

## Welcome to the first bulletin of *Sustainability Now*

We recognise that you are someone who's keen to support real action on sustainability. This 'monthly missive' from Sustainability South West (SSW), your regional Champion Body for sustainable development, **won't** offer you a lengthy report on anything and everything on sustainability but **it will**:

- Focus on the most urgent sustainability issues, including climate change
- Encourage sustainability champions
- Cheer on real progress
- Highlight moves that are taking us in the wrong direction
- Provide a healthy dose of honesty about the state of sustainability in our region!

As a network of influential individuals your feedback on *Sustainability Now* is very valuable – you can send comments to [info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk](mailto:info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk) (and let us know of anyone else who ought to be on the e-distribution list). *FYI please note SSW has recently moved offices and websites – details below.*



This month's Sustainability *Now* headlines at a glance:

- Action to tackle Climate Change
- Sustainable communities *for real*
- Delivering a Low Carbon Economy
- 'Sust'Ometer'
- On your radar?
- Up & Coming
- Over to YOU

## *Action to tackle Climate Change*

Is 'Climate Change' the new Rock n Roll?! Internationally, topping the bill at the G8 Summit and in cinemas showing Al Gore's film. Nationally, many of you will have been responding to the potentially, ground breaking Draft Climate Change Bill (for SSW's response to the recent consultation go to [http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/ssw\\_on/climate\\_change](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/ssw_on/climate_change)). Here in the region we wait to see if fine words will result in real action as the Regional Spatial Strategy undergoes an Examination in Public. Will the region's aspirations to reduce our carbon footprint be thwarted by the national aviation white paper which promotes airport expansion? Will proposals for zero carbon developments make it into the final cut? Meanwhile, a round of applause to:

- The Regional Assembly – for taking the lead in co-ordinating the development of a regional climate change action plan. With experts predicting that the action we take over the next 10 years will count most in preventing catastrophic climate change – its great timing. We look forward to seeing the plan adopt measures which will support definitive and ambitious carbon cutting action within this timescale.
- Jane Laurie – who's leading on climate change for the South West Wildlife Trusts. Jane organised a meeting of NGOs in the region to promote coordinated action on climate change 'mitigation' projects.
- Mike Birkin – Regional Director of Friends of the Earth, brought together reps of regional agencies at a meeting (ably chaired by Mark Robins: RSPB, Regional Environment Network & Regional Assembly) which focussed on developing an integrated approach to tackling climate change at the regional level.
- The TUC SW Regional Council – for carrying through a motion on Global Warming and Corporate Responsibility, resolving to support trade union carbon reduction initiatives and lobbying employers to invest in energy saving and sustainable transport systems for workers and families.
- All those individual, organisations and businesses who've signed up to SSW's climate change initiative *Fair Shares, Fair Choice* (FSFC). The growing low carbon movement includes regional celebrities, big business, schools, local authorities and key regional agencies (visit the FSFC Supporters List at [www.fairsharesfairchoice.com/fsfc\\_supporters.asp](http://www.fairsharesfairchoice.com/fsfc_supporters.asp) and add your name to the movement at [www.fairsharesfairchoice.com/sign\\_up.asp](http://www.fairsharesfairchoice.com/sign_up.asp)). Businesses and organisations are taking advantage of the resources on the site to develop customised Carbon Action Plans. Please contact SSW if you're interested in arranging a hands-on workshop to complement the free resources.

*Please feedback your suggestions for other climate champs we should cheer on...and let us know if you spot any backsliding actions*

## Sustainable Communities for real

Sustainable communities are healthy, productive, socially just and live within environmental limits (see [http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/what\\_is\\_a\\_sustainable\\_south\\_west/](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/what_is_a_sustainable_south_west/)) Visit the *Sustainability Shaper* (the region's sustainable development framework) for further guidance and resources (in particular the sustainable communities checklist) see [www.shapersw.net](http://www.shapersw.net)

- **Sustainable construction** A new regional version of a nationally-backed 'checklist for sustainable developments' has been launched. The checklist will provide a helpful reference and has been supported by WWF, BRE, SW Regional Development Agency (RDA), Regional Assembly and GOSW see [www.ChecklistSouthWest.co.uk](http://www.ChecklistSouthWest.co.uk) The SW checklist has been coordinated by SSW's *Future Foundations* project see [www.futurefoundations.co.uk](http://www.futurefoundations.co.uk)
- **Sustainable living** is really taking off at a local level – from the Tinkers Bubble community in Somerset woodland aiming for self sufficiency in energy and food, to community action groups such as 'Go Zero' in Chew Magna, St. Endellion's climate friendly parish, Bovey Tracey's 'Bovey Climate Action', Milverton's Climate Challenge and the flourishing 'Transition Town' movement.

