

JUNK MAIL

Newsletter of Devon's Community Recycling & Community Composting Networks

Summer 2005

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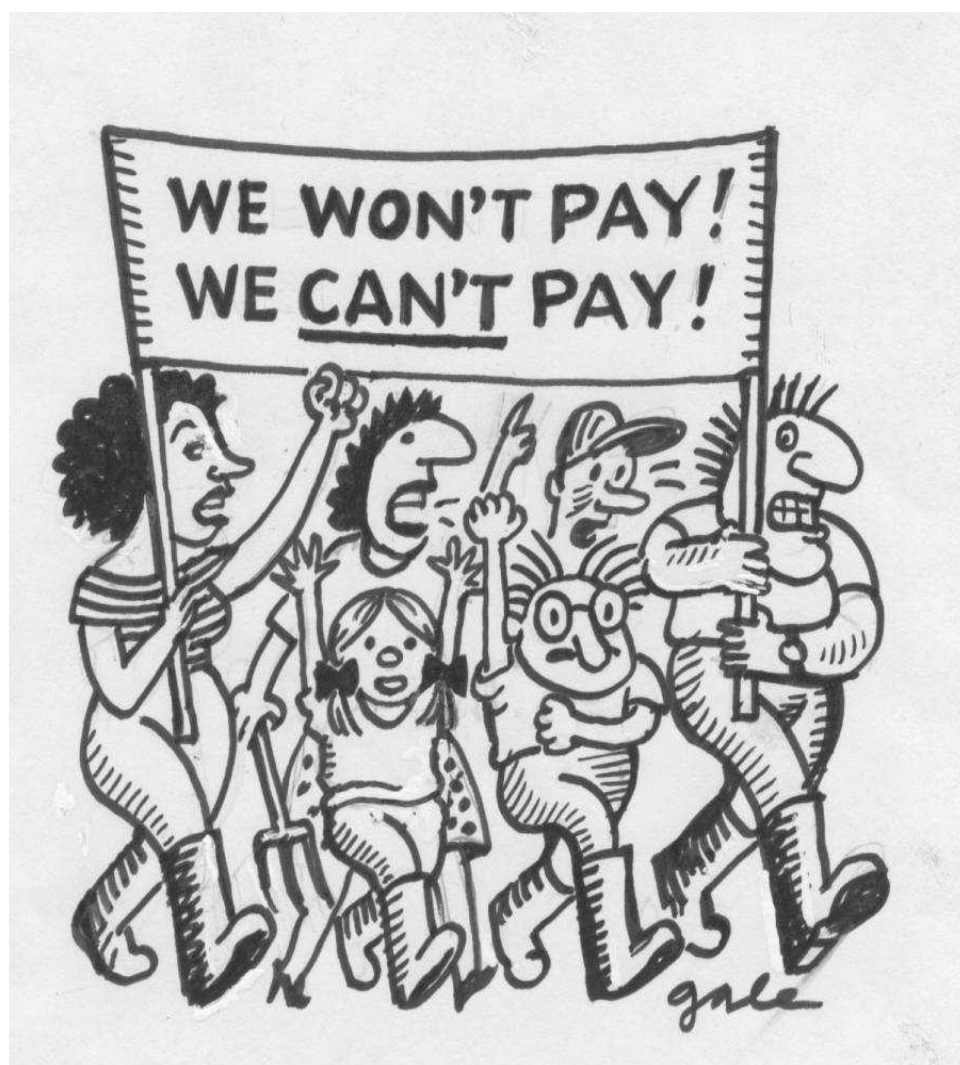
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Editorial



DCRN evolves

Devon Community Recycling Network will vote at its annual conference on 29th June on 'incorporating' to become a community business not for profit Ltd Company. At present it is an 'unincorporated association'. Ltd Company status secures protection and limits liability to £1 each for Directors and members in the event of liability or financial insolvency, and will make applying for external funding sources easier.

Contact info@dcrn.org.uk

Cred funding

Don't miss the last chance to get your hands on £4,000,000 still in the Cred pot! Contact Richard for more details.

