



Working locally to make a difference

GREENING WALLINGFORD

PROGRESS REPORT



Wallingford's Beavers show their support at the launch

Greening Campaign is that it lets us all know that we aren't on our own in trying to do something about Climate Change and when we add up the carbon savings that we are all making, we will be able to see that our small actions are beginning to make a big difference. The Card Count is taking place in the week between Nov 9th & 14th by students from Wallingford School and the results will be published in the January Window on Wallingford. In the mean time Wallingford School has taken on its own 'Greening Campaign' and is getting students involved in Greening activities relevant to their school day.

On October 10th 2009 we held the Official Launch of 'Greening Wallingford' in the town's Regal Centre. What an amazing and enjoyable afternoon we had. Over 300 Wallingford residents came, enjoyed learning about the Greening Challenges - and ate lots of cake and drank much tea! Ed Vaizey our MP came and gave his full support to the campaign. The Town Council ran 'Crazy Jumper Races', St Johns School sang their way in, carrying Greening Wallingford Banners and the Beavers and Guides had brought realistic cardboard washing machines to persuade us to do our laundry at 30 degrees. We had a display of beautiful draught excluders from Rainbow pre-school, St Mary's church choir convinced us not to let our lights shine in empty rooms and Fir Tree School did a superb version of 'We're going on a Standby hunt'!

So will all this make any difference to Climate Change? So far the 23 communities across England who have finished their year of Greening Challenges, have saved 1,730,575 tonnes of carbon dioxide by doing small things. There are 118 other towns and villages taking on the Campaign, and with this average, between us we will have saved 12,038,782 tonnes by next year! More communities are taking it on all the time, so all these small things are making a difference!

If you weren't there, you missed a great afternoon and the firsthand evidence that many people in Wallingford are doing something to mitigate Climate Change.

After this first phase of the Greening Campaign, Sustainable Wallingford will be looking at other activities we can do to help reduce CO₂ emissions as a community, and find ways to help us all take part in making them happen. Together, we CAN make a difference!

Jacinta Thorley

So, now the Campaign is well and truly launched. Sustainable Wallingford volunteers have spent the five weeks between the Launch and Nov 15th, persuading as many households as possible to join Greening Wallingford and put the Greening Cards in their windows.

The challenges on the card are not difficult to do. It is quite likely that many households are already doing most of them, just through good housekeeping, (how hard is it to turn the lights off in an empty room?!) but these small things really add up to a big carbon saving if we all do them. The thing about the



Jacinta Thorley, Ed Vaizey MP and Councillor Bernard Stone

Groups News...Groups News...Groups News..

Local Sourcing Group

The Buy Local Directory

In future the directory will be produced only on-line and a dedicated website will be set up for this purpose. The costs to do this will be considerably less than producing a paper version. However, it was agreed that the paper Directory, which has now reached three editions, has been extremely successful. There has been a lot of demand for it in and around Wallingford and it has generally benefitted producers and consumers of locally grown food.

The Local Producers Market

The Saturday morning market is increasingly well supported and the demand for stalls now outpaces the number of stalls available. It is important for stall holders to keep us informed if they are unable to attend.

The Community Orchard

Most of the possible sites in Wallingford have now been explored without successful outcomes. So it has been agreed that, if we are offered the land designated to us, we should accept and go ahead with our part in the Healthy Harvest project at Northmoor Trust. At present the staff at Northmoor Trust are anticipating the final outcome of their application to the Local Food Lottery Fund in November. When we know if this result is positive we should draw up our plan for the project and make a proposal to Northmoor Trust for funds. We will then be in a position to proceed in the New Year.

We are contacting local people who have expertise in this field and would be very glad to hear from anyone who would be interested in contributing time and energy and enthusiasm to establish a community orchard – which would be a project independent of the local sourcing group, but initiated and supported by it.

Please would anyone interested please contact **Dot Cussens** on **01865 891197** or contact us via the website.

