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Sightings

IN FOCUS THIS ISSUE:

**Sustainable
Growth?**

...focusing on sustainability in the South West

Winter 2006

Low carbon growth?
High carbon growth?



Our choice

PLUS: 'Securing the Future' in the SW – have your say on the development of the new interactive regional sustainable development framework!



Blueprints for low carbon growth?
Left to right: Beddington Zero energy development (www.zedfactory.com); Slatford Green car-free development in Edinburgh; Oak Meadow sustainable housing scheme at South Molton, Devon
(photographer: Clive Boursnell, architects: Gale & Snowden, other partners: Devon & Cornwall Housing Association, Midas Homes, Faber Maunsell, North Devon District Council and Frame UK).

How can growth in the region be approached in a way which meets the region's sustainability challenge of reducing inequalities, remaining prosperous and enhancing our distinctiveness and diversity – all within environmental limits?

With leadership for sustainable low carbon growth

What would low carbon growth in the South West look like?

Typical characteristics would include:

- Carbon neutrality, smart water use and very low waste
- Measures to reduce the need to travel eg video conferencing, more provision for home working/learning
- More local sourcing of goods and services
- A strong sense of local identity and networks of urban green spaces
- High-density/mixed use developments

...and the lasting benefits?

- Support for local economies
- Security and self sufficiency
- Improved health and well-being
- Enhanced quality of life
- Financial cost savings

“It’s growth, Jim... but not as we know it!”

In population terms, the South West is the fastest growing region in the UK. One million extra people are expected by 2030 and at least 150,000 new homes are planned for by 2016. We also have the most ageing population of any of the English regions and, because of our geography, particular challenges in providing access to goods and services.

The key regional processes responding to the growth agenda are the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the regional response to John Prescott's 'sustainable communities' programme – 'Way Ahead: delivering sustainable communities in the South West'*. Significantly, the draft RES states that the South West will demonstrate that economic growth can be secured within environmental limits. The challenge is to translate this vision into action (SSW's sustainability appraisal of the draft RES contained some key recommendations on how this can be achieved). Whilst the RES is nearly finalised, the RSS is still evolving and will perform a major role in establishing the course of new development. The Way Ahead' programme

meanwhile is looking at ways to accelerate growth to bring its perceived benefits to the region more quickly.

It is fundamental that these regional processes apply sustainability criteria, not only to 'flagship projects', but as guidance for all development. The RSS will, critically, set standards which will inform the Local Development Frameworks governing the delivery (and degree) of growth in our cities, towns and villages. An integrated approach which maximises social, economic and environmental outcomes will help to ensure the long-term success of these developments. The innovative, low carbon solutions necessitated by our Kyoto obligation can also generate exciting new economic opportunities for the region and pass on lower running costs to its residents. With wise leadership and investment the South West surely has the potential to use growth as a springboard to create communities genuinely 'fit for the future'.

*Please note 'Way Ahead' was, until recently, also the name of an initiative led by SSW and Learning South West to develop an 'education for sustainable development' action plan for the region. To avoid further confusion a new name is now being chosen.

What should the region do now to secure a sustainable approach to growth?

1. Implement a regional definition of a genuinely sustainable community ie 'healthy, socially-just, productive and living within environmental limits' as defined within the draft RES.
2. Incorporate carbon reduction measures in the Regional Spatial Strategy, establishing a series of regional and sub-regional targets with agreed deadlines.
3. Adopt the regional eco-footprint (see www.steppingforward.org.uk) as a key indicator of progress with the aim to first stabilize and then reduce its size.
4. Implement sustainable construction standards for all new housing and developments including targets to incorporate renewables.
5. Reduce the need to travel and improve intra-regional car-free access through an integrated approach to planning and use of the latest technologies.
6. Reduce travel miles by procuring more locally-sourced goods and services eg via a regional sustainable procurement consortium.
7. Address how developments will adapt to unavoidable climate change due to greenhouse gas emissions already in the climatic system (eg increased flooding risks).
8. Ensure that proposals for growth incorporate quality, diverse urban green space.
9. Incorporate sustainability criteria into regional funding allocations.
10. Establish sustainability learning & skills programmes in all sectors.

An exemplary sustainable community?

