

February 2010

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.'

LUV sustainability? Carbon is not the only fruit!

Dear (much loved) readers – we thought it timely to bring a little romance into your lives in this edition. But how can one 'romance' in a sustainable way?! Perhaps a brisk stroll with a loved one in an inspiring greenspace is the way to get the blood pumping (see Planting Places winners announced below – celebrating top green spaces that are contributing to sustainability 'in the round'). For other enticing options to toy with, check out our special Valentines Day feature below...



Meanwhile, with the launch this week of the new Low Carbon Industrial Strategy, the UK is being urged to adopt an industrial strategy which goes 'beyond carbon' to maintain employment levels and a competitive, sustainable advantage in global markets. Competing agendas relating to water resources, food production and vital life supporting ecosystems will need some new careful, long term integrated policy-making.

More broadly, we need to be asking how we *all* will achieve the transition to living within environmental limits whilst at the same time improving our well-being and sharing the benefits of prosperity more equally. SSW, in partnership with Defra/Government Office for the South West, the Regional Development Agency and South West Councils, is putting this question to decision makers from across the region, including politicians from all the main parties. How and who will skill up a new generation of 'integrators' to join up these different agendas? We will report back to you later in the year.

It's clear that achieving a truly sustainable future will require more than single minded carbon counting – it'll need the whole fruit bowl. So back to our theme – feeling fruity anyone....?!

This month's other SustainabilityNow headlines at a glance:

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Planting Places greenspace awards – Winners announced

Congratulations to the winners of the 3rd Planting Places Awards (listed below), recognising greenspaces that are making fantastic contributions to the sustainability of their communities. The awards, coordinated by SSW and supported by Natural England, NHS South West, SW Regional Development Agency and Arup, were 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 ten winners vary from being privately funded, community-run, conservation group, NHS Trust or council land, and represent a great spread of the region, but all are free and accessible to the public, and for public use and enjoyment.

The 2010 Planting Places Award winners are:

- Apex Leisure and Wildlife Park, Highbridge, Somerset (pictured, right)
- The Chiswell Earthworks, Portland, Dorset
- Hayle Library Community and Wildlife Garden, Hayle, Cornwall
- Kemble Community Gardens, Cirencester, Gloucestershire
- Morrab Garden, Penzance, Cornwall
- Oakfrith Wood, nr Devizes, Wiltshire
- Pentylands Country Park, Highworth, Wiltshire
- St. Gurons Way, Bodmin, Cornwall
- Steeple Woodland, St Ives, Cornwall
- Young's Park Conservation Area, Paignton, Devon



Coming soon: winners case studies will available shortly on the Planting Places website, www.plantingplaces.org.uk.

Sustainable Valentine's Day

Tips on a sustainable Valentine's Day this 14 February...

- Choose an e-card for your meaningful messages this year – it's even guaranteed to arrive on Valentine's Sunday itself unlike its snail mail counterpart.
- For chocolate lovers, make it fair-trade.
- Support local flower farmers and buy seasonal flowers from the region – or, even better, a plant to last with local garden centres an ideal place to look for locally grown plants.
- Impress with a home cooked meal – have you visited your local farmers market or signed up to a box-scheme for fresh, seasonal produce to use?
- Why not substitute out of season strawberries with an assortment of fruits including: apples, bananas, blood oranges, kiwi fruit, oranges, passion fruit, pears, pineapple, pomegranate, satsumas and tangerines. Cut into pieces and serve with melted fair-trade chocolate for a 'fabulous in February fondue!' For other seasonal cooking ideas visit www.bbc.co.uk/food/in_season/february.shtml.
- When it comes to wine, rather than purchase a bottle flown across the world, enjoy any number of award winning wines from on our doorstep in the South West instead!
- Save money, save carbon and still be romantic with a walk or picnic somewhere special with your loved one.
- Thinking of lingerie this Valentine's? Look out for ranges made from organic cotton, bamboo, organic silk, hemp, wool or soya.
- And, to practice ethically sound and safe romance, choose fair-trade condoms.

