



working locally to make a difference

Come and meet us

Sustainable Wallingford holds its annual meeting on Monday 16th October, where you'll have the chance to meet people from each of our action groups, hear about what we've been doing over the past year, and find out how you can get involved.

This year the meeting will also be a celebration of 'Apple Day', so expect some apple-related events and maybe even some free apple pie!

The meeting is at the Friends' Meeting House in Castle Street and starts at 7.30pm.

SusWal at Bunkfest

Sustainable Wallingford will once again be at the Bunkfest festival (1st–3rd September). We will be on site on both Saturday and Sunday and this year our stand will have a recycling theme, with displays and activities for children. You can also chat to us about activities that we have been involved in over the last year.

Recycling

We are working with Bunkfest organisers to help promote better recycling and waste management at this year's festival. As this is such a high profile community event, the aim for this year's Bunkfest is to have better facilities for recycling and general waste. Plastic, aluminium and steel cans, paper, cardboard and glass will be recycled.

To achieve this there will be several mixed recycling banks around the main arena, with a team of volunteers policing

the site. Rubbish will be allocated to recycle and general waste containers, which will be processed by our local waste management company Grundon who have continually supported and helped with the festival over the years.

To make the task easier we will be using wheelie bins for the recycle banks, lined to aid the removal of the rubbish. The smaller bins and removable liners will allow the bins to be emptied quickly and easily, maintaining a clean and well-managed site for all to enjoy. The bins and signage have been kindly provided by the Waste Reduction Team for Oxfordshire County Council who are working hard to promote and encourage waste reduction in local communities.

The Northmoor Trust's Wild Waste Bus will also be appearing again this year actively promoting recycling to a younger audience. Look out, too, for the figure of Recycling Ricky, promoting the recycling message throughout the event.

Volunteers needed

We are looking for volunteers who are able to spare one hour of your time over the weekend to help remove bags of recycled waste from the wheelie bins to the main recycle containers ready for Grundon to take away. Times will be between 11am and 9pm at 1–2 hourly intervals, depending on the number of volunteers. Please contact Brian Landowski (tel 07963 821252, e-mail B.A.Landowski@rl.ac.uk) if you are able to help.

Please get in touch, too, if any tall men would like to join the existing volunteers and jump around in a 7ft Recycling Ricky costume secure in the knowledge that their identity will remain unknown.

School garden grows

On the last day of term at Fir Tree Primary School in Wallingford, the vegetable garden at the school was at its height of beauty: sweet peas, marigolds and cosmos flower among squash and courgettes and grace the ends of the lettuce and tomato beds. The runner beans and their red flowers are thick and prolific, as are the ladybirds. All along the west edge is a high hedge, providing shelter for birds with its blackberry and hawthorn, and colour with its roses and other flowering shrubs.

Equally satisfying is the fact that Kit and Teresa, who serve up increasing numbers of school dinners, have used the garden's cucumber (from the greenhouse), early potatoes, courgettes, runner beans, lettuce, beetroot, and peas in the school meals. Some surplus produce has been sold on to parents. Kit will process and freeze the veg that comes during the summer holiday, to be used during the autumn and winter terms.

Silver Birch, a mixed class of years 3 and 4, worked every Friday morning with Karen and me from January. Karen led half in ecology lessons (I was able to sit in on two of her lessons: I wish I had had such a teacher when I was in school...) and I led the other half in work: preparing beds, harvesting crops, weeding. We plan to continue next term, with tighter integration of the national curriculum with the lessons.

A new volunteer, Gemma, has arrived for the summer. She is a hard-working university student from Brightwell, studying Ecology and the Environment. Gareth continues to work hard and steadily, and with great humour; the children enjoyed him so much this year. Don, who lives very nearby, has spruced up the school grounds, including some work on the garden, and Penny, a grandmother of two students at the school, has been reliably watering in the greenhouse and closing it up on cooler

nights. We are fortunate for such support from these and other friends.

To celebrate getting the garden up and flourishing, the school held an opening on 30th June. Dot Cussens, from the Local Sourcing group of Sustainable Wallingford, has been instrumental in writing proposals and providing moral support. She cut the ribbon while the cameras clicked. Representatives of Didcot Power Stations and the Countryside Agency, who provided grants this year, were there, as were many of the volunteers who have made it such a productive and lively project.

Getting involved

Garden work party: On Saturday, 7th October, from 9.00am–4.00pm, there is another garden work party. We have these periodic parties to push forward the garden's development. The two in the winter were fun, with good measures of laughter and shared food. In October we will dig the last set of veg beds and frame them, prepare the garden for the winter, and develop the wild patches in and around the garden. Ring if you wish to come so we can plan the work accordingly. Please bring some food to share at lunch time.

Friday volunteers: We are seeking volunteers to work in the garden for part of their Fridays on a regular basis. There is always work for a wide range of abilities.

Sam Settle, Project Co-ordinator (tel: 01491 838 054)

Energy Group

When Sustainable Wallingford was set up, a number of action groups were created, focusing on different aspects of sustainability. We are now hoping to revive the Energy Group as several members have an interest in this area. If you are interested in joining the group, please come along to the AGM on 16th October to find out more and share your ideas.

