



# Hope for the world

## Making Change Happen On The Ground

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Hope is a small word with big power. It makes us happy and motivates us to change. You only have to remove it to realise its power.

Don't we feel at our bleakest, our most demotivated, our most powerless, when we lose hope in a situation that really matters to us? For example – that a once-close relationship can be restored, or that a project we have devoted so much time to will ever succeed?

So often, it is other people who give me hope – our minister's Sunday morning sermon on a parable of Jesus, where he helps me see my situation from a more godly perspective; meeting an old friend for a meal after a tough week and being re-energised by laughter at the memory of our past escapades and the ideas we have for the future; reading a book and finding others have the solution to my concern, from how to fix my beloved old bike, to the breathtaking potential of solar power to provide clean energy to the world, in the face of dire threat of climate change driven by dirty fossil fuels.

Right now, climate change is an issue where the world urgently needs hope and motivation. It hangs over the younger generation like the threat of nuclear holocaust hung over those of us brought up in the Cold War.

What gives me hope on climate change is how much, all round the world, ordinary people are just getting on with the solutions in their own homes and communities, workplaces, schools, and demanding governments do the same at national and international level.

For example, it gives me a lift every time I walk past my children's school, now powered by its state-of-the-art solar-tiled roof. And I loved seeing tens of thousands of ordinary people at rallies around the international climate talks in Paris last week, people committed to doing all they can to address climate change in their own lives, and to holding their governments to account for their national and international responsibilities.

All environmental problems – from climate change to loss of key species like bees – will be helped by strong international agreements. But ultimately, it is we, the people, who will make change happen on the ground and drive our political representatives to bolder action at scale. We Christians should be in the lead, prayerfully and boldly – promoting justice, a healthy environment for all, and care of God's creation.

So, how you can express hope on the environment today? Why don't you join a growing number of Christians and sign up online to a campaign, urging our own government to move faster to cut the UK's contribution to climate change – out of fairness to the world's poorest countries who are worst affected and out of love for God's creation?

I suggest you try The Climate Coalition, A Rocha, Tearfund or Friends of The Earth, and do take a hopeful step forward this Advent.



Andy Atkins was a founder of the 2005 Make Poverty History campaign and went on to lead Friends of the Earth. He becomes A Rocha UK's new CEO in January.

[advent.arocha.org.uk](http://advent.arocha.org.uk) (Andy Atkins – 14th December)



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