



Richmond Team Ministry **GREENTIPS**

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

Welcome to the Summer edition of the GreenTips newsletter. As we welcome the better weather we continue 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 encourages us 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 our recent GREEN events, our many 'green' collections and all the exciting things we have planned for the rest of the year. We also have a seasonal recipe from Robert – Rector's Ratatouille – with some excellent wine suggestions to accompany both the cooking and the eating processes.

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, and this year A Rocha, who run the EcoChurch project celebrate ten years of EcoChurch!

The RTM Green Team continues to work on the projects and processes which will support all three churches to achieve the Silver award. We are achieving Gold in 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.

A Rocha, in celebrating its 10-year anniversary, encourages us all to reflect on our journey thus far – to pause, reflect and celebrate. Our Team Ministry has achieved a lot but there is still more for the Green Team to do, and to do more we need more of you to join us.

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 SUMMER

RECYCLE THOSE BIRTHDAY CARDS

Thank you all so much for the incredible number of birthday cards that have been brought into our churches to upcycle by one of our wonderful Richmond Soup Kitchen Volunteers. We have had a couple of sales over coffee and one planned at the May Fair and everyone has commented on how lovely and professional looking the cards are. More to come!



LITTER PICKING – OUR CONTRIBUTION TO EARTH DAY

Earth Day is celebrated on 22 April every year and has been since 1970 – it is believed over one billion people across the world join forces each year on this day to do something to protect our planet.

The St Mary's churchyard litter picking team worked hard and amassed several bags of rubbish, three drain pipes and a pallet – which has since been upcycled – see the Insect Hotel story below.....

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.



THE BIG PLASTIC COUNT 9 to 15 March

How many of us took part – some 70 000 of us did nationally! Based on our returns it is suggested UK households throw away an estimated 82 billion pieces of plastic packaging every year! And guess what? Most of it isn't even recycled. Over half of it is burned, right here in the UK. If you would like to read the full report here is the link:

<https://thebigplasticcount.com/media/TBPC-2026-Results-Report.pdf>

Do remember here in LBRUT we can recycle plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays in our weekly black box kerb side collection. We can take our plastic bags, wrap or film to a number of larger supermarkets.

GLOBAL RECYCLING DAY 18 March

This was our third year repeating the spectacles and sunglasses collection as our contribution to Global Recycling Day. We collected over 100 pairs again this year – including 20 pairs of sunglasses – and some snazzy designer ones at 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. 🌱

And in other glasses news – check out how one of our readers recycled her prosecco glass after the Bell Ringers Film night - propagating roots for plants which she will then donate to the Habitats and Heritage plant sale. That's really green!

BRA RECYCLING BOXES

You may have noticed the new Bra Banks in each church so bring in your unwanted bras – all shapes all sizes welcome. Those in good condition will be offered to women in countries who need access to free or cheap underwear and those in less good condition will be recycled – wire removed and padding used. We will also be 'paid' for our collections and this will go directly to Breast Cancer Research.



INSECT HOTELS



An insect hotel (or bug hostel) is a human-made structure filled with natural materials - wood, bamboo, pinecones, straw to provide nesting and hibernation sites for beneficial insects like solitary bees, ladybirds and lacewings. These structures boost garden biodiversity as well as aiding pollination. St John's has had insect hotels for several years and St Mary Magdalene has recently repurposed a pallet left in the churchyard! The building team were very pleased that all materials used in creating the town centre hotel were recycled. We are very hopeful the new gardening team (see on) at St Matthias will add an additional RTM Insect Hotel - on the Hill - to add to our hotel chain!!

If you are interested in building your own – check out this link and don't forget to send us a photograph of your creation. <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/09/how-to-build-a-bug-hotel/>



GROUNDS FOR COFFEE



Introducing the new gardening group which started at St Matthias last month called 'Grounds for Coffee', caring for the churchyard and enjoying coffee together afterwards. They have already planted new shrubs designed to cope with drought conditions, and a gorgeous Judas Tree which is attracting lots of bees and insects. They have introduced a new compost heap to recycle green waste - all garden and floristry waste – on site. Eventually the well-rotted compost will feed the plants and help to keep the soil healthy without the use of chemical fertilisers.

Please contact Richard Seaborne for more information richardseaborne@aol.com or text him on 07554437130 if you are keen to help.

NO MOW MAY



Not sure words are needed for this section – it is all looking rather beautiful in the churchyard. No Mow May is one of the easiest ways to help the environment – letting wildflowers grow whilst supporting bees and butterflies. Even very small wild patches add up to make a huge difference to nature.



