

GloballySusDCymru

Facilitating the flow of information about sustainable development in Wales and the World

May 2008

WELCOME

Welcome to the May edition, on housing.

With zero carbon building moving up the agenda, our Assembly Ministers are committed to achieving this standard for new builds in Wales by 2011.

How can you make your own contribution? Whether it's better insulation, retrofitting your house or using energy more efficiently, there are lots of articles and tips inside to help you on your way.

I'd like to thank Janice Collard at the Big Issue and Haf Roberts at Gwalia for their contributions to this edition and a special thanks to Joyce Gervis at Ty-Mawr Lime for her excellent top tip this month!

As ever, all your events are listed at the back. This month, why not head to Sustainable Wales' '21st Century Living: Climate Change Solutions' event on the 28th at Bryngarw Country Park?

We'll be back in June with all of your news and events as well as features and tips on **health**.

Helen

Helen Nelson
Executive Director
Cynnal Cymru—Sustain Wales

The views expressed in this publication are those of individual contributors and are not necessarily those of Cynnal Cymru-Sustain Wales or its sponsors.

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Contribute To The Next Issue

If you would like to contribute to the next edition please send your news and events to the email address below by the 2 November.
globallysusdcymru@sustainwales.com

WALES NEWS

Housing – Whats the big issue?

Janice Collard, Senior Vendor Services Worker with the Big Issue in Swansea, has a varied schedule, ranging from helping with housing applications or helping with crisis intervention - there's never a quiet day at the office!

'I do a lot of outreach work, volunteering on the breakfast run, waking people up with hot drinks; accompanying people to GP appointments or the courts, often just to reassure them that they will be listened to.'

'People don't always realise when we talk about homelessness, it isn't just rough sleepers on the street that we are talking about; there are also the hidden homeless - people forced to stay with friends and always on the move, others face eviction because they haven't filled in their housing benefit paperwork.'

It's Janice's role to find the best solution to each individual's circumstance and, where necessary, refer them to the right organisation.

'We're front line workers and feed into many other organisations and networks, such as local homeless forums and Swansea local authority's Rough Sleeper Group.' Being widely networked enables them to cover all of Wales too.

'Our services workers are based in the south but we have vendors in mid and north Wales too. Through our networks we can phone and get someone referred to whichever service they need.'

Every case is different and will need a different kind of support. In fact, there are numerous reasons why people find themselves without a home to call their own. As Janice explains:

'Substance misuse is a major problem and, without enough money to treat people with addictions, there are waiting lists in every area.

'People who find themselves homeless often suffer with mental health problems, perhaps due to abuse at home, or they may have experienced relationship or family breakdown.

'We are also seeing an increase in home repossessions. People buy houses but can't afford to maintain them; it's expensive with gas and electricity bills on the increase. People also have more debt now than ever before and there is an increase in gambling addiction.'

A key part of the Big Issue's work involves liaising with a wide range of organisations to try to prevent these situations from happening in the first place.

'There is a lack of affordable housing in Wales,' continues Janice. 'Council housing just isn't being built. People can't afford to get on the property ladder and we work with many private landlords who won't take DSS. You get some very good landlords but others, unfortunately, just aren't as good.

'Bond Boards help too, supported here by the local authority and Wallich, they'll raise the bond on rental property to help people into housing.'

“Behind every vendor there’s a story”

The Big Issue has done incredible work over the years, not least by keeping homelessness an issue in people’s minds.

‘I work on the ground with street homeless and vulnerably housed individuals. It means I can support them back into work and help them rediscover the person they once were! People come from all backgrounds. Behind every vendor there’s a story.’

‘Some may have a history of crime too. This is a legal way for them to make money and pay for their bed, breakfast or even their rent. It’s a real financial incentive. We want to offer a hand-up, not a hand-out.

‘It gets people back into work, builds their confidence and self-esteem. Vendors build up their customer base.’

There’s a buddy system for first time Big Issue vendors but they don’t receive formal training as such. All that’s required is that they follow a code of conduct. It’s a sad fact that many are the victims of verbal abuse while selling the magazine, but time and again vendors display amazing grit and handle difficult situations ever so graciously.

