



# NEWS FROM DORSET AGENDA 21

APRIL 2007

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2007 from Dorset Agenda 21. We are here to work with and promote to the Dorset community all areas of sustainable living.

## CHANGE FOR THE BETTER by Sally Cooke

Channel 4's programme 'The Great Global Warming Swindle' seems to have shaken many people who were previously sure of the dangers of climate change. I think the programme was deeply flawed, but rather than argue on its own terms, let's look a bit wider. CO2 does add to the warming of the Earth's atmosphere. Oil supplies are finite. So we need to find a lower-carbon lifestyle, regardless of what you think about sunspots and climate change.

In this newsletter are some heartening reports from people who are going lower-carbon in their own ways. Many of us are following suit. DA21 exists partly to bring together like-minded people, because 'people are good together', and it's much easier to make and to sustain a change if we are doing it with others.

But such a radical lifestyle change needs more than individual action. Something else we need is a shared vision of what a lower-carbon life will be like. A positive vision, not one defined by what we will do without. The 'Transition Towns' movement helps people to create their own vision (e.g. <http://transitiontowns.org/Totnes/>). And for many people that vision includes stronger community life: more satisfying lives locally, reducing the need to travel and to consume. Perhaps examples like the Dorset Eco Village Movement ([www.living-organically.com/deva.html](http://www.living-organically.com/deva.html)) are pointing the way?

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## GETTING TOGETHER

### **RED (Renewable Energy Dorset)**

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April - Dorchester**

A short seminar on: Solar Water Heating. Come along and find out about the different options available and get help making choices about systems and ways to install them, from DIY to full professional installation. Advice on applying for grants and other help available. Speakers will be Jim Sherman & Richard Toft from Bridport Renewable Energy Group, Alan Seviour from Ace Plumbing and a representative from Sarum Solar. 7.30pm at County Hall, Dorchester, Ctte Room1.

### **PEAT (The Purbeck Environment Action Team)**

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April - Wareham**

At February's meeting actions were set to get articles in the local press about the sustainable living initiatives undertaken by several members. As well as spreading the message and recruit more members. The group plan to integrate their "Ban the (plastic) Bag" campaign with the Dorset County Council initiative recently started in Swanage. The next meeting is Wed. 18<sup>th</sup> April, at 7.30 pm in the Duke of Wellington Pub, East St., Wareham. (More from PEAT later in the newsletter)

### **WEYMOUTH GROUP**

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April - Weymouth**

There will be an illustrated presentation on: Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Saving. Come along and find out about household RE systems, larger community scale systems and energy saving in your own home. This will be followed by discussion of some plans for action by the Weymouth group. Please bring along your own ideas for action and any aspect of sustainability. The speaker will be John Tomblin. 7.30pm, at St Nicholas Church Hall, Buxton Road, Weymouth.

### **CORSCOMBE & HALSTOCK Renewable Energy Group**

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April – Corscombe**

There will be a presentation about solar heating and photovoltaics as part of a season looking at various renewable energy sources have been discussed at recent meetings and the group is looking into the possibility of a wind turbine project. Corscombe village hall at 7.30pm

### **The "SANE FUTURES" discussion group**

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> April - Dorchester**

This group, started by Michael Gill, explores any aspect of greener living that catches the curiosity of its members. At this meeting Paula Andrews will share her experience of the WI's Eco-Team, Harriet Stewart-Jones will demonstrate CAT's Carbon Gym and Sally Cooke will reveal the mechanics of CRAGs (Carbon Reduction Action Groups). The meeting is open to anyone but space is limited; if you would like to come please contact Paula for details of the venue. Tel: 01258 830959 or [pmandrews@talk21.com](mailto:pmandrews@talk21.com)

