



Richmond Team Ministry GREEN TIPS

**'The gospel is Good
News for God's earth'**

Welcome to the Spring edition of the GreenTips newsletter. Onwards and into 2026 – we are continuing to share the good news about RTM's care for God's world in our worship and living, how we care for our buildings and land and how we engage with local communities and global campaigns to enhance our world.

GreenTips continues to consider and reflect upon our personal lifestyles to ensure we are doing all we can to care for our planet. This edition brings news of recent GREEN events, how we can all take part in The BIG Plastic Count this March and the things we have planned for the rest of the year. There are plenty of projects we need your help with. We have an update from our parishioners on the challenges they undertook based on the last newsletter and a couple of fab tried and tested seasonal recipes.

A Rocha - EcoChurch

Just a reminder, the **EcoChurch** project - to which we at RTM has signed up to - aims to equip all churches to be greener. To date, 8700 churches in England and Wales are registered and so far 4400 have achieved the Bronze award or above. Only 111 have achieved the much coveted Gold awards!

The Green Team continue to work on the projects and processes which will support all three churches to achieve the Silver award. As you know we are achieving Gold in the areas of worship and teaching which is very encouraging but we have work to do in terms of our buildings and energy, our land and nature, our community and engagement and our lifestyle.

THE GREEN TEAM

Go on you know you want to!! If this newsletter inspires you please do think about joining our small but perfectly formed team. We welcome representatives from all three churches to help with our plans and contribute new ideas. We meet both in person but also online - very green as no transport is required. If you would like to talk about joining us for one off projects or joining the Green Team – please contact Emma Meredith emeredith@ctpa.org.uk.





GREEN UPDATES THIS SPRING

RECYCLE THOSE CHRISTMAS CARDS – and now birthday cards too!

Thank you all so much for the incredible number of cards that have been brought in to church to upcycle into Christmas Tags by a Richmond Soup Kitchen Volunteer. We are going to continue this over the year and ask for birthday cards for making into general gift tags and new birthday cards. These tags and cards will be for sale at the May Fair on the 9th of May – would be funny if you recognised one of your donated cards! Green and a great fundraiser for a brilliant cause too.

LITTER PICKING – IN PREPARATION OF THE ARRIVAL OF OUR NEW TEAM RECTOR

World Clean-up Day is a Global event supported by the UN and held annually on the 20 September. SMM Church Clean-up day (14th February) on the other hand was a very local event to prepare SMM and the churchyard for the arrival of Rev'd Robert Stanier.

The churchyard litter picking team worked hard – as did the folk inside who focused on the church, vestry, bell tower, kitchen and the overflowing cupboards. Much recycling was identified and sorted into the correct recycling boxes. The litter pickers found a TV, frying pans as well as golf clubs!!

The pans were Du Buyer Carbon Steel Mineral B pans no less! These retail at over £70. One of our litter pickers took them home, cleaned them with a dishwasher tablet, then vinegar finally she seasoned them – wow! She is a Green Queen!



Don't forget if you do a local litter clear up in your own street or area there is a fantastic app you can use to report to the LBRUT – <https://lovecleanstreets.info> – you add the address, how many bags of rubbish and the local authority come along and collect without further ado! You can use any bags as long as they are tied up when full.

GREEN CHRISTMAS OVER TO YOU....



Thank you to all members of the congregation who let the Green Team know about their efforts towards having a Greener Christmas.

Our Editor decluttered and took several bags of unwanted gifts and clothes to the MIND shop in East Twickenham. She did however come home with a box of cocktail glasses which made a lovely extra gift for her daughter and a bargain at £5! She also invested in paper Christmas bags which she reclaimed as soon as the gifts were opened and are now stored neatly ready for next year!

Jutta from SMM used newspaper for wrapping her presents keeping any pictures of war or violence on the inside! Mary from SJD made marmalade from the left-over Christingle oranges. That counts as a double green effort – green star for you Mary!



PLANS FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS



THE BIG PLASTIC COUNT 9 to 15 March

A challenge to us all – let's sign up to the Big Plastic Count – last year almost a quarter of a million people took part in The Big Plastic Count. This revealed that almost two billion pieces of plastic packaging are being thrown away a week. This year you can help build even more evidence to convince UK ministers to lead the way at the global talks to phase out plastic pollution for good.

It's so easy to take part – you register at www.thebigplasticcount.com/sign-up

You are sent a Count Sheet and How-to Guide. For the week of 9 to 15 March you simply count all the plastic you use that goes either in the bin or in the recycling. You then submit your results by 22 March.

Do remember that although it is easy for us all to feel guilty when we start counting our plastic usage but only governments and companies can offer accessible alternatives and by submitting our count we add to the evidence needed to demand change.