And whilst you are 'feeling fruity' you could also check out new Oscar nominate documentary Food, Inc. opening on 15 February (South West screenings in Bath, Bristol, Exeter and Plymouth). Food, Inc. seeks to lift the veil surrounding the food industry in America, and to reveal, in Director's Robert Kenner's own words, "the truth about what we are eating" and the crucial issue of how we are to feed the world's growing population whilst at the same time addressing climate change and protecting our environment for future generations – see www.foodincmovie.co.uk/ for more information.

Renewed urgency on securing international treaty called for by Environment Agency chief

In recent keynote address Environment Agency Chairman Lord Smith urged that the media storm about the reliability of climate data not be allowed to halt action to combat the causes and consequences of climate change. "Recent challenges to one or two points in the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports do not mean that we do not need to worry anymore. Sloppily expressed emails at the University of East Anglia were irresponsible and very damaging. A blithe assumption that the Himalayan glaciers may melt by 2035 – when they won't – should never have been inserted in the IPCC report. But let's not allow one or two errors to undermine the overwhelming strength of evidence that has been painstakingly accumulated, peer reviewed, tested and tested again, and that shows overwhelmingly that our emissions of greenhouse gases are having a serious impact on the earth's atmosphere, and that as a result climate change is happening and will accelerate."

National Trust to green its country houses

The National Trust, the charity protecting the nation's heritage, has promised to cut its reliance on fossil fuel within the next decade, vowing to reduce its emissions for heat and electricity by 45%.

To make the cuts the trust will use more wood, solar, heat pumps, hydro and wind across its entire building stock of 300 historic houses, office buildings, visitor centres and 360 holiday cottages. SSW President Jonathon Porritt said "This is exactly the kind of ambition level we need to help us navigate our way towards a low-carbon society. Millions of people will be inspired by the Trust's initiative, especially on some of its older properties. Its members will also benefit from the cost savings that these measures will secure - at a time of growing concern about both energy and carbon prices." Through the plan the charity could save around £6m of its yearly heating and electricity bills. See: www.edie.net/news/news_story.asp?id=17652&channel=0&title=National+Trust+to+green+its+country+houses

Ed Miliband responds to Copenhagen Accord deadline

Commenting on the publication by the UNFCCC of pledges by 55 countries to cut and limit greenhouse gas emissions, Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Miliband said:

“Just one month after Copenhagen, countries accounting for nearly 80% of global emissions have shown they’re pushing ahead with domestic action on climate change. With countries including the USA, China and India setting out what they will do, this is a significant change compared with just twelve months ago. There is now a world-wide recognition that cutting emissions and moving to a low carbon economy is the right thing to do. But there’s still more to do and we’ll continue to push for bold cuts in emissions as well as a comprehensive, legally binding climate change framework under the UN. A global climate deal is vital to Britain – helping us protect the environment, boost green jobs and enhance our energy security.”

On your radar?

Green Up! Five ways to work with your council on the environment and sustainability – free report

A new guide for community groups has been published by The Community Development Foundation. ‘Green Up!’ explains how community groups can use everything from Council’s Local Area Agreements to Sustainable Community Strategies to get their work supported and is packed full of practical examples including from Transition Towns, civic societies and faith groups. The guide explains vocabulary commonly used by councils, so local groups can clearly understand ‘council speak’. It also has tips from community group members successfully working with their councils on issues relating to sustainability, climate change, the environment and energy. Download the report at:

www.cdf.org.uk/web/guest/publication?id=142955.



The Sustainability Challenge: Implementing Change that Doesn't Cost the Earth – free report

This free guide follows on from last year’s ‘The Sustainability Challenge: implications for chief executives in the third sector’, published by Third Sector Leaders ACEVO. With a range of case studies, the report shows that addressing sustainability is a critical strategy in developing strong and effective third sector organisations. Delivering on sustainability is increasingly what partners, funders and commissioners want. And with the ethos of preventing problems before they happen, the third sector has a major role to play in planning a more resource-efficient future. Download both reports at the free publications section of Acevo’s website: www.acevo.org.uk/Page.aspx?pid=1519&dm_i=6FP,32EQ,12IEJJ,9YIR,1.



Green Belts: a Greener Future – free report

This new report, produced by Natural England and the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), is the first major survey of the environmental state of Green Belt land and the benefits it provides for people and wildlife. Helen Phillips, Natural England’s Chief Executive, said: “By containing urban sprawl, the Green Belt has been a great success story of post-war planning. We need to look at ways in which it can expand on its success to date and play a full role in supporting England’s wider network of protected areas and open spaces. The Green Belt is an important environmental resource that, managed effectively, can help tackle climate change, support wildlife and provide health and leisure opportunities for millions to enjoy.” Download the report at: <http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/ne196>.