“We offer a hand up, not a handout”

‘We provide references when our vendors are ready to move on, based on the skills gained working with us: timekeeping, cash-handling and customer care. A vendor in Neath so impressed staff and managers of a supermarket near his pitch, he landed a job in-store!’

Soon Janice and her colleagues will be offering an NVQ in customer care training to help encourage that step-up.

‘We’re working with the British Red Cross to pilot an accredited course. This will lead to vendors volunteering to train others; we’ve got some initial funding for that.’

So, what’s on Janice’s wish-list?

‘I’d like to see private landlords be more realistic about rent and more aware that DSS tenants don’t always pose a risk! In fact, many landlords welcome them because their rent is a regular income.

‘I’d like to see much more affordable housing. There are plenty of flats going up, but they aren’t affordable; working people often can’t afford them! For every building that goes up I’d like to see a percentage of that dedicated to affordable housing.

‘It would be great if more services were available in the same place - one-stop-shops that can deal with health, housing and social service matters in one place, with a night shelter for people in crisis. At the moment, people have to go here, there and everywhere and it gets confusing. In rural areas the problem is worse.’

But there are some positive changes happening already, Janice beams:

‘We are getting there, little by little. The Rough Sleepers Group in Neath Port Talbot has successfully established a resource centre, a place for people living on the streets to go.

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'We are getting there, little by little. The Rough Sleepers Group in Neath Port Talbot has successfully established a resource centre, a place for people living on the streets to go.

“People think that we sell a magazine and nothing else”

'We are trying to raise awareness all of the time. People think that we sell a magazine and nothing else. There's a LOT more that goes on behind the scenes! Whatever it takes, we work with people until they achieve what they'd like out of life. Not everyone who comes through my door becomes a Big Issue vendor - as much as a quarter of them don't.'

Janice is thankful too for all of the organisations that the Big Issue works with. 'You find that you need your support networks and, in turn, they help you do a much better job.'

The Big Issue is a not-for-profit organisation.
If you would like to contact Janice we can put you in touch.
For further information, visit [Big Issue Cymru](#).

Volunteer with Big Issue Cymru by helping sell the magazines to the vendors at the Big Issue office, or visiting the vendors on the street while they are working, visit [Volunteering Wales](#).

Search for Little Stars with Lucy Owen

During April's Real Nappy Week, Waste Awareness Wales, Sustainable Wales and new mum Lucy Owen, encouraged parents to use real nappies and launched a search for babies across Wales to star in a real nappy calendar.

Gwenan Davies from Waste Awareness Wales said 'Real nappies have changed a lot - there's not a safety pin in sight and they're so easy to wash, no need to soak or boil and with savings of up to £500, are kind to your finances too.'

Lucy Owen said 'When you add up all that waste going to landfill you realise what a big difference real nappies could make.'

If you think your baby could be the face of real nappies then send a recent photo of your baby wearing a real nappy with name and contact details to Waste Awareness Wales at Golley Slater, Wharton Street, Wharton Place, Cardiff, CF10 1GS.

Creating a New Community for Wales

At a 200 acre site north east of Bridgend, work will soon start on a £225m development designed to create a village for the 21st century, following traditional village layouts while adopting the highest standards for housing design and the environment. It has been designed to foster a sense of community and strong local identity, where people take precedent over vehicles, with an interconnected network of people friendly streets to encourage walking and cycling with open green spaces, parkland and play areas.

The village will have a small shopping centre to meet local needs, and other facilities will include a community centre and a new primary school for 330 pupils. 150 of the 1500 new homes in the Parc Derwen village, delivered by Wales & the West Housing Association, are said to be affordable housing.

The First Welsh Sheepswool Insulation

School children at Brecon Road Infant School in Merthyr Tydfil will be nice and snug in their new school extension with its local sheepswool insulation.

Mrs Lambe, Headteacher at the school, the first school in Wales to benefit from this material, said 'We'll leave a section of wall un-plastered so the children can see the building materials, creating environmental awareness and appreciation that the wool from sheep grazing around here may have been used to insulate the school!'

Nigel Gervis of Ty-Mawr said 'Howies Organic Clothing company chose it for their offices, and families are realising the long term economic benefit. With 250mm of Thermafleece in a loft, a household can reduce heating costs by 25% and CO2 emissions by one tonne per year!'

