



# Wasteless Society

Newsletter Issue 27 AUTUMN 2007

**Welcome** to the Autumn Newsletter and it is that time of year again when the A.G.M is on the horizon, this is your opportunity to come along and meet members of the board and get involved it would be good to see as many members as possible new and old faces alike.

It is also that time of year when subscription renewals are due we very much rely on your continued support to carry out our work - take a look at the Chairman's Summary to see what that has involved this year. Along with renewal slips will be a questionnaire asking all about you, your own lifestyle and seeking your thoughts on the Wasteless Society we would be very grateful to receive your views and look forward to what will be revealed - details in next newsletter issue.

In this addition we are trying a new feature - interviewing members, we kick off with Director Kaye Chambers who shares her thoughts with us. We also have a letter from Orkney from ex-Director James Murcott. Enjoy and take part!  
Editors

## Wasteless Society A.G.M.

**Saturday 10th November 6.00p.m**  
**Town Hall, Bishop's Castle**

followed by fundraising gig  
at 8.30 p.m.  
featuring

**Little Rumba plus support**  
**Three Tuns Bishop's Castle**

see back page for ticket details

## Wasteless News

### Bank Farm Renewable Electricity

Bank Farm, who used to take our green waste from Crowgate, has been awarded money from WRAP to convert their biogas in to both heat and power. Heat for the dairy and farm house and electricity for the grid. Excellent news and well done Clive for persevering. It should all be in place in early 2008.

### Presteigne heading to become a Transition Towns

Presteigne, building on the carbon footprinting work, is close to becoming the first Transition Town in Wales. Transition Towns look forward and plan for a time when oil is a scarce resource and far more expensive than it is today. This time is just a few years away. And in looking forward they plan for how their communities will adapt and cope. If Presteigne choose to sign up they will join 23 other towns and areas across the UK actively looking to enter transition.

### Celebration

Read inside and in the AGM papers about how a new organisation is being set up to take on much of our climate change and energy work.

### Teme Valley taking action

Bored of meetings the Teme Valley have abandoned these confines and have set up the following action groups:

A food team doing: A community allotment followed by a community orchard. Permaculture and agroforestry exploration on 10 acres nearby. Work to bring producers in the valley together with the buyers (that's you and me) in the valley.

An energy efficiency team who:  
Have dedicated themselves to getting the Household Energy Service up and running in the valley

A renewable energy team:  
Looking in to community owned wind schemes;

Bringing biodiesel in to both Knighton and Presteigne;  
Undertaking a feasibility in to an AD plant.

### Contemplation

With changes afoot, it is also time to consider where the Wasteless Society goes next. Read the Directors report and watch out for a survey of your views in the forthcoming membership renewal.



# Member Interview

Rosa James interviews

**Kaye Chambers,  
Director of the Wasteless Society**

## **1. When did you first get involved in the 'Green movement' and why?**

At uni I got involved with the Soil Association which I think would count as part of the Green Movement. And rented a house with a big garden so while studying physics and geophysics and doing my dissertation on small scale solar power generation I was also growing a lot of veg on a traditional 4 course rotation. Then visited CAT in my early 20s and was inspired by everything they were starting up. But then marriage, housing, childcare and work rather took over and apart from campaigning on reusable nappies, cutting my own energy consumption and paying my FoE and Greenpeace subs I was in my late 30s before I came back to 'green' activities. I suppose organic food and health generally were the driving factors – and a couple of sayings that have formed the core of my beliefs 1. 'There is no away' – i.e. we only have one planet so we cannot 'throw' rubbish 'away' because there is nowhere else [I suppose with 'space junk' this is no longer true but I think the jist of this still holds]; everything is interdependent and we should consider the impact of our actions and 2. A comment about red Indian society which I read in a book by Joan Grant saying that when they took decisions about what to do and how to live they considered the effect of their actions on the next seven generations. It really brought home to me how limited our perspective is: we tend to look at present gain not future cost. And our actions now will have profound costs for future generations as the Stern report highlighted.

## **2. Who are your green heroes/ role models/icons? And who or what has influenced you the most in your thinking about environmental matters?**

Ken Livingstone has been my hero for many years. Influenced me – early on James Lovelock and Jonathan Porritt; more recently George Monbiot who presents clearly argued ways forward. If you haven't read his book HEAT I highly recommend it. And Nicolai Steno who in the 1700s first formulated the science of Geology and articulated awareness of the massive changes that have taken place on planet Earth

## **3. How do you see your role in WS? And what do you think WS will be focusing on a year from now?**

Up to now, mostly in the back room –doing the boring admin stuff that needs to be done and perhaps sowing seeds with a few people about how to do things differently. But also getting some of my ideas into practice, like the biodiesel. And now I'm working on setting up a 'travel club' to reduce car miles. WS focus in 12 months time: 1. I think we should be encouraging people to back the established campaigning groups such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace because without political change we can't achieve much. 2. Working on local energy and/or heat generation. 3. Working with the Town Council to get renewable power generation as part of the Town Hall refurbishment 4. Working with local primary and secondary schools on eco buildings, insulation and power/heat generation and –of paramount importance - through and alongside this, 5. educating the next generation. But none of this can happen without more people getting involved.