Regular Open Evenings

Have you always wondered what Sustainable Wallingford really is? Who are these people who are always trying to get you to live more sustainably? Well now is your chance to find out. Starting on Thursday 17 December, you will be able to come to the Coachmakers Arms in Wallingford from 8.00pm on the 3rd Thursday in every month and be sure that there will be some members there to talk to. Hopefully you will be able to get some of your questions answered and get to know more about the action groups on waste, transport, communities, local sourcing and energy. Sustainable Wallingford always welcomes new members (£5 a year), but you don't have to join to be welcome at the open evenings. Come and get to know us: we'd love to get to know you. Any queries please contact John Gordon (tel: 01491 652 243)

***WATCH* - AGE OF STUPID**

Corn Exchange Friday 13th Nov 17:30 & 19:30

JOIN US - for [The Wave](#) in London on 5th December, demonstrating for action on climate change. Register interest in bus hire ASAP with Mark Gray 01491 651 333

ECO FACILITATORS

SusWal has four members undertaking training over the next few months to be eco-facilitators. At the end of the training, they will be able to visit householders and help them work out what their present energy use is, identify what they can do quickly and easily to improve things and what eco-renovations options might suit should the homeowner be prepared to spend a little more money. We will be able to lend current cost meters and low energy light bulb libraries to help with this work. So watch this space for more news or check out our website early next year for updates.

BIG Climate Event in Oxford

On 7 November 2009, five members of Sustainable Wallingford attended the Big Climate Event, organised jointly by Jo Hamilton (ClimateXchange) and Simon Kenton (Oxfordshire CAGs) for groups from all over Oxfordshire, including our neighbours in Brightwell.

There were eight lively workshops, with plenty of time for discussion, as well as lots of stalls and networking between the many green groups from all over Oxfordshire, and it ended with Fair Trade wine and live music.

John Gordon led one of the workshops and Catherine Somerville, Mark Palmer, and Amanda and John Griffin attended in Oxford Town Hall with 100+ others.

We promoted our Greening campaign and forthcoming events in the group display area in the main hall and there was plenty of time for meeting other groups and learning about what they are doing.

There was an entertaining and thought-provoking opening talk by Ian Curtis of Oxford University's Environmental Change Institute, using football images to look at the challenges ahead and the strengths that Oxfordshire brings – “Can an Ox go MOU?” – Marketing, Organisation, Unique contributions.

INNOVATIVE WASTE REDUCTION

Gavin Hull from Oxfordshire County Council spoke about Retrader, a website to be launched in January to get businesses more involved in reuse (better than recycling) of material they would otherwise discard; it will work similarly to Freecycle, but aimed at businesses rather than individuals. It is intended to link with existing reuse initiatives, and he reminded us that as well as the well-known Freecycle and Ebay there are several other websites with different specializations.

The second speaker, Laura Bristow of Dorchester Carbon Project <http://www.dorchestercarbonproject.org.uk/>, began by describing the organisation's two main waste projects so far - a refill and recycling station run twice weekly in the village hall, and becoming a plastic bag free village - and then briefed us on their other waste activities. She then described their plans, having been awarded a Defra grant, for becoming a Zero Waste Place in 2010; their many ideas for ways to meet this challenge include mending workshops, cookery classes, a business waste audit and an emphasis on working with the village school.

The final part of the workshop consisted of a useful discussion of ideas and experiences from the different groups represented. I was asked quite a lot about SusWal's experiences of running our SwapShops.

COMMUNITY ENERGY AUDITS

Peter Varley and David Evans-Roberts from Brightwell Environment Group described their experiences of using a thermal imaging camera to indicate where heat is being lost from houses. There is quite a lot to learn and it is hard to obtain exact figures for the amount of energy lost, but it is a valuable way of giving people a graphic illustration of which parts of their house lose the most heat.

Allan Ridgeley from Sustainable Blewbury then described their community energy audit (<http://www.blewbury.co.uk/energy/>). They began with awareness raising and education, including thermal imaging of homes, and then used a questionnaire sent to all households to estimate, by extrapolation from those who replied, the total carbon footprint of the village from domestic energy use. Householders were given advice on how to make improvements, and a second survey is currently in progress. They estimate that the village carbon footprint has been reduced by about 10%.