Brecon-based Ty-Mawr, launched their sheepswool insulation, Ty-Mawr Thermafleece at the Wonderwool Exhibition, Builth Wells in April. Contact Joyce Gervis, Ty-Mawr on 01874 658000, email joyce.gervis@lime.org.uk or visit www.lime.org.uk.

Training Days for Teachers at CAT

Every year, thousands of pupils, students and teachers make the journey to the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) either for a day visit or residential stay in the eco cabins. They take part in a wide variety of workshops and experience first hand practical demonstrations of renewable energy and eco buildings.

But, the education team is also preparing a range of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) training days for teachers which will be run in the Autumn term. The days will help teachers deliver the new curriculum with a particular focus on how each subject can be related to ESDGC.

These courses will be targeted at KS3 and 4 teaching (and one training day for primary teachers) but some of the learning will give teachers the background information necessary to teach at a higher or lower level. Email education@cat.org.uk or call 01654 705983. Visit www.cat.org.uk/education.

Fairtrade Schools Action Guides

If your school is interested in taking part in Fairtrade activities, or even becoming a Fairtrade school an action pack is available to download or order from <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools/support%5Fresources/> or call 0207 4055 942 (English) or 07734 939 370 (Welsh). Copies of the guide are available in Welsh and English.

Do You Live in Swansea and Take Action to be Sustainable?

The Sustainable Swansea Awards recognise, reward and promote local organisations, groups and individuals that have made an active commitment to good environmental practice and sustainable development. All short-listed projects will be made into a short film to show at July's presentation. Winners receive a glass award made by a local craftsman.

Categories:

- Community Project
- Business Sector
- Public Agency
- Schools
- Champion: for outstanding individual contribution
- NEW Overall Winner Award, sponsored by Environment Agency Wales.

Last year's winners: Pitstop Wash Ltd., Hendrefoilan Primary School, Swansea Bay Alternative Travel Forum, Gower Explorer Network, and More Green Reuse, Recycle Project. The Scheme is open to everybody in the City and County of Swansea. If you are doing your bit then you deserve recognition – enter now!

Download an application form and guidelines at www.sustainableswansea.net. Or email: Helen@environmentcentre.org.uk, or call 01792 480200. Closing date is Friday, 30 May 2008.

WWT Launches Green Benefits for Local Business

The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) has launched a new scheme to get local companies involved in protecting the natural world. As well as discounted tickets, staff at companies participating in the WWT Corporate Partnership Scheme can enjoy a team building day doing practical conservation work, a company day out with private guided tour or a talk by a WWT expert at their offices.

Nigel Williams, centre manager at WWT National Wetland Centre Wales said 'For companies which share WWT's commitment to the environment, becoming a WWT partner will be the start of a close relationship and the opportunity to make a positive difference to the wildlife and environment right here in South West Wales.'

The opportunity is open to all local businesses and is the perfect way to put something back into the community and the environment while providing a valuable benefit for staff. Contact Ruth O'Malley on 01554 741087 or email ruth.omalley@wwt.org.uk.

Go Duckling and Diving This Spring

From 24 May WWT National Wetland Centre Wales, Llanelli, will be holding special 'Downy Ducklings' tours where visitors can take a special behind the scenes tour of the waterfowl nursery (duckery). Here eggs are incubated and hatched and visitors can see hundreds of newly hatched ducklings of different shapes and sizes at different stages from birth to adulthood.

Newly hatched chicks spend their first few weeks here where WWT wardens act as surrogate parents, ensuring they are fed, kept warm and have plenty of water until they are two months old when they're moved back into the grounds to become part of WWT's captive breeding programme.

Special ducklings events and duckery tours will be taking place at WWT National Wetland Centre Wales every day from 24 May – 1 June and every Sunday during June. Find out more at www.wwt.org.uk/ducklings.

Smart Energy

The Energy Retail Association (ERA) has welcomed the Welsh Assembly Government Sustainability Committee's new report 'Reducing Carbon Emissions in Households in Wales' and recommendation for smart energy meters to be installed in all homes in Wales.

The ERA last year gave evidence to the Committee on how smart meters can help consumers identify energy wastage in the home.

