

## Welcome to Sustainability Now

September had a distinctly political feel with Gordon Brown's first Labour party conference as PM and early election rumours. Brown's conference address contained plenty of green rhetoric – from environmental stewardship and eco-towns to green technologies – meanwhile the Lib Dems have vowed to carbon neutralise Britain by 2050 and the Tories have published their 'Blueprint for a Green Economy'. While the parties jostle for sustainability positioning, SSW's mantra remains the same: 'integration, integration, integration'. Are our leaders visionary enough to integrate the *full range* of sustainability principles into *all* their policies and programmes? In the region we can use the principles of our sustainable development framework ([www.shapersw.net](http://www.shapersw.net)) as our integration guide – no matter what sector we work in. Further to the release of the Sustainable Development Commission's report on tidal power, which considers the sustainability of Severn barrage proposals and recommends a number of conditions (see [www.sd-commission.org.uk](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk)), the region now has an opportunity to apply its sustainable development principles to the proposals. SSW continues to champion an integrated and sustainable approach in all our strategic project work.



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

- *Planting Places* – calling all urban greenspace champions!
- *Fair Shares, Fair Choice* – a political and legal boost
- Tesco – every little helps?
- 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](mailto:info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk) and view back issues at [www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/sustainability\\_now](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/sustainability_now) (let us know if you've colleagues who need adding to our e-distribution list).

## ***Planting Places – calling all urban greenspace champions!***

Are you someone who recognises the *growing* importance of greenspace networks for sustainability? Do you have a vision for the 'garden' towns and cities of the future? Would you like a stronger voice in debates about the development of the region? If so then SSW, and partners Natural England, Defra and English Heritage, need your help to plant the seeds of *truly* sustainable urban communities in the South West. *Planting Places* will identify, celebrate and award 10 brilliant examples of urban greenspace in the region and share the stories of the people that care for and champion them. The initiative will also support the regional networking of urban greenspace champions to strengthen their voice in regional developments. This year's *Planting Places* programme will culminate in an event for planners, regeneration workers and greenspace champions (March 2008) and the production of specialist urban greenspace guidance for everyone involved in urban development. See [www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/projects/planting\\_places](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/projects/planting_places) for more info, to register your interest and to nominate your top examples of South West urban greenspaces and their champions.



## ***Fair Shares, Fair Choice – a political and legal boost***

In September FSFC welcomed its first MP, a UK top 100 law firm, a sustainable transport guru and a further council to its growing low carbon movement. On signing up, Martin Horwood, Lib Dem MP for Cheltenham, described FSFC as an "excellent" resource, whilst TLT Solicitors and their staff were keen to add their name to the movement after meeting FSFC reps at their special green day in Bristol. Swindon Borough Council joins Dorset and Wiltshire county councils and Exeter City council, swelling the number of leading authorities in the region to four.

John Grimshaw, Chief Executive of sustainable transport charity Sustrans, who have also signed up, has offered his VIP backing to FSFC. John thinks FSFC complements Sustrans' practical work to help people to reduce their carbon footprint through cycling and walking. In all, a further 60 individuals added their name to the FSFC supporter list in September, many finding out about the initiative at our stall at the Bristol International Kite Festival (1-2 September). If you're making choices towards living within a fair carbon share, add your name to the *Fair Shares, Fair Choice* movement and share your story at [www.fairsharesfairchoice.com](http://www.fairsharesfairchoice.com) Please help us reach our end of year target of 1000 supporters by letting your friends, family and colleagues know about the initiative!

## ***Tesco – every little helps?***

"The global threat from climate change is now clearer than ever. The whole economy has to change" – so says Sir Terry Leahy, Chief Executive of Tesco. In a recent newspaper interview Leahy recognised that 'developed' countries

need to make big changes to their business practices if we are to make the necessary deep cuts in carbon emissions. Leahy looks to have put his money where his mouth is with £25m pledge for research into low carbon business practices.

