

# NEWS FROM DORSET AGENDA 21

June 2005

## getting together

### film show and discussion evening

On **Wednesday June 8<sup>th</sup>** at **7.30 pm** we are hosting a film show and discussion evening at County Hall in **Dorchester** to raise awareness of '**peak oil**'.

The UK's production of oil peaked in 1999 and our output is now 17% below the all-time high. When will the world's production of oil peak? Many independent geologists and petroleum engineers believe this will happen in the next few years. The effects will be profound as our entire economic system in the West depends on cheap and plentiful oil. This news may seem a blessing for those of us pushing for a more sustainable society, but the reality may be more difficult to deal with if the expectations of our wider society are for 'more of the same' in terms of energy usage.

Knowledge of 'peak oil' is also important to those who are campaigning on transport issues as it means that the demand for personal transport will slump in the coming decade as fuel prices inexorably rise. The growing and distribution of food will also be profoundly affected as the price of oil rises - did you know that an average of 10 calories of fossil fuels are used to grow, pack, deliver and cook 1 calorie of food in developed countries?

The film '**End of Suburbia**' (US/Canada 2004; 77mins) looks at the consequences of the approaching global peak in oil production. **Contact** Damian Brothers [d.brothers@virgin.net](mailto:d.brothers@virgin.net), 01300 345216, for more information.

### two eco-homes visits

We have the opportunity to visit two very different eco-housing projects. On the afternoon of **Friday 15 July** we will see the **Seldown site in Poole**, 86 flats and houses which will be a mix of affordable rent, shared ownership, key worker and homebuy. The developer is Western Challenge Housing Association in association with Poole Borough Council. Numbers are limited to 10. Please **contact** Sally (see end panel) to book.

We are also invited to see a private house designed on eco-principles which is being built by a local architect for himself and his family, in Upwey. We hope to visit the site at different stages of its construction between July and October. The first date is likely to be **Saturday 8 July**. Please **contact** Pervina Whitmore if you are interested, on 01305 261065 or [tpdw@btinternet.com](mailto:tpdw@btinternet.com).

### Our first weekend away - a visit to the source!

A chance to get to know your fellow DA21ers on our first ever weekend trip, to the **Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales**, on **Sept. 2nd to 4<sup>th</sup>**. This is the weekend of CAT's annual conference, celebrating 30 years of opening to the public as a visitor centre. The theme is looking to the next 30 years plus, and what members would like to see happening both at CAT and in a wider context of society as a whole.

There are many other attractions: CAT members talking about their projects, site tours, staff talks including "CAT-past and present: an insider's view" and "organic gardening at CAT", an opportunity to see the construction work in progress of the new Welsh Institute of Sustainable Education, a discussion with CAT experts on the future of UK energy and climate change, workshops on biodiesel and renewable fuel sources, education for sustainability etc. There will be parallel events for children over the weekend and an opportunity to dance the night away at the ceilidh.

The cost (excluding travel) is:-

£110 to include food, very basic accommodation and all other extras for the weekend or

£90 for conference, lunch, dinner and all activities but organizing your own B&B.

Non-CAT members need to add the annual membership fee of £19 to the conference fee.

**Contact:** Liz Coulter at [lizzycoulter@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:lizzycoulter@tiscali.co.uk) or 01305 852278. Liz can provide a list of B&Bs, and she can help you plan your travel (car-sharing or train).

**!!! Please book by 30 June !!!**

## sustainability news

### stop press - Environment Seminar, Saturday 4 June

Colin Dewsnap, a member of DA21 who also runs the Christchurch Energy Advice Centre, is helping to organise a FREE Rotary Club Environment Seminar at Romsey School from 10.00-12.30. It features top line speakers on transport, climate change and consumption patterns.

Prof. John Wootten will speak on transport. Road traffic volume is increasing at approx. 4% per annum, which means at that rate it will double in just under 18 years. We have to do something - *but what?* Dr. Simon Boxall of the Southampton Oceanography Dept. has led expeditions to the North Atlantic investigating the scenario that as the Arctic ice melts, the Gulf Stream will shut down and make North West Europe much colder. The third address will be by Ecosys/ BiffaWard on a report indicating that if the whole world consumed at the same level as South East England, we would need 3½ planets. **Contact** Colin Dewsnap 01425 275691, [colindewsnap@compuserve.com](mailto:colindewsnap@compuserve.com)

### free training - waste

The Dorset Reduction and Recycling Group has 5 places left on a 5 hour **course in waste management**, in Wimborne on **Thursday 9th June from 9.00-3.00**. You can gain a certificate from CIWM (Chartered Institute of Waste Management). The course is free (including refreshments), and covers:- understanding what waste is; waste minimisation; waste management options - recycling, digestion, energy from waste, landfill; health and safety issues; legal responsibilities; locations of information for future reference. Not to be missed then!

If interested please **contact** Kirsten Juniper, 01305 228668 or [K.Juniper@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:K.Juniper@dorsetcc.gov.uk), as soon as possible.

### more free training – East Dorset

East Dorset Community Partnership is holding a series of free training events for members of the partnership (that includes us, but preferably members living in East Dorset).