Harlow is a strategic location earmarked for growth in the national sustainable communities plan. Plans for it to nearly double in size are not without controversy (building on green land). However, the proposal is aimed at being an exemplary sustainable community of 25,000 dwellings including state of the art green infrastructure. Sustainability principles will be implemented throughout. Key features include:

- being the largest development of eco-homes in the UK
- achieving BRE Eco-Homes 'excellent' rating
- being a low carbon town with extensive, accessible public transport
- using a combined heat & power network and other micro-generation distributed via a local grid
- ensuring neighbourhoods are compact and pedestrian friendly, with a heart providing a focus for community life

A key sustainability delivery tool for the South West: developing the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF)

Last year SSW was commissioned to review the effectiveness of the region's sustainable development framework. As required by Government, every UK region has developed an 'RSDF' to guide sustainable development policy. The South West's was put together by a partnership of organisations and adopted by the region in 2001 – but just how influential has it been?

After consultation and research the review concluded that although our RSDF has provided a good foundation for some sustainability projects and assessments, it has not established itself as the key sustainability reference point for the South West's decision makers and does not contain enough guidance on the 'how' of sustainability for those involved in delivery.

A process to update and develop the RSDF, not least in line with the Government's new sustainable development 'guiding principles' ('Living within environmental limits' and 'Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society' along with 'Achieving a sustainable economy', 'Promoting good governance' and 'Using sound science responsibly'), is now underway. It is envisaged that the RSDF will become a 'living' web-based awareness-raising and decision-making tool with customised guidance and signposting (see p. 9). The RSDF update working group wants your input to develop these ideas – please let us know what you think by filling out and returning the form on p. 9-10.

'Healthy, wealthy and wise'

This RSPB publication outlines why protecting and enhancing the environment in new developments is a healthy, wealthy and wise choice. Quality greenspaces can encourage investment, reduce crime by providing socially-inclusive places and reduce health care costs by offering locations for healthy lifestyles, as well as supporting biodiversity. The report recommends that new developments:

- Deliver wildlife-rich green 'infrastructure': pocket parks, woodland and nature reserves – biodiversity infrastructure as vital as traditional infrastructure such as roads and schools.
- Respect environmental capacity by conserving natural resources to prevent irreversible damage to natural systems.

The future's coming home

By Lesley Seymour, Future Foundations Manager

If you speak to an estate agent they may say, "There's a buyer for everything... at the right price". And the one selling point everyone agrees on is 'location, location, location'. Today's good location may be about house prices nearby, friendly neighbours or just somewhere we like to hang out... but how can new houses help create desirable locations of the future? If you're involved in the growth agenda – or buying a new home! – here are some important considerations:

- How much energy will it take to heat and light your house?
- Is there nearby green space or a garden (great for drying clothes!) and a place to put bikes?
- Is there 'space to grow' as needs change? Opportunities for home-working?
- Can recycling and compost bins be easily and safely stored? (less landfill means more quality locations for everyone...)
- Do walls and furnishings ensure the availability of natural air?
- Have hazardous materials been avoided... or will they become 'someone else's problem' in the future?

It's our future... and our choice.

Check out the latest consultation: Code for Sustainable Homes www.odpm.gov.uk (returns by 6th March 2006).

Heroes of Zero

'Go Zero' is an ambitious community led project in the village of Chew Magna in North East Somerset, taking action on waste, CO2 and promoting local food. It attracted considerable media attention in 2005 and SSW's Andy Baker decided it was time to find out more about the project, its relevance to the growth and 'sustainable communities' agendas and what inspiration it might provide for other communities.

Chew Magna, lying just within the Mendip Hills, is one of many picturesque villages in the Chew valley. You would believe yourself to be deep in the countryside were it not for the persistent roar of low flying Easyjet 737s and the traffic congestion in the village's central triangle – an ever present reminder of its proximity to Bristol. Chew Magna is about 5 miles south of Bristol, and only a few miles east of the rapidly expanding airport.

Tucked away from the main street is 'The Old Mill', a derelict watermill that closed down in 1991. This is the soon to be HQ of the flourishing 'Go Zero' project and where I met Denise Perrin, Go Zero's co-ordinator and a local resident, who shows me round.

"We're hoping this will be a permanent base. There's huge potential in the mill itself, perhaps for a water turbine to generate hydro-power" she explained. I asked her how the whole thing got off the ground.

"Two things were happening simultaneously in 2004. The RSA hosted a series of 'coffee house' conversations on a range of themes including 'a zero waste society'. John Pontin, a resident for the last 40 years and an influential business man,

became involved and brought the debate to Chew Magna. Meanwhile villagers were being consulted on the village plan which brought out consensus on issues like congestion, Bristol Airport, local services... in addition villagers made points along the lines of 'let's invest in our children's future by looking after what we've got'. On seeing the amount of interest, John Pontin felt we should build on the enthusiasm and so he and his company, JT, purchased the Old Mill as a potential centre."

What are the key issues addressed by 'Go Zero'?