The technology allows consumers to see gas and electricity use in real time, the cost of their energy use and impact on the environment. Energy suppliers can also communicate with customers' meters ensuring they receive accurate bills. Contact Rachael Mullins on 029 2055 6148 or Gwyn Thomas on 029 2055 6145 at WEPR.

Eco Centre Launches Climate Change Website

West Wales Eco Centre launched a website in December, developed by teachers for teachers, to highlight the impact of climate change in Wales. The bilingual site, www.climatechangewales.org.uk, is the only online resource for curriculum-linked materials for all school age groups on climate change in Wales.

Tim Brew, the project's education programme manager, said 'We want colleagues to use our website in the classroom, not just as a reference.'

The project is supported by the Welsh Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Fund, administered by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority; and St Davids-based TYF Adventure, through the '1% for the Planet' scheme.

TYF Adventure Managing Director Andy Middleton said 'It is crucial that sound science about what is happening, and what may happen, is used as a basis for educating the upcoming generation of voters, homeowners, car drivers and consumers in general.' Contact West Wales ECO Centre on 01239 821903 or email tim@ecocentre.org.uk.

Ecovillage Planning Application Online

West Wales could be the home of a pioneering eco-village if planners give the green light to a planning application recently submitted to Pembrokeshire County Council under the council's new low-impact development policy. Lammis is proposing to build nine eco-smallholdings and a community hub building on 76 acres of woodland

and pasture near to the village of Glandŵr. The application includes straw bale houses, an earth sheltered house, timber roundhouses, turf-roofed barns and an eco-terrace.

The project will be completely off-grid, supplying water from a spring, electricity from a hydro-electric unit and fuel from on-site biomass crops. As well as being largely self sufficient, each of the nine smallholdings will be required to run a land-based enterprise in order to meet the stringent planning criteria. Enterprises include making linen shawls from flax, breeding compost worms as well as supplying more traditional farm produce.

The entire application, along with further details about the project, can be found at www.lammas.org.uk.

Diary Marker: Making Business Sense of Sustainable Development

One day conference on 12 June at the Parc (Thistle) Hotel, Park Place, Cardiff. With 50 per cent of customers taking note of green or ethical aspects when buying, businesses are increasingly viewing sustainable development as a commercial opportunity. This conference illustrates through good practice, and offers practical and balanced advice. Organised by the Institute of Welsh Affairs in association with the Institute of Directors and supported by Cynnal Cymru-Sustain Wales. Call 029 2066 6606 or email wales@iwa.org.uk.

Diary Marker: Developing the Village Shop

CefnGwlad.org will facilitate a networking event at the Pavilion, Pontrhydfendigaid on Sunday, 18 May. This is an event organised by village shop owners for village shop owners, providing an opportunity for those who run a village shop – or who are thinking of doing so – to discuss, share experiences and information and to learn from others. Visit www.cefn gwlad.org/index.php?p=c82691c3.14.1.

GLOBAL NEWS

M&S to Scrap Free Plastic Bags

Source: [Edie](#)

Marks and Spencers will charge 5p for carrier bags from the food hall from May, with profits being donated to environmental charity Groundwork. The company's £200m eco-plan, Plan A, held trials in Northern Ireland and south west England where use of food carrier bags drop by more than 70%.

Sir Stuart Rose, chief executive of M&S, said 'We want to make it easy for our customers to do their bit to help the environment and our trials have shown us that they want to take action.'

Waste and recycling spokesperson Adrian Ramsay said: 'We believe that the only way to achieve a serious and sustainable decrease is through government legislation introducing a mandatory tax on every plastic bag used.'

The introduction of the charge will coincide with the launch of a new food carrier bag made from 100% recycled materials.

Canada to Introduce CCS by 2012

Source: [Environment Canada](#).

To comply with targets on emissions, fossil fuel projects and coal-fired power plants will have to use carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology from 2012, the government of Canada has revealed.

The Canadian government made a commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions 20% by 2020, with Canada's Environment Minister, John Baird, adding that the plan will effectively require new oil extraction operations to implement CCS to meet the targets and will ban construction of new coal plants.

