

Charles Mossman

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Subject: Sustainable Crediton Newsletter Issue 8 November 2010

Hello Everyone,

I seem to say this every month but yet again we have a packed edition of the Newsletter. It is very heartening to see the number of activities Sustainable Crediton supporters are getting involved with such as the new spinning group (detailed below) that is getting underway. It shows that individuals and community groups such as ours can and do make a real difference.

We are also delighted that our efforts were acknowledged by the Devon Community Foundation in October. They awarded us a very welcome grant (see more below). We came 2nd out of 38 applicants based on our work over the past 4 years. So congratulations to everyone for playing a part in this very real achievement. Lets continue making a difference.

ps. Please note that the PDF version of this newsletter will be sent to you in about a week. Sorry for the delay.

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1. Sustainable Crediton Events Nov 2010 onwards

Wed 10th Nov 7.30pm Core Group Meeting (contact Gerald for location)

Wed 24th Nov 9.30am to 12.30pm Sustainable Crediton workshop with MDDC at Pheonix House Tiverton (contact Gerald Conyngham for details)

Sat Nov 27th 11am to 2pm Food Group Seed Swop at Crediton Congregational Church (more details below)

Wed Dec 1st 8pm Food Group Planning Meeting, Park House, Sandford

Thurs Dec 2nd 7.30pm Endangered Plants and Herbal Medicine - talk at Crediton Arts Centre (more details below)

Thurs Dec 2nd 7.30pm Waste Action Group Planning Meeting at Jill's house

Fri 2nd to Sun 5th Dec Holy Cross Church Xmas Tree Festival with Sustainable Crediton's 'Living Tree'

Wed 15th Dec 7.30pm Core Group 'Mulled Wine and Nibbles' at John Downe's house

Sat Jan 29th 2011 Food Group, Seasonal Supper - more details to follow

Wed Jan 12th 2011 7.30pm Waste Action Group Planning Meeting

Sat 12th March 2011 11am to 3.30pm Waste Action Group Eco Fashion and Clothes Swop Day at Boniface Centre

2 New from The Action Groups

2.1 Waste Action Group

Visit to Punchbowl Recycling Centre

5 members of the group recently made a trip to Punchbowl Recycling Centre near Cridton to find out more about how the centre operates. We were given a comprehensive tour by Dominic Treacher of Devon Waste Management who are paid by Devon County Council to run all the recycling centres in Devon and who then subcontract the day to day work at Punchbowl to Sandy and her team who you see at the centre.

We were impressed by the range of waste which can be recycled. It includes TV's and all electrical equipment which are reprocessed in S. Wales and 98% of their content is reused. We were reminded that all unwanted white goods can be recycled at the Centre and that used engine oil taken there goes for burning in incinerators and used cooking oil is turned into bio-fuel locally. Household and garden chemicals can be taken there for disposal. All wood and wood related products collected are sorted and recycled in various streams depending on their content. Even plasterboard is recycled into fertiliser! Paper they can accept includes brown bags, Yellow Pages and envelopes and all clothing taken there is sorted for resale wherever possible. All told over 75% of the waste that arrives at the centre is recycled which is above the average for Devon recycling centres.

Sandy, the manager, explained that only 3 or 4 cars can unload at any one time in the marked bay. This is for safety reasons as, under the previous arrangements, someone who was unloading and not watching where they were going was hit by a car. She asks that patrons be patient awaiting a slot in the unloading bay. She suggests that wherever possible you make your visit there during the week as Sat and Sun are by far the busiest days. Certainly when we visited on a Friday morning most cars drove in and unloaded straight away with no waiting.

We will be keeping up a dialogue with the Centre from now on so if there is anything you wish to know or suggest about the operation of Punchbowl please let us know paula.mossman@lineone.net

2.2 Transport Group

"Now's the time to choose cheap local motoring', says John Skrine, chair of Transport group,

"We already have ten people who want to join Co- Cars either because they don't have a car, or would like to be able to save the cost of owning one, and the hassle of maintaining and parking it too. "If we can just double that number, we should be able to get the Club started. There's nothing to lose – the £50 deposit is returnable, then it's pay as you go for time and mileage. You can book the car from a few minutes beforehand to months in advance.

"If you drive less than 6,000 miles per year then a car club could save you up to £3,500 a year. On top of this, one car club car replaces around two dozen private cars, so will help the parking problem in the centre of town.

"Co-Cars have paid for printing the leaflets, which we have distributed, and believe that Cridton is a good place to expand to.