Cash rewards for low carbon electricity and heating

Households and communities who install generating technologies such as small wind turbines and solar panels will from April be entitled to claim payments for the low carbon electricity they produce. Power from solar panel could earn £900, on top of £140 reduction on household energy bill. For more information see:

www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/lfi/410754.

Entries open for The Blue Mile - Race for the Environment

The Blue Mile - Race for the Environment is the UK’s newest mass-participation event designed to engage people actively with our blue environment. It will be open to everyone to take part and complete a mile in, on or next to a water environment. The inaugural event will take place in Plymouth this summer. The Blue Mile - Race for the Environment aims to increase participation in our natural environment and provide a learning experience to help encourage more people to take steps to care for the health of our planet. For more information, or to enter, please visit www.thebluemile.org.

South West Built Environment Awards 2010 – now open for applications

The award Categories for this year’s SWBE Awards are: CIOB Building Manager of the Year Awards; Integration & Collaborative Working Award; Future Foundations Legacy Award; SME Award; Innovation Award; Value Award; Leadership & People Development Award; Health & Safety Award; Client of the Year Award; Achiever’s Award; Project of the Year Award and, new for 2010, Heritage Award. The application pack and entry form is available to download at: www.buildsw.org.uk/2010%20Awards. Deadline for entries is 8 March.



2010 Green Gown Awards – deadline for applications, 19 February

The leading Sustainability Awards Scheme for universities and college across the UK is currently welcoming applications from all institutions in the FE, HE and the Learning and Skills Sectors. The deadline for applications is 12 Noon, 19 February. For more information and to apply, visit: www.eauc.org.uk/green_gown_awards_2010.

Have your Say on Dorset cycle Network

Dorset County Council is drafting a Cycling Strategy which will set the future direction for cycling in Dorset. DCC wishes to work in partnership with stakeholders and the public to identify where people would like to see new cycle routes. They have developed an online interactive route mapping tool, available at: www.dorsetforyou.com/haveyoursaycyclenetwork. Proposed routes can also be sent via email at: HaveYourSayCycleNetwork@dorsetcc.gov.uk or by post.

Green makeover for low carbon winners in the South West

Seven communities across England have awarded grants of up to £500,000 each to help install new green technologies— two are in the South West. Exmoor National Park will use its grant to help fund renewable energy projects such as wood pellet heating and solar installations in six communities that have been participating in community sustainable energy planning. Ladock and Grampound Road in mid-Cornwall plan to upgrade homes, schools, community halls and businesses with a combination of energy efficiency measures and microgeneration technology. Read more at: www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/Ifi/410909.

2008 final UK greenhouse gas emissions figures, updated 2 February 2010

Emissions on an end-user basis, broken down for each carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous dioxide, show a continued decline in greenhouse gas emissions of nearly 2% during 2008. See: www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/climate_change/gg_emissions/uk_emissions/2008_final/2008_final.aspx

Promoting health and well-being: reducing inequalities – free guide

This guide has been developed to assist commissioners to make the most of the best methods of promoting health, using the latest understanding of how they can support people to make healthy choices as individuals within the social and environmental contexts in which they live. Download the report at: www.rsph.org.uk/download.cfm?docid=36B243B7-B455-4893-8AB7157AB86353B9.

All on one 'plate'

The Food Standards Agency is to expand its eatwell website to bring together all government information on food aimed at consumers. Advice on food safety and healthy eating will be integrated with information on a wide range of other topics relevant to consumers' food choices, with a particular focus on environmental and wider sustainability issues. The Agency will work closely with other government departments and bodies over the coming year and it plans to launch the remodelled website in spring 2011.

Up & coming...events around the region

Sustainable Market Towns, Market and Coastal Towns SW conference, 20 February, Tiverton, Devon

The second conference for Market and Coastal Towns in the South West will explore the theme, how can we make our communities more sustainable? Speakers include SSW Board Member Cate le Grice-Mack. To book your free place, contact your County's Forum or Laura Pictor on laura.pictor@wfcap.org.

