

SPONSOR OF THE MONTH



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SUSTAINABLE LIVING FOR VILLAGES - VISIT TO SHERWOOD ENERGY VILLAGE

In October two members from Vale Vision joined a fact-finding visit to Sherwood Energy Village (SEV) on the site of the former Ollerton coal mine in Nottinghamshire that closed in 1994. The community, concerned about the future and employment, encouraged the local Miners Union officials to negotiate the purchase of the site, some 125 acres, for £50,000 with a 25 year interest free mortgage. An Industrial Provident Society was set up to manage the site, their main objective being to take control, provide jobs for their kids, 'get rid of the muck' and to develop a great place to live, work and play.

Whether for homes, business or recreation, the whole site has been developed using environmentally sustainable planning principles and has attracted some very prestigious companies including the Centre Parcs Head office employing some 300 people.

Throughout the process, SEV have worked closely with the local planning authority and now have delegated planning powers. All companies coming to the site can include individual features in their building but must conform to the site principles. Heating is generally from under floor heat pumps and controlled air circulation. All buildings are required to be oriented so as to maximise the opportunity for daylight and solar energy – both solar thermal and photovoltaic (PV). Most of the achievement of high energy performance is via building thermal performance using thermal insulation, thermal mass and natural ventilation. In the main building owned by the project a large glazed atrium brought heat into the building and air flow is controlled automatically. It also provided a very attractive entrance to the building.



With memories of recent flooding, my lasting memory will be the Sustainable Urban Drainage system (SUDS), which deals with surface water run off from the roads and other hard surfaced areas. The water gently permeates or evaporates creating green corridors through the site and stopping any risk of flash flooding. All surface water is managed on site and provides water for toilet flushing. Since the installation of the swales (ditches), there has been no flooding during heavy rain of a neighbouring road (something that had been a historic problem).

SEV is working with a major building contractor to set up a Centre of Excellence in sustainable building.

CONSTRUCTION COURSES AT DURSLEY EDUCATION CENTRE

Free training courses for men and women. Brickwork/Painting/Decorating courses leading to City & Guilds awards - 15 weeks, 15 hours/week. Suitable for progression into industry or for DIY enthusiasts. Foundation Construction Award in Brickwork - Course starts in the week beginning 7 Jan 2008. Foundation Construction Award in Painting/Decorating - Course starts in the week beginning 7 Jan 2008. For more information on these courses, contact Stroud college, 01453 763424 or www.stroud.ac.uk

Sponsor this newsletter: £25 ½ page, £15 ¼ page (charities and community groups – please ask for reduced rates). Advertisements must be two colour only, except for a logo. Only two advertisements per copy.

Circulation: Parish, Town, District and County Council, community venues, Vale Vision shop and on our website.

Telephone: 01453 544933 **E-mail:** valevision@btconnect.com **VISIT OUR WEBSITE:** www.valevision.org.uk



Vale Vision News

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November 2007

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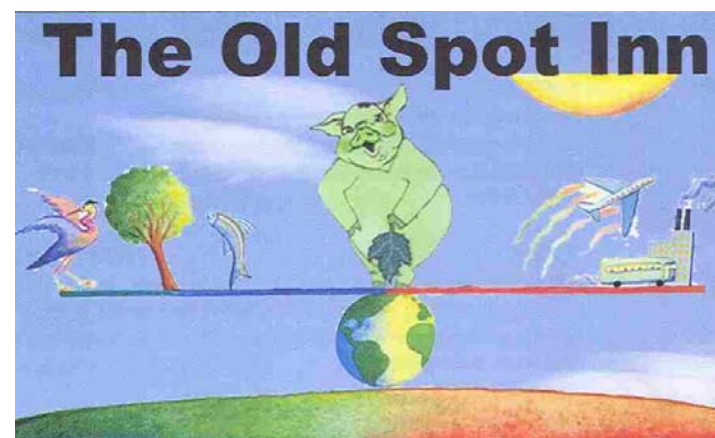
Construction Courses in Dursley this January

Dates for your Diary

Thurs 15 November Vale Vision Festival Planning	7 pm
Thurs 22 November Sculpture Trail Development Meeting	4 pm
Thurs 6 December Littlecombe Liaison Meeting	10 am
Thurs 13 December Vale Vision Board Meeting	7 pm

All meetings will be at the Vale Vision Shop unless notified otherwise

THE 'ALE' CARBON DEBATE



The Old Spot, Dursley, is planning to become Carbon Neutral. Steve Herbert, the landlord is calculating the pub's Carbon footprint. In the Spring, with the help of ex-local farmer Ken Hall, they will be planting a corresponding number of trees at relevant sites.

