

sustainable YOULGRAVE news

www.sustainableyoulgrave.org

The valley of the River Bradford: Alport, Harthill, Youlgrave, Middleton, Gratton No 4: December 2007

'Waste, wind and wood' - Sustainable Youlgrave and local farmers explore the options

Last month Sustainable Youlgrave organised a meeting of local farmers and landowners to examine the commercial possibilities of renewable energy in the Bradford Valley.

Held at Youlgrave Reading Room and chaired by Matthew Parris, the event was styled 'Waste, Wind and Wood' and featured presentations into types of renewable energy that Sustainable Youlgrave is actively exploring for the local area. These include reports from our consultants Celtic Composting who have reported on options for anaerobic digestion – capturing electricity from methane through the breakdown of organic matter; and Dulas ReSolutions Ltd who have examined the feasibility of capturing wind energy in the valley through small and medium size turbines. Will Rolls from the Forestry Commission also outlined the energy possibilities of the wood fuel yield from local woodland, describing the environmental and social possibilities of biomass.

Refreshments took the form of a delicious pie and pea supper prepared by Hollands Butchers, accompanied by Whim Hartington beer and wine from Parkers in Youlgrave.

The evening concluded with a lengthy question and answer session that covered issues such as the Government's perhaps over-ambitious renewable



energy targets, Renewables Obligations Certificates and the attitude of the National Park towards local schemes. The focus remained very much on the viability of renewable energy in the farm context, with discussion on what was most likely to succeed and yield a realistic financial return. It was widely recognised that the farming community is currently under great pressure and that one way forward may be alternative 'green' solutions.

Sustainable Youlgrave continues to explore ways in which initiatives can be taken for our mutual benefit.

Sustainable Youlgrave began early in 2006 when a group of likeminded villagers in the Youlgrave area came together to discuss ways in which, by thinking globally but acting locally, we could do our bit to combat climate change and at the same time make our rural community fully sustainable. We are exploring a range of initiatives which covers renewable energy generation, educational and energy-saving projects, plus related themes such as promoting local shops and services. We cover the parishes of Youlgrave, Middleton & Smerrill, Harthill and Gratton. Sustainable Youlgrave is an independent community group run by and for local people. To get involved contact John Youatt (Chair) on 01629 636241 or email sustainableyoulgrave@sustainableyoulgrave.org.

www.sustainableyoulgrave.org

Our new website is now up and running, thanks to a grant from the Sustainable Development Fund via the Peak District National Park. Go to www.sustainableyoulgrave.org to find out the latest news on our activities and future plans, plus reports of past meetings and events, back issues of our newsletter, a blank household survey form for you to print off and complete, and much more. The site is still quite new and expanding, and we welcome contributions from Sustainable Youlgrave supporters on ANY relevant topic – please contact Andrew McCloy on 636125 or email him at the group's new email address (see box – left).

Engaging with the community – it's time to make new connections

In the New Year we plan to renew our efforts to involve more of the community. A sub group is being set up to come up with some specific plans, but already there are several ideas taking shape:

- *Composting class – a workshop on how to make the perfect compost, what you need, and so on*
- *Energy-awareness day (along the lines of Sustainable Winster's recent successful event) to help people make their homes more energy efficient and so reduce their bills*
- *Projects for children and young people in sustainability and climate change awareness, in partnership with local schools and youth groups*
- *A series of talks and presentations to other community groups in and around Youlgrave explaining what we're about and encouraging ways in which everyone can get involved.*

If you have any specific ideas – and these are only some outline suggestions – please get in touch with Andrew on 636125. Also, if you would like to be a part of this subgroup (and it's open to all – not just the Committee) please get in touch.



Plastic bag-free campaign gathers momentum

It all started in the Devon town of Modbury when residents decided that they wanted their local shops to stop giving out endless plastic bags. The community caught on to the idea and sought out alternatives, and once the shopkeepers were convinced there was no turning back.

