



**Moray Eco-Congregation Network**  
*2<sup>nd</sup> September 2013, 7.30 – 9.00pm*  
St Giles Church, Elgin  
**Note of Meeting**

**Present:** Duncan Alexander and Carola Smith      St Giles and St Columba's, Elgin  
Avril C Clark and Liz Moir      Bellie Parish Church, Fochabers  
Judith Trew      Holy Trinity Episcopal, Elgin  
Margaret Warnock      Eco-Congregation Scotland

**Apologies:** Jenny Adams      Duffus, Spynie and Hopeman

**1. The meeting opened with a prayer** taken from the Creation Time "Starters for Sunday" materials. See

[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/starters\\_for\\_sunday/creation\\_time](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/starters_for_sunday/creation_time)

**2. Introduction to Eco-Congregation**

Margaret gave a brief overview of Eco-Congregation Scotland. Eco-Congregation Scotland is an ecumenical movement and a registered charity. ECS helps congregations link environmental issues to their faith and take action in their church and local community. There are currently 298 Eco-Congregations in Scotland. 104 of these hold the Eco-Congregation Award. (See website <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/> for further information).

**3. An Eco-Congregation Network for Moray**

Each church represented then explained where they were on their eco-congregation journey:

**Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Elgin** are registered as an eco-congregation and have completed the Churches' Check Up. They use Fair Trade products and recycle a number of items through collections in the church and with assistance from Moray Council. Unusually, they have managed to find a collection service for recycling candle wax.

Simply by closing the outside doors when services are in progress, they have managed to cut down on some of their energy usage. It was suggested that use of a thermal imaging camera would be useful for all churches to assess where heat was being lost from their buildings.

**ACTION: Margaret will investigate a possible local source**

As in most churches, involving the whole congregation is a continuing challenge.

**St Giles and St Columba's, Elgin** are also registered and have, in recent years, sold their old church hall and built a new one that is far more environmentally friendly to run. Their energy usage, and therefore carbon footprint, is now much reduced with the new hall meeting modern building standards and having installed solar thermal panels to provide hot water and movement activated lights in the toilets and kitchen. As well as now only using one building for worship, a lighting consultant has been employed to advise in the church building and low energy light bulbs are now used.

Two bird tables have also been recently constructed and put up in the gardens, old wood has been left on site to provide habitat and the Guild also raised money for planting. Recycled paper has been sourced for the covers of the church magazine and Fair Trade products are also used in the church.

The Sunday School have explored a theme on creation and, sometime ago, a Bible Study looking at caring for creation was used in the church, although the group was poorly attended. They have recently inducted a new minister and this is maybe an opportunity to again raise the eco-congregation profile in the congregation

**Bellie Parish Church, Fochabers** registered about a year ago but have already done a lot of work. Their eco team is part of the church's Mission and Discipleship group. To highlight creation care work to the congregation they held an "Eco Awareness Day" with a variety of stalls, including Burn of Fochabers Trust and Moray Community Food. They also had a knitters using recycled wool, the quilting group making "bags for life" to order and served Fair Trade teas and coffees.

They have a recycling corner in the church with collections of old specs (which go to Specsavers and eventually Vision Aid see (<http://www.specsavers.co.uk/news-and-information/vision-aid-overseas>), computer cartridges, mobile phones and textiles for Rag Bag (see <http://www.rag-bag.co.uk/>). They have tried to reduce paper use by encouraging the emailing of the church magazine.

They have looked in to installing solar panels but, at present, any money raised needs to go into restoring the spire.

The church has an "Eco suggestion box" so that all members of the congregation can contribute their ideas and is also organising an art competition with a local primary school in October this year with the subject of, "How do we care for God's Creation?".

**It was agreed that:**

- the network should cover the Moray Council local authority area
- a programme of meetings would be put together to give those interested the opportunity to get together, exchange information and invite speakers on relevant topics.
- in order to share that the load around network members, each participating congregation would hope to offer host a meeting and take notes to share information with those unable to attend
- three meetings in the year should make up the 2014 programme with dates set for:  
**10<sup>th</sup> March**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> June**  
**8<sup>th</sup> September**
- the Rev Trevor Jamison (Environmental Chaplain for ECS) would be invited to speak at the March meeting with further topics and venues to be decided at that meeting. NB the Rev Jenny Adams from Duffus, Spynie and Hopeman Churches (who was unable to be at this meeting) is happy to host a future meeting. Jenny also suggested solar power - for churches and/or manses - what is involved, subsidies, ownership, risks etc. and possibly wildlife (in particular bats!) as topics for meetings.
- members would like to keep in touch via email to exchange news of what they have done, or are planning to do and to share ideas and suggestions. All present agreed to share email addresses.
- information about eco events in individual churches could be publicised through the network and shared on the network web page, which will be set up on the Eco-

Congregation webpage (<http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/networks/>). There is also an Eco-Congregation Forum page, where people can ask questions and discuss issues – see <http://forum.ecocongregationscotland.org/>

- the Guild in the area could be approached to seek their support in getting new congregations involved in creation care work through Eco-Congregation

**Next steps:**

**AVRIL** will check with the church diary that Bellie Parish Church, Fochabers can host a meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

**MARGARET** will invite the Rev Trevor Jamison to speak at the March meeting and will also produce a flier / poster nearer the time to be distributed to all churches in the area.

**ALL** to try to use their own contacts and local networks to involve others in ECS. Fliers and further information are available on the website ( see <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/publicity/>) and hard copies can also be supplied.

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