

# Business as usual?

asks **Clare Redfern**, Commissioning Editor

Sustainability, it seems, is now a mainstream aspiration, whether as the shared global vision of the **Sustainable Development Goals**, or in the anti-consumerist plot of a box-office hit (see *The Lego Movie* review). Yet, in practice, as the Sustainable Lifestyles project at the University of Surrey has shown, only two to three per cent of the UK population are actively reducing their carbon footprint. Others aspire to change, but soon hit barriers.

This issue of *Green Christian* is about motivating change for good, making aspirations a reality. Our opening feature, drawing on the November workshop, reflects **The Struggle to Change** to more sustainable lifestyles; and Paul Bodenham in **Standing at the Crossroads** explores how Churches could play a more pro-active role in this. Read also about the Noddfa **Joy in Enough** retreat last November and what might nurture us on this journey of change.

Our **Local groups** bear witness to the effectiveness of small groups in raising awareness, forging new partnerships and taking on new challenges (anyone for **The Rubbish Diet?**) whilst the **News section** shows Green Christian members active in campaigns to reduce our national and institutional dependence on fossil fuels. Changes are afoot in Green Christian too – we have a new **Information Officer**, Amy Willshire, and a new project called **Xistence**, looking at meeting young people's needs.

Change is essentially a spiritual process; in Christ we are called to a life of ongoing renewal and transformation. Jonathan Rowson from the Social Brain Project, and speaker at our November 2015 conference, describes spiritual practices as important checks on our natural tendency to sleepwalk through life on automatic pilot. So which spiritual practices could help us to “wake up!” to respond and engage, for as Malcolm Guite's poem reminds us “Love is the waking life”.

One is the discipline of paying attention. Laura Deacon's **Hedgehog Love** describes how closely observing the hedgehogs visiting her yard made her see her life in a new light, “connected, like the hedgehogs, to the wider earth community, affecting and affected by everything that happens within it”. Our **Book Reviews** also call attention to the soil below our feet, and the enchantment of the created world. And the **Still Point** reflection from the desert of Sinai, points to a deep well of silence to refresh thirsty souls. So read on, pay attention and be prepared to change.

First though, it's time to meet the new editorial team. We've really enjoyed working together on our first issue, and are privileged to be building on Chris Walton's work over the past 12 years. If together we can manage a fraction of his enthusiasm, wisdom and wit, we will be doing well.

## Meet the team

**Suzannah Brecknell** (below left) I saw the advert for editorial volunteers while rocking my youngest child – then just a few weeks old. It seemed the perfect opportunity to take a faith-based look at issues of Creation care and sustainability while also supporting an admirable organisation. And so far it has proved to be just that.

Apart from Green Christian, my time is mainly taken up with that baby and his elder brother. When not with them I work as a journalist writing about government and the civil service – another reason why volunteering to write about something positive with hope at its heart was an attractive idea.

**Simon Court** (below centre) What to do when your children leave home but you don't feel ready to retire just yet? Volunteer for the *Green Christian* magazine editorial team! I first heard about Green Christian at Greenbelt some years ago and eventually became a member. When I am not working with children who don't go to school I enjoy growing things to eat, fiddling with technology and writing steaming letters to the *Church Times*. Since joining the editorial team I have also become involved in the Green Christian Xistence project.

**Clare Redfern** (below right) I live in Cambridge, which is beautiful but very flat, so I like to get away and climb hills. I've worked as a press officer and researcher at the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion and have three almost grown-up children. Years ago I trained as a doctor and did lots of challenging jobs before deciding it really wasn't my vocation. ■

