



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

Richmond Team Ministry GREENTIPS



Welcome to the Autumn edition of the GreenTips newsletter. As we move into the autumn and enjoy the wonderful colours of the trees 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 bumper edition brings us the excellent news that all three churches have achieved the SILVER award for EcoChurch. There is also news of our recent GREEN events, our next 'green' collection and everything else we have planned for the rest of the year. We also have a seasonal soup recipe from Joe and a new section with resources from our previous editions!

A Rocha – EcoChurch Awards

RTM is Silver!

The RTM Green Team is delighted to announce that all three churches have recently achieved the Eco Church Silver Award! You will see the posters displayed in each church.



As part of the RTM Sustainability and Environmental Policy, RTM is committed to sustainable development as a guiding principle. Our aim is to reduce the impact on the environment from our churches and other buildings that we own and/or occupy, our employees and volunteers, and strive to make our congregations and local communities more aware of how we need to care for God's creation around us.

We use the principles of [Eco Church](https://www.arocha.org.uk), an A Rocha programme, to direct us in our thinking and action. A Rocha UK is a Christian charity working to protect and restore the natural world. The Southwark Diocese has signed up to Eco Church and is encouraging all its churches to participate. All three churches in RTM achieved the Bronze award in 2023, although have continued to score Gold in the Worship and Teaching category. We are extremely pleased to have progressed to the Silver award overall.

We would like to thank the RTM Green Team members for all their great work, for all their enthusiasm and good ideas not only in ensuring our worship, buildings, land, communities and lifestyles are meeting the needs of the present without compromising

the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, but also for sharing tips and then taking our actions back to our churches.



We would also like to thank the Clergy and Church Wardens for their ongoing encouragement; and to the RTM Office Team for their help and support. And of course to you all – a big **GREEN** thank you to everyone who has contributed - our litter pickers, our gardeners, those who buy the Fair Trade coffee, those who have recycled their bras and old Christmas cards, those who walk to church, those who built our ant hotels, those who have written articles for GreenTips and so many other things – all your efforts great and small are very much appreciated. We could not have done this without you.

If anyone would like to join the RTM Green Team, please contact Emma (emeredit@ctpa.org.uk). The group meets around three times a year and we keep in contact in between meetings by email.

Our work is not done, and we are proud to announce - RTM is Going for Gold!

A ROCHA – THE SEASON OF CREATION

A Rocha also promotes The Season of Creation, which runs from 1 September to 4 October. This is an annual, ecumenical celebration of prayer and action for creation that Christians on six continents have commemorated for many years. This year the focus is on water which is very apt given we have had such a dry summer. We continue to have water restrictions here in West London. The National Drought Group has officially declared the entire capital in drought, meaning water companies can implement stricter measures to conserve supplies, including hosepipe bans. Residents are urged to conserve water, avoid non-essential use, and follow updates from water companies. The London Fire Brigade has been warning of extreme fire risk due to dry vegetation. We all need to ensure good stewardship of this precious resource.

<https://arocha.org.uk/the-season-of-creation-2026-living-waters/>



A ROCHA – TARGET 25 Programme and WILD CHRISTIAN Programme

<https://arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/target-25/>

Target 25 is a conservation initiative focused on reversing the sharp decline of 25 vulnerable and once-common British habitats, taxonomic groups, and individual species. It guides practical land management and community action, such as installing Swift boxes and planting wildflowers. The link above takes you to 25 resource packs helping us all to take action. The butterfly one for example urges us to avoid pesticide and peat based products, leave the edges of our lawn wild with flowers for butterflies to lay larvae, grow plants that provide a rich food source such as bluebells and pansies in the spring and marigold, mint and thyme in the late summer.

Did you know there are 59 species of butterflies in the UK! How many can you name.....



<https://arocha.org.uk/wild-christian/>

The Wild Christian programme is for individuals and families who want to enjoy and learn about nature, to take practical action at home and in their localities and join with others for greater national impact. Sign up to A Rocha's regular emails and hear about their events to help you explore critical challenges in climate and biodiversity – and enjoy, nurture and defend Nature!

Your own nature project – have you ever considered that our own private gardens and other outdoor spaces can make a significant contribution to nature? We would like to encourage you to manage your own or local outdoor spaces for nature in some way.

Eco Church has some great suggestions:

[Vegetable growing example from Wild Christian Community member](#)

[RHS Create a wildlife friendly garden](#)

[Wildlife Trusts How to start a wildlife garden](#)

[National Trust How to make your garden a haven for wildlife](#)

[RSPB Planning a wildlife garden design](#)

[Wild About Gardens](#)

[Roots and All](#)



THE RETURN OF TOWER MUSTARD

Amanda Adams, from SMM, tells us about her work in taking practical action to enjoy, nurture and defend nature.



