

July 2009

Sustainability Now is a monthly bulletin from Sustainability South West (SSW), the region's independent Champion Body for sustainable development. SSW is a charity and its Mission is: 'To champion and assist action now to achieve a South West that is genuinely sustainable: healthy, productive, socially-just and living within environmental limits.'

Time to launch a food revolution!

Members and guests of SSW considered "What a truly sustainable food system would be like" at our annual sustainability summit in Dartmouth last week.



There was a cross sector consensus that if we continue to produce and consume food as we are now we risk being unable to feed ourselves because we are increasing dangerous climate change and damaging and wasting the natural resources on which we depend for survival. So Sustainability South West is calling for:

- Consumers and food producers to wield more power over our food supplies
- A move away from large retailers setting the agenda
- A complete re-valuing of healthy food production as an essential ingredient that keeps our vital life support systems going.

Our current approach to food is fast becoming a recipe for disaster. We need stronger leadership to overturn our short sighted approach to food production and consumption. If we are going to be resilient to the huge 21st century challenges of climate change and population growth we must all learn how to be far more eco - efficient in the way we produce, distribute and consume food. We have a reputation for good local food in the South West – now is the time to develop this legacy to help us to - literally - grow ourselves a more sustainable future.

Our region has developed some excellent examples that support local communities and producers through sustainable production and procurement schemes by organisations including The Cornwall NHS Trust and The National Trust. We know that personal involvement with the production of food even at the simplest level can significantly improve our physical and mental and wellbeing. So dig for sustainability"!

NB: Sustainability South West will be preparing recommendations in liaison with other organisations across the region to respond to a new government consultation on a national sustainable food policy expected later in the year. Please contact the office if you/your organisation would like to be involved.

This month's other SustainabilityNow headlines at a glance:

- ◆ Sustainability South West has moved! ◆ Fair Shares Fair Choice: An SDC Breakthrough for the twenty-first century ◆ New Training Opportunity 23 July, Bristol: An Introduction to Sustainability
- ◆ On your radar ◆ Up & Coming ◆ Over to YOU!

Sustainability South West has moved!



Sustainability South West has new contact information! As of 1st July, our new telephone number is now 0117 929 0989 and our new address is Sustainability South West, 3rd Floor, Bush House, 72 Prince Street, Bristol, BS1 4QD. Please update your records with our new details - our email addresses remain the same! Plus we can now be found on Twitter <http://twitter.com/SustSouthWest>

Fair Shares Fair Choice: An SDC Breakthrough for the twenty-first century



Nineteen Breakthrough Ideas have been chosen by the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) across the spectrum of sustainable development, with solutions ranging from policy change to grassroots action to technological innovation. They encompass varying levels, from individuals, to communities, cities, and things that need to be done at national or international level. Indeed, many of the ideas are driven from the grassroots, but require government to act as the enabler. Sustainability South West's climate change campaign, Fair Shares, Fair Choice, supporting the principle of 'globally fair and safe carbon shares for everyone' features in the report as a breakthrough idea for personal carbon budgets. Download the report at:

www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/SDC_Breakthroughs.pdf

For information about Fair Shares, Fair Choice, and to add your name as a supporter of the principle of fair carbon shares, visit www.fairsharesfairchoice.com.



New Training Opportunity 23 July, Bristol: An Introduction to Sustainability

Sustainability South West is now offering accredited courses for members of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and local government officers.



The new half-day course, 'Introduction to Sustainability' introduces the basics of sustainability and the sustainability appraisal process. The course aims to demystify sustainability and provide practical experience and hands-on training for undertaking a sustainability appraisal in a real life strategy, plan or work programme. The training is suitable for anyone who works in local government and with LSPs and is CPD accredited. Free follow up support and advice is also included.

This is the first in a catalogue of accredited courses and workshops that SSW will offer to local authorities and other public and private sector organisations.

For more information please contact clare.mitchell@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk or phone 0117 929 0989.

Next training date: 'Introduction to Sustainability' Half Day Training - Thursday 23rd July (Bristol). Cost: £75 (£50 concessions) - last few spaces remaining. Following high level of interest we will be offering further training dates for 'Introduction to Sustainability' between September and December. Further courses to be announced shortly.

Natural England urges decision-makers

Working with nature is vital to climate change adaptation Natural England has responded to the latest Government climate change forecasts by highlighting the urgent need to support the natural environment to adapt to climatic changes. Whilst new technologies may be part of the solution, we must not overlook the role of our natural assets in moderating greenhouse gases - such as in the case of the UK's peat bogs, which operate as a vast carbon store. Natural England's Character Area Climate Change Project has identified the particular adaptation needs of four treasured English landscapes including the woodland and chalk grassland of the Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase - which are predicted to resemble Portugal by 2080 - is one of the featured areas.

On your radar?

Sustainable Development Commission; Will Day the New Chair

Jonathon Porritt is moving on after nine years as the Chair of the SDC. Will Day has been appointed the new Chair, taking up post on 27 July. Mr Day brings to the role an acute understanding of the scale and urgency of the challenges facing the UK and the world. His goal is that the SDC plays a strong role in helping Government to tackle these challenges. His experience to date has given him a keen understanding of the social imperative of sustainable development, and the key role of business as well as government in delivering this. An important part of pushing the SD agenda forward will be supporting Breakthrough ideas: dynamic ideas with the potential to spark ground-breaking progress towards a more sustainable UK (Sustainability South West's Fair Shares, Fair Choice climate change campaign for personal carbon budgets ins included), see:

www.sd-commission.org.uk/presslist.php/100/time-to-raise-our-game-19-ways-to-make-the-uk-more-sustainable.