## **4. Would you be willing to disclose your household carbon footprint? And what have you done in the last 2 years to reduce it?**

A year ago it was 3968 kg for 3 people –so around 1300 kg per head. Since then I've cut down on car use substantially and rely on my electric bike for all local journeys and cut down further on oil and electricity use so I guess now it is around 1000 –1100 per head. And am also trying to get builders to put in more insulation and add a conservatory both of which have been hard going to implement.

## **5. How do you see the future? (I guess this question is in the context of Climate Change, but it's very open.)**

Very depressing. I think there is little willingness among the vast majority of the population and the decision makers to take the radical steps needed, and even with minor things a majority of people are not willing to change. Travel seems to have become a means of finding identity: I find people who are flying to Barbados just because they want to sit in the sun for a week: they have no interest in Barbados itself. My brothers both have holiday homes in Spain which they visit 6 or 8 times a year as well as holidaying in the States each year and they just say 'I want to' and have no regard for consequences. I am also concerned that WS work could be having a negative effect: a neighbour of mine recently replaced their light bulbs with low-e bulbs. Great you might think – until you look in his garden where yes, he does have a low-e bulb under his outside umbrella so he can eat outside in the evening BUT, right next to it, he has two patio heaters!!! If people think they have 'done their bit' by putting in some loft insulation and low-e bulbs and they can carry on driving everywhere, flying where and when they want, buying food that has travelled around the world and having the house so warm they only need t shirts on indoors then WS's actions have failed drastically. In a recent national survey about 'what is important to you when deciding about going on holiday': environmental considerations were only mentioned by 0.4% of respondents. So what do I see? Mass loss of life and mass starvation for those of our children who are left; violence and desperation in trying to access clean water and food.

## **6. Anything else you'd like to share with WS supporters?**

Increasingly I realise that I can only change my life and, in the philosophical sense, just drop pebbles into the pond and leave the ripples to spread. And I really want to say a big 'thank you' to those such as John and Hillary Smyth whose outstanding examples of how to live we could all learn a lot from. Oh, and how about the newsletter featuring the website seat61? It has been set up by an enthusiast for train travel and helps anyone plan travel anywhere in Europe and beyond by train. Just have a look at it. I've managed to get several people to travel by train rather than flying since seeing this. I know it's not much and I know train travel still creates emissions but I do think it helps.....

# Wasteless Household Energy Service

## 300 Household Energy Surveys completed

HES has now completed over 300 household energy surveys. A substantial achievement with all credit due to our dedicated team of volunteer surveyors and the HES Committee. We continue to receive positive feedback from our clients and we now are collecting further data on the energy saving measures that people undertake, giving us a clear picture on the effect that the Household Energy Service has.

If you have undertaken any energy saving measures in the last two years and want to give us some feedback, please get in touch with Dave Green.

We are also looking to resurvey a percentage of clients to see how much energy has been saved, seen as examples of what can be achieved.

## New Energy Organisation

Work continues with the set up of a new organisation to take over energy projects presently run by the Wasteless Society. Having an organisation dedicated to 'energy' will allow this specific work to function as an entity in its own right separate from the Wasteless Society. The Wasteless Society continues to concentrate on local issues, including delivering HES in Bishop's Castle.

Approval of this move will be sought at the Wasteless Society AGM on November 10th. The new organisation will be a 'Co-operative, for the benefit of the community'. Membership will be open to communities and individuals interested in energy and climate issues, with emphasis on helping communities take action. If interested in being involved in this exciting new organisation contact Adam Kennerley or Dave Green or speak to us at the Wasteless Society A.G.M.

## Take Part

### Welcome to 'MEG' and 'SCC'

Yes, we have two new local groups dedicated to working on energy issues, set up recently with help from the Wasteless Society.

**MEG** is 'Montgomery Energy Group' the contact: Mike Membrey, 01686 668643 mikemem@fiscali.co.uk.

**SCC** is 'Stretton Climate Care' the contact: Geoff Hamby, 01694 723424 qesr@btinternet.com

Both groups are warmly welcomed and we look forward to working with them in the future, and join existing energy action groups **TVEG** of Knighton and **Green Presteigne**.

## Household Energy Service (HES) to carry on.

The Household Energy Service '**HES**' team, its volunteers and committee are keen to see the service continue after initial funding ends in October, the Wasteless Society board support this. Various funding bids are being submitted and commercial sponsorship sought. Dave and Kate will be kept on part time for a few months to bridge any gap. If you can help us with fundraising please contact Dave Green or Kate.

