, with the possible exception of Montrose.

Did Scotland in the not too distant past do enough to introduce hydro-electric schemes in sufficient numbers and size to produce 'clean' electricity cheaply and efficiently?

Scotland must reduce its carbon footprint, no doubt about that at all, but at what cost, not only in price, but in the blotting of our land and seascapes if due consideration is not given to their location.

It was announced recently that billions of pounds of investment was at risk after RSPB Scotland mounted a legal challenge to four major windfarms in the firths of Tay and Forth.

It was seeking judicial review of the decision by Scottish Ministers to grant consents for the windfarms concerned.

RSPB Scotland said its decision to do so had not been taken lightly.

An important quote from them was: 'RSPB Scotland continues to support the development of carefully sited and designed renewables, including offshore wind.'

An article in the Scottish Daily Mail on January 17 reported on Scots windfarms being handed £8 million since the start of 2015 to shut down when it's too windy.

Common sense will surely prevail in the end and Scotland will meet its hoped for carbon footprint reduction targets.

All concerned with the siting of wind turbines have a difficult task, but they must be trusted to make correct decisions for the benefit of us all.

The answer may, indeed, be blowing in the wind (or the blowing of the wind).

IN THE BLEAK MID WINTER



The Eco Awareness Group are now part of the World Church grouping under the restructuring of work groups recently undertaken. Along with us are Fairtrade, Energy Officer, Habitat for Humanity, Twinning With Ghana and Christian Aid. Fiona O'Connor and Vicky Fraser are joint conveners of the whole group, reporting to session. The eco group remains the same with Jean and Alex at the helm.



- Renewable power has overtaken nuclear to become the main source of electricity in Scotland. Environmental campaigners and leaders of the green energy sector hailed renewables becoming the country's largest source of energy as an historic landmark.
- Angus Council has revealed innovative plans to tackle the problem of litter at the West Links in Arbroath.