Cutting your energy use

Oxford student Lucy Evans hopes she can help you cut your household energy use. She reports:

My study is focusing on household carbon footprints (the amount of energy that a household uses for heating, electricity and transport expressed in units of carbon). I'm interested in trying to calculate how much of household carbon emissions are caused by behaviour. I'll then be looking at ways to change this behaviour in order to reduce carbon footprints and hopefully save people money on their energy bills.

I'm currently reading Geography at Oxford University and the study forms my undergraduate dissertation. I'm especially interested in climate change and what can be done about it at a local level. The idea for my project came about out of discussions with researchers at the Environmental Change Institute in the university as well as Sarah Webb of Sustainable Wallingford.

What does taking part involve? I'm asking people to gather energy information for me. This will involve taking meter readings and car mileage readings over a period of four weeks. This information will be used to calculate a 'carbon profile' for each household. I will then give advice on how to reduce this profile and save money on energy bills. After giving the advice, I will collect more energy information in order to assess any changes in energy consumption within the home.

What do I hope to get out of the study? An idea of how best to go about reducing carbon emissions without the need for any capital investment.

I'm looking for a real mix of participants for a representative sample – families and individuals, all sorts of house types, people who count themselves as energy conscious as well as those who don't.

If you're interested in taking part, please contact me on tel 01494 481329 or e-mail lucy.evans@bnc.ox.ac.uk.

What happens to our waste?

In July, members of the Sustainable Wallingford Waste Group joined others in the Oxfordshire Community Action Group network on a visit to find out what happens to our recycling waste.

The visit began at the SITA Materials Recycling Facility at Enstone Airfield. The group was guided around the site seeing how the recyclate is brought into big sheds in bags, opened up and put on a conveyor belt for sorting. In the first sorting shed, cardboard is picked out for recycling and anything in closed bags is picked out for landfill. The second step is putting everything in a trommel where small waste is separated out. The remainder then goes onto another conveyor belt where aluminium cans and plastic are picked out by hand. Paper and card are bashed and aerated before being baled up for sale.

Approximately 150 tonnes of waste is brought to this site every week and at least 70% of it is recycled. Lest we think the waste we throw away is worthless, SITA currently sell the baled products from recycling centres for between £52/tonne and £700/tonne.

Discovering sustainable farming

Crowmarsh Battle Farm, just outside Wallingford, is a member of LEAF – Linking Environment And Farming – a charitable organisation working to develop and promote 'integrated farm management'. LEAF describes this as 'common sense farming practices that are both financially viable and environmentally responsible'.

Members of Sustainable Wallingford were able to find out what this means in practice when they were given a guided

visit of Battle Farm in June. Battle Farm is an arable farm, following a traditional mixed rotation of autumn and spring sown crops. In a major diversification project, it has converted redundant farm buildings into office space – The Barns at Preston Crowmarsh – which brought 80 new jobs to the area.

Touring the farm on the back of a luxury trailer, the group learned from farmer Philip Chamberlain how technology is used to optimise yields and the steps the farm takes to encourage wildlife habitats. A range of environmental management projects are taking place including the creation of a new 'green lane', hedgerow coppicing and the pollarding of willows in fields bordering the river.

We saw how the farm uses everything from the high tech (satellite technology is used to map the soil nutrient status of fields) to the traditional (nesting boxes for owls). We learned about the demands attached to government subsidies (extending to details like the height of hedges) and heard about the times that organic is not necessarily the most environmentally friendly option. There was also some lively discussion of the realities of this country's low-cost food policy which was of particular interest to the Local Sourcing group, who organised the visit.

We are hoping to organise another farm visit next year, which is likely to be in early summer, and will publicise this to members nearer the time.

You can find out more about integrated farm management at www.leafuk.org.

Who's who

Sustainable Wallingford is a group of volunteers who share a passion for making a difference locally. Membership of Sustainable Wallingford is free. You can commit as much or as little time as you are able to. You can help us to promote sustainability in Wallingford by receiving our newsletter, helping us organise events or working with a

specific action group on initiatives that motivate you.

Contacts:

Waste: Mark Palmer 01491 839 230

Local Sourcing: Dorothy Cussens
01865 891 197

Schools: Louise Robinson 01491 835
420

Transport: John Griffin 01491 838523

Communications group/Media

contact: Rachel Viney, 07980 803969

Dates for your diary

SEPTEMBER

Friday 1st–Sunday 3rd: Bunkfest
www.bunkfest.co.uk

Tuesday 19th: Wallingford Farmers'
Market.

Saturday 23rd: SwapShop, Regal
Centre, 10am–12 noon.

Saturday 30th: Wallingford Farmers'
Market.

OCTOBER

Saturday 7th: Fir Tree Garden work
party, 9am–4pm.

Monday 16th: Sustainable Wallingford
AGM, Friends' Meeting House, Castle
Street, 7.30pm.

Tuesday 17th: Wallingford Farmers'
Market.

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 21st: Wallingford Farmers'
Market.

DECEMBER

Tuesday 19th: Wallingford Farmers'
Market.

From the editor

We aim to produce this newsletter three times a year to keep members and supporters in touch with what's going on. Don't forget that in between newsletters you can keep up to date via our website at www.sustainablewallingford.org. We will post details of meetings and other events so please do check for updates. If you have any items for inclusion in the next newsletter, please contact Penny Kiley.