## Integrating sustainability into Local Area Agreements (LAAs)

LAAs represent a big opportunity to support the delivery of sustainable development. New guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government on integrating environmental issues into the LAA economy block is a step forward, but does not go far enough in recognising the fundamental need for an integrated approach. SSW is currently working (thanks to resources from DEFRA/GOSW) on a number of local authority pilots to fully integrate sustainable development principles into LAAs, Sustainable Community Strategies and the work of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). Please contact SSW (contact details below) if you'd like to discuss how your Authority/LSP can benefit from this scheme. Sustainability guidance for LSP members is available now on the *Sustainability Shaper* see:

<http://www.shapersw.net/rsdfresources.php?ID=41&category=50&stylesheet=style>

## Delivering a low carbon economy

We're all very aware of the need (and opportunities) for shifting our consumption and production patterns so they are consistent with a 'one planet economy'. The Regional Economic Strategy's statement of intent ('that the South West will demonstrate that economic growth can be secured within environmental limits') sets out a positive ambition which must now be followed by action. Hats off to the RDA for investing over £21 million in the world's largest wave farm off the coast of Cornwall. With the potential for the Wavehub to save over 24,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year it represents a great step forward for ensuring the SW's economy (including security of energy supply) is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Looking for some help and advice for achieving *genuinely* sustainable economic development? Then check out the RDA sponsored economic development resources on the *Sustainability Shaper* which include a specialist checklist, alongside guidance for 'planning sustainable economic development' and 'must-have ingredients for delivery' see <http://www.shapersw.net/rsdf.php?ID=59&category=59&stylesheet=style>

### Sussed!



**Eating well** A Cornish NHS Trusts and Soil Association project to improve hospital food has achieved great success with 92% of patients rating new menus 'very good' or 'excellent'. The local economy and sustainable farming practices have also been boosted, and the hospitals' 'food miles' have been slashed by 67%. All these benefits without an increase to food budgets.



**Carbon clarity** The Carbon Trust, Defra and BSI are developing a standard 'carbon labelling' scheme which will apply to a wide range of products and services helping to ease carbon confusion



**Sustainability score** David James, Portsmouth FC and England goalie and resident of Devon, is helping to lead the greening of the Premiership



**Making the connection** Corby – previously the biggest town in Europe without a train station – is finally going to get linked in to the rail network as part of a major regeneration project

### So last century...



**Boy racers** The new "when's the last time you just went for a drive" Golf ad leaves us wondering when Volkswagen last reviewed its marketing strategy.



**Too much baggage** A recent neighbourhood renewal event held in the SW provided no public transport options and dished out a baffling array of branded freebies (...plastic keyrings, rucksacks, shoe-cleaning kits!) to bemused delegates. A visit to the SW's 'Greener Events Guide' could have saved their blushes:

<http://www.oursouthwest.com/SusBus/gevents.html>

The Sust'Ometer:

## On your radar?

- The new DEFRA report on how UK regions are doing on delivering their 'Big Ideas' for sustainability? (see **separate attachment** – check out the summary of SW activity)
- The powerful new IPCC report, *Climate Change 2007: mitigation of climate change*. Go to: <http://www.ipcc.ch/SPM040507.pdf> to see the 'summary for policy makers' and check out the key mitigation technologies and practices currently commercially available.
- Two new Sustainable Development Commission reports from [www.sd-commission.org.uk](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk):
  - *Healthy futures: the natural environment, health and well being*
  - *Building houses or creating communities?*

## Up & coming...

- Sustainable Development Commission report on the Severn Barrage proposal – watch this space.
- SSW's Sustainability Summit 2007 at the National Maritime Museum, Falmouth. This years 3 big issues for debate by SSW members and guest speakers are:
  - Supporting leadership to tackle climate change
  - meeting our maritime sustainability challenges
  - Championing enhanced urban green space networks within the growth agenda

We'll report back on key messages from our Summit in the next *Sustainability Now*

## Over to YOU

Remember – we're your friendly, 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 problems in adopting a more sustainable approach let us know so we can feed back messages on your behalf.

You can also tell us about key regional events coming up over the next month so we can include this in our next edition of *Sustainability Now*. **Deadline for submissions: close of Tues 24<sup>th</sup> July.**

## Other news from Sustainability South West

More SSW news available on our new look website at: [www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk)

...regular updates on SSW coordinated projects available from:

*Fair Shares, Fair Choice* – the SW's growing low carbon movement [www.fairsharesfairchoice.com](http://www.fairsharesfairchoice.com)

*Sustainability Shaper* – the SW's new sustainable development framework [www.shapersw.net](http://www.shapersw.net)

*Future Foundations* – the SW's sustainable construction Charter [www.futurefoundations.co.uk](http://www.futurefoundations.co.uk)

*Future Footprints* – the SW's sustainable tourism visitor campaign [www.futurefootprints.org.uk](http://www.futurefootprints.org.uk)

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

### PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW CONTACT DETAILS:

Sustainability South West, 2 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EH t. 0117 900 1751 f. 0117 900 1909  
[www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk)

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