

Stretton Climate Care

R e d u c i n g C O 2 i n t h e S t r e t t o n s

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER

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We would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone to the first edition of the Stretton Climate Care newsletter. Through this forum we hope to keep you informed about local and national developments regarding climate change and to enable you to share your stories and successes.

To date we have had a low public profile as we have been busy behind the scenes setting up our charitable status, preparing our three year business plan and clarifying our aims and objectives. All boring but essential administrative activities.

Now that we have our paperwork in order we can get down to the real business of raising the

awareness of climate change issues and encourage a culture of climate care in the Strettons. We're here to help!

For example, we are about to launch "Carbon Footprint Classes". Once again we are leading the way as these will be the first in the country. You will be able to assess your Carbon Footprint and be challenged to reduce it. We want the Strettons to continue to be leaders and beat the government's 2050 target of a 60% reduction by a further 20%.

We plan to take this service out and about. By 2012 we hope to have measured the footprint of 5,000 homes and premises.

We are also going to

introduce a Drop In Advice Service on energy saving matters: insulation, low energy lighting, renewable energy, etc.

There are even more plans for talks, displays, fundraising, special publicity campaigns and community involvement. We're not short of ideas.

Jon Cooke



View from the top of Caer Caradoc towards Shrewsbury

Our Aims (a selection)

- To encourage local trading
- To survey half of the local area's households and business by 2010
- To eliminate fuel poverty

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

Our planet is surrounded by a blanket of gases which keeps the surface of the earth warm and able to sustain life. This blanket is getting thicker, trapping in heat as we release greenhouse gases by burning fossil fuels for energy and cutting down forests that can absorb some of that CO2.

As a result, our climate is starting to change.

Scientific research indicates that, because of climate

change, we may experience more frequent extreme weather events. A gradual increase in temperature also has serious implications for ecosystems, growing seasons, animals and their habitats.

Future changes to the climate are inevitable – even if we stop emitting gases now, the gases we have already released will have an effect for years to come as there is a time lag

between when emissions occur and when we begin to feel their effects.

If we continue the present increasing rate of emissions, a time could come when it will be impossible to reverse the damage that is being done.

However, on an individual level and as a group we can take positive steps towards change.



WHAT IS A CARBON FOOTPRINT AND WILL I NEED TO BUY NEW SHOES?



Autumn on the Long Mynd

According to Integrated Sustainability Analysis UK – a carbon footprint is a "measure of the impact human activities have on the environment in terms of the amount of greenhouse gases produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide".

Each person in the UK is responsible for approximately 12.5 tonnes of greenhouse gases a year. Chris Goodall author of How to Live a Low Carbon Life tells us,

“human activities put the equivalent of a blanket of almost 2m thick of carbon dioxide across the entire UK last year”.

Of these greenhouse gases, 50% of these are generated as a direct result of how we live our lives. Air travel is the biggest culprit but all activities, including running our homes and personal transport, are accountable. The other half is emitted indirectly on our behalf as a consequence of food

production, manufacturing the things we buy and construction, for example.

Currently government and big companies are not dealing with this problem. They are good at making speeches but evidence shows that emissions continue to rise. Once again it falls to us, the public to make individual reforms.

So you don't need to buy new shoes, but you may need to buy new light bulbs.

Web resources:

www.wrap.org.uk – encourages recycling and effective use of packaging

www.lowcarbonlife.net – “individual's guide to stopping climate change”

www.monbiot.com – the site of George Monbiot, environmental columnist

LOCAL HEROES

A big round of applause for the following individuals and organisations who have taken positive steps towards reducing their carbon footprints.

The Co-op has had bio-degradable bags for some time and now Mr. Bun has joined the ranks of the eco-friendly.

There is a new collection point in the Lutwyth Rd

Car Park for tetra packages.

The Long Mynd Hotel is taking huge strides forwards. Midlands Wood Fuel will be installing a 150 kW wood chip boiler to supply the bulk of heating and hot water. This new system will reduce the hotel's carbon dioxide emissions by 95 tonnes.

And a further standing ovation to the Hotel as

they have already switched over 200 light bulbs to low energy bulbs. This move has saved them an enormous £2,250 on their annual electricity bill.

Charles West has installed solar panels on his house, as has our Chair, Jon Cooke.

Tell us about your local heroes.

ARE YOU A CARBON JUNKIE OR DO YOU HAVE A SLIM-LINE CARBON FIGURE? HOW TO MEASURE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Measuring your Carbon Footprint can be done in two ways. With paper and pencil or by using a computer based carbon calculator. Calculations are based on: the amount of fossil fuel involved in heating your home and hot water, the electricity used by your household appliances and the fuel that is consumed by your

travel or that of your food (food miles).

Dependent on your consumption figures a calculation is made to show the amount of CO2 in tonnes you are responsible for generating each year.

Starting in January we shall be running Carbon Footprint Classes at the Library on: Monday

afternoons, 2.00 – 3.30pm.

Classes are free and it's a one off (but donations always appreciated) and you will have the chance to use our on-line “carbon calculator”.

Little or no computer knowledge is necessary, as the calculator is very user friendly. Also, our volunteers will be on hand

to offer assistance and to talk you through your personal energy report which will assist you in reducing your CO2 and shows ways of saving money. All information is completely confidential.

To book a place contact Wally Blake on 724040 or Jon Cooke on 723205

ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION METERS AND LOCAL POWER STATIONS

We have a number of Brennenstuhl wattage and current meters available for loan to Stretton Climate Care members. What on earth is one of these you may ask? It's a plug in meter that measures how much electricity a piece of equipment uses over a period of time.