"We set up discussion groups and ended up focusing on four themes. 'People and Consumption' addressed why and how we consume. A key outcome was the Local Food guide which covers products grown and produced within a 10 mile radius of the village with the aim of encouraging local purchasing and reducing food miles. It's also created a dialogue with local producers on green issues like reducing packaging, recycling etc. Another group looked at 'Waste & Recycling'. Chew Magna has a pretty good record on recycling – 70% – and we're

supported enormously by Bath & North East Somerset Council but we want to improve.

"Transport & Energy' is tackling carbon emissions which is largely an educational exercise of saying 'hey, do we need two cars? can we join the car share scheme? can we switch to alternative fuels?' There's also a side project looking at the airport shuttle bus which has a lot of spare capacity which could meet local people's transport needs. In terms of energy there's the potential of the mill wheel as a source of hydro-power.

"The fourth group looked at the more complex issue of 'the Converging World' – the links with developing countries and the potential to offset carbon by assisting communities to develop sustainably. For example, we'd never get planning permission to put a wind turbine on the Mendips but we could buy one for a small village in India and the global reduction in carbon would be the same. So we need to start thinking creatively about how the world can work together to address these issues."

How did you get involved?

"I came along to the village hall Open Day last April and was amazed to see it packed with people talking about these themes. This led to me helping with the 8th October event, where we invited people to the mill to have a look around and share ideas for the project. Over 500 people came – a really rainy day – we couldn't believe the level of interest! Radio Bristol did a live feed on their breakfast show and by 9.30am they'd been inundated with callers and us by a deluge of people. After seeing the displays people were saying they just couldn't go back to their old lifestyle. Lots of the other villages in the valley are also showing an interest. I guess it catches the imagination when you suddenly feel able to contribute to what are actually achievable goals."

We're anticipating growth in the region – new and expanded communities – which may impact on villages like Chew Magna. What does this mean for a 'Go Zero' approach?

"In this area we desperately need low cost housing and starter homes and it's been shown that eco-homes can be affordable and aren't just for posh people. The other issue here is making our older houses more efficient. Perhaps we can approach some of these issues as a community. For example, if we can get 10 householders who are willing to go solar perhaps we can get a better deal".

If other communities in the South West are interested in 'going zero'

what suggestions might you have?

"Start talking and listening. Once people engage in the issues there's no turning back. Any community needs to ask: Are we happy? Do we want to change? What do we really need? Once you start addressing the problems, the solutions will materialise."

The Regional Sustainable Development Framework is being refreshed including new web resources to help deliver sustainable development on the ground. Have you found gaps in available advice and support?

"Incentives. Well publicised and accessible grants. Government can't tell us we need to be sustainable without making it attractive or possible."

We're interested in the region's unsung heroes of sustainability, the people who are really making a difference and willing to stick their neck out. Who are the heroes of Go Zero?

"The impetus has definitely come from the community, but John Pontin, as a member of that community, has been a huge help. John helped to facilitate a solution by providing the mill as a means for the project to go beyond debate."

It's interesting that you've been able to utilise the community's enthusiasm, knowledge and skills to make the project happen.

"We're very lucky to have local skills and expertise to help take the project forward. For example, there's a man who manages willow crop rotation for use in biomass over in Cleeve, in Blagdon we've got someone who evaluates and installs water turbines and there's a carbon trading expert in Stanton Drew, so you don't have to look far. There's also a huge amount of untapped potential within the community. You always hear people saying I used to do this and that and I always think 'why did you stop'? Retired people in particular have a lot to offer and may be highly skilled – older community members don't seem to generate a lot of waste, which is quite telling. The most important ingredient is definitely people's interest and enthusiasm and harnessing a desire to make a difference."

You can find out more about the Go Zero project at their website (still in development at the time of writing) www.gozero.org.uk

member's viewpoint

As an SSW member **Chris Hines** draws on a range of experience in different sectors – including tourism, business and media. A history of active campaigning has helped to shape his views on raising sustainability's profile.

One of the biggest challenges to anyone in the sustainability world is how to make our views mainstream and accepted – not just the domain of worthy late night TV and small columns in the broadsheets. Sustainability, when taken in the true meaning, is a core value for everything.

"Sustain: to support, to keep alive, to keep going continuously..."

"Ability: the capacity or power to do something..."

Yet despite this it is often marginalised. We have our sustainability officers, groups, a Commission... my job title is Sustainability Director at the Eden Project. Part of my job description should be to ensure that I am out of a job as soon as possible. Only when sustainability is a core value of every business and organisation will we have cracked it. Then people will make decisions that automatically take the whole sustainability and sustainable development agenda into account. This 'mainstreaming' is all the more urgent as we face a period of significant growth in the region.