HES is now available to other communities including Montgomery with **TVEG** keen to set up a scheme in Knighton for the Teme valley.

## Volunteer opportunities

### New HES volunteers needed and welcomed - Kate Evans

Our initial stalwart group of volunteers have been doing absolutely sterling work and I can't thank them enough but inevitably, over the two years, some have dropped out due to life circumstances and what not and we now need more volunteer surveyors in Bishops Castle, Lydbury North, Wentnor and Linley as well as new territories of Montgomery and Knighton.

It might sound a bit daunting, but carrying out a surveys is not difficult or highly technical – you don't need to be an energy boffin - just someone interested in energy saving issues and have a liking for meeting all sorts of new people.

Volunteer surveyors do at least one survey a month, which takes about 3 hours (of course you can do many more if you want to!). You can use our laptop database for the survey or just a paper questionnaire if you don't like computers. Full training and support is given throughout. Surveyors are all ages and from all walks of life; if you are at all interested in helping us, we would be overjoyed to hear from you! Contact Kate on 01588 638738 or 638762 or katee@wasteless.co.uk

Kate is also busy planning social and fundraising events for HES volunteers, friends, clients and any interested parties; The first of these is to be a music night featuring Little Rumba and support act (**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 8.30pm, £7 at the Three Tuns, Bishop's Castle**). If anyone would like to help with organizing this gig, I shall fall upon them with gratitude! Otherwise, just come along for a good boogey. Put it in your diary and get your friends to come too.

Next event will be a home-made 'revue' night early in the New Year, so again, if anyone has a 'turn' they would like to perform, either musical or comedy I'd love to hear from you. Contact Kate on 01588 638738 or 638762 or katee@wasteless.co.uk

Thank you

## Letter from the Orkneys - James Murcott

I am writing this on the island of Westray in the Orkneys. Population about 500 people, 5000 cattle and a few sheep. This place oozes energy from every pore. The wind is incessant. Waves crash constantly and tides rip past four times a day. Gradually the island is getting to grips with renewable energy. Many houses are heated by wind turbines or ground source heat pumps. There is biodiesel available at 80p per litre and there is an electric car. Normal road fuel costs £1.12p/litre.

I am helping to build another digester up here. We built one last year and this one is twice as big. Ultimately, the plan is to generate a small amount of electricity and also to clean and compress methane gas as a road fuel.

The island has just obtained lottery funding to install a 900 kw wind turbine. The size is limited by the cable to Mainland and to Scotland, and by the island switchgear. So the island should soon be totally self sufficient in energy and could soon be a nett exporter.

Apart, that is, from farming. This island is a very good demonstration of the madness of modern farming. Because it is primarily a producer of beef cattle, a few sheep, and a few potatoes it is easy to analyse the outputs and inputs of the island. The island imports much more fossil fuel energy in the form of fertilizer than all other energy uses.

After power generation, domestic heating and surface travel, agriculture is the next biggest source of our global warming emissions and would be even greater if we acknowledge imported food as part of our personal footprint. Modern farming is desperately inefficient, converting only about 1% of sunshine energy into food. For protein production it also requires almost 100% input of fossil fuel. In simple terms it would much more efficient if we produced less, from less. To maintain production levels, and at the same time reduce the use of fossil fuel for farming we need to dramatically improve the recycling of nutrients back to farm land.

For those of you who think I may be using excessive amounts of fossil fuel to drive to Orkney, let me tell you I use 40 litres of fuel to travel the 600 miles. Clive Pugh's digester is capable of producing that amount of energy in two hours! But for Clive Pugh energy is only a secondary benefit.

Along with a few other farmers he has greatly reduced his dependence on fossil fuel fertilizer because his digester improves his slurry and makes it easier to spread. Sadly the UK build rate of farm digesters has only averaged about one or two per year, and we need to build about 5000, so it could take 5000 years!! The Germans are building about 2 PER DAY.

## Subscription renewal date

Renewal subscriptions, unchanged at £12 minimum (£9 concessionary) are due on 1st December. You will be receiving a reminder letter, with renewal form, during November. Thank you for your continued support



## Dates for your Diary

### October

**Saturday 20th & Sunday 21st October 2007**

Llanidloes Green Fair  
Talks, events & activities  
[www.lles.co.uk/greenfair](http://www.lles.co.uk/greenfair)

### November

**Saturday 10th November 2007 6.00 p.m.**

**Wasteless Society A.G.M**  
Town Hall, Bishop's Castle

followed by fundraising gig at 8.30p.m featuring

**Little Rumba plus support**  
Three Tuns, Bishop's Castle

Tickets £ 7.00: from Textile Traders in BC 01588 638712  
[emailjim@textiletechniques.co.uk](mailto:emailjim@textiletechniques.co.uk)  
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