The regulations require Canadian industry to cut carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions intensity by 18% in 2010 and a further 2% annually thereafter. Companies will be able to choose the most cost-effective way to meet their targets, either by cutting emissions in their operations, buying carbon offsets, or by paying C\$15 per tonne by which they exceed their target into a government-run technology fund. Regulations are to be finalised in 2009 to come into force on in 2010.

New Report Concludes Retrofitting Homes Essential

Source: [Edie](#)

You might think you are doing your bit to reduce climate change by reusing plastic bags and getting the bus - but there's much more you can do! A new report aims to highlight the importance of retrofitting and adapting our homes. 'Your Home in a Changing Climate' describes why homes in London, the east and south east of England should become more efficient to mitigate the effects of climate change, and how they can adapt to changes that are already taking place.

The report, launched by the Three Regions Climate Change Group, concludes that widespread adaptation of existing homes is crucial as climatic conditions have altered since many were built. It focuses on three key changes that put homes at risk - flooding, water stress and overheating - and outlines cost effective methods to increase the resilience of existing homes to these threats. An online guide to retrofitting existing homes can be found at <http://www.london.gov.uk/trccg>.

New Business Environment Code

CBI Director of Business Environment, Michael Roberts, in March set out the importance of monitoring energy use in buildings at the launch of the Investment Property Databank's Environment Code. The Code provides a standardised way for businesses to record and analyse consumption of energy, water and waste and

benchmark results against similar properties. It can be applied to any building type and will operate internationally. Download your free copy at www.ipdoccupiers.com/environmentcode.

The CBI also launched a guide to Energy Performance Certificates for business premises which is available at www.cbi.org.uk/ property.

SMALL CHANGES, BIG RESULTS

Let us know what small changes you are making in the SustainWales.com bi-monthly poll and find the results here! Get some great tips for simple things you can do and help make a BIG difference.

Send your own top tip to:
globallysusdcymru@sustainwales.com, you could win a prize!

Tip of the Month

Keep recycling bottles! In the UK, to keep up with housing stock demands we extract around 200 million tonnes of sand each year depleting natural resources and disrupting marine-life. Welsh manufacturer Ty-Mawr substitute sand in their mortars, plasters and limecrete floors for recycled glass, which also creates a use for a waste product. The UK glass recycling rate is amongst the lowest in Europe yet 30 gallons of oil is saved for every tonne of glass recycled.

Thanks to Joyce Gervis, Brecon, for this tip who wins a copy of Wales in Our Own Image and the Pocket Green Guide for Wales.

Fact of the Month

It's time for lime! Cement is responsible for 1500 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions each year - that's 10% of all worldwide carbon dioxide production! By turning to alternatives, considerable steps can be taken towards reducing the amount of this major greenhouse gas into the atmosphere. (Ty-Mawr Lime).

Readers' Poll

42%

of those polled last month said they would make a whole lifestyle change to reduce the carbon footprint of their home including ethical shopping, banking and energy; composting and growing food; and giving up the car or flying.

Next month's theme is health, so visit www.sustainwales.com and answer this question:

What is your view on the latest fitness gadgets like the Nintendo Wii and Wii Fit?

- I've never heard of them
- Great exercise for the health of all ages
- Pointless, get outside and exercise!
- Pressurises kids and parents to buy

Log on to www.sustainwales.com to answer this question!

AT HOME... Top tips to help you save your pennies and the planet

Mind the gap

Insulating your walls could be the most cost-effective way to save energy in your home. Around 33% of the heat lost in your home is through the walls, so getting them insulated could save you as much as £130 on your annual heating bills!

What a bright idea!

Energy saving light bulbs last about 10 times as long as traditional filament bulbs and because they use less energy they are much better for the environment. Switching to energy saving bulbs could also benefit your pocket – saving you as much as £7 a year. Just remember to turn them off when you leave the room.

Green, green gas of home

Ask your energy supplier about switching to a green payment plan and ensure that part of your bill payment is invested in renewable forms of energy like wind, solar and water.

A lofty idea

Insulating your loft is one of the simplest ways to save energy and you can even install it yourself. Insulate your loft today and in a year you could be between £180 and £220 better off.