The first two are **21- 22 June [Planning for Real](#)**, by the Neighbourhood Initiatives foundation, and **28-29 June [Facilitation Skills](#)**, by the Institute of Cultural Affairs. Anyone interested please **contact** Sally 01305 213721

## organisation news

### transport

Kate Oatham has offered to host a meeting of any DA21 members or friends who would like to be more active on transport issues. We are getting plans together to hold the first meeting in June or July. If you are interested, please **contact** Kate on 01305 261533. Also, Howard Thomas, a DA21 member who is also chair of Dorset CPRE, is seeking volunteers to help survey usage of trains and buses between Dorchester and Weymouth, and traffic delays, to compare the benefits of the Orange Route with other solutions. If you can help please ring DA21 on 01305 213721 or (preferably) **contact** Howard on [thomascpre@onetel.com](mailto:thomascpre@onetel.com)

### DA21 summer outreach project

Laura Cousins has taken over this project, which had its first outing with our new display boards and leaflets to the Springhead Woodland Fair on Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> May. Four volunteers staffed the stand and spoke to about 150 people about local food, greener building and sustainable living. We had a lot of fun and people seemed really keen on our information. Please **contact** Laura on 01202 248622 or [lfcousins@hotmail.com](mailto:lfcousins@hotmail.com) if you can help at other events.

### recent events (1)

Some DA21 members joined a WORM (Wessex Organic Movement) visit to the Magdalen Project on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> April. The director, Gyles Morris, gave an inspirational talk about Magdalen's work with business and adult groups, schools, disaffected young people, and young carers. The project aims to provide a rich and fulfilling environment in which to connect to 'real world learning' in a sharing and supportive atmosphere. Children help collect and cook eggs, pick vegetables, construct shelters, paint using nature's art materials, and walk barefoot and blindfolded in a stream, amongst other activities. Most of the food used at Magdalen is grown or raised there and the award-winning chef is strongly involved in the educational and food production side of things too.

The project was begun in 1990 when Alan Heeks founded the Wessex Foundation and bought what was then the 132 acres of Maudlin Farm. The buildings were restored to provide residential and educational facilities for environmental education. Forty acres are still farmed by the project and the remainder is leased to a neighbouring organic farm.

At present there are organic fruit and vegetable plots, pigs, cattle, sheep and chickens, a campsite with 2 tipis, composting toilets, facilities for washing in harvested rainwater, and a fire circle. On the site of the Mary Magdalen chapel (derelict by 1590) a straw bale round house is being built as a craft room and space for quiet reflection.

Projects for the future include a field oven and solar showers in the campsite, a reed-bed sewage system and renovating one of the remaining derelict buildings using sustainable building techniques. Willow beds are being established to provide a source of biofuel.

After a guided tour of the project, some of us stayed to a lunch of nettle and lovage soup, home made bread rolls, salad with sprouted seeds and a selection of local cheeses. Most took the time for a further walk around the farm after lunch to enjoy the peaceful tranquillity of the surroundings.

### recent events (2)

*with thanks to Nichola Motley for letting us draw on her article for the Marshwood Vale magazine. This is a much shortened version – get the mag if you want the full story!*

On 7<sup>th</sup> May 25 of us visited the eco-community of Tinkers Bubble, a site of some 40 acres where 10 people live, hidden away among the lanes of South Somerset. Tinkers Bubble was founded 10 years ago, by a group who included road protesters from Twyford Down near Winchester. The name comes from the spring, the 'bubble', which provides water for the site, and the old name for the area, Tinkers Bottom, from the gypsies who used to work in the valley's enormous apple harvest.

The community's aim was to find a place where members could live sustainably, including growing their own food. Getting planning permission was no easy task, but eventually they were able to convince the planning authority (and their neighbours) that their intentions for the land were serious and environmentally responsible.

Their principles are typified in their approach to timber production, which generates part of their income and is also used to build their own houses. Much of Tinkers Bubble is wooded, and trees are harvested using handsaws, as they strive to minimise the use of fossil fuels – no chain saws echoing there. Timber is hauled out with the aid of Sam their magnificent Shire horse. The wood is planked using a wood-fired steam engine built in 1837 which powers a saw bench with an enormous circular blade, all contained within a straw bale shelter to reduce the noise.

On the day of our visit Tinkers Bubble was idyllic. We saw blossom-filled orchards which produce apples for cider and juice, productive vegetable gardens, and were welcomed with tea from a kettle boiling over an open fire. There have been testing times, however, such as the 84 consecutive days of rain in the community's first winter - 'a bonding experience for the community!' said Mike Zair, our guide and one of the founder members.

On leaving we passed the solar panels and wind turbine, which allow each household to have one light bulb and run a radio. Small 'luxuries' for people who forgo much that the rest of us consider essential.

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For further information about Dorset Agenda 21 or this news bulletin please contact **Sally Cooke, P O Box 5789, Dorchester DT2 8ZR**

**01305 213721 [sally@dorsetagenda21.org.uk](mailto:sally@dorsetagenda21.org.uk)**