

Sustainability Now

March-April 2008



Welcome to Sustainability Now



Children's TV favourite Timothy Claypole from the Rentaghost series of the 70s and 80s

April fools! We thought it would be appropriate to theme this *Sustainability Now* around all things foolish. Fools come in many forms. SSW aspires to tell the (sometimes unpalatable) truth and act as that tough combination of a 'critical friend'....the classic 'Shakespearian fool' perhaps?

March's budget contained a few green nuggets...but was it really just a case of 'fool's gold' where sustainability was concerned? Recently we attended the SW debate on globalisation (part of the Regional Development Agency series – see www.swdebates.info). Speaker Jonathon Porritt did not fool around in presenting delegates with well-informed truths about the urgent social and environmental risks facing the global economy. Digby Jones, on the other hand, was left looking more than a little foolish with his espousal of the market in air freighted flowers as a positive example of globalisation supporting communities in the developing world – no mention of the tragic consequences of siphoning off water in drought prone areas to grow exotic blooms...or that climate change impacts exacerbated by high carbon activities, like air freighting, will hit those very communities the hardest. If this is the thinking of a government 'sustainable trade & investment' expert, the new financial year is surely the time to ensure 'we don't get fooled again'.

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

◆ *Local to Regional Sustainability Forum event 2008 – round up* ◆ *Finalists announced for SW C+ Carbon Positive Awards* ◆ *Future Footprints event – getting real benefit from tourism* ◆ *Sust'Ometer* ◆ *On your radar?* ◆ *Up & Coming* ◆ *Over to YOU*

As a network of influential individuals your feedback on *Sustainability Now* is very valuable. You can send comments to info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk and view back issues at www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/sustainability_now (let us know if you've colleagues who need adding to our e-distribution list).

Local to Regional Sustainability Forum event 2008 – round up

Thanks to everyone who participated in SSW's Local to Regional Sustainability Forum 2008 (held on the 6 March at the Winter Gardens, Weston-super-Mare). This year's theme was 'Achieving genuinely sustainable resilient communities' with a particular focus on the region's growth areas and the role of greenspace. The event attracted councillors, local strategic partnerships, planners, regional agencies, community groups and NGOs. Delegates were treated to some lively key note speakers including renowned Bristol based architect George Ferguson and visiting Birmingham LSP officer Keith Budden, who outlined the pioneering work that the partnership are undertaking to improve the city whilst shrinking its carbon footprint. The greenspace themed afternoon included the *Planting Places* awards ceremony (see www.plantingplaces.org.uk) – an opportunity to hear from some truly inspiring greenspaces – along with workshops exploring the opportunities (and barriers) to sustainable approaches to urban greenspace in the region. Full details of the event – including delegate packs, speaker powerpoints and workshop notes – will be available soon on the 'Local to Regional' page of SSW's website (see www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk 'Projects').



Finalists announced for SW C+ Carbon Positive Awards

Stop press! Finalists have been shortlisted for the Regional Development Agency's (SWRDA) first South West Carbon Positive Awards, managed by Sustainability South West (SSW) and Business in the Community (BiTC). The judging panel, including representatives from SWRDA, BT, Viridor Waste, Carbon Sense, Wessex Water, BiTC and SSW, met yesterday to decide the shortlist. All those selected will be invited to the Awards ceremony on 1 May at Exeter Met Office, as part of HRH The Prince of Wales's May Day Business Summit on Climate Change 2008.



8 awards will be presented across 5 categories. Finalists in the 5 award categories are Alistair Sawday, Commercial Ltd, Leap Media, Ecclesiastical Insurance PLC, EDF Energy and Wessex Water (for 'Carbon Positive Footprints' – organisations who have significantly reduced their carbon footprint); Nutshell Paints, Rosemullion Homes and Who Cares? (for 'Carbon Positive Consumer Choices' – organisations who are offering customers low carbon products and services), Good Energy, Kensa Engineering, Plug into the Sun and Dyson (for 'Carbon Positive Cutting Edge' – the innovation category); Bovey Tracey, Knowle West Media Centre, Devon County Council, United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust and Urchfont Parish (for 'Carbon Positive Communities'); and Mallinson Ltd and The Limes Bed & Breakfast (for 'Carbon Positive Micro' – exemplary low carbon micro businesses). From the winners of the above categories one overall winner will also be chosen – the 'Carbon Positive Pioneer 2008' – and will receive a specially commissioned low carbon trophy. For more information about the awards, please visit: www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/policy/south-west-c-carbon.shtm

