

November 2009

Sustainability Now is the monthly bulletin from Sustainability South West (SSW), the region's independent Champion Body for sustainable development. SSW is a registered charity and its Mission is:

'To champion and assist action now to achieve a South West that is genuinely sustainable: resilient, healthy, productive, socially-just and living within environmental limits.'

Unhealthy people... Unhealthy planet

Guest editorial by Dr Gabriel Scally, Regional Director of Public Health for the South West



To draw a distinction between the health of people and the health of the planet is not just difficult to do, it also diverts energy from the task of maximising both. The synergy between human health and sustainable development demands that we unify our efforts and learn from and actively support each other.

The major health problems we face are associated with disordered consumption, whether it is obesity caused by the eating of high fat processed foods and physical inactivity or the trauma and disease caused by a society awash with cheap alcohol. Opposition to universal sex education in schools in the face of frighteningly high levels of teenage pregnancy and sexual diseases again shows how out of tune we are with our bodies and how they should be cared for.

If we want to embrace the challenge of change then we will need to confront those that cause ill health and damage the environment in the pursuit of profit; such as the South West's Imperial Tobacco which recently announced pre-tax profits of £2.2bn. Even more importantly we need to create a picture of how we want to live our lives in a happy and pleasurable way that enhances health and wellbeing of planet and people.

This month's other SustainabilityNow headlines at a glance:

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New sustainability website for South West NHS organisations

The new website, www.sustainablehealthsw.org.uk, is a key part of the Sustainable Health SW project supporting the region's NHS organisations in working towards sustainability. The site has sections that mirror the key areas and actions from Carbon Reduction Strategy for the NHS (in England) and contains a range of resources and information, including news and events. A forum will allow NHS staff from around the region to ask questions, share best practice and feed in to the work of the Sustainable Health SW project. The site also links the NHS to wider sustainability issues, including natural spaces and climate change, to help embed sustainability in all aspects of the organisation. Sustainable Health SW is a partnership project of Sustainability South West and the NHS South West – if you would like any more information please visit the website or contact project manager Lynn Gibbons on lynn.gibbons@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk.



Planting Places awards – applications now open!



The Planting Places awards – recognising greenspaces that are making fantastic contributions to the sustainability of their communities – will be running for a 3rd year. The awards, coordinated by Sustainability South West, are now open to applications from any public greenspace in the South West of England. This includes everything from parks, community gardens and allotments to green routes (ie cycle paths), play spaces and even cemeteries and rooftops. The greenspace can be any size. It can be privately funded, community, conservation group, NHS Trust or council land, but it **MUST** be free and accessible to



the public, and for public use and enjoyment. Applications can be submitted by a local community group, local authority, NGO, NHS Trust, private organisation or individual. Completed application must be returned by **5pm on Monday, 25 January 2010** by email to lynn.gibbons@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk. For more information visit the Planting Places website – www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/projects/planting_places/planting_places_awards/.

Boost of support for 'globally fair and safe carbon shares'

The Fair Shares, Fair Choice carbon reduction campaign has had a surge of supporters all signing up to the principle of 'a globally fair and safe carbon share for everyone' following events around the region including Bristol Climate Countdown, part of the International Day of Climate Action; Paignton Zoo's Green Solutions Festival and various NHS climate change events in the region. The number of supporters now exceeds 2,100 and includes MPs from all the main parties, Councillors, VIPs, climate change experts, organisations from all sectors and individuals. See www.fairsharesfairchoice.com for the full supporter's list and to **add your name!**



Further support for fair carbon shares comes from Environment Agency Chairman, Lord Smith, who has called for personal carbon allowances for individuals as one of a set of measures that should be developed within the next 20 years, irrespective of agreements on world emission targets, to achieve a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

A climate change survey has found that the public agree with 66% of 760 people asked agreeing strongly, and a further 27% agreeing slightly, that 'Everyone should have a globally fair and safe carbon share' – the principle behind the Fair Shares, Fair Choice campaign. 83% also agreed strongly that 'Climate change is a concern and something needs to be done about it', with a further 14% agreeing slightly; and 83% of people agreed strongly that 'Everyone should take responsibility to do something about climate change', with another 14% agreeing slightly.