### **CO-OP GROUP CONFERENCE**

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May – Taunton**

The Co-operative Group and Somerset Trust for Sustainable Development are running a conference aimed at people who want make their lifestyles more sustainable. *It's Easy to be Green* has been designed to give those of you who are 'not sure what to do next but want to do something' straightforward easy to understand advice. There will be the opportunity to meet some experts in the region who know about energy efficiency, eco-friendly fuel, renewable energy and get some realistic straightforward advice and a few hot tips too – and meet other people who want to make a difference. For further information about the conference, please contact the Co-operative Membership South West Region, tel 08457 573130 or email [membership.sw@co-op.co.uk](mailto:membership.sw@co-op.co.uk). 10.30am–3.30pm, at the Genesis Centre in Taunton

## CARRY ON CAMPING (Camp for Climate Action)

**Fri 20<sup>th</sup> – Sat 21<sup>st</sup> April - Liverpool**

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the problem of climate change. It's easy to feel that we can't make a difference. The camp's aim is to bring people together to create a community of resistance. The organisers say 'We hope the camp inspires people to take action, share ideas and beyond the camp, make a start in their own localities and spheres of interest. At The Camp for Climate Action 2006, over 600 people converged on a field in Yorkshire. There were over 100 workshops, it was powered entirely by



renewable energy, and everybody was welcome to take part in running the camp. The camp was also a base for non-violent direct action against industrial polluters such as Drax, the largest coal-fired power station in the UK. The 2007 Camp for Climate Action will be even better!' For more information contact [info@climatecamp.org.uk](mailto:info@climatecamp.org.uk)

## RISING SEAS FESTIVAL

**Fri 4<sup>th</sup> – Sun 6<sup>th</sup> May – Lyme Regis**



Science is on trial! 'Who is responsible for global warming?'

will be one of the questions asked at this year's Rising Seas Lyme Regis Fossil Festival. The festival programme will include a Youth Climate Change Summit, discussing rising seas and climate change in the here and now. How is this different from the past? What does it mean? What can we do about it? There will be a Walk Through Time along the Jurassic Coast and see how sea levels and the story of how climate change has affected the last 250 million years. Lyme Regis was under the sea, Sidmouth was in a desert – environments have been different in the past. For more information phone 01297 445021 or visit [www.risingseas.co.uk](http://www.risingseas.co.uk). DA21 will be taking part – we would love to have your help - please contact the office.

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## IN HOUSE NEWS

### GOODBYE ... to John Tomblin

John leaves on the 12<sup>th</sup> April to take a well-earned 'retirement' (although all the signs are that it won't be a rest; if you are in Weymouth you may soon see John promoting a local group and some energy initiatives...). We owe a lot to John for launching our community project so enthusiastically, and his cheerful presence will be missed. We wish him a very happy and fulfilling retirement. If you would like to add your good wishes, or make a contribution, please send them to our Hon Treasurer, Henry Lovegrove,

at Comforts Orchard, Corscombe, Dorchester DT2 0NX (cheques payable to Dorset Agenda)

Goodbye also to several trustees who have served DA21 over the last year or more. Jane Altounyan, Dave Bloomfield, Richard Burden, John Gaylard, Federica Macchi and Pamela Sylvester have stepped down from the Board. We thank them all for their dedicated service and wish them well for the future.



**HELLO...** to our new Board of Trustees, elected at the AGM in February. They are:

Dr Andrew Barker, Sally Cooke (Managing Trustee), Dr John Crossman, Colin Dewsnap, Sarah Heyes, Henry Lovegrove (Company Secretary and Hon Treasurer), Patricia Neimer (Hon Secretary to the Board), Catherine Simmonds, Perwina Whitmore (Chair of Trustees).

**JOB SATISFACTION** DA21 is recruiting 3 new part-time members of staff: an Administrator to help run the office, a Project Officer to take over the Community Choices project which John has set up, and a Development Officer to progress DA21's business planning and fund-raising. Details of these posts are available on our website [www.da21.org.uk](http://www.da21.org.uk) or from the office (01305 213 721). Please pass the word to anyone who might be interested. Closing dates are 10<sup>th</sup> April for the admin post and 30<sup>th</sup> April for the others. We are grateful to DEFRA's Environmental Action Fund and to Ecos Trust for financial support for these posts.