Future Footprints event – getting real benefit from tourism

Future Footprints, the SSW coordinated sustainable tourism campaign 'to keep the South West special', is inviting decision-makers and policy officers who want to get more out of local tourism to a truly motivational event on Friday 25 April. The day will highlight top examples of how to maximise the positive economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism. Delegates will hear from top UK initiatives – from a Welsh project engaging a third of local tourism businesses in using and promoting local foods to sustainable transport initiatives at the National Trust – and get ideas on supporting the region's 26m visitors make sustainable choices. For more info or to book one of the limited places, please email lynn.gibbons@futurefootprints.org.uk or phone 0117 900 1751. Info and booking form also available from www.futurefootprints.org.uk/ffprints.php?stylesheet=style&page=news#



Sussed!



Reprieve for popular SW 'green corridor' Bristol City Council's controversial plan to build a rapid transit bus route along the Bristol and Bath railway path has been shelved, albeit only temporarily. The railway path, hugely popular with cyclists and walkers, was one of ten examples of SW urban greenspaces recognised by SSW's *Planting Places* awards see www.plantingplaces.org.uk Let's hope that the council continues to take the concerns of the community on board – see www.railwaypath.org



Blades of Glory! The Environment Agency has commissioned its first onsite wind turbine which will be installed at its Launceston depot in Cornwall. It is expected to generate 20% the building's electricity needs, saving up 6.5 CO₂ tonnes per year.



Holidays in the sun Tehidy Holiday Park in Redruth has had 12m² of state-of-the-art solar technology installed by Cornish renewable energy specialists Capture Energy. The solar energy will help provide hot water for 7,000 guests during the season and could cut the park's electricity bill by £2,000 a year. The park's managers hope the solar energy will attract visitors, giving it a competitive edge.



Car-free Tuesdays The Chooseday campaign in Bristol aims to encourage people to leave their cars at home on Tuesday to reduce their carbon footprint whilst helping to alleviate the city's congestion see www.chooseday.org



A lotta allotments Councils are struggling to keep up with soaring demand for allotments as more and more people are getting the 'grow-your-own' organic produce bug, The Independent newspaper has reported (23 March). According to the Local Government Association 2000,000 allotments have been lost since the 1970s. The Guardian has also reported a trend in gardeners replacing flower borders with veggie patches, perhaps in response to rising food prices (22 March).



Cornwall gets active Cornwall Mobilise! Is one of ten new BIG Lottery funded 'Active Travel' projects working to increase walking and cycling in deprived communities in England. The scheme will run in every Cornish local authority area and target those most at risk from sedentary lifestyles including younger and older people. For more info see www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?sID=1144332723000&dm_i=213638164



Welsh Hospitals to junk the junk Junk food will be banned from hospital vending machines in Wales in efforts to tackle obesity and other diet-related conditions <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/7311326.stm>

These foolish things...



Carbon accounting fraud?

The National Audit Office has suggested that the UK's greenhouse gas emissions may be 12% higher than officially stated due confused use of 2 different carbon accounting systems across Government departments (see www.nao.org.uk/publication/s/0708_greenhouse_gas_emissions.pdf). The system which the Government uses to calculate emissions for the UN, and which are presented to the public, alarmingly does not include emissions from aviation and shipping. Use of the more accurate 'national accounts' system reveals no reductions in UK emissions since 1990 levels. Surely such inconsistencies will have to be addressed in the new Climate Change Bill? The Government are only fooling themselves...



End of the line? The Liberal Democrats have cited figures to back the claim that under New Labour, Britain's road network has grown 15 times faster than our rail infrastructure. Motorways have grown by 405 miles – compared to just 27 miles for rail – and commanded 10 times the expenditure. According to the Lib Dems the length of the railway network actually fell 185 miles between 1994-2004.

The Sust'Ometer:

Please contact SSW if you would like more info on the source of any story

On your radar?

Don't miss out – Shaper bulletin Are you signed up to the *Sustainability Shaper* bulletin? The Shaper is the SW's online sustainable development framework, housing our sustainability Mission and Principles. Specialist Shaper modules are being developed including Economic Development (complete); Sustainable Communities (in development); Leadership for Sustainability (in development); Learning & Skills (overseen by the SW Learning for Sustainability Coalition); delivering the Integrated Regional Strategy (complete); Natural Environment (coming soon); Heritage (coming later this year) with discussions also being held with partners in sectors such as health. Go to www.shapersw.net and 'join up as a Shaper' ensure you are kept up to date with Shaper developments and resources.

