Torbay Christian EcoAction

October 2026 newsletter

This is the October 2026 newsletter, with the clocked having changed and with not one but two storms already battering our bay. As I dictate this, looking out over Torbay which really means peering through the sea mist with the heavy rain, one realises autumn is fully with us. As previously, this newsletter is coming in PDF form but also with a link at https://davidhodson.com/torbay-christian-ecoaction-october-2026-newsletter/ if that is easier for you and to distribute. If you want a Word version, let me know. If you want to unsubscribe, email me. If you know of anyone whom you think would like to receive, again let me know. As previously, it is a mixture of events, resources and news. If anyone has anything they would like publicised, please let me know.

Tearfund Quiz: 21st November

Please come along to our annual quiz in support of the brilliant work of Tearfund. At St Matthias on the evening of 21st November, a week later than elsewhere around the country in order to avoid clashing with another church event. It is at 7:30 PM start and please arrive from 7 PM onwards. As in previous years we will be serving pasties and tea and coffee and cake and its bring your own drinks and nibbles. We propose a maximum team size of six to make it fair and fun for everyone. We welcome everyone even without an existing team so please come along yourself and we will find a team for you and opportunity to meet others. Why not come along as a group from your church so we can get to know you better from St Matthias and have an opportunity to discuss what more we can be doing as Torbay Christian EcoAction. Please let us know if you will be coming and if you will be having a team. Prizes are not only for the winning quiz team, but other prizes announced on the evening. All proceeds go to Tearfund's long-term development work, helping to create thriving communities amongst some of the poorest parts of the world. We suggest donation of £3 per adult but please give more as you are able. I attach a poster and please distribute in your churches and communities. You are welcome to pay on the door, but we would prefer if you could donate via our just giving page: https://www.justgiving.com/page/eco-action-group-st-matthias-torquay-7?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL Please get in touch with me direct or via ecoaction@st-matthias-church.org See you there.

Five ways El Niño is affecting the weather around the world.

I think it was the August newsletter which covered the story that El Niño this year would be far more dramatic and have far greater consequences, certainly for the weather in the northern hemisphere but with potentially catastrophic consequences on livelihoods in the southern hemisphere, often less able to cope and manage. The BBC has outlined five areas already where it is having an impact. Please read for information and please include in your church prayers for all those affected. The story is here https://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/articles/c6dx07dznpyyo

How to live on earth

I am grateful to our friends at the Plymouth Churches Green Action for drawing attention to the above film recently released on YouTube, an ambitious feature documentary that explores how humanity can build a safe and thriving future by working with nature and not against it. Presented by Benedict Cumberbatch, known to some as either Sherlock Holmes or Dr Strange albeit otherwise with a far better acting career, it shows what is possible working with nature. About 90 minutes and a hopeful vision of a future which is possible. It is here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3mRsvFmWi0

New future confirmed for living coasts site

This was an item this month in Devon news which I thought was rather old news, but I pass on anyway. Apart from the visible area at the top which used to be the tourist attraction, Arc Marine have moved into the building on the prominent Harbourside. My understanding is that they have been operating for quite a few months. They build artificial reefs including to protect underwater cables. They were at our marine eco-event a few months ago and they have said we can come and visit the site when they are fully fitted out. It's an excellent development that somebody has taken on this site and that it is an ecologically aware company as they are. Story is here: https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/new-future-confirmed-living-coasts-11196164?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwdGRzaAU7PTRjbGNrBTs8umV4dG4DYWVtAjExAHBkb2YFc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQMMzUwNjg1NTMxNzI4AAEesceM-gdP-g2_2U8reSMfeoagjk1DmscKK08MXt53t8phGJrkS0MmVyj2oQ8_aem_ZZKpo2jEcAvMcYEr949bDw&sfnsn=scwspmo#Echobox=1791893148

Appeal for major energy storage system in Devon rejected.

This newsletter is featured before the real crisis, accelerated by AI, in the need for data, energy and storage centres which use a huge amount of energy and water. Plans for a battery system site in Axminster were rejected by the local authority last year and the appeal has been turned down. Part of the opposition was the impact if there was a fire, an increased risk with a battery centre, and risks of pollution in the water environment. The story is here: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwvgdej69m2ro

Dartmoor ponies support biodiversity through grazing

We all love the Dartmoor ponies, but a recent study has shown how much they support biodiversity through their ordinary grazing habits. A wonderful double win situation. The story is here https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cq0ldp0lrexpo

Cross pavement channels for electric car charging

Of those who have an electric car, apparently 60% have a driveway. 20% live in flats and need a way of getting a cheap charge. Which leaves 20% parking their cars outside their house. A tiny sliver of pavement can be eased apart to allow a sunken cable for roadside charging. Except you can't. It needs planning permission. How ridiculous. But campaigning by a Liberal Democrat peer has brought about a change for a generalised assumption of permitted development. About time. Except it's not game over. Apparently many local authorities still won't agree Cross pavement access and therefore everyone keeps using petrol and diesel. For those who do, the price varies hugely for permission. Some local authorities make it easy and cheap. Some don't. This is a ridiculous situation. We must make it easier for people to work with climate solutions not harder. The story is in private eye and I **attach**. For any reading the newsletter from my website, it in touch and I will send over.

