



## Welcome to Ely Cathedral's Environmental Newsletter

<https://www.elycathedral.org/social-justice/social-justice-and-the-environment/renew>  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/668996277287429/>

Friday 5 June is **World Environment Day**<sup>1</sup>.

This has been celebrated every year on 5 June since 1974, under the auspices of the UN, to keep environmental issues on the agendas of governments, businesses, celebrities and us – ordinary citizens. There is a different theme each year, and this year the theme is **biodiversity**.

That may feel like a distraction at best, and frankly irrelevant at worst, given that as a global community we're still working out how to cope with a world in which a novel virus can completely interrupt normal life. But reduction in biodiversity is part of the problem.

All life is connected through complex cycles which have the ability to moderate ill effects. At least, they did until recently. The effects of our carbon rich, biodiversity depleting, lifestyles, which remove nature's safeguards, are threatening these complex cycles.

By destroying biodiversity, we make it more likely that a pathogen like the coronavirus will pass from animals to humans. Biodiverse ecosystems help to prevent rapid spread of pathogens.

In the last 50 years, the human population has doubled, the global economy has almost quadrupled, and global trade has increased by a factor of ten. It now takes 1.6 Earths to meet our demands each year, and increasingly both human and non-human life are less able to flourish.

When we cut down forests, destroy wildlife habitats, and adopt intensive farming practices, we upset the balance of nature which would have helped to protect us.

**Protecting the environment protects us and cares for all God's creation!**

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<sup>1</sup> Information taken from <https://www.worldenvironmentday.global/biodiversity-coronaviruses>

## Ely Cathedral Community Support Group: moving forward ...

First, many thanks to all of you who, when lockdown first started, volunteered to support others by shopping, phoning, and praying. Thank you too to all of you who were prepared to admit that you would appreciate a bit of support, whether short lived or longer term. Thank you also to the team who matched people up, and kept in touch with them to ensure that the arrangement was working for both parties.



The Ely Cathedral Community Support Group, which sprang into action back in March, is a perfect example of how working together – acknowledging our connectedness with each other – enriches us all. It is also a great example of different ways in which we can show the faith that is in us.

The Bible tells us to support those in need, but it isn't meant to be one way. Jesus was

supported by those around him, he was not an independent one man band!

The initial crisis has led to many new friendships, and made us all so much more aware of each other's needs. Thanks be to God for that!

None of us has any idea how long all this will go on, or what life will look like in the weeks and months ahead. It is important that we look at what we can do, not lament what we can't.

One way in which we can work towards the gold A Rocha eco church award is to set up some kind of community shopping scheme, and a small group is working out how to put a small scale trial in place this summer, taking forward what has already been established through the support group.

### Who will it help?

- Anyone who can't shop for themselves, or would appreciate shopping ethically.
- Local traders, and Fairtrade.

### How will it work?

- You will be able to order items through an online order form.
- Volunteers will collect and distribute the goods direct to your door.

### What products will be available?

To start with:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Eggs and honey
- Tea and coffee, pasta, rice and flour

Products will be sourced from local farm shops, from the Prospect Trust Café, and from Traidcraft, and will promote LOAF values – local, organic, animal friendly and Fairtrade.

### When will it start?

Soon! Watch this space ...

## Twin-Your-Tap with Tippy-Tap<sup>2</sup>

Whose idea was tap twinning?

Did you know that 1 in 3 people across the world do not have a safe and hygienic toilet?

Many people reading this Newsletter will have come across the concept of toilet twinning and many will have twinned their own toilet. If you haven't, this brief explanation will put you in the picture:



**Toilet Twinning** started originally in 2008 by the charity Cord, who then joined forces with Tearfund in 2010 to extend the number of countries where toilets could be twinned. In 2015, Tearfund took over Toilet Twinning and by then, Toilet Twinning had raised more than £2.3 million, and had twinned about 35,000 toilets in more than 40 countries. The story continues ... because access to toilets can change whole communities.

### So what changes?

**Hygiene:** Without sanitation, a child under five dies every two minutes due to dirty water and poor sanitation.

**Education:** Without sanitation, girls are forced to drop out of school.

**Safety:** Without sanitation, women and girls are vulnerable to attack or snake bite.

**Finance:** To individual and communities: every £1 spent on sanitation has a return of £5.50 due to increased productivity and lower health care costs.

### Which brings us to **Tap Twinning**

Since the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak the need for constant handwashing is something of which we are all aware. When it comes to stopping the spread of the virus in the communities where Tearfund works, taps for hand washing and training to understand how viruses spread are vital.

In response to this need, Tearfund has introduced **Tap Twinning**. It's like Toilet Twinning – but with taps.

A £60 donation will provide a tap, hygiene promotion and support in vulnerable communities across more than 45 countries to help people learn how to protect themselves from Covid-19 through handwashing and good hygiene. In return, Tearfund will send a special Tap Twinning certificate to thank donors for their support during the Covid-19 pandemic.

£60 is a lot of money so why not consider clubbing together to Twin-Your-Tap?

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<sup>2</sup> This article was written by Rachel Johnson.

Information taken from <https://www.toilettwinning.org/tap-twinning/> where you can find full details – including finding out what a tippy-tap is!