The Return of Tower Mustard project is a pioneering urban conservation initiative aimed at bringing back one of London's rarest native plants, Tower Mustard (*Turritis glabra*), which has almost disappeared from the capital due to habitat loss and changes in land use. Through seed collection, propagation, and carefully planned reintroductions, the project works with local authorities, land managers, and communities to restore suitable habitats and re-establish this critically endangered species in London. This is the first time in London's history that there has been a collective, strategic effort to return one of its rarest plants and increase its range and populations.



Volunteers such as myself have been given seeds and equipment to grow Tower Mustard at home in a carefully controlled protocol. Once established, plants will be planted out at 'receptor' sites. It is more difficult to grow than you might think and potting on has to be in a combination of sand and compost to mimic the conditions in the wild. They have to be watered carefully from the bottom of the pot – not from the top. The extreme heat has been challenging as they need to be kept very slightly damp. The group of volunteers have had mixed results from their seeds and as with many projects, a resilient approach is needed. But it is enormously rewarding to be involved in an important ecological project.

Well done Amanda and thanks for sharing and we look forward to an update when all the seedlings are planted.

GREEN UPDATES

BRA RECYCLING BOXES



You may have noticed the Bra Banks are full to overflowing – do continue to 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. The first collection (see picture on left of the full box weighing 15 kilos) has been picked up and we will continue with bra collections for the time being. We have noticed those donating are not always regular church goers but have seen our adverts on local Facebook feeds and are popping in with donations during the week.



GROUNDS FOR COFFEE

An update from the gardening group as St Matthias:

St Matthias is nicely surrounded by lawns and planted areas that over the years have become a little less tidy, and consequently a little less welcoming than our congregation would like. Basically, a fine location but in need of a haircut. To make the grounds look more cared for and consequently make St Matthias look more inviting and more alive, a two-pronged approach has been taken.



Commercial gardeners have tidied up the beds in the southwest corner of the grounds, planting new perennials and shrubs, the highlight of which is a Judas Tree, taking its common name from Judas Iscariot. Judas is said to have hung himself in shame from the branches of one of these beautiful trees, realising too late what his betrayal meant for Jesus. The blossom which appears on bare branches at Easter time, along with the heart-shaped leaves, speak of forgiveness and new life. Matthias was the disciple who was chosen to replace Judas after the resurrection, so this is an ideal tree to introduce into our church garden.



The same commercial gardeners cut the churches lawns, though skipping May so that we could join the No-mow-May eco scheme by encouraging insects to flourish.

To complement the limited amount of commercial gardening our volunteer gardening group has been established to attack the other garden areas by trimming back overgrown shrubs, clearing piles of litter that had accumulated and restoring a measure of orderliness to neglected beds – though not too much as our aim is not to create a manicured urban garden. Wildflowers are being encouraged in various areas and insect-supporting plants added. The gardening group, which now has around half a dozen members, meets on an ad hoc basis when weather and other commitments permit. The concept is one of gathering often for short bursts of activity, ending with fellowship over a cup of coffee either in the church or at one of the nearby cafes. Hence the name, Grounds for Coffee. The group has already accumulated a set of donated tools, established a compost bin (thanks to Twickenham Lib-Dems for donating some old pallets) for rotting organic waste, started work on tidying up the overgrown northeast area of the grounds and contributed to watering the newly planted trees and shrubs.





Still a long way to go but in a few short months the grounds of St Matthias have started to look rather more welcoming. Please contact Richard Seaborne for more information richardseaborne@aol.com or text him on 07554437130 if you are keen to help.

And whilst we are on the subject of compost – here are the impressive collection of compost bins at St John's!

MAY FAIR around St Mary's 9 May

As ever this was a huge success - our annual excuse to recycle books, kids toys and unwanted gifts and bottles for the Tombola. Thank you to all those who donated and all those who bought and recycled!

AND there was zero waste - the cakes and jams were sold on Sunday morning after the 9;30 service at SMM, the left-over toys were taken to a local charity shop here in Richmond and the books were collected by the British Heart Foundation – check out the piles of books in the back of their van – not just ours! They have a fabulous shop in Palmers Green.

Our congregation and our very many visitors were extremally generous and we donated over £5000 to Richmond Soup Kitchen.



CHURCHES COUNT ON NATURE 6 JUNE

Along with 440 other churches, chapels and cemeteries across the country, our team of volunteers took part in the Churches Count on Nature which involves exploring and recording the plant and animal life living within churchyards. Caring for God's Acre run this annual event – they are the conservation charity caring for burial grounds across the UK. Our local observations are invaluable as our records will help shed light on which plant and animal species are thriving and which may need more support.

We found an enormous number of plants, insects and birds and even featured in the Caring for God's Acre Gallery!

Thank you to everyone who took part – and check out some of the things we counted!



CLAPPERS AND BELL WHEELS!