**WEB SITE MAKEOVER** Paul McIntosh has given our website a complete makeover and it has a new address: [www.da21.org.uk](http://www.da21.org.uk) You can find up-to-date lists of events, news of projects and publications there, plus a directory of the community organisations we know of which are working for sustainability in Dorset. Please take a look. Paul will be delighted to receive your comments and suggestions ([paul@da21.org.uk](mailto:paul@da21.org.uk)).

**DA21 NEWSGROUP** Another way to share news and ideas with other green-minded people in Dorset is to join our internet newsgroup. With one message you can reach the members with news of an upcoming event, start a discussion, or ask for advice. If you'd like to join, please send a message to Derek Fawell, [derek@da21.org.uk](mailto:derek@da21.org.uk)

### THE DA21 SUSTAINABILITY NETWORK

Representatives from DA21 attend a variety of meetings to put across the sustainability viewpoint. The meetings range from specialist groups, e.g. on aspects of renewable energy, to broad-based ones such as the local community partnerships. Reps met on 27<sup>th</sup> Feb to hear from Kate Hindson and Maria Clarke about the Dorset Strategic Partnership and West Dorset Local Partnership. Mike Jones is collating information gleaned by reps for sharing throughout the sustainability network. If you would like to receive this information please let the office know ([office@da21.org.uk](mailto:office@da21.org.uk) or 01305 213721).

We aim to broaden this network so that it represents the views of a wider range of sustainability organisations in Dorset. For more information please contact Paul McIntosh, [paul@da21.org.uk](mailto:paul@da21.org.uk)

**CLIMATE CHANGE SEMINAR** DA21's climate change seminar at Sherborne on 10<sup>th</sup> March was over subscribed. A packed audience heard Mark Letcher of the Centre for Sustainable Energy advise us that 'it is hard to over-exaggerate this problem'. Copies of Mark's inspiring talk will shortly be available from the office.



**VOLUNTEERS & ACCOMMODATION WANTED...** We rely hugely on the help of regular volunteers, many of whom are mentioned throughout this newsletter. We're also grateful for volunteers who work with us intensively over a short period. At the moment Jim Kirkpatrick is helping us with funding bids and IT improvements. Jim is looking for accommodation to rent in central Dorset for the next six months or so. If you can help, please contact us at the office ([office@da21.org.uk](mailto:office@da21.org.uk) or 01305 213721).

**PRESS OFFICER REQUIRED** If you have experience of dealing with the media, can spare a few hours a month, and are keen to help make DA21 and its message better known, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Sally at [sally@da21.org.uk](mailto:sally@da21.org.uk) or 01305 21 37 21.

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## SUSTAINABLE NEWS – DORSET

**SWEP (Sherborne Wind Energy Project)** continue with their plans to install a 2 MW community wind turbine near Sherborne which would meet the energy needs of 800-1000 households and bring a return to local investors and good causes. On 22 March they held an information workshop for the public explaining their plans. It attracted wide interest and revealed some surprising facts – did you know that there is a 3 year waiting list for wind turbines?!

**DORSET ENERGY GROUP**– Community Renewables Working Group. Our rep John Tomblin reports: Proposals on a mobile display for summer shows and on local group training were presented and discussed. Updates were given on the planned Sustainability Resource Centre at QE School, Wimborne, various renewable energy projects, and member perspectives on progress on one-year action plan. The installation of renewables in council and community buildings continues.

**BIOMASS ENERGY** Last October an excellent seminar and demonstration was organised at Kingston Maurward College (KMC). A further information event on Renewable Energy in Dorset is to follow at KMC this June. Contact the office for further details.

**PILSDON COMMUNITY** near Bridport, are developing a five-year business plan, with sustainable living at the centre. The 25 residents already live very sustainably and, for example, produce a lot of their own food from their 8acre farm. With help they are undergoing a sustainability audit of all their resource use, to feed in to their business plan. One major area for action is likely to be energy use, with the community at present being heavily dependent on fuel oil for heating. They want to improve the energy efficiency of their old farmhouse and converted out buildings, thus reducing energy use. Suitable renewable sources of energy are also planned – possibly biomass for space heating and solar thermal for water heating. They may consider wind turbines and photovoltaics to generate some of their own electricity.