COUNT SHEET						
Pour this off and stick somewhere you'll see it, then count the types of plastic packaging you throw away each day.						
Tick off the days as you count your plastic:						
<input type="checkbox"/> H	<input type="checkbox"/> O	<input type="checkbox"/> W	<input type="checkbox"/> T	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> S	<input type="checkbox"/> S
LET'S COUNT!						
EVERYDAY PLASTIC						
COMMUNITY FUND						
THE BIG PLASTIC COUNT						
9-15 MARCH						
FOOD & DRINK						
	Small bottles up to 500ml (water, soft drinks, sauces etc.)	Total				
	Large bottles (over 500ml) (water, squash, cooking oil, milk etc.)					
	Hard plastic cups and lids (from soft drinks, juice, fast food, dips etc.)					
	Flexible film lids (from soft drinks, juice, fast food, dips etc.)					
	Fruit and veg trays, pots and their lids (berries, grapes, stir fry, tomatoes etc.)					
	Fruit, veg and salad bags, wrappers and nets (lettuce, bananas, cucumber, lemons etc.)					
CLEANING & TOILETRIES						
	Small bottles up to 500ml (hand wash, shampoo, washing up liquid etc.)					
	Large bottles (over 500ml) (detergent, bleach, surface cleaner etc.)					
	Pots, tubes and tubes (mousse, cream, suncream, laundry tablets etc.)					
EVERYTHING ELSE						
	Other hard plastic packaging (plastic packaging for toys, tech, stationery, DIY etc.)					
	Other soft plastic and foil packaging (plastic wrap, cling film, foil, weather tabs, wet wipe packets etc.)					
	Other with plastic packaging (out food pouches, carrier bags, bubble wrap etc.)					

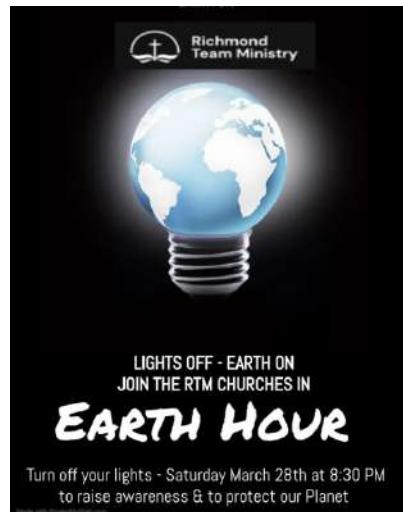
GLOBAL RECYCLING DAY 18 March

This will be our third year repeating the spectacles and sunglasses collection as our contribution to Global Recycling Day. We collected over 125 pairs last year – 25% up on the first year so let's try and beat that!!! We will be sending them off to the Lions Club who use them to improve the sight of children and adults living in less developed countries. All donations are washed and regraded and sent directly to those in need. There will be boxes from now until the end of March in all three churches - please hunt through those desk drawers and bring all those unwanted spectacles to church. ☺



EARTH HOUR – 28 March

Since 2007, Earth Hour has been known for the “lights off” moment, with folk around the globe switching off their lights to show symbolic support for the planet and raise awareness of environmental issues affecting it. So join us at 8.30pm, 28 March and switch off ALL your lights. Use the time to do something positive for our planet – to pray, to think about impact of our actions, watch a climate documentary, cook a meal using local produce or even to look for books to donate for the May Fair.....Here are some more ideas for giving your hour <https://www.earthhour.org/take-part/give-an-hour>



All our churches will be in darkness with all lights off for the hour.

EARTH DAY 22 April



On the nearest Sunday 19th April we will hopefully be litter picking in the sunshine in the churchyard of SMM as our contribution to Earth Day. As usual coffee and biscuits will be supplied and we now have our own church litter pickers! Let's see what treasures we find this time. The churchyard will then look lovely for the May Fair three weeks later. Please do come along at 1045 and give us 30 minutes of your time – many hands will make light work.

ALL OUR GREEN DATES FOR 2025/26

(There are posters in all three churches advertising our events)

9-15 March - The Big Plastic Count

Let's count every bit of plastic we use this week

18 March - Global Recycling Day

Glasses Recycling project

28 March - Earth Hour

Follow our churches and turn off all the lights for an hour

22 April – Earth Day

Litter pick after the 9.30 service at SMM (19 April)

1 - 31 May – No Mow May

Our Churchyard will be left to grow

9 May - May Fair around SMM and on the Green

Recycle books, unwanted bottles and gifts for charity

6 – 14 June - Big Green Week/Churches Count on Nature

Churchyard Nature Count

18 June - Clean Air Day

Walk to church Sunday (14 June)

22-28 June - Insect Week

Our insect hotel(s) will be open

7 - 11 Sept - Zero Waste Week

Another collection campaign will be announced

20 September - World Clean Up Day

Litter pick at SMM after the 9.30 service (20 Sept)

22 September - World Car Free Day

Walk to church Sunday (20 Sept)

26 September - Christian Aid River Walk

Let's get an RTM team walking

14 October - International E-waste Day

RTM campaign on cable decluttering

1 November - World Vegan Day

Let's exchange some great recipes

27 November - Buy Nothing Day

Not as easy as it sounds.....

