

**BBC's Aled Jones in Suffolk for Songs of Praise filming
at Foxearth Meadows Nature Reserve**

BBC Songs of Praise presenter Aled Jones was in Suffolk at a Foxearth Meadows nature reserve earlier this month finding out what the annual harvest celebration means to local Christians and the importance of caring for nature. The episode he was filming for was 'Caring for Creation' which will feature this **Sunday 25th September at 13:15** on BBC One.

The episode illustrates the importance of reconnecting with the natural world and transforming spaces for nature. Foxearth Meadows managed by A Rocha UK since 2015, a Christian nature conservation charity, has become a wildlife haven where communities can help protect the natural world. The 11-acre reserve, on the south side of the river Stour sits on a floodplain on the border between Suffolk and Essex, dedicated to providing a wetland habitat. The reserve is managed especially for dragonflies and damselflies, it is also home to a wealth of wildlife including otter, kingfisher and harvest mouse.

Mark Prina, Foxearth Meadows reserve manager, explains, "Foxearth Meadows is a special place where people come to encounter our precious wildlife. We hope that, by being included in this 'Care for Creation' episode on Songs of Praise, many more people will see how we promote caring for nature, be concerned at its vulnerability yet wonder at its resilience and vitality."

Churches have stepped up to care for nature through the A Rocha UK's Eco Church programme, launching their appeal this month. Earlier this summer, Songs of Praise recorded hymns and music at Holy Trinity Church in Long Melford during the hottest day of the year. At Harvest time many think about how important it is to look after our planet. Reverend Lynda Sebbage from Barrow EcoChurch invited seven children from their eco-group to explore the reserve and try some pond-dipping.

Reverend Lynda Sebbage, Rector of the Benefice of Barrow said, "We were delighted to be invited to take part in the recent filming at Foxearth Meadows, near Sudbury. Several children from the Barrow Benefice, all keen on the environment, having already visited our Eco Church Project at All Saints Church, Barrow, joined the tour around Foxearth, which is a haven for a variety of dragonflies and damselflies. We were rewarded with seeing quite a number of them as they flitted across the reeds and

ponds, and the children loved learning how to spot the difference between them! While the filming took place, the children had great fun in making their own dragonflies.”

- ENDS -

For images and to arrange interviews please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

Watch the BBC Songs of Praise 'Caring for Creation' programme on Sunday 25th September, 13:15 - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006ttc5>

1) A Rocha UK is a Christian charity undertaking practical nature conservation and education with local communities and equipping others to care for the environment. Their main mission is to enable UK Christians and Churches to care for the environment. www.arocha.org.uk

A Rocha UK is part of a worldwide family of A Rocha organisations. We work collaboratively with others who share our passion for the planet and our desire for its flourishing.

2) Eco Church is a free online award scheme for churches in England and Wales. It is an A Rocha UK project. At a practical level Eco Church encourages churches to reduce energy use; protect open space and valuable natural habitats; reduce their contribution to global warming; keep the church safe and healthy; lessen pressure on the local water supply and reduce run-off into local waterways.

Launched in 2016, the Eco Church scheme has gained momentum. Even throughout the Covid pandemic Eco Church continued to receive applications for bronze, silver and gold awards. We offer practical guidance to an increasing number of churches opting to care for God's earth. Twenty seven churches have achieved a gold level Eco Church award including Quaker, Methodist, Baptist, United Reformed and Anglican churches. To become a gold-awarded church churches must prove high environmental standards in each area covered by the Eco Church Survey. These areas are worship and teaching, management of church buildings, management of church land, community and global engagement, and lifestyle.

In partnership with Christian Aid, The Church of England, The Methodist Church, Benefact Trust, The United Reformed Church and Tearfund. In the Eco Church scheme's seventh year, A Rocha UK are encouraging more churches to join the Eco Church community. Churches can do so by registering and completing a simple survey or donating to our appeal at:

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk>

3) Big Green Week (25th September - 2 October) The Great Big Green Week is the UK's biggest ever celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature. Great Big Green Week will unleash a wave of support for action to protect the planet. Tens of thousands of people in every corner of the country will celebrate the heartfelt, brave, everyday actions being taken to stand up for nature and fight climate change.