**THE AL GORE FILM** is generating a lot of interest in Dorset: 280 people at Christchurch just before Christmas, 60 at Corscombe village hall and 150 at Bournemouth University in February. West Dorset District Council showed it to their staff and councillors one lunchtime recently and had to put on a second showing because of the demand.

## **DORSET CLIMATE CHANGE COALITION**

A Climate Change Coalition is being formed among organisations across Dorset with the aim of delivering a strong and co-ordinated message about the urgency of tackling climate change, and inspiring action. DA21 has been chosen to provide the secretariat to this partnership, and we are currently fund-raising to enable us to do more in this area. We've already had grants from the South West Foundation, the Co-op and Dorset County Council, and offers of in-kind help from Dorset Energy Advice Centre, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Dorset County Council and Dorset Community Action. See [www.da21.org.uk/climatechange/](http://www.da21.org.uk/climatechange/) for more information.

## WELL WORTH A MENTION

### **THE GREEN / LIFE BALANCE by Mike Cush**

Like many people, I'm not seeking a 'deep green' lifestyle. In the last year we've moved into a bigger house and my wife has given up work. This means being green needs to be cost-effective, and relatively hassle free. So what have we done?

**Energy** - We fitted a room thermostat (£12) and got a grant for cavity wall insulation so we only paid £130 towards it, and I've spent £60 on insulating the loft space to about 20cm deep. These have *already* paid for themselves this winter.

We've replaced halogen spotlights with energy saving versions where we use them a lot. They're expensive (£12 each), but they'll pay for themselves in 3 years.

A £12 energy meter from Maplin shows how many units the appliance that's plugged into it is using. You can then make more informed decisions about what you use, and when.

**Waste** - We got a huge compost bin for £15 via a council offer. It looks fine in a 'tidy' garden and doesn't smell. Leftovers and other bits go into our wormery, which cost £70. This needs looking after but it's not difficult and not smelly. I don't think there's an excuse for not having either of these.

The rest gets recycled via a second kitchen bin. It's important to design things so that the green choice is the easy one to make. Even with the nappies (and we have used washable), we average only half a bin bag of rubbish each week.

**Transport** - I now use a scooter to get to the office. My carbon footprint is 30% what it was, it costs under £50 a month to run,

chops 40 minutes off the daily commute and it's enormous fun. It's a good start.

**Food** - Much of what we buy is local or organic. Fruit and veg from an independent shop or the market, and come home under a pushchair rather than in a car. All our meat is sourced locally, fewer food miles and better meat. And everything comes in much less packaging.

**Stuff** - Taking on a bigger house and halving our income forced us to think hard about what 'stuff' matters to us. We think before we buy. It's forced some big changes but guess what? I've learned that the best activities are often cheap, and I'm convinced they lead to better 'quality time' together. I've just built a fireplace using local stone for a third of what it would have cost to buy. It's not perfect but I got to visit the quarry, meet some interesting people and learn something new. B&Q don't offer too much scope for personal growth.

In Japan they have a concept called Kaizen, or continual change for the better. It's about making lots of tiny changes. Enjoy your green journey and take one small step at a time. When you're ready, or have the time, take another. Don't worry about the destination, or what someone else has achieved. We'll all get there in the end.

### **LIFE IS BETTER WITH ONE by Lesley Cocker**

My household has gone from two cars to one. The turning point if I'm honest came when someone wrote my car off; now I would say they did me a good turn. I had been umming and ahing for some time about, "could I manage without it, should I just make sure I use it less?". Since I live, work and take my children to school in Dorchester I felt a prime candidate for giving up driving, but actually to abandon car ownership was a frightening step. To start with I just thought I'd see how we got on. After all, the school is a good mile-and-a-quarter away and the kids object to walking that distance. Of course there's also our dreadful weather, isn't there? Plus they have after-school clubs in various parts of the town, plus getting them to school and then myself into work at a decent time seemed ludicrous. Fortunately I only do a couple of days a week so difficult though it seemed it had to be worth a go.

