



Winter 2008 Newsletter

GreenTeam
Mawdesley



What have we been up to?

Since our last newsletter in early September we have had our first outing, at the Mawdesley Village fun-day. Many younger visitors made their own smoothies, thanks to Pete's efforts, by powering a food processor from electricity generated by their own pedal power.

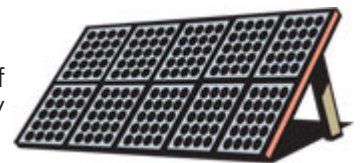


For more photos visit: <http://greenteam.mawdesley-village.org.uk/activity.html>

On the day we also distributed free Hessian bags, GreenTeam Frisbees, to those passing our recycling quiz, and gave away numerous books in our free book exchange as well as making several converts to our cause.

As well as public awareness initiatives we have also been busy in other areas:

- Exploring opportunities for local demonstration projects. The first of which is a funding application we have submitted to get a solar PV panel installed at St.Peter's school.
- Looking at local nature projects. We are exploring the possibility of local allotments, or a community smallholding. We have also been donated some trees by the council to plant around the village.
- Lobbying the local councils about excessive use of street lighting and regulation of plastic packaging.
- Making links to other groups in Burscough, and Cheshire (see below)



More details of our progress and plans can be found on our website:

<http://greenteam.mawdesley-village.org.uk>

Free Hotpot anyone?

Two years ago a few people got together in the small village of Ashton Hayes, 8 miles east of Chester, and decided to tackle climate change - head on. From these small beginnings, Ashton Hayes has become an inspiration to like-minded communities, not just throughout Cheshire, or England, but throughout the World. This small campaign grew until the whole village got involved and its residents have now made a pledge that they will all become carbon neutral, within the next few years.

This is obviously a great example to other communities, like us, who are still struggling to come to terms with the size of this environmental problem and who may be tempted to say that it's too large a problem and nothing can be done about it, particularly in a small village like Mawdesley. By the way, Ashton Hayes has a population of barely 1000 people compared with our 1700, so it appears we can all make a difference.

If however, you have any doubts, or you are keen to know more about this special community and how we can emulate them, then please join us in the Village Hall at 7pm on 20th January when Garry Charnock, one of the founder members of Ashton Hayes' Going Carbon Neutral Project, is travelling up in his hybrid car to speak to us (by the way, it's no coincidence that Garry's surname is Charnock, his family originally came from round here, so he's practically one of us!). For those of you who want to know more about Ashton Hayes please visit their website:

www.goingcarbonneutral.co.uk

Besides Garry, we will also be inviting some other interesting speakers and there will be plenty of time to exchange ideas during a break for hot food and refreshments. It's all free and it's all put on for *your* benefit, so please come along and help us make this a very memorable event — and enjoy a free feed in the process!



Keep warm & save

Calling all the over 70's in the village, you are entitled to FREE insulation!

This also applies if someone in your home is on income support or disability benefit.

Home insulation could save you 365 pounds a year on your heating bill.

Source: Energy Saving Trust 2008, based on a gas heated 3 bed detached property with average levels of existing insulation.

Did you know that over half of the heat lost in a typical home is through poor insulation. Grants are now available to completely cover the cost of cavity wall and loft insulation. If you are not entitled to a full grant, you may still be eligible to receive a 50% to 70% grant. These are Government-backed grants, no repayment required. Save money, and save energy. There is no catch.



Too Good To Be True?

The grants are part of the Government's new Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT). The major utility companies (British Gas, npower, Powergen, EDF, etc.) are now obliged to meet targets to reduce carbon emissions by paying to insulate domestic properties. Many of the grants and offers from the energy companies do not require you to be a customer of theirs. Here is an example of the offers available:

- **British Gas** If you or someone in your house is a British Gas customer and over 70, or receives income or disability benefit, phone 0845 6052535 (8 to 8 mon-fri, 8 to 6 sat) quote HTHH for free assessment and installation.
- **E-ON** Over 70's phone 0800 0961017 (8 to 8 mon-fri) and quote D1213. Again, for free assessment and install.

Huge discounts on insulation

If you are not yet 70, do not despair! There are loads of grants and subsidies available for home insulation as part of the CERT initiative. A good starting point, to find out what you are eligible for, is the Energy Saving Trust. You can either call them for free independent advice on 0800 512 012 or visit their website which, amongst other things, allows you to search the grants and offers available to you:

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/proxy/view/full/2019/grantsandofferssearch>

Here are some examples of subsidised offers on the market:

- **British Gas** If you are a British Gas customer, loft and wall insulation could pay for itself within a year. Full installed loft insulation £249. Installed cavity wall insulation £225. For non-customers add £25. Prices based on 3 bed semi-detached. For a free appointment call 0845 971 7731.
- **npower** Offer their customers both installed loft and cavity wall insulation at £199 each, and at £249 to non-customers. These are rates for a 3 bed semi. Rates vary on house size. Call 0800 980 2135 quoting 'Online Offer'.
- **B&Q** Professionally installed loft insulation on houses up to 5 bedrooms for £198. Likewise on cavity wall insulation, £198 on houses up to 5 bedrooms. Visit <http://www.diy.com> and click insulation.



The above offers may be subject to terms such as maximum coverage. It might be wise to clarify when booking.

e money this winter!

