

Bridport Cohousing group surges ahead

Bridport Cohousing group is making good progress, looking for a site and recruiting specialists.

Fifty people attended a lively public meeting in July, including Cllr Ron Coatsworth, a local District Councillor and Chair of West Dorset District Council, who publicly voiced his support for the project.



Since that meeting a membership scheme has been developed and currently there are over 30 households lined up for membership to help move the project forward.

A number of sub-groups have been formed to share out the detailed work that needs to be done. A Site Development group is working with the project partners: Ecos Homes, a leading eco-developer, and Synergy, the Housing Association appointed to help deliver the affordable housing that is planned as part of the development, and which West Dorset badly needs.

The project group is also planning a 24-hour Vision and Values residential workshop, to be held at Symonds Manor in October, for the members to develop their vision of the Cohousing community they want to create. Meanwhile preliminary discussions have begun with the planning authority and research is underway to find a suitable site for this groundbreaking project in the Bridport area. Additional members are very welcome, especially if you have project management, financial and other relevant skills.

...also more news on the Threshold Centre co-housing development inside this issue

For more information about Bridport Cohousing Group and the principles of cohousing, go to www.dorscoh.org.uk

Summer Shows

da21 attended the Dorset County Show and Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival over the summer. The Dorset County Show saw a diverse range of organisations packed into the Sustainable Living Tent including the Energy Saving Trust, South Coast Books, Holton Lea, Travelwise, TT BH and Weymouth Energy Advice Group. Thanks to all those who attended and gave their time to make it possible.



NEWS
FROM da21
Autumn
2009
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BIG LOTTERY FUND

LOTTERY FUNDED

**Encouraging
climate-friendly
and sustainable
communities in
Dorset**

In this issue;

**Dorchester's first
local food market
Dorchester Car Club
launched
Straw bale building
courses at DCRS
www.da21.org.uk**

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Straw Bale Building – the Warm Revolution

Straw bale building, cob and lime courses have been run from the Dorset Centre for Rural Skills for the past seven years. During that time the Centre has seen a massive shift in public perception of sustainable buildings, particularly straw bale construction.

Rob Buckley, DCRS's Director explains. "When we first started our training courses the majority of people didn't understand that straw bale homes were feasible. Most of the people attending our straw bale building weekends were already living alternative lifestyles and knew of the benefits of these beautiful homes, if not how to actually build one. So aside from teaching we have spent a lot of time promoting straw bale buildings for their high insulation levels, low environmental impact and ability to breathe which simply makes them lovely living spaces.

"About three years ago on one of our Open Days we noticed a change, people living in modern housing were looking at the possibility of self-building in straw, yet maintaining the advantages of modern living. During this time straw bale building technology in this country developed very quickly from an organic building process to one that produced practical family homes." He added that in the last six months the courses have been joined by increasing numbers of builders and developers, who are responding to a demand for sustainable construction.

"This is where real change can take place and we will watch with interest as to how this further progresses over the coming

years. As for us, we foresee that the next step will be looking at the existing housing stock and making that more energy efficient. A daunting challenge perhaps, but no more than the one we took on seven years ago!"

DCRS runs one to four-day courses throughout the year. For further information about this and all DCRS courses phone 01747 811099 or see www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk



Funding Round-up

Co-operative Grants

Running or involved with a Transition Group? The Co-operative is handing out small grants to help groups get started in the South-West call 01884 266892 or visit www.co-operative.coop Transition Sherborne has just been awarded one of these grants.

Green Energy Trust

Grants of up to £25,000 are available for renewable energy projects. Local community groups, not-for-profit organisations and charities can apply for the funding.

www.scottishpowergreentrust.co.uk

Wessex Water

The giant water supplier is offering to support community and voluntary projects that will directly benefit the environment in the Wessex Water Region. www.wessexwater.co.uk/watermark

N.I 7 Seed Funding Grants

To support the 3rd Sector in Dorset small grants of up to £1,000 are being made available to increase the capacity of organisations to increase their income, for example writing or updating a Business Plan or Fundraising Strategy, researching funding opportunities or developing a fund-raising idea. The money can be used to cover costs such as extra hours for existing staff / consultant, or volunteer expenses. For more information or any queries please contact Rachele Smith on 01305 216411 or

Rachele.smith@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk

E.ON Sustainable Energy Fund.