"Please let us know and bring a Co-car to Cridton"

Leaflets in Cridton Library, phone Laura Conyngham on 01363 773000, or email drive@co-cars.co.uk, and at www.co-cars.co.uk.

2.3 Food Group

2.3.1 [More than a] Seed Swap Saturday 27 November 11am to 2pm Cridton Congregational Church [opposite St Saviours Way]

If you have saved seeds this year, bring them to swap. If not, come anyway we'll have plenty of seeds of all sorts to spare for a small donation. Or just come for delicious coffee and cake or a seasonal soup and roll lunch. There will also be displays, information, advice and stalls including one for tree seedlings and perennial

plants and probably a herb stall. Linda Lever lindaandcolin@phonecoop.coop

2.3.2. Local Produce Website

Have you signed up yet for the monthly emails advertising special offers? It's easy to do and the mail is short and sweet. Go to www.creditonlocalproduce.co.uk to sign up on line. Keep looking at the site for new entries and seasonal recipes too.

2.3.3. Garden Share and Vegetable Gardening for Beginners

Do you want to start growing your own vegetables and fruit but don't know where to begin? We are hoping to run a session for beginners in February. If you are interested contact Anne on 01363 772 823 or catucker@btinternet.com

We are still looking for gardeners to take on growing some veg in the gardens we have available for the garden share scheme. You can contact Anne if you are interested in that too. She would also like some help for running the scheme.

2.3.4. Harvest Seasonal Supper

On the 9th September we had our largest seasonal supper to date, held at the Boniface Centre in Crediton. It was a real celebration of our local harvest with most of the ingredients sourced locally. Special thanks go to Linscombe Farm who yet again donated all the vegetables and as usual there were many comments about how tasty they were.

This time was slightly different to the previous suppers as seven brave volunteers sweated it out in the kitchen cooking for 31 guests. On the menu this time was pumpkin soup, pork fillet stuffed with chestnut, vegetarian chestnut, stilton and ale pie with seasonal vegetables followed by apple, pear and quince charlotte and sheep's yogurt, all for the bargain price of £7 ahead!

There was a lovely atmosphere and despite the large portions many people came back for seconds!

We are planning to have another supper at the end of January, a New Year celebration.

Finally on a practical note it is essential that people book and pay in advance. Your payment pays for the ingredients which we start buying 5-6 days before the event. I had to turn away about five people this time because we had already planned amounts and shopping lists etc, please don't be disappointed again!

If you are interested in more information contact Carol Lee 01363 82794 carollee3@googlemail.com or Ruth Beckley 01363 860260 ruth.beckley@which.net

2.4 Energy Group News

2.4.1. Photo Voltaics - could they be for you?

A Current Case Study - Part 4 Update on Performance and FIT payments

As recounted in part 3, our 22 panel 3.96 KWp PV system was commissioned on the 20th April and has now been generating electricity for a little over 6 months, through a beautiful summer and a reasonably sunny autumn. We are delighted with the performance so far. The output has exceeded our expectations. Already 3000KWh of electricity has been produced against a forecasted annual production of 3200KWh. Our best week's output was 174 units in the last week of May, whilst our lowest week was 65 units during the last week of August. We are exporting close to 80% of our production even though we are at home most days and have changed our habits to use our electrical appliances during the day wherever possible.

We have received one Feed-in Tariff payment so far, and another is due in November. To get the FIT payment we had to register our system with an electricity supplier, in our case Ecotricity. We had to provide Ecotricity with our MCS Installer Certificate which proved that both our installer and the solar panels were approved by the Government. Then Ecotricity registered us with Ofgem, the electricity industry regulator and provider of tariff payments. This paperwork only took about a month to come through and was very simple to do.

In an earlier part of this case study we looked at the theoretical economics of installing PV. Now we have

some firm data ! Up to the 29th September we generated 2576 units and exported 2033 of them. This will have produced an income of £1064 from the generation tariff and £61 from the export tariff, a total of £1125. We have also used 543 units of our electricity which would have cost us £67 on an electricity bill. So the total benefit to date is £1192. Our system cost £16000, so we have seen a 7.5% annual return based on less than 6 months performance. You can't equal that in any bank or building society account.

Our recommendation if you are thinking of having PV installed is to go ahead as quickly as possible and start to reap the benefits. The Government has confirmed in the spending review that the FIT scheme will continue as planned and they will not look at it again until 2013, which is what was originally planned at the outset. The schemes where you rent your roof to a company and have panels fitted for free do not seem to us and independent advisors like the Consumer Association to be good value, so if you can afford the investment or can get a low interest loan, have panels installed yourself.