The bells at St Mary's have now been removed prior to the new ring of eight being installed later in the year. The bell team organised a very successful viewing of the eight old bells in church one Saturday morning and those in attendance were encouraged to take the old clappers and bell wheels for recycling into garden ornaments, wall décor and someone even had the intention of repurposing into a side table.



OUR GREEN PLANS FOR AUTUMN

ZERO WASTE WEEK 7 – 11 September



The poster really tells you all you need to know – there will be boxes in each church for your donations of ‘as new’ socks, hats & gloves for guests at Richmond Soup Kitchen.

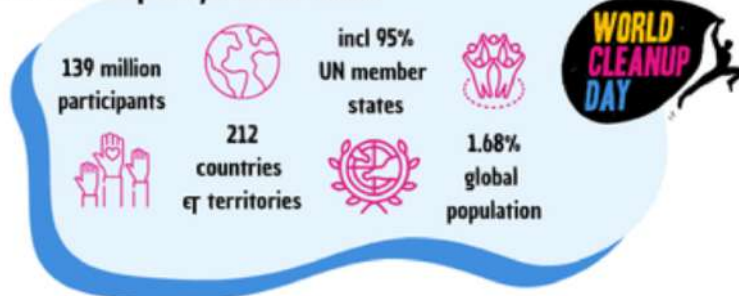
Perhaps those of you with odd balls of wool might consider knitting a hat or two – here is a very easy video you can watch on YouTube if you are a beginner!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0JydAedTkA

Do send in any photos of handknitted donations and we will include them in our winter edition of GreenTips!

WORLD CLEAN UP DAY – 20 SEPTEMBER

World Cleanup Days 2018-2025



These are some pretty impressive figures and we have signed up to join the 139 million previous participants with a Litter Pick at SMM on 20 September after the 9.30 service - we very much hope to see you there.

AND don't forget to walk (or cycle or take the bus or lift share) to church that Sunday as part of our commitment to World Car Free Day celebrated on the 22 September.

CHRISTIAN AID RIVER WALK 26 SEPTEMBER

A Walk for creation. A Walk for climate justice. A Walk for hope. Join the scenic Thames Walk on Saturday 26 September in support of Christian Aid and enjoy a day of community, fellowship and action for a fairer, greener world.



We'd love you to join the Green Team on this walk. The walk starts at St Matthias at 11am and you can choose between the 3 mile walk to St Richard's in Ham or continue on the 8.5mile route to St Anne's in Kew. We might even get a team together from each church!

Please let Bella Hobson (bella.hobson@googlemail.com) know if you would like to join our team and you can also register online <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/richmond-riverside-sponsored-walk-september-2026-tickets-1994315316798>

For us as Eco Churches, taking part is a practical way to demonstrate care for creation, community engagement and climate action. And of course, the walk falls within the Season of Creation – see below.

INTERNATIONAL E-WASTE DAY 14 OCTOBER



International E-Waste Day 2026 turns the spotlight on **Fast Tech**: the small and inexpensive electronic products that have become part of everyday life. Think earphones bought at the airport, fancy charging cables, USB adapters.... The term draws a deliberate parallel with fast fashion. Just as disposable clothing culture reshaped how people think about garments, a comparable shift has taken place with small electronics. The result is a large and growing volume of items that are never properly collected or recycled.

Unlike large household appliances, which consumers generally recognise as items requiring responsible end-of-life disposal, Fast Tech products are rarely perceived as electronic waste. A broken pair of earphones is thrown in the general bin. A tangled charging cable ends up in a drawer, forgotten.

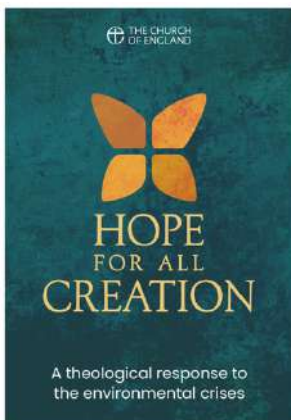
Let's face it - most of us have a "**drawer of doom**" – full of old chargers, cables, broken electricals we no longer use. On average, each UK household has 15 cables stashed away. Did you know every one of these cables contains valuable, critical and finite materials like **copper**? Copper is essential for phones, transport, clean energy and medical equipment. It's 100% recyclable AND recycling uses up to 85% less energy than mining new copper – a win for the planet!

So, we are challenging our congregations to check out your Fast Tech and to recycle it – sort out the 'drawer of doom' and drop those cables and the like at one of the **Pink Bins** across Richmond – pop your postcode into this links to find your nearest one.

<https://recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/>

SEASON OF CREATION

Creationtide or the Season of Creation is the period in the annual church calendar, from 1st September to 4th October, dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life.