Beneficially to you, it can also be set to show the cost of that electricity. You can borrow one of

these for a couple of weeks and find out exactly how much it costs you to leave your television on stand-by.

It's official. We now have two local mini power stations – Penwardine and Gorswen. Charles West and Jon Cooke's homes now generate their own electricity and export the spare capacity back to the National Grid.

Interestingly, 40% of all electricity generated by

national power stations is wasted just in distributing it around the National Grid. Locally generated electricity is far less wasteful as it has less distance to travel before it gets used.

Grants are available if you are interested in building your own generator. When was the last time you got a cheque from the electricity company?



PV panels being installed on the roof of Jon Cooke's bungalow. 14 panels were installed by Greenerth Energy in June 2007

CLIMATE CHANGE BILL – AN OVERVIEW

The Climate Change Bill entered parliament on November 15, 2007. The UK is the first country in the world to set out legally binding targets for the reduction of CO2 emissions. Currently goals are set to reduce CO2 emissions by 60% by 2050 starting with rolling them back 26-30% by 2020 against 1990 levels.

The 2020 and 2050 targets are broken down into carbon budgets for five year periods starting in 2008. No more than 1% of

the carbon budget can be carried over into the next term. Unfortunately emissions from aviation and shipping are not currently included.

Two keys elements of the Bill are of particular interest to local authorities: financial incentives to pilot innovative waste reduction plans and initiating carbon trading schemes.

At the moment local authorities are unable to use financial incentives to encourage residents to

reduce waste. However Defra has committed £1.5 million over three years to pilot a series of projects.

As 70% of emissions cuts will have to be made locally, local authorities cannot wait until 2010 for Carbon Reduction Commitment (measuring, monitoring and trading their emissions) to be established.

Climate change must be on everyone's agenda now.

Non Web Resources:

The Ecologist – monthly magazine devoted to a variety of environmental issues

Costing the Earth – Radio 4 program looking at our effect on the environment – Thurs 21:00 – 21:30, available on Listen Again

Church Stretton Public Library
01694 722535

THANKS TO MEMBERS AND FUNDING NEWS

What a super start our members have given us. To date our members include 30 households (representing 55 people), 10 individuals and 5 corporate members. Your encouragement has meant a lot to the executive and committee members and we appreciate it.

Our website is up and running thanks to Derek Smith who is responsible for its creation. As the site develops it will be full of

useful energy tips, news of our activities and links to other related sites.

We'd also like to recognise our form-filling volunteers. Due to their efforts we have successfully received grants from the West Midlands Rural Community Network, the A.O.N.B., and Shropshire Community Fund. However, all this money has to be allocated to specific projects, so we are still in need of funds for

publicity or day-to-day running expenses, etc. Also it's often match funding so we need to find other money to match the grant. Polymer Labs., have already kindly donated match funding, which has enabled us to obtain some of these grants.

Membership subscriptions will cover newsletter costs, but we urgently need local sponsorship and financial



Glider over the Long Mynd

support. Fund raising events are in the pipeline but start up funds are scarce.

Become part of our team by joining as a member or a volunteer and help support our work helping you.

Our mission is to advance environmental protection and improvement by reducing the carbon emissions of the local area.



Stretton Climate Care

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REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE



Snow in the Strettons

O2 GRANT

Is there a close group of 10 – 25 houses in the Strettons who would be interested in getting together to apply for an **O2 / Energy Saving Trust** grant? It could provide funding for loft insulation improvements, draft proofing, cavity wall insulation, hot water tank insulation, low energy bulbs and energy advice. Contact Jon Cooke on 723 205 for more information.

South Shropshire District Council is to be commended for its efforts in providing recycling facilities for its residents.

We have a composting service, both at home and at the recycling centres. Furthermore, plastic bottles, glass bottles, clothing, and now tetra packs, can all be recycled locally.

What is better for the environment is that first we **REDUCE** the amount of waste we throw out. Ask yourself - Where does my rubbish go? Look in your bin next time you wheel it out for collection. Now imagine a huge landfill site. Landfill sites are not nice places, and that is where your rubbish is going.

However, it's only partly our responsibility. Presently the householder is still being forced to purchase goods in packaging that they are unable to recycle, are fiddly to recycle, or take a long

time to recycle. They come in polystyrene trays, cardboard boxes and paper bags with cellophane windows, and plastic bags, to name a few.

All of our manufacturers and shopkeepers are responsible and there appears to be reluctance on their part to join forces with the rest of the public in reducing household rubbish.

With the best will in the world it's very difficult to reduce rubbish if our goods continue to be packaged in this way. So, it's a challenge all-round: for manufacturing to come up with new, environmentally sensitive ways, to present their goods, for shopkeepers to consider how those goods are carried away by the purchaser, and for the purchaser to step back and think about how important those goods are to them if the manufacturer and/or the shopkeeper just

won't help in reducing our waste.

How you can help:

- Say no to plastic and take your own alternative re-usable carrier bags

-Join Stretton Climate Care and spread the word

- Come to a Carbon Footprint Class and pledge to reduce your impact

- Become a Stretton Climate Care volunteer and train to be a Home Energy or Drop In Advisor

- Tell us your ideas, accomplishments, fundraising schemes and we'll highlight them in future newsletters

- Send us your email address and save paper by receiving this newsletter electronically

By Julie Cowley