## Sussed!



**SW making waves** Planning permission was granted in September for the world's largest wave farm off the coast of Cornwall. The farm will generate enough electricity to power 7,500 homes, meeting 3% of Cornwall's domestic electricity needs, and will save 300,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide over 25 years. It is expected to be fully operational by 2009, putting the SW at the forefront of wave energy technology.



**Banish the bag** 50 UK towns and cities have now joined the movement to phase out plastic bags. They are following the lead of Modbury in Devon which in April became the first town in the EU to banish the bag. Read Modbury's story at [www.plasticbagfree.com](http://www.plasticbagfree.com)



**Nottingham climate change declaration** The number of councils in the region signed up to the 'Nottingham Declaration' has reached an impressive 30, the SW Climate Change Impacts Partnership have reported. For more info visit [www.oursouthwest.com/climate/sectors/sectors.htm#LG](http://www.oursouthwest.com/climate/sectors/sectors.htm#LG)



**Berry good idea** Ribena will become the first UK soft drink company to use bottles made from 100% recycled *and* recyclable plastic. Blackcurrant flavoured Ribena will soon come in the new eco-bottles with ambitions to extend the green packaging to the full range within 6 months – pretty significant as Ribena sells 60m bottles of drink a year! For SSW's consumer guide to sustainable packaging go to [www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/projects/pioneers\\_of\\_packaging](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/projects/pioneers_of_packaging)



**Eco-clubbing!** The Sustainable Dance Project is helping the Netherland's clubbing capital, Rotterdam, to go green with dance-floors that capture kinetic energy to power the club's lights, décor from recycled materials and rainwater loos. The project leader, Michet Smit, hopes to take eco-clubbing world-wide.



**Is this a wind-up?** Trevor Baylis, inventor of the wind-up radio, has designed the wind-up 'eco-media player' which plays MP3s and videos, stores files, has a built in radio, sound recorder and torch and can also power your mobile. The player can be charged by hand or via a PC.



**Papal power** The Pope is set to publicly declare that climate action should be a moral obligation. The Vatican City is already the first state in the world to be 'carbon neutral' having offset its emissions by planting a forest in Hungary, and installing several solar panels.

The Sust'Ometer:

## So last century...



### Going, going, gone?

The Campaign to Protect Rural England warns that the English countryside could vanish by the end of the century. On current trends new housing, airport runways, motorways and power stations will replace green spaces, it is claimed. CPRE estimate that 40% of the SW, renowned for its natural beauty, has already been affected by substantial noise, light and visual pollution.



### The true price of a £6 dress

The Daily Mail recently highlighted the real costs of a high street bargain. An article looking at the garment making industry in Bangalore – the clothes export capital of India – exposed terrible conditions for many of its 400,000 textile workers. [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/femail/article.html?in\\_article\\_id=481538&in\\_page\\_id=1879](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/femail/article.html?in_article_id=481538&in_page_id=1879)

## On your radar?

**WWF and CAG 'community engagement and sustainable development'** This project asks the question 'when and why is community engagement likely to result in more sustainable decisions and lifestyles?'. It is hoped the research will inform future practice and policy. Find out more about the project and how you can be involved at: [www.wwflearning.org.uk/community-engagement](http://www.wwflearning.org.uk/community-engagement)

**Latest IPCC verdict** The latest study from the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has concluded that it is now 'very unlikely' that a global two degree Celsius temperature increase will be avoided. With climate change experts predicting that the best chance we have to avoid catastrophic, runaway climate change is to keep temperatures within a 2 degree increase, the report is a stark reminder of the need to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions immediately. Further information can be found at [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)

## Up & coming...

**Climate justice event** Environmental journalist and campaigner George Monbiot will be joined by other speakers Andrew Simms (New Economics Foundation) and Kate Raworth (Oxfam) at the 'Climate Change: a global injustice' event on Thursday 18 October at Broadmead Baptist Church, Bristol. For more info and tickets call Roger James at Oxfam on 0117 916 6473 or visit [www.agoraspace.org](http://www.agoraspace.org)