Reference: <http://www.which.co.uk/news/2010/09/free-solar-panels-not-such-a-great-deal-231808/>

2.4.2. Sandford Energy Project

Sustainable Crediton Energy Group is supporting a renewable energy project in Sandford which could act as a pilot for the whole Crediton area.

We had a successful public meeting back in September and a small group is now working on finding the best deal for installing photovoltaic [PV] cells on lots of Sandford roofs to generate electricity.

We have looked into the free installation offers, but these are not as good as they seem. The best strategy seems to be either to invest savings in PV, which would give a much better return than a bank or building society, or to get a loan and pay this back with the 'feed in tariff' [FIT] money.

We also plan to investigate the possibilities for council houses and listed properties. It seems that there should not be a problem with houses in conservation areas if the PV cannot be seen from the road.

To find out more or get involved contact Linda Lever lindaandcolinl@phonecoop.coop 01363 777 624

2.5 National and International Group News

2.5.1. Mel Stride meeting

Gerald Conyngham and Charles Mossman had a meeting with Mel Stride, our local MP, on the 9th October. Although we only had less than 15 minutes with Mel we managed to cover a number of topics briefly. Our first subject was to request that green measures were included in the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). We lobbied for a properly capitalised Green Investment Bank and clarity on the subject of feed-in tariffs and the renewable heat incentives. Secondly we lobbied for large scale carbon capture and storage and for no new coal fired power stations. Finally we represented the need for the Government to deliver its fair share of money that the poorer nations need to adapt to climate change. We pointed out that there are alternative ways of raising money for this such as the Robin Hood tax on some financial transactions. We left our MP with a letter setting out our arguments. He has forwarded it to David Cameron for a response, which as yet we have not received.

2.5.2 Reaction to the Comprehensive Spending Review

Chris Huhne the minister in charge of Energy and Climate Change said that the Spending Review ensures that the UK can meet its environmental goals, including the 2020 targets for a 34% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and for 15% of energy to be from renewable sources, while improving efficiency, supporting growth and facilitating a private sector led transition to a green economy. Capital spending will increase by 41% over the next 4 years. Here is a summary of what was agreed.

The Green Investment Bank survived the review but of the £6Bn called for there's just £1Bn. Most economists say that that is not enough to kick-start private investment in green technologies. There has been a reprieve for the feed-in tariffs which are to remain unchanged until the first planned review in 2013. Also the Government announced that the Renewable Heat Incentives would commence in June 2011 with an investment of £850Mn out of the Department of Energy and Climate Change's budget. Upto £1Bn has been allocated to create one of the world's first commercial-scale carbon capture and storage

demonstration plants. There is a strong chance that this project will be given to an existing coal plant, Longannet in Fife, to demonstrate an immediate reduction in emissions if successful. Longannet is the UK's most polluting coal fired power station and in many ways it is the appropriate one to go ahead with as it is able to be fitted up for carbon storage under the North Sea in oil and gas reservoirs. £200Mn has been allocated for low-carbon technologies including offshore wind technology and manufacturing infrastructure at port sites. Friends of the Earth (FOE) think this will mean thousands of new green jobs in areas like the North East that need it most. But there are savage cuts, strongly criticised by FOE, to home insulation schemes such as Warmfront.

The Department for International Development (DFID) also saw its capital programme increase over the next 4 years by 20%. The DFID has committed to drive urgent action to tackle climate change by supporting low carbon growth and adaptation in developing countries. International Climate Finance will be £2.9bn over the Spending Review period. This amount is included within its overarching target of spending 0.7% of gross national income on overseas development aid. All campaigning organisations have lobbied the Government for the climate change finance to be additional to the 0.7% pledge.

To summarise, although the green agenda did not fare too badly from the spending review, there will still be much campaigning and lobbying to do in the future to ensure our UK targets are met and the poor countries are treated fairly as agreed at Copenhagen last year.

2.6 Education Group

Paula Mossman and Laura Conyngham recently gave a talk on Peak Oil, Climate Change and the work of Sustainable Crediton to the Yr 8 politics class at QE taught by Vicki Geatches. Laura arrived up the steep hill to Lower School on her bike to discover no other bikes parked in the school bike shed! However when we did a survey of the class we discovered most of the children came to school on foot or by bus. They were really interested and most amused therefore when we estimated for them how many kgs of CO2 were emitted by Ms Geatches car in a year as a result of her daily trips to and from her home to the school!

