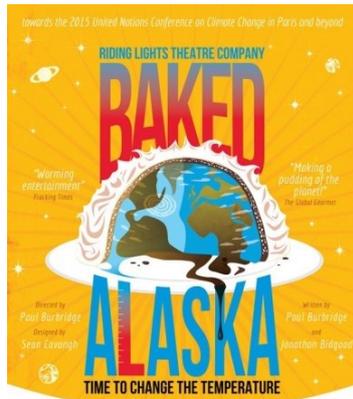


Riding Lights - Baked Alaska

MKCEG is delighted to announce that the highly-regarded theatre company **Riding Lights**, will be including Milton Keynes in their UK tour itinerary this autumn.

The production is a comedy with a challenging message which Riding Lights says will be “*servicing up a recipe for hope ready for the 2015 United Nations Conference on Climate Change taking place in Paris this December*”. It is aimed at adults and young people over the age of 12 from within the Christian community and others who like good drama and/or are interested in environmental issues.



Tuesday 22 September 7.30pm
Whaddon Way Church

Read more about the show [here](#)

Ticket prices are £12, concessions £9. Youth groups (8 or more under 18s) £7.50.

Further details will be available early July, but we strongly advise booking tickets as soon as you can. Order tickets locally from Lisa Pye at lisapye@sky.com or 07969 383854.

Some help requested

Riding Lights will supply printed publicity material - flyers for distributing to friends and other people who may be interested in coming, and posters for displaying in churches and other suitable locations. These will only get distributed with your help!

On the evening we propose having a small table with an MKCEG display. We would appreciate help with manning this before the show and during the interval.

Please [email me](#) if you can help with any of these tasks.

David Miller

Other events coming soon

The Urb Farm Open Day

Sunday 21st June, from 1.00-4.00pm, off Windsor Street, Wolverton, MK12 5DR.

There will be various Urb Farm items for sale – organic produce as well as plants and seedlings, and a range of activities to take part in including face painting and feeding the chickens.

Other groups will have stalls selling craft items and refreshments and there will be a barbecue with live music to add to the lively atmosphere.

See the [facebook](#) page for more details.

Parks Trust Nature Day

Saturday 4th July, from 12.00-15.00 at Howe Park Wood

Meet at the new education centre – the car park for this on the opposite side of the H7 from the entrance to Morrisons by the Nut & Squirrel pub

Parks Trust rangers and members of MK Natural History Society will help participants discover nature in Howe Park Wood. There will be nature walks and activities for children.

The event is suitable for all age ranges and is free of charge. You don't need to book in advance. More details are available [here](#):

MKCEG Visit to IKEA

Where in Milton Keynes can you see an installation of nearly 6000 solar PV panels? Until the MKCEG visit to IKEA on 8th May, I would have had no idea such an installation existed in MK.



A dozen of us enjoyed a tour of the building, with Paul Allen, Sustainability Officer. We visited areas mostly behind the scenes and not normally accessible to members of the public.

The roof provides excellent views of MK1 and it was good to be able to see what can be achieved when a building is designed with sustainability embedded into the thinking at the outset.

The solar panels provide electricity for the building and the slightly V-shaped roof allows rainwater to collect in a gully for drainage into tanks below for use throughout the site for flushing toilets.

Hot water is provided by the use of two biomass boilers, the raw materials for which include waste material from both products and packaging.

After the tour Paul showed us some samples of IKEA products which help consumers reduce their water or energy usage. (The light-bulb fitting converters - bayonet to screw - were new to me, and I purchased a few which are cheap and effective!)

We also watched a TED talk, and Paul subsequently supplied links to several which may be of interest:

[Hans Rosling - Population Growth](#)

[Hans Rosling—the Magic Washing Machine](#)

[Steve Howards—Selling Sustainability](#)

In recent days IKEA has announced a plan to invest €600 million in renewable energy, and a further €400 million towards the alleviation of poverty and disease in poor countries affected by climate change. A great example for other businesses to emulate. You can read an article about this on [Blue and Green Tomorrow's website](#).

David Miller

Spain by Train

Our latest adventure to Europe took us for a week's holiday in the Algarve, but we spent three days getting there as we travelled by train, allowing us to spend a whole day in Barcelona *en-route* and two half days in Seville, from where we hired a car for the journey across the border into Portugal.

Thanks to the building of further high-speed line in Spain three years ago, the journey from Paris to Barcelona now takes only 6½ hours and a mid evening arrival there can be accomplished by leaving MK at 6.45am, taking a Eurostar at around 8.30 and arriving in Paris in time for having a break of just over 2 hours. This gives time for taking the bus or metro to the Gare de Lyon and enjoying a sit-down meal in a Brasserie nearby.

This was the first time I had made a train journey of over 1000 miles in a single day! By booking 3 months in advance the cost of the whole journey was a shade over £100, though because the first part of the journey — from MK to Euston — has to be undertaken in the early part of the morning rush hour, the result is that it costs 19% of the total, for just 5% of the total distance.

