

News Update March 2011

Forthcoming events

Sat 28th May - Duck Racing Day
Sat 2nd July - 40's Dance Evening
Sat 9th July - Low Carbon Homes Trail and Renewable Technology exhibition

Editorial

It has been often said that the world of climate change and energy saving is a fast moving scene and certainly since our last newsletter, when we were just recovering from Frozen Britain, news, both good and bad has come in as a never ending stream. Rather than bemoaning a dearth of news, it is more a case of what to leave out.

Membership numbers are up and the "team" have continued to be hard at work on your behalf. The Publicity and Campaigns Committee have just begun a new project - "The Battlefields Energy Challenge" where we shall be working closely with all the residents on this estate over the next two years. A small grant from Shropshire Unitary Authority's Climate Change Fund is supporting this work and we shall regularly report on progress. Your Finance and Funding Committee meet regularly, as do the Trustees, and the Contractors panel have met several times recently with the various insulation and renewable technology installers we have links with. We have just finished our Rural Outreach Project, where we took a mobile drop in advice service out to the more scattered communities; Cardington, Hope Bowdler, Rushbury, Wall under Eaton, Leebotwood, Aston Munslow, Ratlinghope, Myndtown and Wentnor. Every home in these communities was leafleted about our work and our Chairman's motor home was commandeered to provide a mobile exhibition for residents to call in and seek advice on energy saving. We are grateful to the Secret Hills A.O.N.B. Sustainable Development Fund for supporting this outreach.



Waiting for clients at the Crown Inn, Wentnor

We sadly said farewell to project worker Julie Mellors at the beginning of March. Funding for the tremendous work she did for us ran out after three years and administration for the Home Energy Surveys has been taken on by volunteer Jane Wrench. The many other tasks Julie did have been shared out around other volunteer members of the team so we are all just a bit busier. **Our greatest need is for more Home Energy Visitors**—the small team we have are at times really stretched and clients sometimes have to wait weeks for a visit. **Please consider if you could help us.** We offer full training and support and it's not too difficult to do. By becoming a home energy visitor you would increase your knowledge of energy saving measures and be helping members of the community to make a real difference. As a result of taking the advice we offer, clients are really getting their carbon emissions down as well as saving money.

- Our next public event is our fourth annual **Duck Racing Day Saturday 28th May in Cardingmill Valley**, 1st race commences at 11.00. Come and join all the fun. We are sometimes asked what this is to do with Climate Change. It isn't BUT is a great opportunity to talk about the work we do with literally the hundreds of people who attend this thrilling event.
- Saturday 2nd July, a 40's dance evening at Silvester Horn Institute with the Little Big Band and food of the time!!
- Saturday 9th July, 11.00 -3.00pm. Energy Saving and Renewables Technology Exhibition at The Parish Centre and the starting place for our 3rd Annual Low Carbon Homes Trail.

Special points of interest:

- News from the committees
- Renewable Heat Incentive
- Local Authority action
- Yes we can make a difference
- It's not our homes that use energy
- World carbon emissions data
- Uphill battle

Obama faces uphill battle

Although in this country environmental pressure groups constantly cry the Government is not doing enough to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions fast enough, we do thankfully have cross party agreement that climate change and fossil fuel emissions are a real threat to mankind and we have legally binding emission reduction targets.

In the United States **President Obama faces an uphill battle** to get binding legislation through congress. He wants the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate emissions. Not only are many Republican politicians against such measures, but even Democratic senators, particularly from the coal states are concerned that such measures will put the American economy in a straitjacket, costing millions of jobs and hundreds of billions of dollars a year.

One experienced observer with ties to several developing country delegations - who did not want to be named - told BBC News that "Unravelling EPA's authority to use national legislation to tackle climate change will be perceived by developing countries as yet one more example of the US 'do as we say, not what we do',"

Here in Church Stretton our Town Council take energy saving very seriously. They are working hard to improve the energy efficiency of The Silvester Horn Institute and are one of only three councils in the County to trial reduced street lighting—yes the Town Council are responsible for the maintenance and electricity costs of many of our street lights. Nearly all of our councillors have borrowed a smart energy monitor and a number of them have had a helpful visit from one of our home energy visitors to receive advice on ways of reducing their energy bills.

