

The Economics of Hope

The 2015 Green Christian conference

From 11.00-5.00 on **Saturday 7th November** at St Michael's Centre, Stoke Gifford, Bristol (close to Bristol Parkway station).

The day will provide the opportunity for further exploration of Green Christian's *Joy in Enough* initiative and will feature two world-class speakers:

Molly Scott-Cato, MEP for South West England, spokesperson for the Green Party on finance, and author of two books on economics and the environment.

Jonathan Rowson, Director of the Social Brain Centre at the Royal Society of Arts, where he is conducting research on spirituality, neurology, social change and the environment.

The afternoon will provide the opportunity to choose two workshops from the following seven themes: Measuring progress, Economic education, TTIP and corporate power, Monetary policy, De-marketing, Inequality, and Building a spirited movement for economic change.

Full details and booking information [here](#)

Communicating Climate Change

Friday 20th November at St Pauls School, Leadenhall.

CLIMATE CHANGE

COME AND HEAR A COMMUNICATING

TALK BY GEORGE MARSHALL FOLLOWED BY Q AND A SESSION

an author and leading specialist on climate change communication **WHO IS**

at

Friday 20th Nov 7.30pm - 9.00pm
 Adult admission £5.00 on door
 £4.00 with pre-booked ticket
 via: www.transitionmk.com

St Paul's School,
 Phoenix Drive,
 Leadenhall,
 Milton Keynes
 MK6 5EN

In his recent book, George Marshall explores the reasons why we ignore climate change and he also is the co-founder and a leading member of COIN (the Climate Outreach & Information Network)

Why is it such hard work getting people to engage with one of the biggest issues of the day—climate change? Why have scientists become so distrusted? Why are some people more easily convinced that we are in danger of being invaded by aliens?

George Marshall, founder of the Climate Outreach and Information network, is one of Europe's leading experts on climate change communication. He has accepted an invitation from Transition MK to come to Milton Keynes next month to share some of what he has learned over the years.

He is also the author of a recently-published book on the subject: *Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains Are Wired To Ignore Climate Change*.

During his talk we will learn which types of communication are likely to fail and which are more likely to succeed.

For more details have a look at the [TransitionMK website](#) or if you wish to go ahead and book your ticket anyway, go straight to the eventbrite link [here](#).

MK Climate Change Rally

Saturday 28th November, 1.00pm, Campbell Park

Community groups and individuals will be gathering for a **Climate Change Rally** in Campbell Park in central Milton Keynes on **Saturday 28th November** between 1-2pm. The aim of the rally is to show support for the national and international campaigning efforts to put climate change high on the political agenda, specifically before the UN Conference on Climate Change in Paris taking place between 30th November and 11th December.

The Rally is organised by Transition MK who, with the support of Citizens MK, is encouraging local organisations, community groups and individuals to take part. Both organisations recognise the impact of collective action on decision makers.

Everyone attending the rally will be urged to sign a pledge card, making a commitment to reduce their individual carbon footprint, whilst also asking their MP to ensure the government introduces new policies to reduce the UK's carbon footprint as a matter of urgency, and pressing for UK support for an ambitious climate deal in Paris.

The plan for the rally is to meet at The MK Rose at 1pm and walk to the Beacon of Hope, where pledges will be handed in and everyone will have a chance to meet with other groups. There will be a few short speeches by local dignitaries. The event is scheduled to finish by 2.00pm.

Christians in Milton Keynes need to support this!

A quote from Amber Rudd, Secretary of State for Energy and climate Change, which appears in Christian Aid's "Big

Shift” leaflet says this: **Politicians can’t deliver on the ambition without the public saying “We need you to do this”.**

Further details about the rally coming early in November.

Baked Alaska



The Riding Lights theatre company brought their production to Whaddon Way Church last month and played to a packed audience. Two theatregoers shared their thoughts about the show afterwards:

A thread running through the show was the woman throwing her rubbish over the fence into the neighbour’s garden. “Well I can’t keep it here; I’m having a party and haven’t got room for it. Look, you’ve got a whole garden spare!” And the woman wouldn’t accept the rubbish back afterwards – “It’s my rubbish but your garden so it’s our joint responsibility.”

Never explicitly said in the show but we, of course, are the ones partying but throwing our waste next door – polluting the oceans, the air, and landfill in foreign lands (toxic chemicals, old computers and electrical goods, and many other processes too dirty to do in Europe).

In Paris, the rich nations will also deny responsibility and demand that developing nations do their bit too, way out of proportion to the little damage they have caused.

Steve Barnes

Although it was clear from the outset that Baked Alaska would be addressing one of the most serious issues of our time, at no point did I feel got at. The hugely talented cast engaged the audience through a fast-paced and very varied series of scenarios, making real events accessible. There was humour, music, and a number of very convincing accents, and I marvelled throughout at their energy, especially in the light of the tour schedule. The overwhelming message I was left with was that this is a problem for which we all share responsibility, and that action is still possible.

Carolyn Sanderson

At the end of the show everyone was given pieces of paper on which to write messages to our MP, Iain

Stewart. These were made into bunting for presenting to him.



The reputation of Riding Lights brought people along who perhaps hadn't really engaged with the issue of climate change before and some were really challenged by what they heard. The performance also succeeded in reaching a significant number of people who wouldn't normally be seen inside a church!