As they were currently studying politics, part of the talk was to explain about a new UK wide organisation that is helping children to adopt their MP and keep climate change high on their agenda. Several class members showed an interest in getting involved and Ms Geatches said that she may well take up the idea as a Class project. They also came up with some excellent ideas about how they as individuals and as a class might reduce their own carbon emissions.

All in all it was an excellent session and we would like to thank Ms Geatches for inviting us along and the pupils for being such an attentive audience.

3. Spinning in Crediton

The traditional craft of spinning is seeing a revival in Crediton with the offer of lessons and the formation of a new spinning circle for existing and would-be spinners.

Sue Reece and Sarah Johnson each have over 30 years of experience in the craft and are keen to share their skills and learn from others. "A spinning circle is a great way of swapping ideas and techniques, as well as having the pleasure of companionship with other enthusiasts" says Sarah.

The plan is to meet monthly for a relaxed afternoon of spinning, chat and cups of tea. The venue is yet to be decided, so please get in touch for more information.

Sue Reece is also offering one-to-one spinning lessons on the wheel or spindle to get anyone interested in the craft started. "Anyone can learn to spin – at one time most women did spin – and it can be very inexpensive if you use a simple spindle and local fleece. Imagine the satisfaction of wearing a garment that you have made entirely yourself."

If you are interested please contact Sue Reece on 01363 773442.

4. Workshop on Sustainability for Mid Devon District Council

We are running a workshop for councillors and senior staff of MDDC on the 24th Nov.

Based on a successful model run in Taunton, it will start with a presentation about global warming and peak oil. This will be followed by envisioning what MDDC might look like in 2025 if we were all living in a more sustainable way, and thinking about the steps needed to achieve that vision, both at an individual, community and Council level. If the workshop goes well, we hope that it will be rolled out to staff at all levels.

Paul Birch from Transition Taunton is coming to deliver the initial presentation.

If you would like to know more about this workshop, contact Gerald gerald@eclipse.co.uk or Paula paula.mossman@lineone.net

5. Sustainable Crediton Win a Small Green Steps Award from the Devon Community Foundation (DCF)

In July we decided to enter the Small Green Steps Award competition. All we had to do was to write to the DCF telling them what steps we had taken over the last 24 months to save energy and tackle climate change, including the positive results we've achieved from these actions. As we had entered the competition also in 2009, but had not been successful, we updated our 2009 application with all the work we had done since July 2009 through to June 2010. Looking back over the past 12 months it was obvious that we had done a massive amount of work through the efforts of our sub-groups and our 350 Day last October.

In September we learned that we had been short listed for a prize and Gerald Conyngham was interviewed by one of the judges. On the 8th October we discovered that we had been chosen as one of the 4 winners of an Award and had been awarded the sum of £1500. We subsequently found out that this was the second prize out of 38 applicants! The Award Citation in part stated " The time and commitment you have put into reducing the impact you have on the environment is an inspiration for many other groups."

The award ceremony was held at Exeter Castle on the 20th October and was attended by Charles and Paula Mossman to collect the cheque, which will make a very welcome addition to group funds.

6. Endangered plants and herbal medicine:

The potential for sustainable herbal harvesting around the world

An illustrated talk with Anne Stobart, consultant medical herbalist, at Crediton Arts Centre, East St, Crediton, Devon, EX17 3AX 7.30 pm,

Thursday 2nd December 2010, free entry, donations welcome.

7. Website Updates

There are new tips of the month on some webpages. For example on the Transport Group page, there is the Greener Car Guide if you are thinking about changing your car. On the Energy Group page we have a map which shows local renewable energy sites where you can view the installations by appointment with the owners.

8. Campaign of the Month

Save our Forests

Caroline Spelman, the Environment Secretary, is expected to announce plans within days to dispose of about half of the 748,000 hectares of woodland overseen by the Forestry Commission by 2020 as part of the national deficit reduction plan. The controversial decision could pave the way for a huge expansion in the

number of Center Parcs-style holiday villages, golf courses, adventure sites and commercial logging operations throughout Britain as land is sold to private companies.

The UK campaigning organisation 38 Degrees has set up a petition to make the Government think again about selling off our forests. Please sign the petition at this link
<http://www.38degrees.org.uk/page/s/save-our-forests>

9. Quote of the month:

'Each uneventful day that passes reinforces the steadily growing false sense of confidence that everything is alright. That I, we, my group, must be OK, because the way we did things today resulted in no adverse consequences.'

Scott Snook, senior lecturer in the Organizational Behavior unit at Harvard Business School. Quoted by Laurie Taylor on 'Thinking Allowed' on Radio 4