Humans are vulnerable to extremes of weather

The floods in Australia and Brazil earlier this year, on top of floods in Pakistan and forest fires in Russia in 2010, are another timely reminder about how vulnerable we are as humans to extreme weather.

Last year the Amazon, one of the world's richest ecosystems, was a net emitter of carbon emissions instead of a carbon store as billions of trees died due to the second severe drought in 5 years; droughts that once were considered one-in a hundred year events. A recent Committee on Climate Change publication said that a 2 degree global temperature rise could lead to crop production in India reducing by 10-40 per cent; an additional 1.5 to 2.5 billion people at risk from dengue fever; and a critical risk for drought in south and south-eastern Europe, Australia, North West Asia and parts of Africa...

It's the world's poorest people who did least to cause the problem who are being hit hardest, but the UK will not be immune to these impacts either, as we've seen with food prices in recent years. *LCCN Newsletter*

New wood burning stove is a great success



Having struggled with an inefficient inset wood burning stove for many years Chairman Jon Cooke took the plunge last autumn and installed a Clearview stove in their living room. Fantastic. The 4Kw output stove not only heats the room with ease but has heat to spare to convect around the rest of the house. Once alight and thoroughly warmed up, the stove can be shut right down and will burn for several hours on just one log. There is minimal ash and the double glazed glass door really does stay clear. As a bonus, the flat top can be used to heat a casserole or quickly boil a kettle of water.

A remote wireless thermostat was fitted at the same time to the gas fired central heating system and in conjunction with the existing RTV's (radiator thermostat valves) a considerable reduction has been seen in gas consumption.

This time of year when perhaps only a little heat is needed in the evenings, the fire is lit and the wireless thermostat moved to another room and set to a cooler setting. Because the house is well insulated, the central heating hardly comes on now and Jon is looking forward to even lower carbon emissions. Kindling for the stove? Last years fruit tree prunings were stored and have proved to make fantastic kindling wood. Bought-in kindling has to be mechanically chopped, bagged, transported and shop stored all of which has an energy implication. Every little, however small helps to reduce carbon emissions.

New Melt Record for Greenland Ice Sheet; 'Exceptional' Season Stretched Up to 50 Days Longer Than Average

New research shows that 2010 set new records for the melting of the Greenland Ice Sheet, expected to be a major contributor to projected sea level rises in coming decades.

"This past melt season was exceptional, with melting in some areas stretching up to 50 days longer than average," said Dr. Marco Tedesco, who is leading a project studying variables that affect ice sheet melting. "Melting in 2010 started exceptionally early at the end of April and ended quite late in mid- September." The study is sponsored by World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the National Science Foundation and NASA. In an article published in *Environmental Research Letters*, Professor Tedesco and co-authors note that in 2010, summer temperatures up to 3C above the average were combined with reduced snowfall.

The capital of Greenland, Nuuk, had the warmest spring and summer since records began in 1873. Bare ice was exposed earlier than the average and longer than previous years, contributing to the extreme record. "Bare ice is much darker than snow and absorbs more solar radiation," said Professor Tedesco. "Other ice melting feedback loops that we are examining include the impact of lakes on the glacial surface, of dust and soot deposited over the ice sheet and how surface melt water affects the flow of the ice toward the ocean." *LCCN Newsletter 27/01/11*



Some good news

In March 2011, the UK Government announced the details of their Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

RHI is designed to provide financial support that encourages individuals, communities and businesses to switch from using fossil fuel for heating, to renewables such as wood fuel and solar heat.

There will be two phases for domestic customers

Phase 1 (available from July 2011) - "RHI Premium Payment"

This is called the "RHI Premium Payment" and will be worth around £15m and available to 25,000 householders in Great Britain who install from July 2011.

The exact amounts available to consumers have yet to be confirmed. However the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) have announced that the following amounts may be available:

- Solar Thermal - £300/unit
- Air Source Heat Pumps - £850/unit
- Biomass boilers - £950/unit
- Ground Source Heat Pumps - £1,250/unit.

These are one of payments so are not annual. DECC plan to publish details of the "RHI Premium Payment" and how this will apply in May this year though recipients of this payment will need to ensure that:

- They have a well-insulated home based on its energy performance certificate;
- They agree to give feedback on how the equipment performs.

Further guidance, including how to apply will be appear in May.