SW built environment awards 2008 The Chartered Institute of Building and Constructing Excellence SW have joined forces to celebrate good practice in construction. The SW winners will go forward to a national final taking place on 13 November at Lords Cricket Ground Pavilion. The 11 award categories are: Building Manager of the Year; Integration & Collaborative Working; The Legacy Award – Sustainability; SME Award; Innovation; Value; Leadership & People

Development; Health & Safety; Client of the Year; The Achiever's Award; and Project of the Year. Deadline extended to 5pm on 11 April. Entry form at: www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/ceawards/southwest/entryform.jsp

Online hub for the 'Slow Revolution' Ever feel like life is flying by too fast?? A new website 'Slow Planet' – see www.slowplanet.com – has been set up as a global hub for the slow movement. To quote: 'Slow is not about doing everything at a snail's pace; it's *about working, playing and living better by doing everything at the right speed.*'

People's Millions funding March saw the launch of the 4th annual Big Lottery and ITV's People's Millions contest which will fund 90 new projects. People will vote in how lottery money is spent via 4 televised head-to-head competitions in November. The 72 winning projects will be joined by 18 'bonus awards' for highest vote runners ups. Orgs across the SW have til 15 May to enter with grants of up to £50k. For more info see www.peoplesmillions.org.uk

Food Standards Agency consultation on sustainable development The FSA is seeking the public's views on its approach to embedding sustainable development into its policy-making, covering how it undertakes assessments, how it contributes to broader sustainable development aims and its approach to partnership working. Responses are required by 3 June – see www.food.gov.uk/consultations/ukwideconsults/2008/sd0803

Up & coming...

Climate Change Bill – action...this week! In the run up to the Bill being voted on in spring 2008, 100s of climate change themed events will be taking place around the country between 30 March – 5 April. Events in the region include the Friends of the Earth 'Big Ask' Day of Action on 5 April and your chance to meet your MP. For more information and to find out how you can do your bit to stop climate chaos visit: http://icount.org.uk/get_involved

World Health Day 2008: protecting health from climate change This year's World Health Day, on 7 April, takes the theme "Protecting health from climate change" in recognition that climate change is posing ever growing threats to global public health security. A range of activities in every country will aim to stimulate active, long-term involvement as well as offer an opportunity to revitalize political commitment to addressing climate change. A toolkit to help in planning activities for World Health Day 2008 and beyond is available, providing information on how different sectors can play a role in the celebrations. For further info and the toolkit visit www.who.int/world-health-day/en/index.html

Professional Development for Social Enterprise Advisors Endorsed by SFEDI, a training course covering all the SFEDI social enterprise standards is running in Bristol 22-24 April. For more information, please visit www.rise-sw.co.uk/training or email events@rise-sw.co.uk

Bristol Architecture Centre launches Spring Green 2008 Suburbs could be the housing solution of the future, according to The Architecture Centre, Bristol, which launches its annual Spring Green programme of events, exhibitions and talks later this month. The theme of Spring Green 2008 is 'Shaping Sustainable Neighbourhoods', confronting issues such as housing growth and climate change and considering how suburbs can be designed to create sustainable, healthy and enjoyable places to live. Up-and-coming exhibitions and events include: 'Tomorrow's Garden City: a sustainable approach to modern living' (on now til 27 April); 'Transition City: preparing for peak oil' (29 April – 8 June); 'An eco-village on our doorstep: building the future' talk at Hanham Hall at 18.30 on 3 April; 'Is the Green Belt sacred?' talk/debate (with presentations from James Heartfield and Paul Miner) at 18.30 on 24 April For further information visit www.architecturecentre.co.uk/events/spring_green_2008

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. You can also tell us about local and regional events coming up over the next month so we can include this in the next edition *Sustainability Now*.

Contact us at: info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk **Deadline for submissions: close of Friday 25 April.**

Other news from Sustainability South West

More SSW news available on our new look website at:

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

Sustainability Shaper – the SW's regional sustainable development framework

www.shapersw.net

Future Foundations – the SW's sustainable construction charter

www.futurefoundations.co.uk

Future Footprints – the SW's sustainable tourism visitor campaign

www.futurefootprints.org.uk

Planting Places – networks for SW urban greenspace project

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

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