They are initiating a debate within the pub and would hope to include views from:

- ⇒ Gloucestershire Ale Trail
- ⇒ CAMRA and local brewers
- ⇒ Other licensees
- ⇒ The local MP
- ⇒ A representative of one of the big brew chains

The pub has recently held a carbon neutral beer festival and Steve now plans to check their meter readings to calculate the footprint from brewery to palette. The results of their findings will be published in their November Newsletter. If you would like to get involved, email: steveherbert@oldspotinn.co.uk.

SDC HELPS SMALLER COMPANIES TO REDUCE THEIR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Stroud District Council is funding a project in partnership with the Severn Wye Energy Agency aimed at businesses, to assist them to improve their energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption. Whilst primarily aimed at helping businesses, the project will also allow employers to impart information to their staff - helping them to reduce emissions and at the same time save on their domestic energy bills.

Advice and assistance available include:

- ⇒ on-site surveys for businesses spending more than £5,000 per year on energy
- ⇒ support to develop an action plan to reduce energy consumption
- ⇒ advice about tariffs and suppliers
- ⇒ guidance with financing energy efficiency improvements
- ⇒ awareness training and advice for staff to reduce energy consumption at work and in their homes

The Energy project aims to help businesses reduce costs through targeted and measurable actions, and helps enhance the reputation of businesses which can show that they are actively working to reduce their impact on the environment. It will also help organisations to achieve the ISO14001 environmental standard.

SWEA WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AT REDNOCK

An alternative approach to these issues is being implemented through the project, 'Young Energy People' (YEP!). The project is supported by Gloucestershire County Council & the European Commission, with aims to develop co-operation on energy efficiency between secondary schools and local businesses.

In Stroud, Severn Wye Energy Agency will be working with pupils from Rednock School to train them in the kinds of energy management skills that are useful in the workplace. The project aims to provide a supported and structured learning placement in a business. The pupils will focus on the energy issues of their placement, bringing mutual benefits for the pupils and businesses involved. Pupils will be able to apply their training to a real workplace, and with the expert support of Severn Wye Energy Agency the business will receive useful feedback about how energy savings can be implemented.

TIME TO WARM UP ...

Now that the clocks have gone back and the nights are drawing in, all across the country the central heating is coming on to take away the winter chill. But how much thought do we give to the heat that we are wasting unnecessarily, and the money and CO₂ emissions that could be saved?

Around half of all the heat lost in an average home is through the walls and roof. Across the UK, this wasted energy could heat over 2 million homes each year. This wastage could be reduced significantly if we all took a few simple steps.

Take a look in the loft. Only about half of the UK's homes have insulation over 100mm (the current recommended depth is 270mm or about 10"), so topping this up can make a big difference. Also, think about when your home was built. Typically, houses built after the 1920s have walls with two layers and an air gap or cavity in between. In a matter of a few hours this can be filled with insulation, and will make your home warmer and cheaper to heat.

Many people think that insulation is expensive. However, there is a wide range of grants and offers available to help with the cost. It can even be installed free of charge depending on household circumstances. For further information on the range of offers available and to get free and impartial, locally tailored advice about how you can reduce your energy bills, call your local Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre on **0800 512 012** or visit <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk>.

Vale Vision has an active Sustainable Energy Group which meets regularly to progress the sustainable energy agenda in the area. The group is heavily involved in the Littlecombe and Rednock School redevelopment projects. For more information or to get involved, please contact either Richard Hellen or Andrew Amato via the Vale Vision shop.