TWO CHURCHYARD CHALLENGES FOR YOU

REAL ESTATE FOR INSECTS



We would like to build some mini houses or even a large hotel to encourage insects and other minibeasts by offering them safe spaces to shelter, to hide from predators and to raise their young.

Insect homes can be small or palatial and we are looking for a couple of volunteers to lead a project to create a couple of insect habitats. This would be a great community activity.

You can also create something in your own garden – big or small. You can simply create a Twig Tower Block - gather some sticks and find an undisturbed, sheltered spot outdoors, pile them up and stuff the gaps with smaller twigs and dry leaves. Or a Pine Cone Palace for ladybirds by gathering some pinecones and bundling them together closely so the scales interlock a bit, stuff some dried leaves in the gaps and it's ready to go. There are lots of ideas on the Woodland Trust website

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/09/how-to-build-a-bug-hotel/>

Please contact the Green Team if you are interested in helping with this project.

HERBS AND SPICES

We are keen to establish some pots around the grounds to grow herbs and possibly chilli. This has already started at St John's with two gorgeous bay trees by their front door.

We are looking for donations of large pots plus cuttings to start the herbs and chillis off. We are also looking for a couple of people who would be prepared to take on the watering of the pots and indeed the harvesting and onward distribution to the congregation of the fresh produce. No real green fingers required just someone who can handle a watering can!



Again do get in touch with the Green Team to discuss your ideas.

HOT TIP - FREE CLASS - If you are interested in composting – there is a free Masterclass at Teddington Library on 26 March from 11 to 12.

SHARE A RECIPE – FOR SPRING

A new but hopefully regular feature – every quarter we would like to share a recipe featuring seasonal produce. **Seasonal produce** is more nutritious, tastier, and cost-effective while also being better for the environment. Seasonal produce is typically harvested at peak ripeness, has a shorter travel time, and doesn't require artificial ripening resulting in higher nutrient content, better flavour, and lower costs. Supporting seasonal food also reduces the carbon footprint from long-distance transportation whilst supporting local farmers.



Here is a tried and tested recipe for cauliflower and spiced parsnip soup – spiced with coriander, ginger, fennel and turmeric.

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/spiced-parsnip-cauliflower-soup>

And please do think about sharing a recipe for the summer newsletter – aubergines, broad beans, carrots, gooseberries, peas, spring greens, tomatoes, water cress – so many options.

STOP JUNK MAIL

Don't know about you but there is so much junk mail coming through our post box which just goes directly into the recycling bin. However you can choose to register with the Mail Preference Service (MPS). The MPS is a free service set up in 1983 and fully supported by The Information Commissioners Office (ICO). This service will remove your name and address from 95% of mailing lists. Registration can take up to four months to have full effect and will last until you cancel it. <https://www.mpsonline.org.uk/consumer/register>

You can also order a free No Junk Mail sticker from the LBRUT – it will be posted out to you in 5 days after you request it – check out the link here - https://www.richmond.gov.uk/junk_mail

There will also be a supply of these stickers at the back of the three churches – please do take one.



STAMPS



However if you do still receive mail and you want to recycle – Sylvia (at SJD) will take both stamps and postcards to help the world's working animals – through SPANA, a charity which relieves the suffering of working horses, mules and donkeys, toiling under impossibly harsh working conditions, often without food or water, in some of the world's poorest communities. Stamps should be cut from envelopes, leaving a small margin of paper around them. Postcards can be new or used.

SPANA's website is - <https://spana.org/>

OVER TO YOU.....

We hope you have enjoyed our latest Green Tips newsletter. If you have any ideas please get in touch via the Parish Office, or email Emma at emeredith@ctpa.org.uk

Please send us in your recipes for the summer edition.

Please join us at one of our Green events, volunteer to help with the insect hotels or new herb gardens.

Let us know how you are engaging in green activities. Did you sign up to the BIG Plastic Count? What did you do in Earth Hour? Were you inspired to create a little insect haven in your own outdoor space? We would love to hear from you all. Any pictures you can send in too would be fabulous.

Thank you