Phase 2 (available from October 2012) – RHI tariffs

People in receipt of the Renewable Heat Premium Payments will be able to receive long term RHI tariff support once these tariffs are introduced, as will anybody who has installed an eligible technology since 15th July 2009.

These tariff payments will start alongside the Green Deal from October 2012 to allow a more whole-house approach to heat production and energy saving. (*Energy Saving Trust*)

Fact: 95% of the U.K's heating comes from the burning of fossil fuels.

Local Authority action

The best local authorities are already leading ambitious action to cut carbon emissions from homes, businesses and transport locally. Trailblazing action includes street-by-street home insulation, better transport planning and supporting local green energy production. But most councils are not doing nearly enough.

Shropshire Unitary Authority has not to date led the way as far as encouraging domestic energy reduction, rather concentrating on its own in-house emissions but Stretton Climate Care, along with other environmental groups are part of the **Shropshire Environmental Alliance** and they have been quietly working away to encourage the authority to become more proactive. Together they scrutinise and comment on every "environmental" document to come out of Shire Hall, are represented on various committees, including the Environmental Delivery Group and most recently have been a major contributor in helping the local authority put together county wide environmental priorities of which we eagerly await publication. Shropshire's Community Strategy 2010 -2020, priority 2 "Responding to climate change...." states "**Shropshire will become recognised as a leader in responding to climate change.....**" It will be up to community groups to make sure our Local Authority meet this aspiration.

Stretton Climate Care are also working closely with Shropshire Community Council, looking at ways to improve help for those in Fuel Poverty (also known as Heating Deprivation.)

Yes we can make a difference

There is a growing body of evidence to show that one of the most important determinants of individual behaviour is the behaviour of others. Humans are social animals and, whether consciously or not, we are powerfully impelled to 'fit in' with those around us. The rules of how to fit in – the 'social norms' – are co-determined, co-evolving phenomena, shaped and affected by a variety of influences. If active and enthusiast people 'set the tone' by galvanising community groups to raise awareness about climate change, to show what can be done to tackle it, this has the potential to play a powerful role in shaping social norms. As social norms change, the 'rules' of belonging, of what it means to be a citizen, to be a member of a community, inevitably and subtly influence everyone. Once upon a time it was completely normal to drive a car whilst drunk; in the future, those responsible for carbon-reckless behaviour will be an ostracised minority.

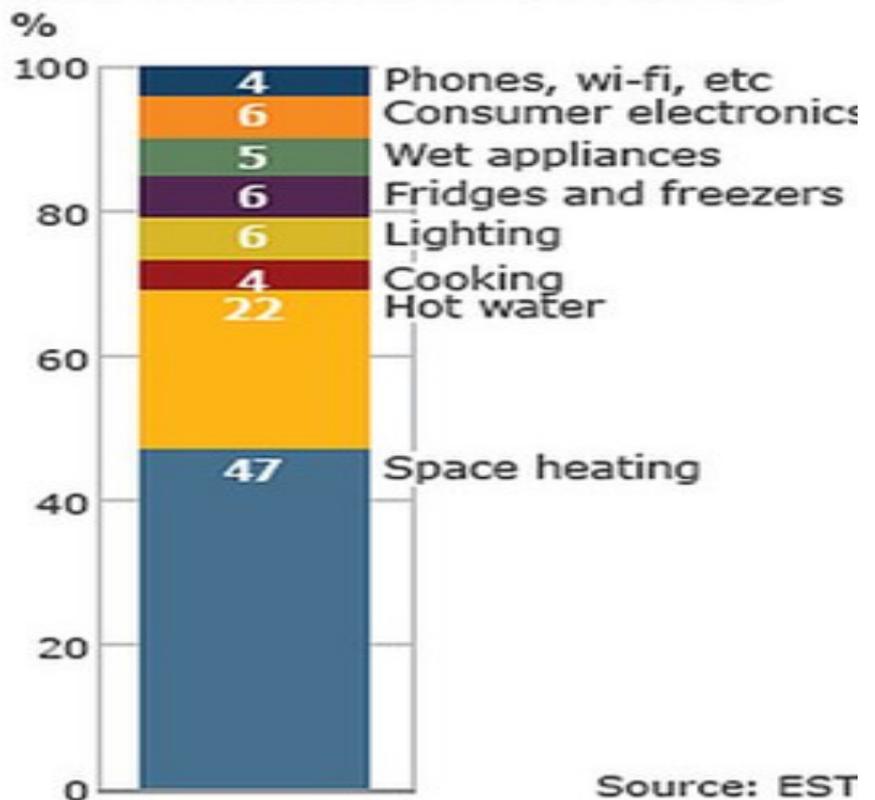
A coalition of community groups, joining across the country, sharing practice, building capacity, making things happen, is not merely positive in and of itself (because it will mean improved efforts to tackle climate change in each and every community); it has the potential to constitute a rebalancing of power relations in a bigger sense. At present, atomised, each community can in effect be 'picked off', whether by an energy company or a local authority or a big corporate entity. (Even the allocation of grants by governments or charitable trusts can, indirectly, have this effect, by endorsing this 'winner' and marginalising or excluding that 'loser'.) If part of a wider group, if able to act in concert with others, the ability to challenge established power, to shape the overall fitness landscape, is dramatically enhanced.