How important it is now for all those of us who saw the show not to ignore what we heard by going back to “business as usual”. Supporting the Climate Rally in Milton Keynes on November 28th would be one good next step...

More photos are available on our [website](#).

OUR MK

This was officially launched on September 23rd at the offices of Transport Systems Catapult in Midsummer Boulevard.

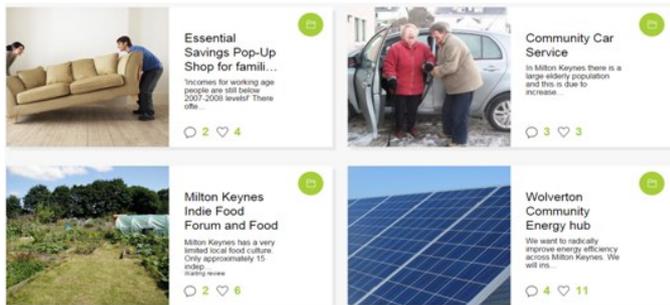
The project is part of the *MK Smart* initiative headed by the Open University in conjunction with Community Action MK, Milton Keynes Council, Graymatter, and other partner organisations.

Our MK aims to involve the citizens of MK in contributing their ideas for using technology to improve the way the city works, especially in the areas of energy, health, transport and water. The technology can involve the use of sensors to gather large volumes of real-time data. Applications can then be developed which use this data to deliver information to mobile phones, displays in key city locations, and even to control appliances in homes.

Citizens are invited to take part in improving their local community in three different ways:

- ◆ By submitting an idea.
- ◆ By bidding for £5,000 of funding towards developing an idea into a project which can be delivered.
- ◆ By volunteering to help someone else’s project to become a reality.

The [ourMK website](#) already shows many examples of the ideas people have put forward and anyone visiting the site can “like” them or make comments about them.



Two projects have already been awarded £5,000 grants. The first of these is a project to use solar PV panels linked to an inverter and battery to provide off-grid lighting in a home equipped with LED light-bulbs.

Several of the ideas are food-related, probably reflecting a desire by many of us to be able to access more “sustainable” food, which isn't being satisfied currently in Milton Keynes — certainly not in the southern half of it.

Please make the time to visit the [website](#) and look through and comment on the ideas. To make the project successful depends on the input of the many — too often in the UK it is just the few who get involved and the majority don't, either because of apathy or lack of time, but then complain about the outcomes.

It would be good to follow the example set by Reykjavik in Iceland which has a citizens engagement project run by the city council that has been running for 5 years. Called [Better Reykjavik](#) (the link here is in English!) it has seen around 60% of its citizens engaging with it in some way.

Divestment campaign

In recent times the campaign to stop investing in fossil fuels has become almost “mainstream” and in March the UN itself gave its backing to it. Operation Noah has been campaigning for two years for churches to divest and some progress has been made but there is still some way to go, the Church of England receiving the most focus because of the scale of the investments it has.

These days many individuals are saving towards a pension in schemes that offer a choice of investment, so the divestment issue is something that can be engaged with. For those who have savings and investments the ability to make choices is much more tangible.

So what should we invest in? Last week saw the publication of an excellent guide from online publisher *Blue and Green Tomorrow* — the 5th edition of [Sustainable Investment](#) — a major revision from the previous edition. It is free of charge, but in order to download it you may first need to join the Blue and Green email network which you can do by registering [here](#). They publish some excellent guides so it is well worth doing so.

Book Review

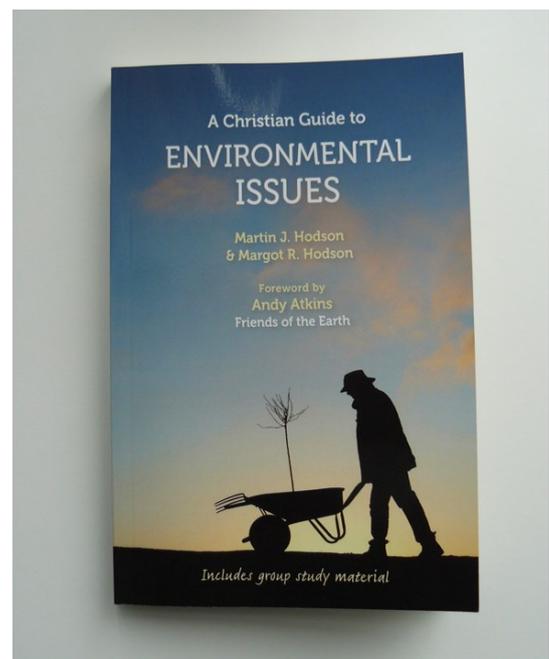
This new title from Martin and Margot Hodson was written whilst they were on sabbatical in 2014 in Spain and Portugal.

The first chapter sets the scene by summarising the state of the planet, and articulates the theology of caring for what God has created.

The chapters that follow explore Biodiversity, Water, Climate Change, Population, Energy, Soil, Food, and Development. Each chapter concludes with an Ecotip and then a short Bible study with questions to reflect on afterwards. The final chapter *A Covenant for Hope* (note that I haven't read the last half of the book yet!) encourages readers by identifying some of the positive developments that are taking place.

At the end of the book there are some useful leaders' notes for each bible study, suggestions for further reading and details of the websites of Christian organisations engaged in matters relating to the environment, poverty and justice.

Published by Bible Reading Fellowship at £9.99.



David Miller
19th October 2015