

Windermere and Bowness are



Sharing the best in Gardening

RHS **BRITAIN IN BLOOM**  
Finalist 2013

# CONTENTS

Background .....	3
The Project .....	3
Projects Undertaken	
Clearing the Site .....	4
Bird Boxes .....	4
Sowing Saturday .....	4
Photographs .....	5
Members of the Eco Group .....	6

# CARVER ECO-CONGRATION CHURCH

## BACKGROUND:

In 2008 Carver United Reform Church had agreed to work towards the Eco-Congregational Award. This was awarded in 2010 and the project has grown from strength to strength.

Eco-Congregation is an ecumenical programme helping churches make the link between environmental issues and Christian faith, and respond in practical action in the church, in the lives of individuals, and in the local and global community.

To qualify as an Eco-Congregation Programme the church will need to be inter-denominational, run an independently assessed award scheme, and take a balanced approach to creation care which covers spiritual, practical and communal issues. In return the church is offered the use of all the resources, the brand identity and as much non-financial support as can be given.

It helps the congregation:

- ◆ to celebrate good practice which is already happening
- ◆ to highlight areas for improvement
- ◆ to work out priorities for action.

When working out the action plan, it was advised to have actions which fit into the three main areas of church life:

- ◆ **'spiritual'**: worship and teaching
- ◆ **practical**: things to do with buildings, land and church management
- ◆ **mission**: reaching out, both locally and globally

## THE PROJECT:

### Step 1 - 'Get Going!'

The church registered and formed a small group which identified the need to start by working in the garden; making 'green choices' at home and in church and incorporating this into their worship.

### Step 2 - Get Cracking

A "Green Book" was purchased in which is recorded all that is done at the church and at home. 3 bird boxes have been put up around the church garden.

### Step 3 - The Award

The Award is given to churches that have:

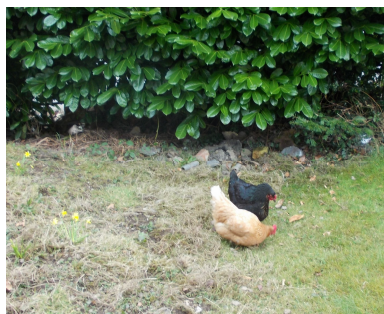
- ◆ undertaken an environmental check-up or audit
- ◆ undertaken activities or initiatives in each of the following three areas:
  - ◆ 'spiritual': worship and teaching — linking environmental issues with the Christian faith e.g. through services, children's work or an adult homegroup
  - ◆ practical: practising what is preached e.g. an energy, churchyard or recycling project
  - ◆ mission: reaching out — worked with or through their local community on environmental issues e.g. a litter pick, project with a school or other community group, gaining positive publicity.

The Award is given for 2-3 years, and churches need to reapply after this time. This is to encourage churches to go deeper in weaving care for creation into the life of the church. The church are again applying for the award in 2013.

# CARVER ECO-CONGRATION CHURCH

## SOME PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN:

**Clearing the site!** - 5 members of the congregation undertook the task of clearing the overgrown borders of the garden by the old vestry door - aided and abetted by 4 chickens from next door. The group dug out all the old woody hydrangeas and several other old shrubs in order to make room for raspberry canes, summer vegetable - beans, courgettes - to be shared amongst the congregation. Fruit bushes were planted in the autumn of 2012. There is still a lot more clearing to do in order to plant attractive pollinators in the area. There is also a scheme to donate a tree or bush in memory of a departed loved one.



**Bird Boxes** - The bird boxes that have been put up have attracted a family of Blue Tits. There are 6 eggs which are being watched over by both parents. There is a webcam fitted to the box and the female could be seen turning the eggs, flying back and forth to get food for herself. 5 of the eggs hatched but sadly after the 2 days the nest was empty. The chicks were too young to have fledged and therefore must have fallen prey to predators. A family of Great Tits took over the nest box and raised their young. One of the group is making bird boxes in aid of the fruit trees which are hoped to be planted in Autumn.

**Planting** - 5 Eco Gardeners have moved 5 tonnes of soil from the car park to the garden on the other side of the church. The next task is to put on a good covering of manure. 4 fruit trees: 2 cooking apple trees; 1 eater and a Victoria plum have been planted. Debbie Binch (Windermere Reflections) has offered some gooseberry and blackcurrant bushes and a congregation member has offered some rhubarb crowns.



*Eco-Congregation with Joan, Andrew and the Reverend Lis Mullen*

Also being planted are the free seeds from the RHS as part of their "Edible Britain" campaign. These seeds included:

- ◆ Chives, Dill, Sage, Parsley, Coriander,
- ◆ Spring Onions, Carrots, Radishes, Spinach,
- ◆ Marigolds and Nasturtiums.

A request, through the magazine, went out to those who grow their own vegetables from seed, to sow a few more for planting in the garden. The aim is to have the garden full of favourite vegetables in 2013.

**Sowing Saturday** - Group of members and friends met in the church hall to make plant pots with old newspapers, fill them with compost and plant a variety of seeds. The windowsills are full of paper plant pots and most of the seeds have germinated. While the seeds were being sown inside, fruit bushes and fruit trees were being planted outside. In the Eco Garden.

# CARVER ECO-CONGRATION CHURCH

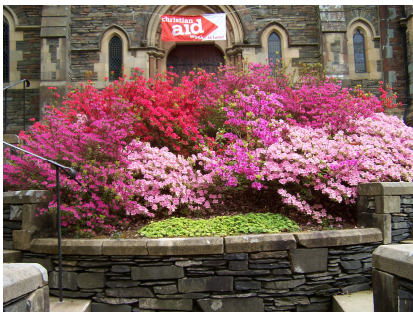
## Photographs of the year's projects



Church members and friends at the 'Sowing Saturday'



The work of the Eco Gardeners  
Before and After



# CARVER ECO-CONGRATION CHURCH

## **Members of the Eco Congregational Group**