Hope for All Creation – A House of Bishops' New Report

The Church of England House of Bishops is one of three Houses that make up the General Synod, and it has a special role with matters relating to doctrine, liturgy or Sacrament. The House of Bishops has recently issued a publication, Hope for All Creation, which shares the Church of England's position on environment and climate change.

More information is available on the CoE Environment and Climate Change page: [Environment and climate change | The Church of England](#)

The Hope for All Creation can be downloaded here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2026-06/hope-for-all-creation-for-web-new.pdf>

The RTM Green Team will take time to consider the report's findings and recommendations for action.

The Feast of Creation

As approved at the recent Synod, the Feast of Christ in Creation is now part of our liturgical calendar. All three churches will keep the first Sunday of September as 'The Feast of Christ in Creation'. We look forward to you all joining us at church to celebrate our beautiful earth and think about how we might best care for it.

Caring for God's Creation: Faithful Living in a Changing World

Here is another exciting opportunity taking place during this year's Season of Creation. Our Diocese together with the Diocese of London, will be running a course offering - 'Caring for God's Creation: Faithful Living in a Changing World'.

Taking place over three Zoom sessions (7.00 - 9.00pm) on 16th, 23rd and 30th September, there is the opportunity to explore what faithful discipleship looks like in a changing world and what it means to care for God's creation as Christians today.



This course is for anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of environmental issues from a Christian perspective. You can find more info here

<https://southwark.anglican.org/news-events/events/whats-on/caring-for-gods-creation-faithful-living-in-a-changing-world/>

ALL OUR GREEN DATES FOR THE REST OF 2025/26

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

- 7 - 11 Sept Zero Waste Week
See details of our collection campaign above
- 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
An RTM team will be walking – will you!
- 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

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.

And so a recipe from Joe at St Johns – great to have a soup recipe from a Director of the Richmond Soup Kitchen! Here is his Roasted Squash, Apple & Sage Soup.

As September slips into October, the days grow shorter, the jumpers emerge from summer hibernation, and England's fields and orchards offer an autumnal abundance. This warming soup celebrates seasonal produce and gives us a delicious way to care for creation, one bowl at a time.

Gather your congregation

- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cubed
- 2 carrots, roughly chopped
- 2 leeks, sliced and washed
- 1 English apple, peeled, cored and chopped
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 litre vegetable stock
- 6 fresh sage leaves, or 1 tsp dried sage
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- Olive oil
- Salt and black pepper
- A squeeze of lemon
- 100ml oat cream, if desired

The liturgy of the soup

The Gathering: Heat the oven to 200°C fan. Put the squash and carrots in a roasting tin, drizzle with olive oil and season. Roast for 30–35 minutes, until soft and gloriously golden.

The Ministry of the Leeks: Gently cook the leeks in a large saucepan with a little olive oil for 10 minutes. Add the garlic, apple, sage and nutmeg; cook for another 3 minutes.

The Great Combining: Add the roasted vegetables and stock. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for 15 minutes.

The Blending: Blend until smooth. Add a little water if it is too thick or leave it substantial enough to stand a spoon in.

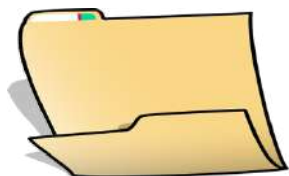
The Dismissal: Stir in the oat cream, add a squeeze of lemon and check the seasoning. Go in peace to love and serve the soup!

Joe's message – eat seasonally, notice the gifts of each season and enjoy the soup with crusty bread!

Adapted from a recipe discovered while on retreat at Minster Abbey, Kent.

GREEN RESOURCES

We are nearing the end of three years of GreenTips and we thought it might be useful to start a directory of useful links we have talked about in past editions. This will enable us all to access these to help us make more sustainable and greener decisions. We will continue to add any links we refer to in each edition of GreenTips and we hope you find this a helpful addition to our regular newsletter. If you have any suggestions about other links we might include do get in touch.



RECYCLING/REPAIRING OR BORROWING

www.richmond.gov.uk/where_to_recycle_your_items

www.recyclenow.com/recycle-an-item

<https://participate.libraryofthings.co.uk/twickenham>

www.twickenhamrepaircafe.org/

WILDLIFE

www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Tin-can-bug-hotel.pdf

CLIMATE FOOTPRINT

<https://www.climatehero.org/en>

<https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>

GREEN AND ETHICAL BANKING

<https://bank.green/>

<https://justmoney.org.uk>

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/how-green-is-your-money/>

LIFESTYLE CHOICES

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/resources/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 and help us work towards that GOLD award. 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.

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 vegan recipes for the winter edition or pics of your piles of e-waste waiting to be recycled. If you are walking, or biking or roller skating to church on World Care Free Day make sure you record this and send in the evidence!

If you make Joe's soup, please send us your feedback on how tasty this is and any meal time pictures would be fabulous.

This newsletter thrives on the input of our congregation.

Thank you.