Now the idea is catching on big time. Hebden Bridge followed Modbury's lead and this autumn declared itself a plastic bag free zone. All 104 traders agreed to the scheme that saw the action group leaflet all 6,000 households to explain the idea and show the alternatives, including string, corn starch and cotton bags. Other towns and villages are queuing up to be next (Brighton, Hay-on-Wye, Exeter, Newtown, Saltash, Wimborne, etc), while all 33 London boroughs are even discussing the idea of a city-wide ban on throwaway bags by 2009.

Here in the Peak District, Sustainable Wirksworth is leading the way by trying to persuade its community to consider the alternatives to throw away plastic bags. Did you know, for instance, that a person uses a plastic carrier bag on average for only 12 minutes, while in the UK at least 200 million plastic bags end up as litter. When you consider that a plastic bag can take between 500 to 1000 years to break down in the natural environment there just HAS to be an alternative.

Go to www.plasticbagfree.com for Modbury's story and 'the UK plastic bag free community list' (in association with the Marine Conservation Society).

SPREADING THE SUSTAINABLE MESSAGE

Over the last few months members of Sustainable Youlgrave have delivered talks and presentations to diverse audiences – from East Midlands Regional Assembly's EXPO at Rockingham



Forest to local community meetings in Bonsall and Edale. We were also invited to run a workshop on action for sustainable communities at the '21st Century Village Conference' held in Bakewell (see back page report). The photo above was taken at the event and shows our new display stands, which were kindly paid for by a Derbyshire County Council Greenwatch Action Award (it didn't extend to the laptop, incidentally!).

Household survey – more help needed

We are still looking for more volunteers to take our energy survey to properties throughout Youlgrave. Whether it's a whole road or just a few houses, we need people to knock on doors, explain very briefly what we're doing and why, then hand over the 2-sided form. We can brief you fully beforehand. Any help would be much appreciated in order to get a full picture of our community's energy use and needs. Please contact Jeni on 636550 or Glenys on 636477 if you can help.

Lawrence wins the TV waste challenge

Earlier this year, Youlgrave's **Lawrence Rimmer** took part in a Channel 4 TV reality show on waste. But despite 'winning' it he still feels he can do more to recycle and re-use.

Back in February I applied to go on a TV show, which was advertised as 'Eco Challenge' (later to be renamed 'Dumped'). They asked for people who lie awake at night worrying about climate change, and those who don't give it a second thought, to go on an adventure in an extreme environment. I must admit I believed the extreme environment to be the Arctic or the rainforest, because like so many others I assumed we would go abroad to solve the world's problems, when what we really need to do is look at the problems on our own doorstep.

Four months later I found myself in Croydon, south London, living on a rubbish dump with ten other people, next to the biggest landfill in Britain. Despite my disappointment and shock, I soon came to realise that by living on the dump it would highlight the growing problems concerned with Britain's waste. In Britain, an average household will throw away 1 ton of waste a year. This is far too much waste

considering that we do not technically throw it away – we are just sending it to a different location. This is already having disastrous effects on the environment.

The programme was aimed to show that not only can we recycle the majority of our waste (ten people lived for three weeks using other people's 'rubbish'), but we also need to reduce the amount that we throw away. It was not a new idea for a programme to highlight our growing waste problems, but it certainly was in the way the message was put across. The



Lawrence contemplates a mountain of waste.

programme was a reality documentary, which was not only designed to inform but to entertain as well. The reality genre appealed to a younger generation who do not want to be lectured about what they should or should not be doing.

Lawrence had the lowest overall footprint of all the participants on 'Dumped' at 7.5 tonnes of CO2 (the highest was over 20 tonnes!). Lawrence, 19, is currently studying Biology at Edinburgh University. This article first appeared in The Bugle (Oct 2007).