Torbay Council is commencing major programme of work to cut carbon emissions and energy bills with solar panels

Our local authority is starting work on council owned buildings including six schools across Torbay with solar panels and energy-saving measures reduce energy use carbon emissions. It is in furtherance of attempting net zero carbon by 2030, despite these many challenges. It is great that the council was giving such support to this endeavour. Details from the council website here: https://www.torbay.gov.uk/news/pr9585/?fbclid=IwVERTSAUirLNleHRuA2FlbQIxMABwZG9mBXNydGMGYXBwX2lkDDM1MDY4NTUzMTcyOAABHl3fBI9crSLb56eeoloabSW3UoqCi6luB0vUD6bb5J5j722e43qyIm5k_Nv4_aem_n_fPT6smuOA7TNSNKr1lKA&sfnsn=mo

Derek versus Derek

I did a follow-up note to the September newsletter about this film of two neighbouring farmers in Devon and the conflicts between organic and rewilding farming on one side of a hedgerow and traditional farming on the other. It was showing in Totnes over several days and sadly the only day I could make it was sold out which was at least encouraging. Did anyone go and could report back? I understand it is showing elsewhere in Devon and I recommend from what I have heard

Water shortages remain

I was going to cover a story of the water shortages in the reservoirs in Devon and Cornwall and how apparently it is likely to continue until the New Year. But with the rain over the past week, half term sadly, and forecast, everyone would have laughed! Understandably so. How can we have a situation where admittedly the water shortage of the summer was understandable but there can be no replenishment until the late winter notwithstanding the very wet marine climate which is Devon and Cornwall?!

Torbay EcoFest: 2027

Not exactly a date for the diary but we are thinking about another event, probably autumn 2027, concentrating on the weather. Perhaps somebody from the Met office to explain the Torbay microclimate. Other speakers about the influence of the moon on our tides and weather, how the winds affect water movement in the bay, impact of a marine environment on gardening, what is the realistic likelihood of future weather over the coming years and similar. More to follow next year but if you have any thoughts or contributions along these lines, let us know

Creation Care Exeter diocese

Might I also recommend the newsletter from the Creation Care team at the Exeter diocese. I can never open their newsletter in the browser and therefore apologies I can't send a link but please subscribe at eco@exeter.anglican.org and here is the webpage about their environmental and climate change work: https://exeter.anglican.org/environment/ This might be sufficient: https://mailchi.mp/8162d824a7c3/roots-shots-and-fruits-newsletter-8345897?fbclid=IwdGRzaAUrPHdjbGNrBSs8JWV4dG4DYWVtAjExAHBkb2YFc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQMMzUwNjg1NTMxNzI4AAEezA6t5Pf28xc_S1TAsAnhCnedKjzmw4iGiMWkY2D3bwC5dAaXx-WEArDLn_c_aem_kECPiYdFX9uaex0Tum-Jtw&sfnsn=scwspmo

One Torbay: Torbay Council weekly newsletter

Our local council produces a weekly newsletter of developments. I include some in these newsletters although I'm conscious to avoid any suggestion of political elements. But there is a strong environmental theme to the newsletter. May I recommend strongly subscribing. It really is most informative. More details here https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKTORBAYCOUNCIL/subscriber/new?preferences=true

Devon county council: Devon climate emergency newsletter

I strongly recommend subscribing to this as it features both national and very local stories. It includes lots of local events coming up soon and rather than repeat every one of them, please do have a read. It can be found here: https://news.info.devon.gov.uk/BB1F72157144228E941FC50D41A6C88272EB5CF6F4087489DE930810FBB1EBDF/35262A2E4F0F6D7748CE5EF94BA80A24/VIB?es_c=35262A2E4F0F6D7748CE5EF94BA80A24&es_cl=F8ECCDCFCCB069EB709A918A1532C140&es_id=xg%c2%a3m4

Devon wildlife trust newsletter

Again, I recommend their newsletter including the important issue of protecting wildlife during this hot time: https://mailchi.mp/2b84ab3fd1e4/enews-13407149?e=3bc0249607

Tearfund newsletter

They carry a number of international stories, worth reading to get an insight on what is happening. Obviously the appalling floods in Nepal and surrounding countries, but also wildfires in Indonesia. Newsletter here: https://mailchi.mp/tearfund/one-voice-in-prayer-280826-in-the-darkest-valley?e=9d20059db6

Carbon literacy project

I recommend their newsletter here: https://hck09.r.sp1-brevo.net/mk/mr/sh/1t6AVsd2XFnIGFAiEfANkSAdzFbkAj/b4bfWTzAMsXN

Similar work from our friends in Plymouth

Here is their October newsletter: https://mailchi.mp/e9db0f8f9ebc/pcga-enews-mid-october-2026?e=9dd45dc4a5 They cover the Plymouth climate action book published on 14th November including a chapter on faith communities which we are hoping we can introduce to Torbay Council, which adamantly won't acknowledge the faith communities in their draft town plan and if any would like more information on this, get in touch with me please. The newsletter reports up to a million trees could be planted across Plymouth and surrounding areas in the next 20 years which is of course excellent news. This covers the South hams. The newsletter looks at other areas where climate change is happening in Plymouth and South Devon. And many more items of South Devon interest

Thank you for getting this far.

Please let me have any items you want me to distribute including from your organisation or church or news items for information.

Best wishes and God bless.

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