PLANS FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS

MAY FAIR 9 May



An annual excuse to recycle those books, kids toys and unwanted gifts and bottles for the Tombola. We look forward to all the Fun of the Fair pictures next edition but here are a couple of shots of the goodies on offer!! Do come along and support the fair around St Mary's church and on the Green.

Our congregation have been very generous so far and we hope to raise plenty of money for Richmond Soup Kitchen.



CHURCHES COUNT ON NATURE 6 JUNE



Caring for God's Acre is the conservation charity caring for burial grounds across the UK. Every year they run the Churches Count on Nature which involves exploring and recording the plant and animal life living within these historic green spaces. Our local observations are invaluable - we will record the species we encounter and add them to a public database accessible to all. These records will help shed light on which plant and animal species are thriving and which may need more support.

We would love as many volunteers as possible to come and help record all the animal and plants we can find in our churchyard. It doesn't matter if you are not an expert – of course there is an app we can all download and use but there are also paper recording methods too. There will be a call to arms in the newsletter to sign up and get the details of how we will be surveying our beautiful churchyard. In the meantime, put the 6 June in your diaries.

STILL LOOKING

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 have had some really kind offers but are still looking for donations of large pots plus cuttings to start the herbs and chillis. 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.



ALL OUR GREEN DATES FOR THE REST OF 2025/26

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

- 1 - 31 May No Mow May - Our Churchyards will be left to grow
- 6 – 14 June Big Green Week/Churches Count on Nature
- 18 June Clean Air Day
Walk to church Sunday (14 June)
- 22 -28 June Insect Week
Our insect hotel(s) will be officially 'opened'
- 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.....



SHARE A RECIPE 'RECTOR'S RATATOUILLE'

Every quarter we 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 from our new Team Rector, Robert. Thanks for sharing this alongside some very useful wine suggestions to accompany the cooking process!

"It's hard to claim an original ratatouille recipe. This is based on the one in Nigella Lawson's 'How to Eat', which in the book she explains that she in turn got it from Elizabeth David. It uses more olive oil than you can possibly believe is good for you, but it's lovely in the end."

Ingredients:

- 2 onions (medium)
- 2 cloves (garlic)
- 1-2 aubergines

3 courgettes
 2-3 peppers
 1 tin of tomatoes or 2 if you want it to stretch or lob in any 'real' tomatoes you have lying around
 8 tablespoons of olive oil!!!!
 1 teaspoon of ground coriander
 Fresh basil (if you have it)

Preparation:

Slice onions into half moon slices
 Chop garlic thickly
 Cut peppers into thin, long strips
 Cut courgettes and aubergines into ½ cm pieces

First, pour the olive oil into a thick bottomed wide pan and put it on a gentle heat. Then (and this is important), you need to cook the vegetables in the following order: first onions, then aubergines, then courgettes, then garlic and finally peppers. The onions should be a bit soft before you add the aubergines, and the same with the aubergines before you add the courgettes; basically, wait two to three minutes before adding each of the vegetables.



While this is happening, you have earned the right for a glass of wine: I'd go for a chilled white from northern or central Italy for while you are cooking - if it says 'Gavi' 'della Venezia', or 'Orvieto', these are all good choices for a wine that won't break the bank. When you have the ratatouille itself, I'd aim for a light to medium bodied red from north Italy or Tuscany. Again, look out for the words Valpolicella (NOT Valpolicella Ripasso which is a thicker, different variation), Bardolino or Montepulciano d'Abruzzo. As with the whites, you should be able to get a decent one of any of these for under £10-12.

Now add the tomatoes and coriander, cover the pan and cook gently for 30-40 minutes. You could probably add some salt too. I often add some dried herbs like basil or 'Mixed Herbs de Provence' but it's a bit classier if you have some fresh basil.

This ratatouille can stand as a centrepiece on its own, with some rice or flat bread, or it can operate as a side dish to something grander. Very good eaten cold the next day too.

We hope you are inspired - and please do think about sharing a recipe for the autumn newsletter – apples, celery, leeks, quince - so many options.

STOP JUNK MAIL

We still have some free No Junk Mail stickers from the LBRUT at the back of the three churches – please do take one.

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 autumn edition or pics of your versions of Rector's ratatouille.

Please join us at one of our Green events or let us know how you are engaging in green activities. We would love to hear from you all. Any pictures you can send in too would be fabulous particularly of your No Mow May gardens or local parks.

Thank you