For **free resources for your climate change event** including carbon calculator worksheets and challenges and tips to reduce your carbon footprint, contact freiny.miles@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk.

SW Transport Enquiry - Only 6% of regional capital investment going to public transport

The South West Transport Enquiry invited regional stakeholders to answer some of the big questions facing transport in the region. Members heard that the South West has the most congestion of any UK region, the most expensive train fares, the worst access to bus travel and some of the greatest disparity of access to transport facilities. A key theme was the failure of the most recent Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) to take account of national and regional policy on sustainable transport, health and the transition to a low carbon economy. The RFA prioritises our capital investment in transport. Members heard that no appraisal methodology was applied to take account of sustainability principles based on national policies or our own regional strategy (Regional Spatial Strategy) and the process was criticised for its lack of transparency.

An independent report commissioned by *The South West Sustainable Transport Round Table* found that out of 42 schemes only 4 were specifically public transport focused – only 6.6% of a total spend of £1597million. The report found the majority of spend goes to park and ride (56%) and 16 road based schemes eating up 35% of funding. The impact on public health of this continued investment in car transport was highlighted – the need to change our sedentary lifestyles – walk and cycle more to tackle the growth in obesity and other health issues.

Research undertaken by Sustrans and Socialdata on behalf of the Department for Transport has shown that nearly half of all local car trips could be replaced with more active forms of travel such as walking and cycling. Members also heard about the lack of expertise and capacity in local government – many small Local Authorities don't have the skills and resources to take forward active travel and integrated transport schemes, and a resource squeeze means less support from GOSW/RDA.

The committee will hold a further session next week, focusing on rural issues. For further details and a transcript of evidence, see: www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/regional.cfm.

Sustainability into Practice – new training

Making sense of sustainability in your working life: Learn to apply efficient integrated decision making in the post recession era. Includes locally sourced lunch provided by Bordeaux Quay.

A half-day workshop delivered by Sustainability South West to: ◦ Demystify sustainability and provide you with a good understanding of the topic ◦ Include a hands-on opportunity to undertake a basic sustainability appraisal of a project, strategy or decision-making process relevant to you ◦ Provide a relaxed and supportive environment in which to explore sustainability issues and network with peers and sustainability practitioners.

Learning Outcomes: The training will give participants a basic understanding of sustainability and sustainability principles relevant to all sectors and experience of how to appraise a project plan, strategy or decision-making process against sustainability principles. Follow up on-line support will be available to support participants implement their learning.

Date and location: **26 November, Bristol**

Cost: £99 (private and public sector organisations) / £70 (voluntary sector).

Quotes from previous participants: *"I can take this tool and use it in all aspects of my project and development work"* *"I came away with a great understanding of principles and measures to assess sustainability"*

For more information and to book email clare.mitchell@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk, call 0117 929 0989 or visit www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/advice_and_info/introduction_to_sustainability_training_course/.



Sussed!



Cycling guaranteed to work

Over 70 organisations have newly pledged to the seemingly effective "cycle to work" guarantees, to boost the numbers of staff using pedal power. The guarantees commit them to providing safe bike storage, changing facilities and access to the 'Cycle to Work' tax breaks for cycling equipment. Typically, over a third of employees of large organisations located within towns and cities live within a half an hour bike ride of work, yet only 3% cycle to work. For more info or to sign up see www.cycletoworkguarantee.org.uk.



Bordeaux Quay has been awarded gold!

Bristol's Bordeaux Quay is the first restaurant in the UK to receive a gold Food for Life Catering Mark rating by the new sustainable catering scheme developed by the Soil Association. It guarantees customers get a sustainable meal through governing food additives, animal welfare and the seasonality of produce used. Visit www.foodforlife.org.uk/resources/catering for more info.



