

Evening walk at College Lake

Join us at **6.00pm** on **Wednesday 20th July**, for an evening walk around **College Lake Nature Reserve, Tring**. This is regarded by Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust as one of the best nature reserves in Bucks. It comprises two lakes occupying an area which had been a chalk quarry until relatively recently. This thriving nature reserve now supports 1000 different wildlife species.



The reserve is open every day until 5.00pm, but on Wednesday evenings in June and July it stays open until 8.00pm (including the visitor centre and toilets)

The entrance is on the north side of the B488 Upper Icknield Way, just to the west of the main railway, and close to Bulbourne.

We'll aim to meet at the entrance at 6.00pm but, in the interests of keeping our transport footprint low, we'll try to travel together in as few cars as possible, so please let me know – MK 337376 or david@millersofmk.co.uk - if you would like to come. We'll need to leave the MK area around 5.30pm and should be back in MK by 8.30pm

More information about the reserve here:

<http://www.bbwt.org.uk/reserves/college-lake>

Find your way on the Redways

A new mobile app is being developed to help cyclists and pedestrians to find their way on the city's Redway network. The app is in the early stages of development by *MK Hackathon* and a "hack" is planned on the weekend of 25th/26th June to work on the project design and build.

MK Hackathon is a project involving, amongst others, the Open University, MK Smart, and Juxt (a local software developer who is hosting the hack).

The app is expected to include a map of the Redway routes, a route planner, and will contain info on bike lock-up points in CMK, places of interest, etc.

MK Hackathon is inviting keen cyclists to take part in the "hack" and you can find out more about the project and reserve your place at the link below:

<https://www.mkhackathon.org/>

New Bike Hire scheme for MK



You may have noticed these signs popping up in various places across MK recently. They mark the 42 points from which you will be able to hire a bicycle under a new scheme being launched this weekend, as a result of a collaboration between Santander, Milton Keynes Council and the MK City Centre Management.

Users will need to register to use the scheme, a simple process explained on the website. It costs £1, which is credited to your account towards your first cycle hire.

Following registration, there are two options, one a "pay-as-you-ride" scheme for casual users, who will pay £1 per 30-minute ride or £10 for the whole day.

For more regular usage, you can pay an annual subscription fee of £60 after which hiring is half the prices quoted above, and with the first 30 minutes free of charge.

The website shows a map of the points from which you can hire the bikes (currently it looks as if all the hire points are south of the H3).

There will be a mobile app in due course, but you don't need to have a smart-phone in order to use the scheme as the bikes themselves are equipped with computers. You can input into the computers a 4-digit code which you will be given over the phone.

The bicycles themselves have been prepared by *Cycle Saviours*, one of the MK Christian Foundation's social enterprises, who will also carry out ongoing maintenance of them.

Read all about the new scheme at the website here:

<https://santandercyclesmk.co.uk/about/>

A selection of other events

MK Soup

The next of these MK Food Revolution events takes place on **Friday 24th June** at the Christian Foundation, Wolverton. Cost: £5.00 for a helping of delicious soup and bread. Arrive by **7.00pm**.

Urb Farm – Farm Fest

Also in Wolverton, the following day, **Saturday June 25th**, from **1.00-4.00pm**, the Urb Farm promises a great afternoon out for all the family. Free bouncy castle, local beer and cider, live music in the Willow Dome, Urb Farm produce, locally sourced BBQ, Homemade cakes and refreshments, Face Painting, Planting activities, Pond dipping and Bug Hunting, Feed the Chickens, Local food and craft stalls.

The Urb Farm is situated between 196 – 198 Windsor Street, Wolverton, MK12 5DR

MK Feast

A second event is planned for **Sunday 24th July** at Bradwell Abbey, from **11.00am-4.00pm**

Visit [MK Food Revolution's website](#) to see the latest information about this and their other projects.

MK Food Fest

Another event for those who want to support the local food economy is taking place at **Linford Manor Park** on **Saturday 17th September**. More details will be available soon. Transition MK is hoping to have stand there. Keep an eye on the website to see the list of exhibitors:

<http://www.mkfoodfest.org/>

Laudato Si

Next month we hope to be able to announce an autumn date for Chris Fegan to come to Milton Keynes to talk about Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment.

Our trip to Ryton Organic Garden

It was a grey day but the rain held off and we enjoyed the visit very much, partly thanks to the excellent guide whose commentary enabled us to learn much more about what we were looking at than would have been the case if we had walked around on our own.

We also enjoyed sharing the visit with a group of folks from the Camphill Community.



There are lots of photos on our facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Milton-Keynes-Christian-Environment-Group-504618966250448/?ref=hl>

At our recent leaders meet-up several of us shared what we had learned and/or what had inspired us.

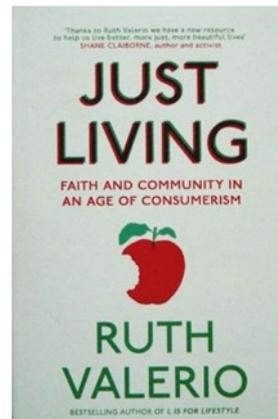
- ◆ David was intrigued by the idea of using nettles for making plant feed.
- ◆ Lisa loved the bird boxes and has since invested in one.

- ◆ Suze was impressed by the ponds and the part they play in promoting biodiversity and encouraging frogs, which are an effective antedote to slugs.
- ◆ I learned some useful facts about composting and subsequently invested in a wooden bin with a lid, like the one in the photo. I've also sown some Comfrey seeds, the leaves of which can rot down within a few weeks to create a feed for tomato plants.