**ENVEC 'Making Sustainability Happen'** Climate change will be a major theme for ENVEC 2007, taking place on 10 October 2007 at Weston-super-Mare's Winter Gardens. Presentations addressing key regional sustainability issues, will be given by a panel of experts including representatives from DEFRA, the Sustainable Development Commission and the Association of British Insurers. Mark Lynas, climate change author and campaigner, will provide an introduction to SSW's *Fair Shares, Fair Choice* initiative. Delegates are then invited to talk to the experts and network with other delegates in the 'information zone'. Find out more at [www.oursouthwest.com/envec/#2007](http://www.oursouthwest.com/envec/#2007)

**South West Debates: 'More Than Meets the Eye'** On 13 November South West Debates is presenting two free events. At the Picture House, Exeter (12.15-13.15), climate change author Mark Lynas will be setting out the urgency of global warming and signing copies of his book 'Six Degrees: Our Future on a Hotter Planet'. From 17.30, at the Watershed, Bristol, Mark Edwards will deliver 'Hard Rain', a powerful presentation of his award winning environmental photographs set to the words of Bob Dylan. To reserve a place at either event (first come first served), email your contact details to [swdebates@southwestrda.org.uk](mailto:swdebates@southwestrda.org.uk) by 29 October.

**Regional Environment Network (REN) – sustainable community strategies, local area agreements and local strategic partnerships event** REN will be holding a plenary on 18 October at the Environment Agency in Exeter to explore how to maximise environmental outcomes from the process to develop local Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements. The free seminar is open to REN members, local government workers and their environmental partners across the region. To request a place please contact [maisie.davies@rspb.org.uk](mailto:maisie.davies@rspb.org.uk) SSW will be contributing to this event, based on our part Defra funded work to support a number of SW local authorities to embed sustainability into Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Area Agreements and more widely through Local strategic Partnerships.

**The Bristol Environmental Technology Sector Annual Conference and Venture Capital Forum** will be taking place on 1 November between 9.30-17.00 at Bristol Zoo Gardens. The event, supported by Bristol City Council and University, will address barriers to sector expansion and tips for attracting venture capital. Please email [molly.brown@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:molly.brown@bristol.gov.uk) or tel 0117 922 4472 to find out more.

**Milverton Climate Challenge Events** If you live in Somerset or nearby log on to [www.milvertonclimatechallenge.org.uk](http://www.milvertonclimatechallenge.org.uk) to find out about the latest events planned by Milverton Climate Challenge. These include the launch of their discounted eco-bulbs scheme on 6 October, an 'eco-retrofitting day' on the 20<sup>th</sup> (covering practical tips on loft insulation) and a fund-raising disco on the 9 November at Milverton's Victoria Rooms.

**Sustainable Construction events** Events in the region in October and November include Ecos Trusts' 'Self-build Surgery' session (4 October in Langport) and half day seminar on 'Renewable Energy: Policy and Practice' (25 October, S Somerset District Council, Yeovil). To find out more about either event (or to register your interest for a 'Make Mine an Eco Home' event – tbc) please visit [www.ecostrust.org.uk/seminars.html](http://www.ecostrust.org.uk/seminars.html) On 5 November a one day conference, 'Sustainable Construction: Are We There Yet?', is being held by RIBA Wessex and The Green Register at the Eden Project to explore the performance of 'sustainable buildings' and showcase 'eco' products and materials. For more info contact [mail@greenregister.org.uk](mailto:mail@greenregister.org.uk)

**Centre for Sustainable Transport launch** Plymouth University is launching a Centre for Sustainable Transport (CST) on 24 October. The CST builds on the University's distinguished history of teaching in this area. More information available at [www.ssb.plymouth.ac.uk/cst](http://www.ssb.plymouth.ac.uk/cst)

## 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 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 key regional events coming up over the next month so we can include this in our next edition of *Sustainability Now*.

**Contact us at:** [info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk](mailto:info@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk) **Deadline for submissions: close of Wednesday 24 October**

## 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 regional 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.'*

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**Disclaimer:** the views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of Sustainability South West's membership as a whole.