So how do we ensure that we pick up our P45 way before our retirement party?

I would argue that we need to look to the marketing and communication skills of the very people we are aiming to change and the products and services we use every day. The more popular the product the greater the potential gain. For example changing the materials used in the manufacture of mobile phones would have a huge positive impact. It is about our cans of coke, our DVD players, our cars – the popular models, not the speciality ones!

We also have to rapidly turn aspirations into reality. The Eco Surfboard is one such project. At Eden we have many people who turn up with little bits of new materials and they say in hushed whispers: "You could make anything from this, isn't it amazing!" The problem is they don't. That was why we made the surfboard and we are pushing as rapidly as possible to turn it into a viable commercial reality – it's already gained

mass media coverage.

And there are the two remaining elements of my viewpoint:

1. Eco products/thinking needs to be as good if not better than the norm and the same price or cheaper.
2. Media – we need mainstream engagement from the 'scriptwriters' before we have a real chance at making the changes that are so desperately needed.

There seems to be a slight lack of sustainability 'campaigners' out there and we all need to occasionally pinch ourselves and make sure we are doing things in a sharp, focused way – any fuzziness is simply not acceptable. Use every tool available to drive the change. Do it as if your life depended on it!

Green Vibrations!

Chris has been a surfer since age 11 and ran the campaign group Surfers Against Sewage from 1990 to 2000. The idea of a green surfboard, believed to be a global first, emerged when a balsa in one of Eden's domes had to be felled. Chris and colleagues worked with local businesses to develop a balsa board which is laminated in hemp cloth and plant based resin. The 'eco-board' was part of Eden's 'crops for tomorrow's industries' display in 2005.

Whilst the heavy weight currently makes it unsuitable for expert surfers, the board proves that natural materials can replace polyurethane and glass fibre – the core constituents of the 750,000 surfboards produced annually worldwide. The commercial potential of the board means surfing could one day live up to its image of being at one with nature!

Find out more at www.edenproject.co.uk

Future Footprints steps up a gear!

Introducing Clare Mitchell, Future Footprints Manager

What is sustainable tourism?

"Sustainable Tourism satisfies visitors, businesses and local communities without damaging the environment now or for the future."

How does Future Footprints fit in?

Future Footprints (FF) is a partnership campaign working with key regional organisations to target the region's

visitors with the message 'help keep the South West special' by taking small steps to make their trips more sustainable.

What attracted you to the project?

Tourism is such a key industry to the South West and I found the statistics staggering – the region supports five times its population in visitor numbers annually. I was particularly interested in finding a way to influence visitor behaviour. Guilt inducing or fear simply don't motivate people, so the challenge is getting visitors engaged in ways that add to their experience.

What are the key messages of Future Footprints?

The over arching message to visitors is 'help to keep the region special' but our two key messages for the first year of the campaign are calls to action for visitors to 'Buy local' and 'Go car free' – two ways to really make a difference.

The most effective pathway to visitors is through 'visitor intermediaries' – those that advise visitors, run attractions, give info on their local area etc. The success of FF will rely on effectively engaging with this audience – from local authority tourism officers and tourist information centres (TICs) to tourism businesses and attractions. We will have to make sure that visitor intermediaries can tailor the Footprints message for

their own local context and priorities. For example, for a TIC in a rural area with little or no public transport provision, the transport message would be 'what's on your doorstep?' focusing on encouraging visitors to see what sites or cultural events are within walking distance.

Future Footprints and partners will lead the regional campaign, develop its profile and momentum, with partners concerned with local food and transport issues, to support visitor intermediaries to take the campaign forward at a local level.

What are the economic, social and environmental opportunities of more sustainable tourism to the region?

The opportunity of sustainable tourism is to develop a tourism sector that will continue to bring us social and economic benefits, whilst protecting our environmental assets, long into the future.

The facts are stark – estimates suggest the number of tourism trips in the region could grow by as much as 80% by 2020, and current figures show 80% of visitors come by car. Climate change is already impacting on the region and traffic congestion clogging our towns and villages.

Without a clear vision, strategy and action for the region's tourism sector – where sustainable tourism is part and parcel of all our tourism and related activities – we are in danger of destroying the very reason that people are attracted to coming to the South West... the region's environment and heritage.



Clare's Top Tips for engaging visitors in sustainable tourism

- ✓ Avoid worthy, guilt-inducing or 'doom and gloom' messages. Make it positive – help visitors feel good about their choices
- ✓ Make it personal – appeal to the heart not the head
- ✓ Make it easy – identify simple, easy steps for visitors with no downsides (highlight a couple of simple things they can do)
- ✓ Highlight the potential for indulgence, fun and an enhanced experience!
- ✓ Understand the local context. Don't create agency without opportunity – there's no point asking people to buy local food if there's none available

Decent housing can be a problem for people on low incomes in the SW – not helped by the demand for second homes. How is this affecting tourism workers and how can our growth and housing strategies address this?