Is established machinery – of European institutions, of UK government, even of parliamentary democracy – going to be able to drive the kinds of changes that we'll need either to mitigate or adapt to climate change? The failure of global climate talks, the flimsy impacts of the Emissions Trading Scheme and the limp talk of 'transforming to a low carbon economy' illustrate the problem. The UK may have the world's first 'legally enforceable' climate change legislation, but our politicians are simply unable or unwilling to talk to us about what it might really mean, or what we're really going to have to change.

We do indeed need a 'bigger' concept than climate change, a concept that enables people to consider their own lives, their family, their community, their job, their world, as well as the rest of humanity and the planet and all the really big stuff. If tackling climate change can be shown to be a perfectly reasonable and ordinary part of living by this bigger concept, it becomes altogether easier. Rather than being a shock, a block, a threat, a low-carbon life becomes an organic expression of some other idea.

Extract from Low Carbon Community network newsletter 21.01.11

CO2 emissions in UK homes



It's not our homes that use energy – it's the people in them!!

There's been a bit of debate recently about how warm our homes need to be. Spring is in the air but according to a BBC news item it will be weeks, if not months before the radiators get turned off. The average indoor temperatures of British houses are creeping up now central heating is the norm, and double glazing and insulation are added to older, draughtier homes.

Our expectations of thermal comfort have been raised by central heating at home and at work, and because we are more sedentary. Those sitting still feel the cold quicker than someone moving about. Long gone, for many, are the days when in the winter Jack Frost painted the inside of our windows with those marvellous ice patterns.

Now the coldest weather is past are you still heating other than your living room?

Dr Lucy Worsley, chief curator of the Royal Historic Palaces, reminds us of our profligate Georgian ancestors "A warm living room showed you were a good host and a generous person. They thought an element of wastefulness showed you had enough cash to be generous," says Worsley, presenter of BBC Four's *If Walls Could Talk*, a history of our homes to be broadcast in April.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change have just introduced a new online modelling tool [My 2050](http://my2050.decc.gov.uk/), where users can decide what they want the UK to be like in 39 years' time. The only caveat? Carbon emissions must drop 80% while keeping the lights on.

If you have internet access, have a go. It is a real challenge to get your carbon emissions down by 80% and it takes more than a few extra wind turbines and a nuclear power station. Even if you reduce average home heating to 16 C it only takes carbon emissions down by 7%. Do you know what the average temperature of your home is? Are you a winter shirtsleeves person or a member of the woolly jumper brigade?

If readers haven't yet asked Stretton Climate Care to come and carry out a free Home Energy Survey, now is a good time – there is a good chance we can save you money and help reduce your carbon footprint and how about getting your neighbours signed up too. In order to reach the 2050 target of an 80% reduction in Co₂ emissions we have to get our average emissions down to around 2 tonnes per household. How close are you to that target?

Local Contractors

Stretton Climate Care have links with the following contractors:

L & C Insulation

Shropshire Insulations

Greenearth Energy

Llani Solar

Salop Energy

If you require information about these companies and the products they offer, do please get in touch with us.

Book Review

World on the Edge - How to prevent Environmental and Economic Collapse by Lester Brown.