Grants of up to £20,000 are available for community groups and not-for-profit organisations who wish to implement sustainable energy projects in their buildings - from energy efficiency through to micro-generation. The next closing date for applications is 16 October 2009.

www.e-on-uk.com/about/sustainableenergyfund

More funding sources available on the DCA website www.dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk and in the funding section of the da21 website

£10m for 20 best low carbon communities

The Government has launched a search for local authorities, charities and social enterprises to take up the challenge to help communities fight climate change. Communities can apply for a share of a £10million fund as part of the Low Carbon Communities Challenge to build on existing low carbon schemes. Around a quarter of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions come from heating, lighting and powering electrical appliances in homes. By 2050 this needs to be almost zero if the UK is to cut its emissions by 80% highlighting the importance of local action. This challenge offers the chance to be in the forefront of moving to a low carbon economy. The twenty successful communities will each receive support to pay for real measures selected by the local residents themselves.

More information <http://www.decc.gov.uk/>

Affordable Eco-cottages Available in January

Work is well advanced and on schedule at the Threshold Cohousing Centre to convert two old barns to seven eco-cottages, and to upgrade seven holiday cottages. Half of the scheme will be affordable housing with East Dorset Housing Association. As of mid-September, three affordable units are still available: two 2-bedroom shared-ownership, and one 1-bedroom affordable rental. All units will be available for occupation in January 2010.

The Threshold Centre is in a quiet rural setting just south of Gillingham, and will have one of the lowest carbon footprints in the UK. All dwellings will achieve Ecohomes Excellent, the highest standard for conversions, and will be heated from a shared biomass woodpellet system. There is also a community market garden, and car pooling and ride sharing schemes.

To achieve diversity of household types, the residents are especially keen to recruit households with school age children, and people interested in helping to run the shared facilities and educational programmes. If you are interested, contact the Threshold Centre as soon as possible. See www.thresholdcentre.org.uk, or contact Amanda Pearson on 01747 835633.



da21 has signed up to 10:10, the national effort to cut the UK's emissions by 10% in 2010. Please sign-up today. By committing to to make this cut you will join thousands of individuals and organisations all actively helping stop climate change by making simple changes to their lifestyles, homes and businesses.

More importantly, your voice will be part of the national demand that the UK Government acts quickly to cut our country's emissions as a whole. If we in the UK can prove that fast, deep cuts can be made at a national level, then we may just inspire all the other big polluting countries to follow suit. <http://www.1010uk.org>

Transition Sherborne Launched

The burgeoning Transition movement in the Dorset has gained another convert, with a group started in Sherborne, thanks in part of a small grant from The Co-operative. The South West region is leading the country in Transition. with almost half the official Transition Towns.

Existing groups in Dorset include Poole, Bournemouth, Christchurch, Wimborne, Dorchester, Weymouth and Portland, Purbeck, New Forest and Shaftsbury, and the Transition BH hub to support the formation of Transition Town initiatives in the BH postcode area.

A list of Transition Towns in Dorset is available on the da21 website. Other weblinks of interest:

<http://transitionbh.org/about/> .

<http://transitiontowns.org/sherborne>

UK Low Carbon Transition Plan Announced

The Government published The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan in July. Not news then, but it's worth looking at, being considered the most systematic response to climate change of any major developed economy, and sets out a vision, which is all important in the run up to crucial talks in Copenhagen in December.

<http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/news/pn081/pn081.aspx>

350 At Lyme

Turn Lyme Green are hoping to set up a memorable event for 350 Day on 24th October. Events are taking place all over the world, to publicise the fact that 350 parts per million is the safe limit for CO2 concentration in the atmosphere. Down in Lyme, they were still discussing some exciting ideas as we went to press. Will they plant something 350 times? Or write '350' in stones on the beach? Or spell it out with 350 people? Could you get involved?

Take a look at their website to find out.

www.turnlymegreen.org . www.350.org

Dorchester Car Club Launch

Just as we were going to press, Dorchester Car Club was launched, at an outdoor ceremony in South Street. Children from Damers First School were involved in naming the club's first car. Like any other car club vehicle, this is a pay-as-you-go car. Apart from a membership fee, members pay only when they use the car. So they don't pay any of the fixed costs associated with car ownership – things like insurance and road tax. Nor are they responsible for maintenance and repairs. An excellent way to reduce car use and save money at the same time.

www.transitiontowndorchester.org/Projects/Car_Club/Car_Club.html



da21s AGM has just taken place - photographs are on our facebook page! - also an excellent presentation from Pete West on the proposed feed-in tariff is available to download from our website - under presentations.

da21 welcomes Susan Anders to the team as Third Sector Sustainability Officer. Susan has extensive experience in the environment and sustainable development sector, having worked in conservation, environmental education, community development and community-based natural resources management, both in the UK and in developing countries. Living in Dorset since 2003, she was responsible for setting up and managing the Bridport Local Area Partnership and chairs the Bridport Environment Group. Her email to contact her is susan@da21.org.uk.

da21 is being used as a case study by the Energy Savings Trust. The Trust helped pay for da21's training day for Transition Town groups back in May. Now featured on the Energy Savings Trust website, the da21 case study notes the challenges of setting up such a training day in a rural county, and where attendees had differing levels of experience.

da21 is also working with mappingforchange to create a Dorset Green Map - the map will be integrated into the new website which we are currently working on, and we are hoping to hold a seminar in North Dorset to launch the idea and to get the local community involved in designing the map. Contact the office for more details.