The tourism industry is characterised by low waged, low skilled, seasonal work. Part of the tourism strategy for the region, which FF supports, is to increase workers' skills and provide a high quality product to the visitor whilst improving opportunities and wages in the sector. In addition the strategy aims to extend the tourism season to provide all year round employment. Future Footprints supports the drive for quality – promoting local purchasing and distinctive regional products will support quality, create new employment and benefit local economies.

It is essential that housing and growth strategies incorporate affordable housing, especially in the South West where housing shortages, second homes, and low wages make it the most unaffordable area after London. There are local authorities who have devised housing schemes which favour local people and this type of intervention should be considered where people are being effectively priced out of their communities.

What is the relationship between how we manage and promote tourism in the South West and the global tourism picture?

Regionally or globally the aim of sustainable

tourism is to work within environmental limits to maximise benefits and minimise negative impacts. Some issues are similar – such as making sure the local community benefit from visitor spend – but there are also differences.

A recent report from First Choice found that whilst more than half of those surveyed gave regularly to charity at home, only a quarter said they were concerned about the impact of tourism on the environments they visited abroad and only one in five said that it was important that their visit benefited local communities. 17% said they actively didn't want to think about the environmental consequences of their holidays. And while eight out of 10 said they recycled at home, only half said they'd consider recycling on holiday.

The challenge for a regional initiative such as Future Footprints is to engage visitors to change behaviour in a way which adds to their experience and gives them a 'feel good' factor. So rather than 'Go car free' the message would be tailored for the local area or attraction – for example: 'see some of the UK's most stunning coast by water', 'go by ferry to x' – the leaving the car behind message is secondary.

On a global scale the growth of cheap low cost air travel is a huge issue. Aviation is the fastest growing source of climate changing emissions but the UK's current transport infrastructure, and the growth in short breaks means more people want to fly. The South West is currently considering airport expansion and Sustainability

South West is actively commenting on the proposals.

What do you hope Future Footprints will achieve in its first year as a fully-fledged initiative?

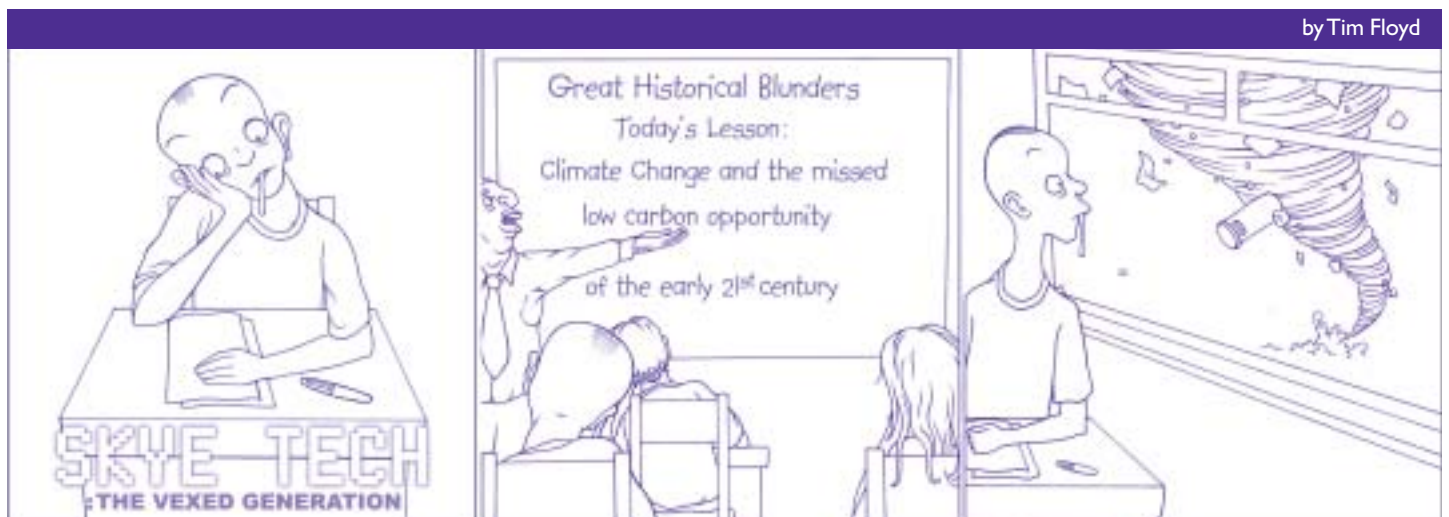
I hope that we will have won the support of visitor intermediaries. I'd like to establish an accessible and well-used website, where they can sign up as supporters and find out how they can get involved. It is also essential that FF continues to work with the key regional partners. We are fortunate to have wide-ranging representation on our Steering Group and the support of transport providers and bodies concerned with the promotion of the local economy. I hope to continue to maximise our supporter base and also want to work with regional (and some national) media on the public launch of the initiative this summer. Our long-term objectives are to reduce the number of car trips by visitors and increase the visitor spend in the local economy.