WORKING with LOCAL AUTHORITIES

This workshop broke away from the slides about what the councils are doing and became a question and answer session about their targets and what they meant in practice. Oxfordshire County Council is aiming to cut emissions from its own operations (including contracted-out services such as sports centres) by 18% by 2012, but had not signed up to [10:10](#) (a 10% reduction in 2010). There was disappointment that no county or district councillors were there to hear the questions and discuss their policies on climate change. There were some meetings with builders on sustainable construction, and Oxford City had “carbon champions” and “recycling champions” working in the community. It was mentioned that over time the UK had produced more CO₂ per head than any other nation.

Tony Duffin introduced Partnerships for Renewables and illustrated the constraints in a case study of a proposed wind turbine on public authority land between Oxford and Horspath.

CUT IT OUT

This session included a presentation by the Low Carbon West Oxford (LCWO) group. This group has charitable status but has also developed a separate arm as an Industrial Provident Society (IPS) for the benefit of the community. Charitable status enables them to apply for certain grants and the IPS status allows them to make a profit.

The group sells shares in its IPS to raise funds and uses these to offer up to £250 to individuals, to be spent on anything that will reduce their carbon footprint.

Ramsay Dunning of Low Carbon Hook Norton also made a presentation telling us of his success working with Green energy suppliers and the Phone Co-op. He has persuaded them to offer discounts to groups of customers.

It's all about setting up an Affiliation, which the supplier will actually help you with. All you have to do is get consent from householders to pass on their contact details to the energy supplier. No confidential data. Just contact details. The more people that the energy supplier can then persuade to join the Affiliation, the bigger the discount the Affiliation group can receive.

MICRO HYDRO PROJECTS

Dave Holt of Goring and Streatley Sustainability Group (GSSG) gave a detailed presentation about the project to install 3 Archimedes screws to generate hydroelectricity at Goring lock. It has taken Dave four years to get to the stage where he is almost ready to roll this project out.

For anyone thinking of following in his footsteps, he advised an early discussion with the Environment Agency to get them on board and explained what and why the GSSG project ended up with an Archimedes screw rather than a Kaplan type turbine. GSSG has gone down the route of issuing shares to help fund this project.

Dave has found some very good contacts to offer free advice to other groups interested in Micro Hydro:

- Brendan Barrow will tell you if you have good enough conditions on your stretch of the river for micro hydro. bbarrow@ewaterpower.com

- Andrew Wybrow is now the interface between the public and the Environment Agency for enquiries. Andrew. wzybrow@anser.co.uk

Ruth Finar of Low Carbon West Oxford spoke in more



Organisers and Distinguished guests at the Big Climate Event (Left to right: Jo Hamilton, Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Oxford Councillor Mary Clarkson, Simon Kenton, Oxford Sheriff Councillor Elise Benjamin, Ian Curtis)

detail about LCWO's Industrial Provident Society and their share-selling. She explained there are serious tax issues for businesses which would like to buy so it is probably not an option for them.

COPENHAGEN AND BEYOND

Heine Schroeder, a Danish research scientist, answered questions on the complexities and timing of Next month's Copenhagen negotiations. It is quite clear that there will be no legally binding commitment emerging, and that talks will drag on. It's not looking good....

The Oxford representative of Stop Climate Chaos (SCC), Mim Saxi, encouraged us all to wear blue and join the bus to London to do the Mexican wave and put pressure on global leaders at the mass demonstrations ([The Wave](#)) planned for 5 December 2009.

John Gordon spoke on the potential for political action to influence next year's general election. It was not clear what, if anything, SCC was planning or whether any other nation-wide grass roots campaign was on the cards. Clearly it would be more difficult to do it in Oxfordshire alone. But if we were we should adopt a totally non-partisan approach, aiming to shift the whole climate of debate and persuade all candidates to be braver in their approach

There was considerable enthusiasm for this idea in a separate follow up session, and about 40 people signed up to help take the project forward. If (and at this stage only if!) you are seriously interested in getting involved and might be prepared to devote time and energy to it you can contact John Gordon (tel: 01491 652 243).