The trick really is to not mix up "impossible" with "inconvenient", something I hear other people doing all the time when they tell me they have to use their cars! It IS sometimes inconvenient, it is very rarely impossible. Through use of the children's scooters and bikes and the excellent school bus service (which we pay for), swooping a few favours with other Mums/lift sharing etc., and just organising ourselves to be in a certain location at a certain time when my husband can collect us on his way home - it has worked. It hasn't just worked it has been a pleasure - mostly! There are cons, for example when one child is sick, getting the other to school, can't do shopping in bulk, it takes longer to get places, the bad weather when trying to get somewhere. But there are answers; if one child is sick the other uses the bus or gets a lift with another parent, we shop often and little and most shops will deliver. I've noticed that the weather is not that bad very often; often grey and frequently damp, but very infrequently does it bucket down just when you need to go somewhere. And I have come to consider the fact it takes longer as a pro. Other pros have been the kinds (6 & 8) don't think anything much of walking

a mile or more. They are fitter. They get to splash in their wellies on the way to school, look at squirrels, talk to their friends, enjoy riding their scooters and bikes, pick up conkers, see rainbows, pat dogs, learn a lot about crossing roads under Mum's eye and arrive at school thoroughly woken up instead of in their old stupor. Goes for me too and I don't have to sit in frustrating traffic jams, get wound up and stressed or have to search for parking spaces. We now use town centre shops which often provide much better food than I was buying before - sometimes it is more expensive, but often not. I have discovered lovely cheese, milk, eggs all produced within 10miles of where I live. We do wish that bus services advertised more widely by schools and in shopping centres. More promotion of lift sharing by schools and workplaces, subsidised train fares, or very discounted season tickets. And oh I do wish someone would invent a stylish shopping trolley?



(Note from the editor; What about this from Olra Kiely, not a snip at £200 though, or an original **TRAID** 'bag for life' It's made from 100% natural jute fibre and costs £6.)

### **NEWS FROM PEAT by Katie Cruickshanks**

Once every 6-8 weeks on a Wednesday night you'll find us discussing compost, photovoltaics and such like in the Duke of Wellington pub, East Street, Wareham. We are a small group consisting of local people, some of whom are council members and recently we have decided to call ourselves Purbeck Environmental Action Team (PEAT- look out for our logo coming soon!). Our group is growing in strength and we had planned to start a 'Ban the Bag' campaign in conjunction with local shops in Wareham. However, we are pleased to hear that there is a similar scheme going on in Swanage and Wareham is the control town... so now it's back to the drawing board. Aside from large projects we are all making small changes in our lives and passing on information as we go. For instance John Peto is working his way to 100% use of grey water in his home and he also recycles drinks cans and has raised £200 for environmental charities- well done John! Tara Lovell continues to work very hard to support DA21 in many ways including local campaigning and also design work. Other group members have turned their hands to new challenges such as Lida Mutton who is about to embark on growing vegetables at home and Rachel Shefford who has organised composting for her block of flats... personally I am walking 5 miles to work at least twice per week... which is very pleasant indeed. The group provides a great place to exchange ideas, hear about events and gain support. We hope that we can start a new project in the future on an issue such as renewable energy or eco-driving techniques and get the message out to the community. We thank John Tomblin for all his hard work and we wish him a very sustainable retirement!

For further information about Dorset Agenda 21 please contact Sally Cooke, P O Box 5789, Dorchester DT2 8ZR. [sally@da21.org.uk](mailto:sally@da21.org.uk) 01305 213721.

Huge thank you to everyone for their contributions and please keep them coming Amanda. [amanda@da21.org.uk](mailto:amanda@da21.org.uk)