Storm in a teacup

If you're making a cuppa, remember to only boil as much water as you need and you'll help save the UK £1 million a year. Boiling a full kettle uses the same amount of energy as it takes to light your living room for an entire evening.

Charity begins at home

If your old furniture still has life left in it, remember that one person's trash is another person's treasure. Your local community charity will be glad to find a good home for your unwanted items.

A half soaked idea

Save water and heating costs by taking a shower instead of a bath – showers use less than half the water needed for a bath. If you really long for a soak in bubbles, you could always conserve water by sharing it with someone and if you bathe by candlelight you'll be saving electricity as well as giving yourself a relaxing treat!

Get switched on by switching off

Appliances left on stand-by are using money even though you're not using them. It takes two power stations just to power appliances left on stand-by each year in the UK. Save yourself a packet by switching them off.

Money saving in-scent-ives

Instead of spending your money on expensive, artificial air-fresheners, just mix natural essential oils, like rose, vanilla or sandalwood with a little water and spray onto your radiators to create a beautiful aroma – as they heat up the scent is released.

Feeling flush?

Dual flush toilets can cut household water use by 20% but if you don't have one there's a DIY way to save the planet. Old cisterns hold about 9 litres of water so put a brick in your cistern and reduce the amount of water you waste.

The Big Freeze

Keep your fridge and freezer full and you'll reduce your electricity bill by using less energy and try not to leave your fridge door open any longer than needed - for every minute the door is open it takes 3 minutes to cool it back down to the right temperature!

How big is your footprint?

Find out how sustainable your lifestyle is and discover what you could change about the way you live by calculating your eco footprint online at www.walesfootprint.org.

VIEWPOINT

Changing times at the Centre for Alternative Technology

We talk to CAT's Arthur Girling on building, educating and a zero carbon Britain.

What started as an experimental community, based in an abandoned slate quarry, back in 1973 now attracts around 65,000 visitors every year.

The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) was originally established as a means of exploring ways of living without harming the environment. Fast-forward to 2007 and the environmental organisation has changed dramatically – and never more rapidly than in the last few years.

As Arthur Girling explains 'We publish books, give out free information on environmentally-conscious living, work with school groups and offer consultancies to help businesses become greener. But the fastest growing area at CAT is in courses and training, prompting us to undertake our biggest ever building project to expand our facilities. If you visit us in the next year, you will see a tall yellow crane towering above a large timber structure.'

The building in question is the new Wales Institute for Sustainable Education (or WISE), a new educational facility being built to accommodate the growing demand for CAT's range of courses. CAT has identified a huge skills gap in the UK when it comes to tackling climate change – plumbers, electricians, architects, builders, engineers, planners, and many other specialised experts are needed to spread the technology and skills to reduce carbon emissions.

CAT's courses started out by teaching DIY enthusiasts skills such as building solar water heating systems, or straw-bale construction. Arthur adds 'We still offer these courses, but they have been overtaken in popularity by professionally accredited solar water heating courses for installers, and photovoltaic installers' courses for electricians. Most of these are now booked a year in advance!'

Similarly, an MSc course in Advanced Architecture: Environmental and Energy Studies has gone from 30 students in 2000 to almost 400 students now. This September, 30 students started a new MSc course at CAT in Renewable Energy and the Built Environment. Individual week-long modules of the architecture course will soon be available for business too for staff training.

The building itself aims to be an exemplar of CAT's own teachings 'We are planning to make the new WISE building an example of everything taught within it, incorporating many of the building techniques we have developed over the last 34 years' explains Arthur. 'This includes a 200-seat circular lecture theatre with the highest rammed earth walls in the UK, a timber frame sprayed with hemp and lime for the outer walls, high levels of insulation and limecrete foundations. These materials and techniques

have been chosen for their low 'embodied energy' (energy used in their manufacture), and reductions in energy demand when the building is occupied.'

Electricity in WISE will come from a wood-chip combined heat and power (CHP) plant, a new photovoltaic roof and existing wind and hydro turbines. Arthur adds 'We think this will be the only building in the world that can claim to have four types of renewable electricity on-site. Heat will come from the CHP plant and a large solar water heating array. What better place to learn the skills needed for the 21st century?'

