

Saving the honey bee

Formation of a new Bee Group in Youlgrave aims to establish community hives and train local people in keeping bees

On 1st October Sustainable Youlgrave invited Mike Cross of Derbyshire Beekeepers' Association to give an illustrated talk for local people interested in keeping bees in Youlgrave. We knew that there was a core interest, but nevertheless we were delighted when around 40 people turned up at the Farmyard Inn to hear Mike speak, and even though the room was a bit small for that number and it was standing room only, everyone stayed for the long and detailed presentation. Mike took us through the life cycle of bees, the art of bee keeping, hives and hive management, bee pests and diseases, as well as how much hives cost to establish and maintain. It was fascinating stuff and very well received.

The next step is a visit to Grindleford where they already have a bee group up and running. Anyone interested is invited to come along. We will meet at the top of Holywell Lane in Youlgrave at 10am on Saturday 17th October, aiming to arrive at Grindleford allotments by 10.30am. If you are willing to car share please contact Judith Orchard (630202) or Jeni Edwards (636550) before the day. We hope to hear how they organised and financed it and to see the site and set-up.

There will then be a meeting to establish the Youlgrave Bee Group properly on Wednesday 4th November, 7.30pm at the Farmyard Inn. It is hoped to have some hives up and running by next year, but the process will need commitment to regular help and training, since bee-keeping is a long-term process. Anyone who doesn't want that kind of commitment is still very welcome to help with administration and in encouraging the community to cultivate bee-friendly plants.

For a copy of Mike Cross's paper on bee management that he alluded to on the evening please contact Jeni Edwards: jeni.edwards@phonecoop.coop. More details at www.britishbee.org.uk/



Photo courtesy of Mike Cross/DBKA

QUEEN OF THE COMPOST!

Pictured right is the winner of the Home-made Compost class at the recent Youlgrave Horticultural Show. This special category, sponsored by Sustainable Youlgrave, received considerable attention at the packed show which is a mainstay of the village calendar. It's hoped that the new Compost class will stimulate local gardeners and allotment-holders to produce more organic and home-made compost and look to manage their plots in an environmentally-friendly way. Amongst other things, the winner received a certificate and a decorative block of stone on a wooden plinth. Thanks to AGM (Affordable Granite & Marble Co Ltd) of Stanton in the Peak; and to Youlgrave wood-turner Matthew Lovell, both of whom donated their products for free. And the winner of the Compost Class, according to the wholly independent judges, was... Mrs Jean Youatt, wife of the SY Chairman. Ahem.





Battery recycling initiative in village proves popular

The Farmyard Inn is the latest local establishment to join Sustainable Youlgrave's battery recycling scheme in the village. SY has teamed up with the University of Sheffield to give people the opportunity to safely dispose of old and used batteries for recycling at collection points around Youlgrave:

Hollands butchers, Parkers butchers, Youlgrave Post Office, Youlgrave Garage and the Farmyard Inn.

Look for the plastic tubs with lids and an appropriate poster, and simply drop in all your spent batteries. Domestic batteries of any size or shape (from AA and AAA to watch and camera batteries) are welcome.

The collection of spent batteries is part of a pilot scheme run by the University of Sheffield, whose students are gathering data as to numbers and types of batteries that people use. Some of the collected batteries are then used for laboratory studies into recycling methods. The remains, together with any batteries not used for this purpose, are then taken to a major recycler. The University staff say they really do appreciate the participation of the people of Youlgrave and the shopkeepers, publican and garage owner who are hosting the 'collecting stations'.

A university student has analysed the findings from both the collection and the recent Opinion Poll (see right) and has revealed some interesting facts. Around 30% of collected batteries still have good energy capacity for longer utilisation (although devices such as smoke detectors are designed to limit the voltage range too narrowly and so they signal a 'low volts' bleep/alarm when there is still a significant amount of energy in the battery!). The collection bin in Hollands butchers had the most quantity of spent batteries, followed by Youlgrave Post Office. The student concluded that the collection scheme needs about two weeks to get peoples' initial attention, then the amount of batteries deposited rapidly increases in the third week, with the speed gently reducing after that. From the door to door survey it appears that 59% of respondents still dispose of used small batteries in normal bins, but 36% said they were using the containers in village outlets installed as part of the new scheme. Additionally, many said that now they knew of the scheme they would use it.



CALLING ALL LANDOWNERS!

