

Don't Be Derek!

Flairs, crazy hair and psychedelic shirts were all the rage at the Haven, Pembroke, on the 16th November. A group of young people joined Tearfund and Pembrokeshire Baptist Youth Committee for a 70's evening of fun and action. Using Tearfund's Don't Be Derek campaign, the team led an action packed night, it's purpose to raise awareness about the effects of climate change, showing how we can change our living habits to help others.

Opening with a Climate Change Ice Breaker, Trina Sutton invited teams to answer questions displayed around the room. Then it was time to meet the infamous 'Derek'. The group were invited to take a look at Derek's house, checking out his lifestyle habits.

'Derek's a nice bloke, don't get me wrong. He gives to charity, goes to church, is kind to animals. But underneath his sleek 70's exterior, Derek's the living nightmare of climate change. The Mr Big of climate-changing carbon emissions, his energy-hungry lifestyle is fuelled by the quest for comfort and convenience.' said Tearfund's Sharron Hardwick introducing everyone to Derek (Ceri Evans).

Derek, a fictional character created by Tearfund, shows how energy hungry lifestyles damage others. Derek's energy wasting habits include vast over use of lights and heating, constantly leaving things on stand by, keeping chargers plugged in and turned on. Derek, inseparable from his car, drives across the road to the local shop, when he could easily walk! 'Derek just doesn't get it! He goes to church, but doesn't see the link between the way he lives and it's effects to others. God is love, he wants us to love him and love others. We show love to others by the things that we say and do. The Bible says 'Love your neighbour as yourself. Love does no harm to it's neighbour.' continued Sharron.

Tearfund's Be Part Of A Miracle film was shown, featuring Tearfund partner Eagles, a Pastor, and a farmer from Fombe, Malawi. Andrew, 22, reported the devastating effects that climate change is having on their harvest.

'Our land was like a river: water brought all this sand,' said Andrew. 'Now we have to dig down a meter to find good earth. In the past, food would last all year round to the next harvest. But these days, because of droughts and floods, we never harvest enough for the whole year.'

In response, Kath and Mick Parry-Thomas called the group to pray. Using Tearfund's Global Poverty Prayer Week resources, five prayer pods were set up for: climate change, water and sanitation, Aids and HIV, trade justice, and disasters, where the teams prayed. The five areas are part of Tearfund's ten year vision to see fifty million people lifted out of spiritual and material poverty.

Because of the devastating effects of climate change, Sharron Hardwick sets a challenge to change our living habits to benefit others:

'There will be a sponsored week of 'Not Being Derek', but the hope is that we will change our habits forever. We must pray and act now, people are depending on us to make a difference.' The evening continued with a quiz and buffet, with Fair Trade Chocolate fountain. Katrin Evans performed a 70's disco, followed by a set by DJ Deno H.

'It was a fun night. Thanks to everyone supporting the event. I hope people realise that we are all connected, and our actions have consequences. Love does no harm to it's neighbour, so lets love our neighbours and think of them as we live our lives. Together we can make a difference,' concludes Sharron Hardwick.