These are exciting times to be involved with CAT. In a separate project, July saw the release of 'zerocarbonbritain', an alternative energy strategy for the UK. The report demonstrates how we could reduce our carbon emissions by 100% within the next 20 years. 'We have based our recommendations on the latest climate science, which shows how rising greenhouse gas concentrations are already starting to trigger "feedback mechanisms"', explains Arthur, 'which will lead to further, irreversible warming, quickly spiralling out of control.'

'Within the report, we have explored a scenario demonstrating we can meet these demanding targets with the right policy framework in place - Britain could produce all its own energy and food from within its own borders and coastal waters, and make this shift within 20 years.'

The report recommends a global Contraction & Convergence agreement to reduce emissions internationally and, within this, a national system of carbon allowances, or Tradable Energy Quotas (TEQs). Zerocarbonbritain presents

an immense challenge, but this would be made easier by trading energy and food with our European neighbours.

The report has been well-received to date with findings having been presented at various events in the Houses of Parliament, and the Liberal Democrats have even named their new environment policy Zero Carbon Britain, citing CAT as a major influence.

'Following its success, we plan to expand the project, working with other organisations to produce an annual updated report. But why stop with Britain? In the next report, we will integrate our scenario with the rest of Europe.'

You can download the full report from www.zerocarbonbritain.com. For more information on CAT's flagship WISE project, go to www.cat.org.uk/wise.

Zero Carbon Britain?

The Centre for Alternative Technology last year published its zerocarbonbritain report, which details how Britain can eliminate emissions from fossil fuels in 20 years and break its dependence on imported energy. It demonstrates how we can achieve this by halving energy demand and installing massive renewable energy generation. The report was researched and written collaboratively through a series of academic think tanks and consultations then peer-reviewed by experts in each field of research.

The report identifies that buildings represent 75% of Britain's demand for heat; but with new builds insulated and designed effectively; this would reduce to almost zero. The strategy in zerocarbonbritain cuts total energy demand from buildings by 38%. It also recommends widespread retrofit of insulation in existing housing stock and a programme of demolition and replacement of the worst-performing buildings.

The Built Environment and Climate Change

More recently, the Sustainable Development Commission, working in partnership with the Design Commission for Wales, have been tasked by the Welsh Assembly Government to look at the key interventions and barriers towards achieving zero carbon new buildings by 2011 and identify how the built environment can contribute to Wales' target of 3% annual reduction in carbon emissions.

The SDC and DCfW will work with a group of key stakeholders to create a leadership network or a 'coalition of the willing' from the private, public and voluntary sector, taking a 'can do' approach to tackling climate change through the built environment.

For further information contact:

Haf Roberts, Grŵp Gwalia Cyf: Swansea, call 01792 460609, email haf.roberts@gwalia.com or visit <http://www.gwalia.com/>.

National Assembly Sustainable Energy Group: (NASEG) Secretariat, Dulas Ltd, Machynlleth, call 01654 705000 or email via the website at www.naseg.co.uk/contact/contact.html.

Sustainable Development Commission (SDC): email wales@sd-commission.org.uk.

Design Commission: call 029 2045 1964 Email info@dcfw.org

Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT): zerocarbonbritain report, email
info@zerocarbonbritain.com or visit
<http://www.zerocarbonbritain.com/content/view/37/72/>