This Junk Mail was mostly written by Nicky Scott & Richard Gomme (DCRN) and prepared for printing by Nicky Scott (DCCN) with illustrations from Bob Gale (Proper Job!) & photos by Nicky Scott.

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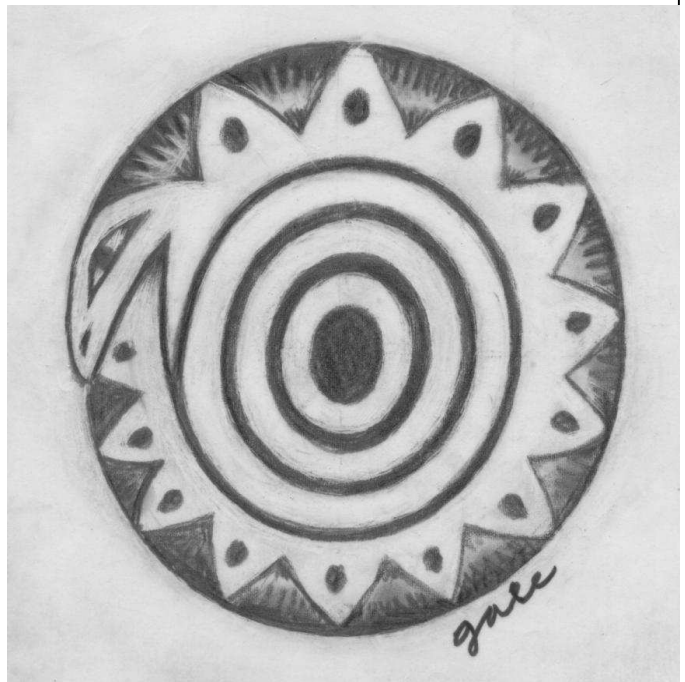
*Local Authority recycling info see:
www.recycledevon.org*

Chew Magna Zero waste village

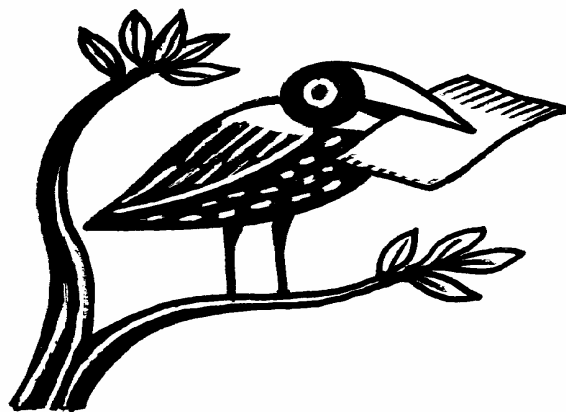
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Bath University mechanical engineering students have calculated that Chew Magna uses .5 megawatts of energy a year. They say two wind turbines would power the whole village and would be the cheapest option for the community, providing energy at 1.4p per kilowatt hour, compared with 7p per kilowatt hour from the National Grid. Generating hydroelectric power from two existing weirs on the River Chew would power 19 homes or perhaps the village street lighting, they said. Solar panels and photovoltaic cells are currently expensive - costing 20p per kilowatt hour - but the cost could be reduced radically if villagers bought in bulk, they added.

Not everyone in Chew Magna is optimistic about the project. Bill Jackson, who owns the village deli, Baraka, said: "It's great that the people of Chew Magna are pulling together to do this, but it's not our place to have to do it. It's the council's responsibility to have to implement this."



News bites



Horrabridge decide to quit composting.

The community composting scheme at Horrabridge in West Devon have decided to wind down the collection scheme following the introduction of the Council's doorstep collection last month. In May and June they received only half a trailer of garden waste compared to around 3 loads they would normally collect at this time of year and the conclusion is that people prefer the regular doorstep collection.

Sandford in Mid Devon have also decided to pack it in. A meeting of all the other groups in Devon was held and they all thought that the introduction of collections would not stop them. In fact they thought that having less material to deal with would make their lives a bit easier!