New report sets the challenges for a healthy natural environment in the South West

A new report on the state of the natural environment in the South West and the challenges it faces is launched and it states that there is still much work needed to ensure that the region's magnificent landscapes, seascapes and biodiversity are protected in the long term from multiple pressures including housing development, over-fishing and the predicted effects of climate change. <http://www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/lfi/DNWA-7T5KDK> For the report:

<http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/Product.aspx?ProductID=b2e2c894-b222-4bcc-801a-c5077f52d83c>

Use and protection of Green Belt land - Have your say

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) is seeking views on use of Green Belt land in England. The survey is aiming to find out how people in Bristol & Bath, London and Merseyside would like to see the Green Belt used in the future. If you have ideas on how Green Belt land can better support the citizens of Bristol and Bath to live more sustainably and reduce the eco/carbon footprint of their cities make your views known.

<http://www.sustainweb.org/localactiononfood/greenbeltsurvey/>

Government rejects Westbury bypass plan

The White Horse Alliance welcomed the Government decision to reject the proposed Westbury bypass plan as a victory for common sense and the determination of local people to defend one of the great landscapes of England.

<http://www.corridor-alliance.co.uk/latestnews.html>

Empowering communities to influence local decision making

The Department for Communities and Local Government has published a study which provides a review of the domestic and international evidence base around community empowerment. The research identifies key criteria that drive and define empowerment across six specific mechanisms: asset transfer, citizen governance, e-participation, participatory budgeting, petitions and redress. <http://www.globaltolocal.com/egemagazine/news/empowering-communities-to-influence-local-decision-making-a-systematic-review-of-the-evidence>

To see the full report click <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1241955>

Learn how to run a green space apprenticeship scheme

CABE Space are offering a free workshop in Bristol on the 30th July for urban local authorities who want to run their own apprenticeship schemes for parks and green spaces. Contact mshepherd@cabe.org.uk with questions about the workshop.

New Documentary - Home

This new documentary connects climate change, peak oil and human population. A remarkable hour and a half of simple truths and stunning photography. It's free to view via [youtube](http://www.youtube.com/homeproject) - <http://www.youtube.com/homeproject>

Climate change and public space

Research from the UK Climate Impacts Programme shows that the future will bring warmer wetter winters, hotter drier summers, rising sea levels and more extreme weather events. Public spaces can play a major role in combating the effects of climate change. Adapting public space to climate change shows how public spaces play a major role in combating the effects of climate change - from moderating rising temperatures in our cities to preventing flooding. Read and download the policies affecting how public space can adapt to climate change in the UK.

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/public-space/climate-change/policy>

Up & coming...

National Strategy for Climate and Energy

Ed Miliband and Cabinet colleagues will set out a comprehensive set of policies to meet the UK's world-leading carbon budgets, cutting emissions by more than a third by 2020. An overarching White Paper will be accompanied by individual strategies on renewable energy, low carbon transport and a Low Carbon Industrial Strategy will help businesses in the UK take advantage of opportunities arising from the shift to low carbon, identifying key sectors and skills that will support that transition and help create jobs. <http://www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/Ifi/DNWA-7T5KDK>

The National Sustainable Schools Conference, 14 July, Explore @Bristol, Harbourside

Schools have a vital role to play in ensuring that the next generation has the skills and knowledge to make sustainable lifestyle choices. New resources are being created around the National Sustainable Schools Framework initiative from DCSF and the government target is for all schools to be sustainable schools by 2020. This conference will help schools plan their journey to become a sustainable school. Register online at www.se-ed.org.uk/conference2009.

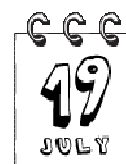
TUC Green action at work camp

A five-day 'green action at work camp' which will be held in Tolpuddle this summer camp will focus on workplace action and how to use the union to make a difference. The aim of the camp is to help trade unionists to raise awareness of environmental issues in their workplaces. The Fair Shares Fair Choice campaign which is supported by the SW TUC will be promoted at one of the workshops. For info email southwest@tuc.org.uk



The Big Lunch, 19 July

Imagine a summer's day on which millions of us, throughout the UK, sit down to have lunch together, with our neighbours in the middle of our streets, around our tower blocks and on every patch of common ground. The food, entertainment and decorations we will have either been grown, cooked, or created ourselves. Sharing and collaborating is key to the success of The Big Lunch, an event championed by the Eden Project to persuade every street and hamlet in the country to sit down and take traditional Sunday lunch together on 19 July. For events near you or to register your own Big Lunch visit www.thebiglunch.com.



Love Parks Week 2009 25 July - 2 August

The perfect excuse to get outdoors and enjoy the summer; this year Love Parks Week organisers GreenSpace are asking as many people as possible to get into parks to join their campaign for continued investment and support for these valuable assets.. Find out more at www.loveparksweek.org.uk/

Over to YOU

Remember – we're your independent sustainability champs – and as an independent charity we're here to act as a critical friend for the common good. If you're involved in action for sustainability – let us know and we can champion it! Equally if you're experiencing barriers to adopting a more sustainable approach let us know so we can feed back messages on your behalf. Also let us know about local and regional events coming up over the next month for inclusion in the next edition. **Contact us at info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk**

Deadline for submissions: close of Friday 31 July 2009

Other news from SSW available from:

Regular updates on **SSW coordinated projects** available:

Fair Shares, Fair Choice – the SW's growing low carbon movement

Sustainability Shaper – the SW's sustainable development framework

Planting Places – networks for SW urban greenspace project

www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk

www.fairsharesfairchoice.com

www.shapersw.net

www.plantingplaces.org.uk

Feedback: As a network of influential individuals your feedback on *Sustainability Now* is very valuable. Send comments to info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk (let us know if colleagues would like to be added to the e-distribution list).

Back issues: at www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/sustainability_now

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Disclaimer: Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of SSW's membership as a whole.

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