EVENTS – WHATS ON GUIDE

May 2008

- 1 Discovering Unusual Food Plants. Weekly until 10 July. Contact Michele Fitzsimmons on ediblelandscaping@googlemail.com or contact the Centre for Lifelong Learning on 029 2087 0000.
- 8 'Child Poverty and Communities First'. Communities 1st Support Network organised by WCVA. Email to training@wcva.org.uk or call 029 2043 1723. NE Wales. Venue tbc.
- 9 'Child Poverty and Communities First'. Communities 1st Support Network organised by WCVA. Email to training@wcva.org.uk or call 029 2043 1723. NW Wales. Venue tbc.
- 10 Weekly for 12 weeks. Permaculture Design Course. Contact Michele Fitzsimmons on ediblelandscaping@googlemail.com.
- 12 'Encouraging Community Participation in Sustainable Projects' workshop; Urdd Centre Bala 10-4pm. Contact Jetske Germing on 01834-862101.
- 13-14 7th Annual Responsible Business Summit, Ethical Corporation, London. Visit <http://www.ethicalcorp.com/rbs/?t=cr>.
- 15 'Encouraging Community Participation in Sustainable Projects' workshop; Castle Hotel, Llandovery 10-4pm. Contact Jetske Germing on 01834-862101.
- 15-16 Two-day: Introduction to Lime and Lime Plastering, Ty-Mawr Lime. Email mike.scruby@lime.org.uk.
- 16 'Child Poverty and Communities First'. Communities 1st Support Network organised by WCVA. Email to training@wcva.org.uk or call 029 2043 1723. Venue tbc. Cardiff.
- 16-18 Power Up weekend. Rights and Justice residential weekend, Birmingham. Contact Jenny Lopez, on 020 7566 1723 or email powerup@foe.co.uk.
- 17 Natural paint-making and cob block making workshops, during Adult Learner's Week, St Fagan's House for the Future. Cardiff. Contact Anna Haslock, Rounded Developments on 02920403399 or visit www.rounded-developments.org.uk.
- 18 'Developing the Village Shop' networking event. The Pavilion, Pontrhydfendigaid. Visit www.cefnwlad.org/index.php?p=c82691c3.14.1.

- 20 Financial Inclusion seminars; Communities 1st Support Network seminars, NE Wales. Email enquiries@communitiesfirst.info or call 0800 587 8898.
- 24 - 1 Duckery tours and duckling events; WWT National Wetland Centre Wales. Visit www.wwt.org.uk/ducklings.
- 28 21st Century Living: Climate Change Solutions event Bryngarw House, Bryngarw Country Park. Contact Angharad@sustainablewales.org.uk or phone 01656 783405.

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- 1 Duckery tours and duckling events every Sunday during June; WWT National Wetland Centre Wales. Visit www.wwt.org.uk/ducklings.
- 3 Financial Inclusion seminars; Communities 1st Support Network seminars, SW Wales. Email enquiries@communitiesfirst.info or call 0800 587 8898.
- 4 Financial Inclusion seminars; Communities 1st Support Network seminars, NW Wales. Email enquiries@communitiesfirst.info or call 0800 587 8898.
- 7 Fair Trade Wales Conference; 10am Caerleon Campus, Newport University, Caerleon. Contact Rowan on rothomas@oxfam.org.uk or phone 0870 010 9007.
- 7-15 Wales Biodiversity Week –Get closer to the Wonderful Wildlife of Wales! Co-ordinated by Wales Biodiversity Partnership. For interactive events calendar see www.biodiversitywales.org.uk.
- 12 'Child Poverty and Communities First'. Communities 1st Support Network organised by WCVA. Email to training@wcva.org.uk or call 029 2043 1723.Swansea. Venue tbc.
- 12 'Making Business Sense of Sustainable Development'; Parc (Thistle) Hotel, Park Place, Cardiff. Institute of Welsh Affairs, Institute of Directors and Cynnal Cymru. Call 029 2066 6606 or email wales@iwa.org.uk.
- 16-20 Reconnection 2008: 1 week course in the Lake District, led by Jonathon Porritt, 'that lasts a lifetime!'. Contact m.trievnor@forumforthefuture.org.uk or call +44(0)1242 266 778. Visit forumforthefuture.org.uk.
- 17-19 Training for trainers in education for sustainable development and global citizenship. For trainers/tutors with some experience of ESDGC, Powys. Email dominic@cyfanfyd.org.uk.
- 18 Conference Forests and Climate Change, Cardiff. Contact Delyth Davies on delyth@fbagroup.co.uk.
- 19 'Child Poverty and Communities First'. Communities 1st Support Network organised by WCVA. Email to training@wcva.org.uk or call 029 2043 1723.SW Wales. Venue tbc.
- 19-20 Dry Stone Walling, Ty-Mawr Lime. Email mike.scruby@lime.org.uk.
- 20 Financial Inclusion seminars; Communities 1st Support Network seminars, SE Wales. Email enquiries@communitiesfirst.info or call 0800 587 8898.

24 Financial Inclusion seminars; Communities 1st Support Network seminars, SE Wales. Email enquiries@communitiesfirst.info or call 0800 587 8898.