It's sad to see the end of any group knowing how hard it is to start them (see next news bite) but completely understandable in the circumstances.

Welcome to the 'Loam Rangers!'

It was a cold wet day in April when the Stoke Fleming 'Loam Rangers' cut the ribbon on their composting scheme. The site looks very well laid out and bursting with promise!

Waste Partnership Fund success.

Devon groups submitted six applications to the WPF as part of DEFRA's Community Sector Support Programme. Three were successful. Proper Job were awarded £44,000 for recycling from rural waste skips and developing a mini Recycling Centre in partnership with Devon County Council and Devon Waste Management. Mid Devon Community Recycling Ltd were awarded under £100,000 to expand to 100% coverage of their kerbside collection scheme in partnership with Mid Devon District Council. Devon & Cornwall Housing Association won funding to work with residents of a new eco-housing scheme on maximising recycling in partnership with South Molton Recycle.

Strategic Partnership Working Group.

This cross sector working group was set up to see how the cross sector partnerships in waste in Devon can work better, more effectively and in more strategic ways which is not able to be adequately addressed through other means. Raison d'être included to help meet recycling targets, reduce waste, meet the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme for disposing of biodegradable waste to landfill, and represent more effectively what the community sector 9.7

SWCRN – Regional Reuse Day Event

Mark Walton, the new regional development co-ordinator for the Community Sector has organised a free reuse event, intended for reuse organisations who are developing, expanding or involved in bulky waste and or WEEE (waste electrical) services within the South West region. It will be held at the Create Centre Bristol on 4th July. Contact mark@crn.org.uk 0117 942 0142.

CRN UK Annual Conference report – mattress recycling?!

Over 300 delegates from around the UK gathered for one of the best networking and information events for the community sector in May. Some interesting experiences from participants included a mattress recycling project in Fife Scotland, where mattresses are being de-manufactured for recycling of the springs and wadding/textiles. The demand for this stems from the fact that mattresses can create flammable 'air' and gas pockets in landfill sites and will not adequately compress. The Local Authority is paying £3 per unit for them to be cleared from Recycling Centres, and other organisations such as hotels, campuses, the military, residential homes are use the service as bulk disposers of used mattresses. Viability can be reached with a catchment population of approx. 400,000 people.

Graham Wiles of the Green Business Network, based in Yorkshire, held a surgery on his dramatic success in working with 'corporate social responsibility' of big companies such as the utilities and British Steel in obtaining help such as free premises. See www.greenbusinessnetwork.org.uk for full details of the projects. Projects so far include, composting, worm & carp farming, plastic recycling into plastic wood products, carpet tile recycling, a packaging compliance scheme to help businesses meet their obligations to recycle packaging for PRNs (packaging recovery notes), a waste exchange, and a nappy laundering service. Projects feed back a portion of their income to sustain GBN. GBN works to include disadvantaged and excluded young people in their projects, and develops innovative partnerships between Local Authorities, social services, businesses, and the community sector.

See bottom of page 4

Tips for Handling Telemarketers

This was e-mailed to me and I thought it might be worth following some of the suggestions! I get phoned every day from someone trying to sell me Plastic windows, or to change my phone company or something else. Often you get that annoying—nothing. Now I know what to try. (Ed)

Three Little Words That Work !!

(1) The three little words are: "Hold On, Please..."

Saying this, while putting down your phone and walking off (instead of hanging-up immediately) would make each telemarketing call so much more time-consuming that boiler room sales would grind to a halt.

Then when you eventually hear the phone company's "beep-beep-beep" tone, you know it's time to go back and hang up your handset, which has efficiently completed its task.

These three little words will help eliminate telephone soliciting.

(2) Do you ever get those annoying phone calls with no one on the other end?

This is a telemarketing technique where a machine makes phone calls and records the time of day when a person answers the phone.

This technique is used to determine the best time of day for a "real" sales person to call back and get someone at home.

What you can do after answering, if you notice there is no one there, is to immediately start hitting your # button on the phone, 6 or 7 times, as quickly as possible. This confuses the machine that dialled the call and it kicks your number out of their system. Gosh, what a shame not to have your name in their system any longer !!!