futurefootprints
Keeping the South West special

Future Footprints (www.futurefootprints.org.uk) is a partnership initiative co-ordinated by Sustainability South West and is currently funded by the South West Regional Development Agency and South West Tourism with contributions from English Nature, Government Office for the South West and the Eden Project. Please contact Clare Mitchell on 0117 933 0340 or clare.mitchell@futurefootprints.org.uk

by Tim Floyd



SKYE TECH
THE VEXED GENERATION



ONE Planet Economy

On 16th January SSW hosted an exclusive 'Leadership for a One Planet Economy' seminar. The event, sponsored by the Environment Agency and supported by the SW Regional Development Agency (and organised in line with Government Office SW's Greener Events Guide) addressed what leadership was needed to support a prosperous regional economy delivered within environmental limits. The programme included presentations from Andrew Simms, Head of Policy at the New Economics Foundation and Michael Smith, Managing Director of the Venus Company green beach café chain. Look out for a full event report in the next issue!



Shining Lights

The region's energy stars were rewarded at the annual Green Energy Awards in November. Kensa Heat Pumps scooped 'Best Business Innovation' with their affordable ready-to-install kit. 'Most Proactive Local Authority' went to Somerset County Council and 'Best Community Scheme' to Pendeen Parish Members Institute for their new community facility. Caddsdawn business park won 'Best New Renewable Energy Scheme' and Mike Grigg was awarded 'Best Home Installation' for his innovative solar heated house. See www.regensw.co.uk

The Pride of Cornwall

Sustainability best practice was celebrated and shared at the 3rd annual Cornwall Sustainability Awards on 2nd December in Falmouth. The Venus Company (a chain of beach cafe-shops) was picked out of a record number of entries for the Best Small Business Award and as overall winner. The Best Medium Business was Mylor Yacht Harbour and Kensey Foods came out on top in the Large Business category. Matthew Hocking of Leap Media was judged the Best Individual Employee and General Clothing Stores Ltd's organic clothes line was awarded Best Employee Led Initiative. Find out more at www.cornwallenterprize.co.uk/news

Recycling – with added benefits!

The SW currently recycles just a quarter of its household waste but several innovative pilots are now tackling this. Incentives being trialled include a prize draws, cash rewards and community funding.

Teignbridge District Council is offering residents who compost the chance to win membership of an organic food box scheme whilst in Exeter prizes include a £10,000 gas-powered car. Other schemes are running in Dorset, W Somerset, Bath & NE Somerset, the Cotswolds, Restormel (Cornwall) and the Salisbury, Chippenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury areas. Source: www.gnn.gov.uk

SW Biodiversity on the map

The Regional Biodiversity Partnership has completed the SW's Nature Map which identifies opportunities for getting involved in conservation action across the region. View the map at www.swbiodiversity.org.uk Spotted frog spawn in your pond or swifts returning from sunnier climes? Put your area on the map by taking part in Springwatch 2006 (coordinated by the BBC and Woodland Trust) at www.bbc.co.uk/springwatch

Good Housekeeping

Somerset Trust for Sustainable Development will be hosting their annual 'Homes for Good' exhibition on 17-19 February at

Notice of Event

'Local to Regional Sustainability Forum' 15th March 2006 at the Met Office

SSW, in association with the Local Sustainability Group South West, will host the first Local to Regional Sustainability Forum on Wednesday 15th March at the Met Office, Exeter. The Forum, being opened by DEFRA, will facilitate the sharing of views on key sustainability issues. This will include promoting mutual understanding around the respective roles of the sub-regional/local delivery organisations and regional strategic bodies which impact on sustainable development. To register your place please contact: sylvie.channon@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk

Somerset College of Arts and Technology, Taunton. The event offers professionals and the public a chance to learn greener methods of design, building, refurbishment and decoration. Penney Poyzer, presenter of BBC Two's 'No Waste Like Home', will be making a guest appearance. More info at www.sustainablehousing.org.uk/h4g.html

Efficiency Driver

The National Industrial Symbiosis Programme (NISP) is the first nationwide business resource efficiency exchange programme in the world. Its free support service helps companies work together across sectors to improve resource efficiency and identify commercial opportunities – local authorities are also key partners. The programme has already diverted 78,000 tonnes of waste from landfill, reduced CO2 by 200,000 tonnes, saved industry an estimated £27 million and created hundreds of employment and training opportunities. Go to www.nisp.org.uk to see how you can benefit!