David Miller

Just Living – Ruth Valerio

'How can Christians live well in a globalised, consumerist society?' is the big question at the heart of Ruth Valerio's second book. Beginning with a frank exposé of current environmental, political and cultural pressures Ruth then moves on to a deep discussion on the theology of creation care. The book concludes with a helpful exploration of practical ways that Christians can live more sustainably. However the book is far from a simple tick list of actions to take and leads the reader to carefully consider their own next steps.



As the author is a resident of a fairly typical suburban area she fully understands and acknowledges the difficulties many of us face in trying to live sustainably in our towns and cities. She talks about the need to engage with the issues where we are, rather than evading them by living a simple but isolated life that opts out of the systems and processes we seek to see

reformed. This is refreshing, as is her honesty about the compromises that are sometimes hard to avoid, for example due to financial, familial or work constraints. It is clear that she understands the issues to be complex which is encouraging for those of us who wrestle with many small dilemmas almost every day.

Reaching the end of the book it is clear that the issues are many, but rather than feel overwhelmed the reader feels equipped to know how to at least make a start, where they are, in bringing about the changes needed for a fairer, more sustainable lifestyle.

A deeply theological, academically robust yet practically accessible book, I recommend it to anyone who knows they need to do something but isn't quite sure where to begin. Equally, in bringing the old familiar issues up to date it provides a practical framework for fatigued eco-warriors to fuel up for their cause anew.

Lisa Pye

A Rocha UK in Southall

One Saturday in April Andy Jowitt took members of his church congregation (St Lawrence, Bradwell), and me, to visit A Rocha UK in Southall, West London. A Rocha is a Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world. The name means *The Rock* in Portuguese, the country where this movement began and Andy and Jane have spent some weeks working with them on their community projects.



The first site was once an unloved stretch of industrial wasteland, part of which was the site of a weekend boot sale. Unsold goods were frequently abandoned where they lay and the whole place became squalid beyond words. Along came A Rocha, who struck a deal with the local council and the contractors for the new Wembley Stadium. Visitors to the site are now aware of a range of grass-covered hills underneath which lie the rubble of the old Wembley Stadium! It's a beautiful place to walk along mown paths through woodland and beside a small brook. Birds abound and are counted in an annual census. Half the site has been taken back by the council and developed into a kilometre-long cycle training track, being well-used by youngsters whilst we were there.

Their headquarters is a converted B & B hotel, where we were served a wonderful home-cooked lunch before going down the road to a much smaller project, Wolf Fields, a triangle of forgotten and neglected land, a dumping ground and drug den from which volunteers removed 50 tons of rubbish before anything else could start. Now it's a flourishing garden which features fruit trees, a sensory garden, a pond, a bee hive, some allotment plots, and so much else besides. Schools and youth organisations both work and learn there, with creative information boards provided.

Wolf Fields' official opening in May drew a crowd of over 200 to a springtime open-air worship service. In attendance were community workers, volunteers, residents and representatives of eight churches from across Southall. 'It was very moving,' said Andy Atkins, A Rocha UK chief. 'A high point was hearing the story behind the work and seeing the derelict site restored – amid scenes of a freshly planted orchard, birds singing and so many local supporters smiling.'

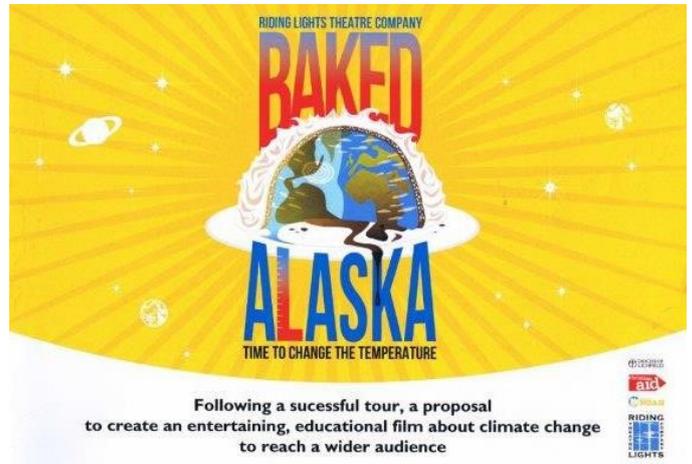
And the crux of our visit was this: Wolf Fields is not only a successful community project, but also a model, an inspiration, for other communities across the nation. It's A Rocha UK's vision to see other similar sites transformed in towns and cities all around these islands.

Visit <http://arocha.org.uk> for lots more information. They

really see transforming the environment as a means of promoting the Good News of Jesus Christ among our communities; just what MKCEG sets out to do.

Steve Barnes

Baked Alaska — the film



Riding Lights has had many requests for a film version to be made for use in schools and churches and has started raising funds for this.

Donations would be most welcome and these can either be made by cheque payable to *Riding Lights* and sent to the office at Friargate Theatre, Lower Friargate, York, YO1 9SL, or online, by using the JustGiving page:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/baked-alaska>

The Big Shift – what next?

Following our meeting in April, Phil Evans sent me details of the Big Church Switch campaign which aims to encourage churches to switch their energy supply towards renewable energy. The scheme is an initiative of Christian Aid, Tear Fund and CAFOD and it aims to have 1000 UK churches making such a change.



Switching suppliers in this way would help any church wanting to gain an EcoChurch award, as this would comply with Questions 5 and 6 of the Buildings section of the survey. 

For more information and to sign up, please visit



www.christian-aid.org/climate

David Miller
17th June 2016

www.mkceg.org.uk

[facebook page](#)