

Third meeting of St Barnabas environment committee 2 November 2010

Liz Marsden (note taking), Steve Bishop, Wendy Jackson (apologies from Robin George)

We looked back over the notes from the previous meeting and the following points were noted: -

Rainwater harvesting

Steve had researched rainwater harvesting systems and explained that it was unsuitable for the church's situation, as both the financial and environmental cost of installing it was very high, considering how little the toilets are actually used. Although we do not therefore plan to go ahead with this, the idea of 'harvesting' as a fundraising idea for other future projects was still very valid and could be used in the future.

Vegetable Garden and bug boxes

Bill's vegetable patch was discussed (admirably!). It was suggested this could be extended to include a herb patch from which congregation members could pick herbs – eg rosemary to go with Sunday roast! Wendy mentioned that it might be possible to get a grant from Metropolitan Gardens Association for this and they might pay for purchase of bug hotels, bat boxes, bee homes etc. It was suggested that the Sunday school might like to go on a bug hunt, or help in the planting of the herbs, once purchased.

- *Steve will ask the community service team to dig over a patch this Sunday*
- *Wendy will buy some herbs which can be planted at this time of year, eg rosemary, sage*

Worship

After the article in Ichthus about worship team, we now know who is on it. It was suggested we ask Tim if we can include a note/card in intercessor's bag asking intercessors to include a prayer for the environment in the intercessions each week.

Recycling

We discussed the positioning of recycling bins, particularly the bottle bin, which is kept by the drive, as it cannot be wheeled past the front of the BP hut while Building Blocks is on, and otherwise will not be collected. The pros and cons of signage explaining recycling facilities were discussed, but was decided that as people often don't actually look at signs, it was not worth putting up more notices. However signs on bins themselves are faded, so:

- *Steve will try and find vinyl sign to label bins with.*

Hall User agreement and Green Mission Statement

We talked about formulating a green mission statement or similar that could be given to hall users to try to encourage good environmental practice. Steve told us a hall user agreement booklet was being planned and a section on environment could be included.

Photovoltaic panels

We talked about putting photovoltaic panels on the roof of the church. The availability of 'rent a roof' schemes was mentioned, whereby companies rent a suitable roof and allow the owners to use the electricity generated for no charge, but keep any money earned from the feed-in-tariff scheme. More research needs to be done, but we agreed we could always ask a company to come and quote or explain how it could work.

Heating Church

Steve gave us figures showing how much energy the hall uses to be heated up. 30 KW is used per hour, for about 5 hours for at least 20 Sundays a year = 3000KW just for 100 hours (just over 4 days) worth of heating. It's about the same as the entire electricity consumption of my house for the year! We then discussed ground or air source heat pumps or biomass boilers being a suitable project to look at, which would be very beneficial in helping us reduce our carbon footprint. This needs to be researched in greater detail.

Crèche

Draft insulation for crèche room was discussed.

- *Liz to ask on Freecycle for curtain*
- *Rug to be found to help insulate floor for crèche-users*

Fairtrade Church

We discussed whether we were using Fairtrade tea and coffee in the church yet. Steve told us that Fairtrade coffee was being bought, but as supplies are bought in bulk when there is a special offer, the supply of regular tea has not yet dried up. When it does, Fairtrade tea can be purchased. The situation is the same for purchasing environmentally friendly cleaning materials, which was agreed on in the previous meeting.

Offset scheme

We discussed the previously planned St Barnabas offset scheme. Liz produced a car money box that could be used. It was decided that as this would constitute another 'fund' which would need to be accounted for, this should be postponed for the time being. It would need a clear idea as to what the money would be used for before asking congregation members to contribute.

Noticeboard

It was agreed part of the noticeboard could be used to raise environmental awareness.

Summary of what was agreed and next steps

At the end of the meeting, we reviewed the Eco-congregation literature and saw that it is possible to get accreditation for being an environmentally aware church. To achieve this the following was agreed:

- Present summary of plans to PCC, hopefully in November meeting (Steve).

- Carry on with small environmental actions and improvements where possible.
 - Once PCC approves that environmental activities should form part of the church's life, we will choose modules from Eco-congregation scheme.
 - Once modules are completed, we can apply for an 'Eco-congregation' award.
- This will help when applying for grants etc when and if we decide to start a big environmental project, eg ground source heat pump, photovoltaic panels.