SSW services – we're here to help!

Sustainability appraisals Whether you're developing a strategy, policy, project or assessing your organisation's internal practices, SSW will provide you with a clear set of recommendations to help maximise your contribution to sustainable development.

Training We provide interactive training sessions/workshops tailored to specific needs. We aim to demystify 'sustainable development', by using easy to understand language and engaging activities. Specific issues – for instance 'sustainable procurement' or 'adopting a low carbon approach' – can also be addressed.

Bespoke presentations We can offer bespoke presentations on a range of issues surrounding sustainable development and have a wealth of knowledge and expertise in this area.

In particular for local authorities... Making the vision of sustainable communities a reality at the local level is a real challenge. SSW can help your council and local strategic partnership achieve this goal.

over to
you...

Securing the Future in the South West Have your say!



Please visit www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk to learn more about the current RSDf

Over spring 2005 SSW conducted a consultation to inform the development of the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDf), interviewing over 50 stakeholders in different sectors and areas of the region. This fed into a fitness-for-purpose report (see p. 3) which revealed an appetite for a 'smarter', higher profile RSDf – more decisive, accessible, useful to a wider audience and reflecting the increasingly urgent sustainability agenda.

The feedback already gathered has helped SSW and partners to agree a proposal for a way forward. We now need your input to flesh out the detail and ensure the RSDf assists and complements your activities.

Please spend a few minutes telling us how the RSDf could support you and help to secure a sustainable future for the South West.

If you would prefer to fill in this form electronically please contact info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk

Developing the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDf)

The Proposal

To develop the RSDf as an interactive online awareness raising and decision making tool. It will translate the new national SD strategy *Securing the Future* against the region's sustainability challenges; target a wider range of audiences; offer know-how – signposting to further organisations and resources; and invite declarations of action.

Your comments:

The Principles

It is proposed that the RSDf's principles (see SSW website) are now applied in the context of new national guiding SD principles (see p.3).

Your comments:

The Vision

The region's current sustainability 'Vision' (see below) has general support but would benefit from an update in line with the new national SD strategy. Some accompanying statements which draw out what a sustainable South West would actually 'look like' are another idea.

Your comments:

The RSDf's Current Vision:

"The South West must remain a region with a beautiful and diverse environment. By working together and applying the principles of sustainability we can achieve lasting economic prosperity and social justice, whilst protecting that environment. This approach will secure a higher quality of life now and for the future."

Priority modules

Consultation responses emphasised the need for a more streamlined RSDF. The proposed priority modules are:

- **Learning & Skills:** supporting sustainability understanding and skills.
- **Well-being & Equality:** improving health and well-being through a preventative approach/healthy lifestyles whilst reducing inequalities.
- **Prosperity:** facilitating a resource efficient and productive 'one planet' economy.
- **Distinctiveness & Diversity:** enhancing the distinctiveness and diversity of the region's natural and cultural assets.
- **Environmental Limits:** promoting solutions to help the region live within environmental limits.

Your comments:

Measuring Progress

What are your thoughts on the use of regional sustainability targets and headline indicators to measure progress?

Galvanising Action

Should the RSDF be used to encourage organisations in the region to commit to sustainability action plans?

Awareness Raising and Training

The RSDF could be better supported by awareness raising and training. What sustainability learning would be helpful to your organisation/sector? Are there existing programmes that the RSDF could link in with?

Mutual Signposting

What sustainability projects are you currently involved with? Would you like the RSDF to highlight/signpost to these? Are there any opportunities for you to highlight the RSDF to your own audiences?

RSDF – a regional sustainability voice?

National policy is sometimes regarded as an obstacle to achieving sustainable outcomes. The RSDF could act as a voice for the region to feedback to Government on perceived obstacles.

Your comments:

Please use the space below for any additional comments on the RSDF

Your details

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Organisation/business: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Would you like to continue to be involved in the RSDF development process via a liaison and consultation network? Yes No

Thank you for your valuable input! Please return this form to the address on the back cover.

At the end of 2004 we asked readers to answer the question 'Is the South West sustainable?'...without using any words. With your help we've been building up our I Spy collection over the last year, collecting inspiring 'visions of sustainability' – along with images of the not-so-sustainable – from around the region. Here's just a few of your contributions.



