

Friends of St Peter's Talk on 16th May at Stoke Fleming, from 6:00pm

Title of Talk: Managing God's Acre – Why are churchyards so important for wildlife

Speaker: David Curry, Exeter Diocese Environmental Advisor (voluntary)

With so many pressures today on our countryside, ***Churchyards represent environmental jewels and long-term sanctuaries for wildlife.***

Every churchyard is a potential nature reserve that can be a home to many plants and animals, some of which are struggling to thrive in our countryside.

If we manage our churchyards well, they can provide many other environmental benefits such as improving air and water quality and providing quiet greenspace for meditation and relaxation.

The Exeter Diocese is committed to managing our churchyards to improve their biodiversity and works in active partnership with other denominations and environmental organisations such as the South Devon AONB, Devon Wildlife Trust, Devon Local Nature Partnership and Caring for God's Acre.

The Devon Living Churchyard Project aims to help churches in the Diocese manage their churchyards in a wildlife-friendly way, while being sensitive to the needs of all churchyard users, paying particular heed to the primary function as a resting place for the dead and a contemplative place for friends and relatives of those buried there.

The scheme has been very successful as it has enabled local people, through churches, schools and community groups, to be involved in a manageable environmental project.

David Curry lives in his hometown Plymouth and is a retired ecologist. He has been working in local government for over 40 years, planning and enabling community environmental projects. His involvement in Living Churchyards for the past 25 years has been a spin-off from that work.