350 day of climate action success

Over 5,200 events were held throughout the world on the International Day of Climate Action, focusing on the number 350, as in parts per million - the level scientists have identified as the safe upper limit for CO2 in our atmosphere. Over 40 were held in SW England alone – check out www.350.org/.



Animal park makes plant history

A new innovative plant growing system has introduced at Paignton Zoo Environmental Park. The VertiCrop sustainable hydroponics installation is the first of its kind in Europe and the first in a zoo or botanic garden anywhere in the world. The installation means the zoo can grow more plants in less room, using less water and less energy and reducing food miles. See www.paigntonzoo.org.uk/news-events/news-detail.php?id=167.



Eddie the low carbon eagle

Stobart Group, the logistics company behind the ubiquitous Eddie Stobart fruit and veg lorries, have made history by opening a major new rail freight route between Valencia in Spain and the UK. The weekly train service, which passes through the Eurotunnel, is said to be the first low carbon route for the import of fresh Spanish produce and will amount to a reduction of 13.7 million kilometers of road journeys and 8,625 tonnes of CO2 annually. See www.stobartgroup.co.uk/NewsCentre/NewsArticle/STOBART-GROUP-PIONEERS-LOWER-CARBON-TRAIN-SERVICE.



ENVEC presentations

For presentations from the 16th ENVEC: Making Sustainability Happen in a Changing Climate, the South West's main climate change conference in 2009, see www.oursouthwest.com/envec/.

So Last Century...



Biodiversity needs more backing

The world isn't doing enough to protect its wildlife in the face of climate change, Secretary of State for the Environment Hilary Benn warned in the annual Darwin Lecture. Alongside typical climate change 'poster boys' like pandas and polar bears, UK species such as songthrushes, toads, seals and puffins could soon become rarities, whilst the snow bunting and black grouse are already facing extinction. Mr Benn called for new international structures and targets to protect biodiversity including a new Intergovernmental panel which would perform a similar function to the IPCC's role in its relation to climate change. Full story: www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/lfi/407922.



Anyone for a Brazilian?

Pret a Manger's 'fresh' sandwiches are stuffed with chicken from South America, it has recently emerged. The £200million-a-year company argues that the Brazilian chickens used are 'treated well' but don't seem to have worried too much about the carbon footprint of their sandwiches not to mention the job satisfaction levels of the Brazilian production line workers employed in the vast abattoirs where the chicken is prepared. See www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1224539/Pret-Mangers-fresh-sandwiches-filled-chicken-came-frozen-Brazil.html.

On your radar?

'No Charge?: Valuing the Natural Environment' new report

The Guardian has reported on whether a more economic approach might convince the cynics of the value of our countryside. Natural England is trying to kick-start a debate on these issues and has published a new report, *No Charge?: Valuing the natural environment*, which aims to help bring about a "deeper understanding of the economic value of nature and natural capital, and the use of an ecosystem services approach to better inform decision-making processes". For the report see www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/nochargev2_tcm6-14259.pdf and for the Guardian story, see www.guardian.co.uk/society/2009/oct/28/natural-england-conservation-rural-communities.

Gauging your greenhouse gases?

New Government guidance is available for organisations interested in measuring and reporting their greenhouse gases, including suggested reduction targets. The guidance has been produced for all types of private, public and voluntary sector organisations and is based on the internationally recognised GHG protocol. See www.defra.gov.uk/environment/business/reporting/pdf/ghg-guidance.pdf.

The paths to play – new guidance for councils

A new document from Sustrans outlines how local authorities can improve walking and cycling access to playspaces for children and young people. The document, which includes nine case studies, can be accessed and downloaded at www.sustrans.org.uk/play.

Birds on the brink? State of the UK's Birds report

Some once threatened British birds are thriving, whilst some previously common species are becoming much rarer, according to the new *State of the UK's Birds* report. The partnership of agencies behind the report is hoping to replicate their success with a wider range of birds in the future by working more closely with farmers and other land managers. See www.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/science/sotukb/2008/index.asp.