REDUCE YOUR ENERGY BILLS THIS WINTER

Winter is now on its way and we tend to burn more fuel to keep warm but are we conscious of how we can cut down?

- ⇒ Replace your light bulbs with low energy bulbs.
- ⇒ Make sure you do not have lights on in areas you are not using
- ⇒ Switch off the television or radio on in another room if nobody is listening to it
- ⇒ Reduce wash temperature to 40° and ensure that you are not washing small loads unnecessarily
- ⇒ Computer users - how many power packs do you leave switched on when not in use, printer, scanner, etc are they switched on all day and rarely used

You can save this winter and reduce your carbon footprint whilst improving your health:

- ⇒ Plan one walk each week - to the post box, to the shops, most of us can cut out one car journey
- ⇒ Arrange to car share with others when you know they are travelling to the same place
- ⇒ Make a list so that you are not making unnecessary journeys to the shop for things you run out of

You may already be doing many of these things but, if not, perhaps you would like to consider ways that you can easily cut down your energy consumption; small changes can make a considerable difference.

SDC REGENERATION MANAGER

Rachel Small joined Stroud District Council in November 2006 as its Regeneration Manager. Rachel is responsible for administering the Sustainable Communities portfolio, which includes services for tourism, accessibility, market town initiatives, rural services, business & economic development, urban design, learning & skills, and community development. An important aspect of the job is to balance community expectations and the available Council resources.

Through the above regeneration portfolios, Vale Vision and the community of Dursley and surrounds have been supported with the following projects: Dursley Urban Design Framework and participation in the development of projects resulting from it, Dursley Rural Festival, Dursley Town Festival, Dursley Farmers Markets and Shop Front Improvement Grants.

Currently Rachel is working with a panel of representatives from Vale Vision, Gloucestershire County Council, Stroud District Council, Dursley Town Council, Cam Parish Council, Dursley Town Centre Manager, Dursley Town Trust and the Chamber of Trade to plan and organise the phasing and implementation of the Dursley Town Centre Design Framework to ensure that, among other objectives, the work is in line with the coming of the Sainsbury Supermarket and access footpaths from the Littlecombe Development.

WALKING FOR HEALTH

Take care of your health this winter by joining our regular walks. Walks are organised for those who are not regular walkers with half hour health walks, one hour walks for those who can manage a longer walk and for those who are more used to walking, 4 mile walks. Many walks are on pavements or level footpaths for those who have difficulty over rough ground. The pace is very much set by the group with two walk leaders, one for those who like to walk a little faster and another leader for those who need to go at a slower pace.

If you need to walk more but do not enjoy walking on your own or perhaps just lack the incentive, choose the level of walk that suits you and join us. If you would like to lead these walks, we are looking for more leaders so that we can arrange walks on a weekly basis – walk leader training can be arranged. See walk leaflet enclosed, more copies can be collected from the Vale Vision shop.

COMMUNITY SCULPTURE TRAIL

Are you a sculptor who enjoys working with natural materials? Would you be interested in working with local community groups to assist in designing sculptures to community group ideas and working with them to develop a sculpture that could be displayed in our woodlands? This is happening very successfully at Cannock Chase and Vale Vision would like to organise and develop something similar in Dursley. Some of the sculptures are designed to be permanent, some semi-permanent and some temporary.

Are you a member of manager of a community group that would like to get involved in this project and see your ideas created into sculptures that could be displayed in our woodlands? We would like to involve all ages and all abilities so that the finished result really is a community development.

If you have any interest in encouraging people to use their woodland or any experience that you could contribute to this project, we would value your input whether as a one off or working on the project until it is complete.

Businesses – you could help by sponsoring a local group to develop a sculpture. All groups, sculptors and sponsors will be acknowledged on a plaque alongside each sculpture stating those involved. To find out more and to get involved, contact Shirley Hill at Vale Vision.

LOCAL PRODUCE AND CRAFTS

Would you like the chance to sell your locally made produce and crafts to local people? You can get a stall at the next Farmers and Craft Market for a nominal charge. The market is on at Dursley Market Place the second Saturday of each month. For more details contact Annemarie Rutter on 01453-548505 or Mike Doughty on 0780 892 3142.