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For further information about da21 please view the website www.da21.org.uk or contact the office

Post: P O Box 5789, Dorchester DT2 8ZR.

Email: office@da21.org.uk

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Huge thank you to everyone for their contributions and please keep them coming - Peter.

peter@da21.org.uk
Newsletter Editor

address should you wish

Transition Town Dorchester - Food Group

The Food Group had its first meeting in September and began with a quick run-through of what Transition is all about. For anyone new to the Transition concept, in a nutshell, the age of cheap oil is coming to an end. Transition is all about anticipating what the world will be like in the years to come, and working towards it in a positive way.

The Food Group meets on the second Tuesday of each month, and rotates around the homes of various members. Meetings start with a bring and share meal, so get in touch if you'd like to come along. The Casterbridge Food Co-operative and Gardenshare schemes are already up and running, and we're collectively keen to get new projects started. In August we ran a Local Food Market which was very popular, selling really local food right in the middle of town. We're beginning work to establish a regular one.

Upcoming events include a breadmaking workshop run by a local master baker, and there'll be a film night. We're also looking into starting a Community Farm and a Community Orchard. We're always happy to hear from anyone with bright ideas or bags of enthusiasm, and we look forward to making the future of Dorchester tastier for everyone. To get involved please email food@transitiontowntorchester.org



Dorchester's first local food market

At the moment there is no market in Dorchester dedicated to truly local food. That struck us as a great pity, so we organised a pilot event to see what would happen. Funding was kindly provided by South West Co-operative Group Membership.

For every £1 spent in local business 80p stays in the local community whilst only 20p of every £1 spent in the big retailers and supermarkets stays local. That's four times as much money staying local, meaning more prosperity, more jobs and a higher standard of living in our local area.

Everything in the local food market came from within the immediate Dorchester area, and the event proved a massive hit with the local people. The question on everybody's lips seemed to be 'Are you going to make it a regular event?' - (so are we?)...

The Food Group has a blog online, join in here: www.transitionfood.blogspot.com

Events Calender & Directory of Dorset Communities in Acton

More events to view online

<http://www.da21.org.uk/events.html>

OCTOBER

Cranborne Chase Wood Fair, Larmar Tree

Sat / Sun 10 – 11 Oct
Larmer Tree Rushmore Estate Tollard Royal, Dorset, SP5 5PT
www.woodfair.org.uk

LETS Harvest Supper & Trading Day

Sun, 11 October, 10:00 – 17:00
Martinstown Village Hall
More information contact
katy@dorchester-lets.co.uk

Shaftesbury Home Grown working party

Sun, 11 October, 10:00 – 16:00
Jonathan's Field, Breach Lane
All welcome, bring hand tools, gloves and a picnic. Help plant onions and garlic and meet other people interested in the project.

Food Group Meeting - Transition Town Dorchester

Tue, 13 October, 19:00 – 22:00
At a food group member's home in the Dorchester area (map)
Join in by emailing:
food@transitiontowndorchester.org

Thorncombe Transition Village meeting

Tue, 13 October, 19:30 – 21:30
Thorncombe Sports and Social Club, TA20 4PS
All welcome starts 7.30pm. For more information contact Sophie and Michael tel 01460 30418 email michael.dh@live.co.uk

Creative Coppicing at Monkton Wyld Court

14 – 15 Oct 2009
Monkton Wyld Court - Charmouth
Creative Coppicing at Monkton Wyld Court FREE! (accommodation not included) For more information contact Monkton Wyld Court, 01297 560342, info@monktonwyldcourt.org.

Local Lunch from the Monkton Garden and Kitchens - Charmouth

Wed, 14 October, 12:30 – 15:00
Monkton Wyld Court, Charmouth
Enjoy a healthy and delicious meal lovingly prepared with fresh ingredients from our own garden and other local producers. Book now to support local organic farming and network-building (or simply take advantage of the best meal deal in town: Only £6!). For more information contact Monkton Wyld Court, 01297 560342, info@monktonwyldcourt.org.

Green Drinks in Shaftesbury

14 October, 20:00 – 22:00
The Mitre, ~Shaftesbury High Street
Come along and chat about environmental / eco / transitional things in a relaxed atmosphere - yes, social networking with real people and purpose!