Bad map reading – impacts map for a 4°C rise

The government has raised the political stakes on climate change, publishing a new interactive global map detailing the likely effects of unchecked greenhouse gas emissions. The map shows the impacts of 4°C rise in the world's temperature which the Government's chief scientist has described as a potential disaster. For more details see www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/oct/22/science-museum-climate-map.



Implementation Plan for the Regional Woodland and Forestry Framework

The latest Plan has just been published, following consultation and discussions over the summer. This outlines the priority actions for the region's woodland owners, private forestry sector, public bodies and non-governmental organisations to meet the objectives of the Framework over the next three years, under the themes of sustaining the resource, climate change, the natural environment, quality of life, and business and markets. The Plan is available to view and to download at www.forestry.gov.uk/southwest-rwff. Printed copies also available – requests to Deborah Elton, deborah.elton@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

Education for Sustainable Development Project newsletter

Latest bi-monthly e-newsletter from Higher Education Academy's Education for Sustainable Development Project, featuring publications, news and events in this sector, is available now at www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/ourwork/sustainability/esd_eneews_3_2.pdf.

Creating Excellence (SW) is looking for Board Members

Creating Excellence, a not for profit company dedicated to developing the region's 'Place Shapers' and promoting community engagement and sustainability, is looking to recruit motivated, knowledgeable and experienced people to serve as board members and support the continued development of the company. To find out more about the type of skills and experience sought, and a full job description see: www.creatingexcellence.org.uk/mod-Downloads-index-req-viewdownloadaddetails-lid-323.html or contact Dominic Murphy on 01823 250803 or at dominic.murphy@creatingexcellence.org.uk.

Watch this space: The Converging World presents Bristol's very own CoP15 – workshops and events running from 7-18 December on the 3rd Floor, Bush House, Bristol

A series of free, open events, including carbon reduction workshops will take place in Bristol in parallel to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. Find out more in the next issue or by checking www.climate350.org.

Up & coming...

Creativity and Innovation: Thinking dynamically about really sustainable business - 4:30-7:30pm, 13 November, Dartington Hall, Devon

New Sustainable Business Seminar from Schumacher College to help you use creativity and innovation to deepen your understanding of sustainable business and use new ways to engage your people and customers in making it happen. Seminar fee: £99, including dinner. Discounts are available for local organisations and multiple bookings. For more information and to book call 01803 865934 or visit www.schumachercollege.org.uk.

Power to the People - 3:30-5:30pm, 13 November, 3rd Floor, Bush House, Bristol

In this **free** event, David Saunders will be showing how zero emissions farming can reduce fossil fuels, restore soils, and provide community renewable energy. For more details email reception@the3rdfloor.org.uk.

Grofun - Urban food growing - 1-2pm, 17 November, 3rd Floor, Bush House, Bristol

A talk and interactive presentation on a community grassroots response to the challenges of food security, climate change and peak oil. Attendance is **free**, for more details email reception@the3rdfloor.org.uk.

Towards a Green Heritage: Contemporary Solutions to Age-Old Problems - 8:30pm, 26 November, STEAM Museum of the Great Western Railway, Swindon

The UK has as many historic buildings as in all the countries of Europe put together and we are rightly proud of our architectural heritage. But are we trying to preserve these buildings at the expense of the environment? This one day conference is presented by The Green Register in conjunction with RIBA South West. The conference will conclude with an open forum with Paul King of UK-GBC, Kevin McCloud of Channel 4's Grand Designs programme and Ruth Reed, new RIBA President, followed by a drinks reception. See www.greenregister.org.uk for full details, costs and booking info. For the chance to win a ticket to the conference, The Green Register would like construction professionals to share their experiences of undertaking an eco-refurb project with old buildings by sending 3 short paragraphs under the headings of The Good, The Bad & The Ugly to mail@greenregister.org.uk by 20 November.