Light bulb phase out to start next year

The most energy-guzzling light bulbs in Britain will start disappearing from shop shelves early in 2008 as part of efforts to cut CO2 emissions. The voluntary initiative is being led by major retailers and energy suppliers and will see energy efficient light bulbs replace their least efficient equivalents on shop shelves over the next four years. The aim is to save up to 5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year by 2012 from UK electricity generation – the equivalent to the carbon emissions of a typical 1 Giga Watt coal fired power station.

SY PROPOSALS FOR YOULGRAVE PARISH PLAN

As the sub group leading on sustainability, we have submitted our key ideas for the interim Parish Plan consultation document that is due to be circulated in Youlgrave early in the New Year. Our proposals:

- *To work with the Parish Plan on areas of shared community interest, such as shops and services, transport and recycling.*
- *To introduce local energy-saving schemes and environmental/ educational initiatives involving all sections of the community.*
- *To reprocess local organic wastes to produce methane gas by anaerobic digestion and generate combined heat and electric power for sale.*
- *To encourage the capture of wind power by means of small and medium sized individual machines.*
- *To explore the use of woodland and farmland products (biomass) for energy use.*
- *To assist households that want to capture solar energy, from hot water or electric panels, or from ground source heat.*

Among our next steps: to seek a new understanding from the Peak National Park and to set up a community renewable energy company.

A village conference for the future

Billed as the '21st Century Village and Community Conference', this public event in Bakewell at the end of September attracted some good speakers, a wide range of exhibitors and

most importantly a good turn-out of enthusiastic local people. There were workshops on subjects such as funding and planning, while Sustainable Youlgrave addressed the community angle and outlined our



brief history and shared good practice. The event was organised by the Peak District Sustainable Energy Group, a partnership of local groups and public bodies, including

Derbyshire Rural Community Council, the National Park and local Councils for Voluntary Services – as well as Sustainable Youlgrave. For further information on PDSEG contact Richard Godley on 01629 816312 or email richard.godley@peakdistrict.gov.uk

www.climatechallenge.gov.uk/ - information on the national picture

www.sheffieldclimateaction.org – what's happening across the border in the big smoke

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe/welcome – Community Action for Energy (part of the Energy Saving Trust) which brings together people and groups interested in community energy projects and ideas

'Together the little things we do make a big difference - so make a pledge and show that you care.' This is the message from the Defra-supported campaign **EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE**, organised by the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities Energy Partnership (LAEP) that comprises all 19 local authorities in the two counties. Go to www.everybodys-talking.org to find out more...

New Mills hydro scheme launched

A major new hydro project has been unveiled in the Peak District which claims to be the first community-owned hydro electric scheme in Britain. The Torrs Hydro Electric Scheme at New Mills aims to generate power from Torr Weir on the River Goyt. Run by a community interest company, it's already attracting strong local support (as well as considerable publicity) and has launched a public share issue in order to raise the necessary finance for the 70kW installation. Planning permission and an abstraction licence have already been granted and a lease agreed with landowners New Mills Town Council. A share of the revenue from the scheme will help Torrs Hydro achieve its stated aim of helping to regenerate the New Mills community and promote the environmental sustainability of the New Mills area. For more details on the scheme and how to subscribe go to: www.torrshydro.co.uk/

Community action on climate change spreads across the Peak District

We are delighted to report that the number of other groups promoting greater sustainability and climate change awareness in their own communities continues to grow. Sustainable Winster, Bonsall Energy Group, Bollington Carbon Revolution, Matlock Area Climate Action Forum and Sustainable Wirksworth are all going from strength to strength. We recently gave a presentation to Edale residents, who are already fired up and full of ideas; plus we are aware of similar stirrings in other communities. Please send us your details so we can share news and ideas – and of course give you publicity!

SY Committee changes

There have been a few changes to the Sustainable Youlgrave Committee recently: Nick Barnett and Simon Frost have stepped down (although Simon will remain as our farming adviser) and Ali Plowright and Nicky Phillips have agreed to 'job share' one of the vacant positions.

Everybody's talking about
climate change



A DEFRA
supported local government
climate change
public awareness campaign
throughout Nottinghamshire
and Derbyshire