



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD AND ABBEY CHURCH ARBROATH

ECO-AWARENESS NEWSLETTER

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AIR POLLUTION CONCERN

A BBC Scotland Investigates programme 'Car Sick' broadcast on January 13th highlighted the very serious problem of air pollution caused by vehicle emissions.

This was an excellent documentary revealing how these emissions can cause, or make worse, a variety of medical ailments, including asthma, especially from diesel fuelled vehicles. Reporter David Miller pointed out £3 million had been spent tackling air pollution last year, but £700 million was spent on roads to try to ease traffic congestion in Scotland. It is thought air pollution is a factor in causing around 2000 deaths each year.

There are around 2 million cars on Scotland's roads. Cycling is becoming more popular, but could be even more so if there were plenty more safe cycle routes available. Walking, too, is gaining in popularity, either individually or in organised groups.

Both cycling and walking are good for our health, no doubt about that. Perhaps we should abandon our cars at the very least for one full day each week and use public transport, cycle or walk. Vehicle emissions are mostly unseen, but can prove fatal for vulnerable people.

There are 91 air pollution monitoring sites across Scotland recording air pollution levels and highlighting areas of particular concern.

Government and local authorities have an important role in trying to reduce air pollution, but we, too, can help by becoming less reliant on the car or switching to electric-powered vehicles or using the bus, train or bicycle or, better still, walking, when we can.

This is not a new issue, but BBC Scotland have produced an eye-opening programme both honest and revealing. If you missed it, I recommend you tune into BBC iPlayer, Scotland category, 'Car Sick': Editor.

CARBON FOOTPRINT 2015

The carbon footprint for the Old and Abbey for last year totalled 8.87 tonnes, comprising 5.82 tonnes for electricity and 3.05 tonnes for gas. This gave a reduction of 1.20 tonnes from 2014.

However, our gas consumption continues to rise (3.05 tonnes compared to 2.83 tonnes), whilst electricity consumption fell (5.82 tonnes compared to 7.24 tonnes).

Nevertheless the gas rise of 0.22 tonne is a vast improvement over the previous year when the increase was 1.27 tonnes.

I will continue to monitor our energy consumption.

Alex Robertson, Energy Officer

PARIS CLIMATE SUMMIT KEY DETAILS

All countries will together aim to limit any temperature increase to 'well below' 2C above pre-industrial levels and will 'pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5C'

All countries will voluntarily cut emissions.

The long-term aim is to reduce to zero the net amount of emissions that are put into the atmosphere in the second half of the century.

Rich countries, joined by some wealthy developing countries, will mobilise financial flows of \$100bn a year from 2020 to help developing countries adapt to climate change. This figure will be progressively scaled up.

The Paris agreement will come into force in 2020.

EARTH HOUR

Earth Hour 2016 takes place on Saturday March 19th at 8:30 pm.

Over the past two years 150 churches across Scotland have taken part.

Earth Hour is the single, largest, symbolic mass participation event in the world. Born out of a hope that we could mobilize people to take action on climate change, Earth Hour now inspires a global community of millions of people in 7,001 cities and towns across 152 countries and territories to switch lights off for an hour as a massive show of concern for the environment.

Look out for details of what our church will be doing this year for Earth Hour.

The Paris Climate Change Summit has come and gone and decisions made, which will come into force in 2020. There is a feeling of anti climax about this somehow after the huge build up to the summit. Why has it taken so long to reach a decision on how to tackle climate change globally? Why wait until 2020? Surely action is needed right now!

Air pollution is a huge problem, mainly caused by vehicle emissions, and causing or making worse many health conditions. An air pollution campaigner was quoted as saying, 'The Government must support local authorities with funding to implement low emission zones in all major cities.

'It must also increase its investment in walking and cycle paths so that it becomes safer and more convenient for people to leave their cars at home.'