Education for Sustainable Development, 26 November, Somerset College of Arts and Technology, Taunton

Free seminar to support Adult Community Learning, Third Sector and not for profit providers to develop their sustainable development policies and practices by exploring issues and sharing solutions. Learners develop skills, knowledge and understanding relevant to sustainable development. To reserve a place online or download the brochure from: www.niace.org.uk/campaigns-events/events/sustainable-development. Enquiries to Gurjit Kaur, NIACE Events Team - Tel: 0116 204 2833 or e-mail: gurjit.kaur@niace.org.uk.

'Designing Environments to Encourage Physical Activity', 30 November, Gloucester Rugby Club, Kingsholm Road, Gloucester

This **free** conference is associated with the work that Gloucestershire County Council, district councils, the Voluntary and Community sector, NHS Gloucestershire, Natural England and the University of Gloucestershire are undertaking around promoting physical activity through improving the built and natural environment. Speakers include Dr William Bird (Natural England), Dr Marcus Grant (WHO Collaborating Centre, UWE) and Ben Hamilton-Baille (Hamilton-Baillie Associates). The content and attendance of this workshop is RTPI CPD creditable. For information contact James Webb, NHS Gloucestershire on 08454 221815 or email James.webb@glos.nhs.uk.

The Search for 'Buy-In': How to use the energy and intelligence of your organisation to engage others in sustainability, 30 November, Sharpam House, Nr. Ashpington, Devon

This Schumacher College seminar will enable you use the energy and intelligence of your organisation to help others realise the potential of sustainability. Seminar fee: £99, including dinner. Discounts are available for local organisations and multiple bookings. For more information and to book call 01803 865934 or visit www.schumachercollege.org.uk.

PiP Webinars, 30 November – 4 December

A week long series of **free** Webinars on UKCP09 will cover: Introduction to UKCIP & UKCP09; Products available; How you might use UKCP09; Demonstration of the User Interface; Other Resources. Visit www.ukcip.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=682&Itemid=9 for more information and to book.

Systemic Change in the Age of Stupid. Lessons from Switzerland. 12 - 2pm, 4 December, University of Gloucestershire

A series of seminars held by IRIS begins with Dr Rolf Jucker, Director of Swiss Foundation for Environmental Education, an independent body tasked with mainstreaming Environmental Education and Education for SD in the Swiss School system. For more info see www.glos.ac.uk/iris and to attend contact Seek Pang, spang@glos.ac.uk, by 27 November.

Policy seminar: Land and Food, 8 December, Larkbeare, Exeter

The second of four **free** SW Observatory-led policy seminars will look at issues surrounding land and food. Suitable for those who work in intelligence gathering and analysis as well as those involved in policy and decision making, the seminars aim to stimulate debate by bringing together a range of speakers with different perspectives on key policy issues. Enquires to Rachel Hartnell on 01823 447 391 or rachel.hartnell@swg.org.uk. To book, see: www.swg.org.uk/seminars.

'European Funding and the Climate Change Agenda' workshop series, various UK locations including Bristol (Armada House) on 13 January

National NGC 'Global to Local' are running a series of day long workshops aimed at public sector organisations/LSPs keen to explore European funding opportunities for climate change related activities. Delegates will be invited to develop project ideas on the day. An earlybird rate of £130 + VAT is available. More info available at: www.globaltolocal.com/EC%20projects%20seminars%20flyer%20FINAL.pdf.

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 Freiny Miles at** freiny.miles@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk.

Deadline for submissions: 29 November 2009

Other news from SSW available from:

www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk

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

Sustainability Shaper – the SW's sustainable development framework www.shapersw.net

Fair Shares, Fair Choice – the SW's growing low carbon movement www.fairsharesfairchoice.com

Sustainable Health SW – supporting the region's NHS trusts www.sustainablehealthsw.org.uk

Planting Places – networks for SW urban greenspace project www.plantingplaces.org.uk

Please note Sustainability South West's new contact details (since 1st July):

Sustainability South West, 3rd Floor, Bush House, 72 Prince Street, Bristol BS1 4QD t. 0117 929 0989
www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk Registered Charity no.1106125 Company Ltd no. 3899945

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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Special thanks: to SSW volunteer Alison Pring