A Cornwall County Council worker making use of the council's bike share scheme – part of measures to encourage greener travel at the authority.

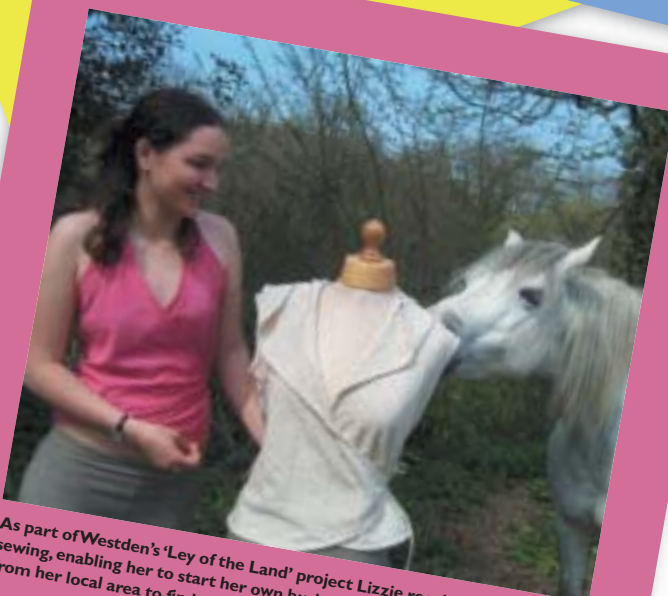
i spy visions of sustainability



'Walking buses' cut down on the traffic associated with the school run and are an easy, safe and sociable way for children and adults alike to fit in some daily exercise.



This cleverly designed low-energy 'solar house' near Helston in Cornwall meets the majority of its heating requirements from the sun – a clean source of energy with huge potential.



As part of Westden's 'Ley of the Land' project Lizzie received training in sewing, enabling her to start her own business and not have to move away from her local area to find employment.



Video-conferencing is one of a range of innovations that can be adopted to reduce the need to travel.



This electric car pool initiative at Cornwall County Council makes efficient use of resources and helps to minimise the pollution and CO2 associated with car travel.

spy visions of sustainability

To help us promote a sustainable South West, email or post your pictures, noting whereabouts in the region your I Spy is, to the SSW office.

Unfortunately we are unable to return submissions (full terms and conditions can be found on the I Spy page of our website in the 'what is sustainability?' section).



The 'Yellow Woods Challenge' works with schools and other partners to limit the amount of Yellow Pages going to landfill. In 2005 Cornish pupils collected 77 tonnes which were recycled locally for animal bedding.



Why was the top deck of this bus completely empty? Reliable, efficient and fairly-priced public transport is needed to cut CO2 and pollution and improve access for those most in need.

Sustainability South West is the region's independent champion of Sustainable Development.

Our members, from the public, private and voluntary sectors, all share sustainability principles and give their time for free. Members inform and support our work which is delivered in partnership with key regional agencies and managed by a small staff team. SSW's mission is to improve understanding about sustainability in the region – to raise awareness of the benefits of living healthy, productive, responsible lives within the natural resources of our one and only planet... and of the implications if we don't. In short – we want real progress towards a sustainable South West.

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the independent champion of sustainable development in the South West

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Disclaimer: The views of individuals expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the membership of Sustainability South West as a whole. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information disclosed but please let us know if you have any corrections or clarifications.



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Designed by Peta Morey

Sustainability South West's current membership: Gareth Allen ITV Westcountry; Bob Bewley English Heritage; Mike Birkin Friends of the Earth; Richard Cresswell Environment Agency; Julian Dennis Wessex Water; Colin Drummond Viridor Waste Management; Nicola Ellen Somerfield Plc; Paul Gompertz Devon Wildlife Trust; Mark Harold National Trust; Chris Hines The Eden Project; Simon Hooton South West of England Regional Development Agency; Bryony Houlden South West Regional Assembly; Brian Kennelly GeoScience Ltd; Catherine Le Grice-Mack South West Regional Assembly; Anita Longley RWE npower; Jackie Longworth Trade Union Congress; Liz McGrath; Tim Render Government Office South West; Judith Reynolds Co-Active Ltd; Louise Thornhill Countryside Agency; Janette Ward English Nature; Brendan Yates Department of Health

Sustainability South West receives regular funding from the following organisations (a full list of funders, for any given financial year, is stated in our annual report): Countryside Agency; Department of Health; English Heritage; English Nature; Environment Agency; Government Office for the South West; National Trust; South West of England Regional Development Agency; South West Regional Assembly



Sustainability South West