Monkton Organic Gardening Group

Thu, 15 October, 10:00 – 13:00
Monkton Wyld Court, Charmouth
Every Thursday Monkton Organic Gardening Group 10am-1pm at Monkton Wyld Court. Everybody's welcome: all levels of experience.
www.monktonwyldcourt.co.uk,

How to Set Up a Low-Impact Smallholding

16 – 18 Oct 2009
Monkton Wyld Court, Charmouth
October 16th - 18th (Fri - Sun)
How to Set Up a Low-Impact Smallholding with Simon Fairlie and Jyoti Fernandes at Monkton Wyld Court
£195 residential, £130 non-residential. For more information contact Monkton Wyld Court, 01297 560342, info@monktonwyldcourt.org.

Renewables On Course - Dorchester

16 October, 09:00 – 15:00
Shooting School, Wardon Hill, Evershot, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 9PW
The CLA are organising a series of courses across the South West to examine the key issues affecting the development of renewable heat and energy.
Contact: John Mortimer, Regional Director, CLA Email: john.mortimer@cla.org.uk
Phone: 01249 700200
Website: http://www.cla.org.uk/In_Your_Area/South_West/Regional_News/Energy/Renewable_Energy/107668.htm

West Dorset's Climate Change Strategy Launch - Dorchester

More information contact WDDC
Fri, 16 October, 13:00 – 16:00

Friends of Ourorganics - Volunteer day - Litton Cheney

Sun, 18 October, 10:00 – 16:00
Ourganics Evolving Systems, Litton Lane, Litton Cheney
Please call Pat Bowcock to confirm 01308 48245

Green Lunch

Transition Town Weymouth and Portland
Fri, 23 October, 12:00 – 14:00
TEABUSH CAFE on the Esplanade
Green Lunch The Green Lunches are on the 2nd and 4th Friday of Each month at the TEABUSH CAFE on the Esplanade!

350.org Beach gathering - Bournemouth

Sat, 24 October, 11:00 – 12:00
West Undercliff beach, Bournemouth
Email Harriet Stewart-Jones
hello@transitionbh.org for more details

Transition Christchurch Film Screening - Age of Stupid

Tue, 27 October, 19:30 – 22:00
The Studio, Regent Centre (entrance at rear of building) (map)
Description Film – The Age of Stupid
Admission £3

Talk on Wave Energy for Portland - Weymouth

Thursday, 29 Oct 2009
Alvin Smith inventor of SEARASER will be talking on 'Wave Energy for Portland' on at the Community 2000 hall in Easton Further details please see http://www.transitiontown-news.org/Weymouth_and_Portland_Transition

Bridport Renewable Energy Group
Contact: Richard Toft — Spokesman
E-mail: richard.toft@btinternet.com

Dorset Cohousing Group (DORSCOH)
Contact: Derek Fawell — Contact Person.
E-mail: info@dorscoh.org.uk

Iwerne Valley Climate Change Forum
Contact: Jonathon Ford — Contact Person
Telephone: 01747 812509

Transition Town Dorchester
Contact: Steve Atkins — Acting Chair
Web site: www.transitiontowndorchester.org
E-mail: info@transitiontowndorchester.org

Transition BH (Bournemouth BH area)
<http://transitionbh.org>
Contact: Harriet Stewart-Jones
E-mail: hello@transitionbh.org

Transition Town Bridport
Web site: <http://www.transitiontownbridport.co.uk>
Contact: David Rickard
E-mail: daverickard@phonecoop.coop

Transition Town Poole
Contact: Andy Hadley
E-mail: hadleyac@ntlworld.com

Transition Town Shaftesbury
Contact : Robin Walter
E-mail : mail@transitiontownshaftesbury.org.uk.

Transition Town Sherborne
Contact: Luke Metcalf — Co-ordinator
E-mail: realresilience@googlemail.com

Transition Town Sturminster
<http://www.wrenfranklin.co.uk/page3.html>
Contact: Sarah Williams
E-mail: sarah@sturquest.org.uk
Telephone: 01258 471456

Transition Thorncombe
Contact: Micheal Graves
E-mail: michael.dh@live.co.uk
Telephone: 01460 30418

Transition Town Wimborne
Contact: Amanda Brown
email: amanda@da21.org.uk

Weymouth and Portland Transition Towns
Web site: www.transitiontown-news.org
Contact: Jon Orrell — Chair
E-mail: jorrell@doctors.net.uk

Turn Lyme Green
Web site: <http://turnlymegreen.wordpress.com/>
Contact: Mark Silverdale — Contact
E-mail: mark@silverdale.entadsl.com

PEAT (Transition Purbeck)
Web site: <http://www.peat-da21.org/>
Contact: Brett Spiller
E-mail: peatda21@googlemail.com

This is not an exhaustive list (far from it!), more groups are listed on our directory of Sustainability Organisations in Dorset