Published by Earthscan ISBN 978-1-84971-274-3

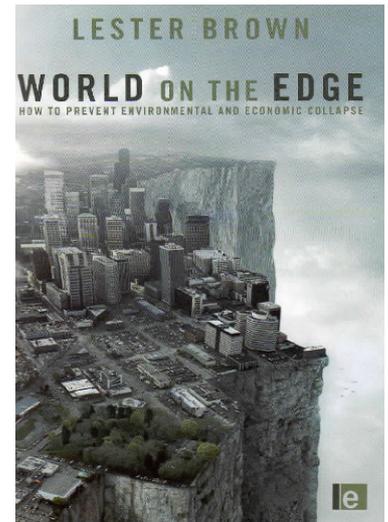
'No one is better informed than Lester Brown of the multi-faceted crisis facing our planet. And no one has spelt out so clearly how our civilisation could be saved from falling 'over the edge' while there is - hopefully - still just time.'

John Rowley, founder/editor www.peopleandplanet.net

'Brown's comprehensive review of human civilization's impending crises never becomes overwhelming, as it is accompanied by clear-eyed, pragmatic solutions that constitute a road map to a cleaner, more just world.'

David Roberts, senior staff writer, grist.org

Lester Brown is president of the Earth Policy Institute. In his latest book he looks at the issue of the race between political and natural tipping points. He asks "can we close coal-fired power stations fast enough to save the Greenland ice sheet? Can we raise water productivity fast enough to halt the depletion of aquifers and avoid water-driven food shortages? Can we cope with peak oil and peak water at the same time?" He predicts that the perfect storm or ultimate recession could come at any time. We are living in uncertain times; natural disasters, political turmoil in oil producing countries, water shortages in part of the world, rising food prices and economic recession, all of which combine to make it ever more important to begin to live ever more sustainable life styles. A good read for those who wish to grasp a better understanding of the potential crisis ahead but not for the faint hearted.



A.G.M.

Our A.G.M. will be held on Friday 7th October at the Silvester Horne Institute. Plenty of notice for you to **put the date in your diary NOW**. This date is linked with an exciting competition that will be displayed and judged that day. Further details will be announced at the Summer Fest.

We really need to know

A lot of time and effort is put into gathering the articles and producing this newsletter. We do it as a result of feed back that you like to be kept up to date with what is going on in the Energy Saving and Climate Change world. Apart from the odd comment from one or two readers which are gratefully received, the editor really has no idea what you think. Do you read the pages? Do you find the articles interesting? Do you pass your copy on to someone else? Do you have material to contribute?

A copy goes out to about 150 people by email and a further 18 monochrome copies are posted or hand delivered. Sorry these few don't get the jazzy colour version but we try to keep our costs down, especially now there are so few grants about.

Some feedback really would be helpful. Comments can be emailed to info@strettonclimatecare.org.uk or sent to Stretton Climate Care, c/o Mayfair Community Centre, Easthope Road, Church Stretton SY6 6BL.

World carbon dioxide emissions data by country

Table id	Rank, 2009	Country or region	2008, mil tonnes	2009, TOTAL, mil tonnes	2009, per capita, tonnes	% change, 2008 to 2009
225		World	30,493.23	30,398.42	4.49	-0.3
179		Asia & Oceania	12,338.41	13,264.09	3.53	7.5
188	1	China	6,803.92	7,710.50	5.83	13.3
1		North America	6,885.07	6,410.54	14.19	-6.9
7	2	United States	5,833.13	5,424.53	17.67	-7
54		Europe	4,628.98	4,310.30	7.14	-6.9
91		Eurasia	2,595.86	2,358.03	8.32	-9.2
107		Middle East	1,658.55	1,714.09	8.22	3.3
194	3	India	1,473.73	1,602.12	1.38	8.7
102	4	Russia	1,698.38	1,572.07	11.23	-7.4
8		Central & South America	1,228.65	1,219.78	2.57	0.7
122		Africa	1,157.71	1,121.59	1.13	-3.1
196	5	Japan	1,215.48	1,097.96	8.64	-9.7
67	6	Germany	823.07	765.56	9.30	-7
3	7	Canada	598.46	540.97	16.15	-9.6
199	8	Korea, South	521.77	528.13	10.89	1.2
109	9	Iran	510.61	527.18	6.94	3.2
90	10	United Kingdom	563.88	519.94	8.35	-7.8

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