A GreenTeam member walks the talk — Autumn

Well, having joined this 'green team', I thought I'd better see what I could do to reduce my carbon emissions. I have to admit we are pretty wasteful in our household and so we have a lot of scope for improvement. I suppose we are the kind of family that could make a real difference by making just small changes to the way we live and so with the cost of electricity and gas both increasing hugely, these areas sounded like good places to start. In the spirit of the Kyoto Protocol, I set myself a target to try to reduce our domestic gas and electricity consumption by 10% over a 12 month period. Just think, if every government in the world did this every year for the next twenty the price of oil would drop and we could stop planting trees and get back to enjoying our cheap flights without feeling so guilty!!

Well, how have we gone on? Firstly the good news, our gas consumption is well under target – ok the house is not as warm as it used to be [you could have grown tomatoes in our lounge in December last year] but we are adjusting and wearing an extra layer than normal in the evenings and at weekends. In September we kept the gas central heating off [it would have come on in previous years at the first sign of an autumn chill], and just had the gas water heating on for an hour in the morning before we got up, and an hour in the evening about tea time. This comfortably provided all our hot water needs. In early October we did switch the central heating on, but again limited the timer to just an hour in the morning and two hours in the evening. On top of this we turned down the radiator valves in the rooms we do not use, just to keep them aired but not heated. As a consequence our gas consumption

is much reduced and well under target – success so far, but we have had a relatively mild albeit wet autumn so I'm not sure how we will get on when the winter bites. However, even with the last week in October, which was pretty cold and when we tripled our gas usage in order to keep ourselves comfortably warm, we are currently still 42% down on last year's consumption.

Getting the electrical usage down has been much more problematic. No matter what I do, we are struggling to make a similar impact to our gas usage with the reduction so far only 12.5% down on last year, but more of this next issue.

One important thing I have learnt so far in all this is to involve the whole family. My wife is always good at pointing out to me when I leave my office lights on and the computer running and is clearly eager to make her contribution to saving the planet. She recently had a brilliant idea about how to cut down the amount of electricity she uses [and the subsequent carbon we emit] when she does the ironing – she wants to send it out, hmmm.....!



Solar Water Heating – Worth it or not?

Installing solar panels, the ones that heat your hot water and not the type that produce electricity, are often put forward as a worthwhile investment, as a way of cutting both costs and carbon emissions. So do they work, are they worth it and what types are best?

The newspapers have carried reports that IKEA were planning in a few years time to start supplying flat pack systems for home installation and even Everest have been leafletting the area drumming up sales of their hot water solar heating system. With prices ranging from £3000 to £5000 plus, for a basic domestic sized installation, solar panels are still not cheap but they are probably the next step on the road to reducing your energy costs after you have reduced heating levels, draft proofed your windows and doors, fully insulating your roof and walls and fitting double glazing to your windows.

We would like to hear from you if you have solar heating panels and if you think having them installed is a worthwhile investment. We would also be interested to have your views on the best types / systems to fit. We will produce a summary of the options available with their advantages and disadvantages in a subsequent newsletter and your 'user' input would be most welcomed. Please contact gtmawd@googlemail.com with your views.



What happens to your curbside recycling?

Chorley Borough Council are one of the top performing local authorities for recycling and composting, with rates now exceeding 47%. Here's where our recycling is going:

Cardboard, Cans & Plastics taken directly to **Valpak** in Preston for recycling.
<http://www.valpak.co.uk/>

Garden waste is taken directly to **TEG** in Preston for in-vessel composting.
<http://www.theteggroup.plc.uk/>



Paper & Glass are stockpiled in Leyland at Veolia's (the council's waste management contractor) depot. From there the paper is taken to **Shotton Paper Mill** in Flintshire, <http://w3.upm-kymmene.com/>.

The glass is taken to **Glass Recycling UK** in Barnsley, <http://www.glassrecycle.co.uk/>

Textiles are collected by **I & G Cohen** of Salford for re-use/recycling.
<http://www.igcohen.com/>

Community Smallholding

Having received positive feedback on the idea of a smallholding, we are now reasonably confident of securing some land within the heart of the village, as well as some grant funding to get the project up and running.



Our current thinking is for one smallholding, rather than a number of allotments. This would allow us to more easily manage the land, considering we aren't all able to commit a lot of time. So possibly some kind of rota could be devised for preparing the ground and tending to crops and (eventually) animals. So if you think you would be interested, and able to offer a couple of hours a week, or more, then get in touch. We are intending to get all interested parties together early in the new year to see what we all hope to get from the project, and then how best to proceed.

More trees for Mawdesley

Thanks to the efforts of Sue Anderson in Gorse Lane and the GreenTeam, Chorley Borough Council has now pledged to supply the village with 15 trees of a local species, for planting by volunteers on the Millennium Green and on local council land around the village, away from any traffic hazards.

Besides making our village more attractive, these trees will also be helping the environment by absorbing more CO2. If you want to help plant them, probably in December, then please ring or email us.

Would you be interested in an orienteering bike ride?

We hope to structure it for both families and those wanting a challenge. Each entrant would be given a map of the village and the checkpoints that are out there. You would then plot your route to cover as many checkpoints as possible in the given time, we are currently proposing 90mins.

Points will be scored for checkpoints visited, and deducted for late return. Prizes will be given, to each category, for the most points scored. At this stage we are just hoping to gauge interest, with a view to putting the event on in spring next year. Please let us know if you think you would be interested.



Contact Us

Web: <http://greenteam.mawdesley-village.org.uk>

Email: gtmawd@googlemail.com

For those of you that do not have access to the internet, more information and membership forms can be obtained from Tom at the shop.

This newsletter has been printed on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) approved paper