The wild flowers in the Algarve were wonderful and we were also fascinated by the white storks who seemed to be engaged in a competition to find the most unusual place to build a nest. The one pictured below was clearly interested in monitoring traffic!



From the “green” perspective, there are some good lessons to learn from Barcelona. This is a city with only a slightly lower population than the capital, Madrid, and the urban area is compact and well-served by public transport, having a comprehensive metro system. Cycling and walking seem to be popular as the distances between various parts of the city are relatively small.

Barcelona features in a [New Climate Economy Report](#) in which it is compared with Atlanta in the US, a city of similar population but spread over 25 times the area, and with 10 times the transport carbon footprint.

How does Milton Keynes compare? The designated area (ie the built up part, but not the surrounding villages which are within the wider Borough), has an area of approx. 90 sq km, which at the population density of Barcelona would house nearly 1.5 million people! On the other hand at Atlanta's population density it would house only around 60,000 people.

The challenge for us is that our low density layout makes it difficult to sustain a decent public transport system. Hopes of improving the city's sustainability as new areas are planned are diminished by the huge support for maintaining the freedom of movement most of us enjoy as a result of our grid road system and our car-dependent culture.

David Miller

MK Smart

Workshop invitation - **Environmental Monitoring – A new date**

The Open University is running a project as part of 'MK:Smart Cities Initiative' to investigate the potential for using a range of environmental sensors around Milton Keynes to produce data for use by the community. As part of the project they want to find out what gardeners, nature enthusiasts and local residents, want to know about their local environment.

The workshop originally planned for April 30th did not take place and a new date has been fixed.

The revised date and time for the workshop is Tuesday 30th June, from 3.30 to 7.30pm at the Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA

More details and registration form at the link [here](#).

The Ethics of Climatic Scepticism

This is the title of a new Grove Booklet produced by Martin and Margot Hodson. The book contains chapters which explore people's views on climate change, how it is presented in the media, political and economic considerations, some biblical reflections, and finally how we can respond to climate change scepticism

The booklet is available in various formats and there are some additional web resources to supplement the material in the booklet. Details [here](#).

Conservation Challenges

on Brownsea Island, Poole Harbour Dorset

Brownsea Island, best known for its cute bushy-tailed Red Squirrels, offers a patchwork of different habitats and is home to many unique species. As a student at Bournemouth University studying 'Biodiversity Conservation', I was lucky enough to visit the island to learn more about conservation challenges:



Relocating species

With alarming losses of fish, mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians being reported by WWF in 2014, serious action is needed to protect species and the habitats they rely on globally. In the face of extinction, relocation can become the only remaining option to conserve a species. Species can be re-introduced to their original habitat if threats to them have been addressed. However, this is rarely possible, and conservationists must look for new areas.

We mapped Brownsea Island's array of habitats and identified potentially suitable areas for the Harvest Mouse – a little-known UK Biodiversity Action Plan species. The Harvest Mouse has recently been successfully reintroduced in Cheshire without adverse effects on other species. We found three suitable areas, and concluded that Brownsea offers a good location for reintroduction.

However, whilst reintroductions might seem an obvious solution to protect species at risk, there are substantial costs involved in relocation projects: it is always going to be vastly cheaper to conserve species in their original homes than to move them!

Creating suitable habitat and preparing for climate change



Brownsea Island has a lagoon comprising 23 miniature islands, used by breeding seabirds such as the Sandwich Tern and Black-Headed Gull. Staff have been creating different habitats on the islands by putting in

shelters, planting vegetation, and building fences around some of the islands to encourage breeding on the islands. We monitored bird nesting behaviour on each of the islands to help understand which habitats were most suitable.

However, all our efforts are only useful in the short-term. There is a much more serious challenge which staff are

talking about: climate change is already threatening these habitats. The staff anticipate that the lagoon will be flooded in the next few decades, eradicating a very unique habitat. Solutions are likely to be costly, challenging and success is not guaranteed – potential solutions include raising the sides of the lagoon, or creating similar island habitats within the lakes inland on the island.



Invasive species

It might be beautiful, but Rhododendron is alien to the UK and is a very invasive species. On Brownsea Island it chokes wild flowers and trees and threatens the Red Squirrel. After a 50-year battle to eradicate it from the island final cuts were proudly made last year. However, we found plenty of evidence of re-growth in our travels through the island woodland!

Indeed, invasive species has been a recurring theme on our course – particularly in freshwater and marine habitats – and adds to the growing list of environmental problems contemporary society must face up to if we are to halt biodiversity loss and prevent future wildlife extinctions.

Suze Miller

Mission and Creation Care

A new resource has recently been published by The John Ray Initiative in association with Tear Fund. *Mission and Creation Care for Christian Disciples* consists of five studies for small groups and there are both leader's notes and participants' study booklets for each topic. All of these are available as free downloads in a variety of formats. See [this link](#) for more details:

David Miller
12th June 2015