Skills for the Future – South West Observatory policy seminar, 24 February, Government Office, Bristol

Free policy seminar hosted by a SWO Local Intelligence Network, looking at issues surrounding skills for the future. Programme and booking form at: www.swo.org.uk/events/seminars-2009-10/.

Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, 25 February, Weston-super-Mare

This free event organised by Department for Work and Pensions, Third Sector European Network, South West Action on Poverty and South West Forum will raise awareness of poverty in the South West particularly in rural and coastal communities, highlight current activity and explore ways in which action to combat poverty can be increased. Confirmed speaker: Regional Minister Jim Knight MP. For full details visit www.southwestforum.org.uk.

IRIS research seminar series, 26 February and 11 March, University of Gloucestershire

International Research Institute in Sustainability seminar series speakers are: Professor Sharon Turnbull, Leadership Trust on 'From Global to Worldly Leadership - uncovering ancient and indigenous leadership wisdoms for a more sustainable world' and former SSW Board Member Dr John Blewitt, Director Lifelong Learning Centre, Aston University on 'Last Turtle Standing: the use of still and moving images in conservation education and communication'. For more info visit www.glos.ac.uk/iris and to book email Seek Pang, spang@glos.ac.uk.

Sustainable Business Breakfast: Carbon Reduction Commitment, 2 March, Bordeaux Quay, Bristol

The March SBB session will be looking at the Carbon Reduction Commitment, the UK's mandatory carbon reduction and energy saving scheme which is due to start in April 2010. The guest speaker is Anthony Peake, Chief Operating Officer, Sustain IT Solutions. For more information and to register for this event (fee: £10) go to: www.sustainablebreakfast.org.

Green Your Workplace with Help from the Experts...Your Staff, 17 March, Watershed, Bristol – free event

When it comes to greening your workplace and improving your environmental performance the workforce is critical. Money saving from resource efficiency is something every organisation can benefit from. This half-day free event invites businesses to look at engaging with their workforce on resource efficiency and greening the workplace. It will introduce you to Bristol case studies of workforce involvement and colleague to colleague engagement and ways in which your organisation can use the workforce to green your workplace. Organised by the South West TUC in partnership with Bristol Green Capital this event is open to anyone from trade union representatives to managers wanting to get more of their colleagues engaged and involved in greening their workplace. The event is aimed at employees at all levels interested in saving resources. Lunch will be provided.

'Under pressure' – with evermore limited financial & natural resources – how can leaders embed sustainability to deliver more efficient, resilient communities?

SSW's annual Local to Regional conference, 23 March at the Watershed, Bristol

Invites are being sent to key local and regional organisations to ensure full cross-sector representation at this event. Please let us know if you would like further details. For more information, email: freiny.miles@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk.



UK Public Health Association Annual Forum, 24 and 25 March, Bournemouth International Centre

'Confronting the Public Health Crisis' The UK Public Health Association is dedicated to reducing inequalities in public health and is eager to share with and learn from colleagues across the country. The conference will feature presentations from leading figures in the public health arena, exhibition and networking. For more information visit www.ukpha.org.uk/annual-public-health-forum.aspx.

Creating Excellence conference, Getting Places Together: Local Engagement in Changing Times, 25 March, Taunton

Creating Excellence's spring conference this conference will focus on how, in practical terms, we can become more responsive to communities, and what is meant by words like 'localism' and 'engagement'. A programme and registration form is available at: www.creatingexcellence.org.uk.

South West Observatory Annual Conference: 'Health, Wealth and Happiness: What Makes a Prosperous Region?', 31 March, Assembly Rooms, Bath

Bringing together a broad range of expertise to consider how notions of prosperity are correlated, how to measure a common understanding of prosperity, and bring it about. Confirmed speakers and panellists include: Jonathon Porritt (Forum for the Future/SSW), Dr Gabriel Scally (NHS), Dr Sara Eppel (Defra), Nigel Jump (South West RDA), Dame Suzi Leather (Charity Commission), Prof Katie Williams (UWE) and Melanie Hall (NFU). For more information and booking details visit: www.swo.org.uk/events/conference-2010/.

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: close of 3 March 2010.

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 – campaign for fair, safe carbon shares for all 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

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