The Sustainable Youlgrave Community Involvement Group is searching for a suitable piece of land for the planting of a local **COMMUNITY ORCHARD**. What is needed is a small field accessible from a road. It really needs to be close to or within the village and be fairly flat. A fair rent can be paid for the right piece of land. This is also a call for anyone interested in being a part of the Community Orchard to get in touch with the Group so we can set up a working committee. Contact: Lucy Stirling (email stirlinglucyb@hotmail.com), Jeni Edwards (636550) or Judith Orchard (630202).

Anaerobic Digestion study update

The first two stages of our specially commissioned full feasibility study into Anaerobic Digestion (AD) in the Bradford Valley have been completed. The £45,000 study is being carried out by Methanogen and Associates and is funded by the Peak District National Park's Sustainable Development Fund and the East Midlands Development Agency, plus a small contribution from Sustainable Youlgrave's own reserves.

The study, which has included interviews with as many as 40 local farms and meetings with various local authorities and specialists, is looking into the viability of AD at different scales and has been assessing various economic and technical factors, availability of waste products, and so on. When the full study is complete we will make the findings available, including a generic element that we hope will be of use to other communities considering the feasibility of AD in their own area.

RESEARCH STUDENTS' REPORTS

Although the specific report on this summer's local Opinion Poll has yet to be received by SY, we have recently been given copies of five student theses from the last academic year which use parts of the results of the Poll that relate to the particular topic. All reports feature Youlgrave, including *Recycling batteries in a rural community* (see left). The others are: *Waste management in a rural community*, *Small-scale wind generation*, *The potential of solar energy in a rural community* and *Micro-CHP [combined heat and power] fuelled by 'waste' wood*, which investigates the possibility of alternative heating and electricity in a Youlgrave estate. It is hoped that copies will eventually be uploaded on to the SY website for all to read:
www.sustainablyoulgrave.org

Sustainable Youlgrave invited to No 10

In July, John Youatt (SY Chair) and Andrew McCloy (Secretary) were invited to a reception hosted by PM Gordon Brown at 10 Downing Street to celebrate the role of volunteers in championing environmental and wildlife projects. There were a number of other green community groups represented, including Bollington Carbon Revolution from Cheshire and Low Carbon West Oxford. Although we didn't manage to bend the ear of Gordon Brown, we did have a very useful discussion with Defra Secretary of State, Hilary Benn, who was also present at the reception in the garden of No 10. Mr Benn seemed very interested in our plans for anaerobic digestion in the Peak District, asking questions and making notes. He repeated his Department's support for AD initiatives and we have kept in touch with his office since the meeting.



Andrew McCloy and John Youatt of Sustainable Youlgrave are joined by Nicola Percival of Bollington Carbon Revolution outside the door of No 10 Downing Street after the reception with the Prime Minister.

Community Renewable Energy: a policy campaign?

At its October meeting, the Peak District National Park Authority agreed to circulate before Christmas a draft of the proposed Local Development Framework (LDF), to replace the old Structure and Local Plans. We are reliably informed that the LDF is the single most important policy document, setting the rules among many others for "community renewable energy". In other words, such capital projects as an anaerobic digester. SY is concerned on four grounds. First, the process is very long; in the worst case there might not be a conclusive outcome until 2011. Second, it might get mixed up with the parallel work on the Regional Plan. Third, the draft loads decisions against AD (treating the resource as waste) and arbitrarily insists everything must be 'small', 'very small' or 'micro'. Fourth and perhaps most importantly, there is no policy for community based ventures – commercial and community propositions are addressed together. So, subject to a committee decision, SY might well campaign to get a purpose-designed CRE policy into the consultation draft. Your thoughts are welcome – contact john@youatt.co.uk.

The Age of Stupid

"The first successful dramatisation of climate change to hit the big screen" (The Guardian).

Free screening of this acclaimed film starring Pete Postlethwaite.

At The Mechanics Institute, Church Street, Eyam, Wed 28th October at 7pm.

Next Sustainable Youlgrave Committee meeting:

**Thursday 12th November,
7.30pm**

**Farmyard Inn,
Youlgrave.
All welcome.**

'Peak Camp'

Wirksworth Town Hall, Sat 7th November

Next month Wirksworth plays host to a one-day event exploring the theme of sustainability in the rural environment and how grassroots initiatives lead change.

It's what know as a 'bar camp', where there's no set agenda and the topics are effectively chosen by those who turn up. The conference is free to attend but you must register beforehand at info@peakcamp.org.uk or go to www.peakcamp.org.uk for more details.