(3) Junk Mail Help:

When you get "ads" enclosed with your phone or utility bill, return these "ads" with your payment. Let the sending companies throw their own junk mail away.

When you get those "pre-approved" letters in the mail for everything from credit cards to 2nd mortgages and similar type junk, do not throw away the return envelope.

Most of these come with postage-paid return envelopes, right? It costs them more than the regular postage "IF" and when they receive them back, it costs them nothing if you throw them away! Why not get rid of some of your other junk mail and put it in these, postage-paid return envelopes.

One of Andy Rooney's (60 minutes) ideas. Send an ad for your local chimney cleaner to American Express. Send a pizza coupon to Citibank. If you didn't get anything else that day, then just send them their blank application back!

If you want to remain anonymous, just make sure your name isn't on anything you send them

You can even send the envelope back empty if you want to just to keep them guessing! It still costs them 37 cents.

The banks and credit card companies are currently getting a lot of their own junk back in the mail, but folks, we need to OVERWHELM them. Let's let them know what it's like to get lots of junk mail, and best of all they're paying for it...Twice!

Let's help keep our postal service busy since they are saying that e-mail is cutting into their business profits, and that's why they need to increase postage costs again. You get the idea ! If enough people follow these tips, it will work -- I have been doing this for years, and I get very little junk mail anymore.

Andy Rooney



Devon Furniture Forum

has won £300,000 CRED funding for a 3 year project to develop an Appliance Refurbishment Centre, which aims to

address some of the needs to recycle Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment under the WEEE Directive. The UK Government has again delayed passing the legislation after lobbying from producers who need more time to agree how producer responsibility and collection schemes will work.

India cardboard, plastic and composting toilets



Sacred cows in Jaiselmer on a high fibre diet of cardboard.

My sister and I were invited to a wedding in Delhi in January. How could we refuse! Since this was soon after the Tsunami I wondered whether I might be able to do something useful as well and spent some time beforehand contacting agencies in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. I had read a piece about appalling sanitation in some of the camps and wondered if I could help with setting up composting toilet systems. What followed was a interesting series of e-mails with various agencies. It soon became apparent to me that compost toilets were not the answer, something far simpler and basic was needed - The Humanure system. For those not familiar with this I can recommend Joe Jenkins excellent book on the subject, recently completely updated (Humanure—number 2—available from Green Books) I contacted the author who gave me permission to cut and paste anything I liked from the book and I made a little—e-mailable guide which seemed to be what was needed. If you want to find out more about the system see Joe's website on:

<http://www.jenkinspublishing.com/humanure.html>
I have been following the system for many years

now without any problems.

Recycling and composting is simple in India. Everything just gets thrown on the ground where a cow, pig, goat, dog, elephant or rat etc will find it and eat it. The resulting dung is picked up, made into 'chapattis and dried out to use as fuel. Quite a good system really except for the fact that there is so much plastic now that lots of it ends up being eaten by cows and filling up their stomachs. I did a rescue job on a cow pulling a length of parcel tape out of its mouth and half way down its throat.

The train tracks are littered with 'chai' cups (spicy sweet tea) in some states where plastic is now forbidden the cups are the traditional low fired earthenware which breaks up and does not cause a problem—but, unfortunately plastic is all over the place—blown into watercourses and ponds, clogging up ditches and causing a major headache in a society where everything of value is either food for some animal or person or reusable, repairable, recyclable.

Nicky Scott

Can't Pay Won't Pay!

The publication of the new DEFRA changes to waste exemptions was not accompanied by the popping of champagne corks and smiling faces.

Strangely this seems to surprise those working within DEFRA. I was even telephoned by an environment agency waste exemption officer to give me the good news which he had 'stumbled across' on the DEFRA website about six weeks after publication. (Incredible - don't DEFRA and the Environment Agency actually communicate with each other!) The good news then is that anyone composting less than five tonnes at any one time will be exempt from charges. So my advice here would be, if in doubt, to tell them you compost less than 5 tonnes at any one time! Let them come and weigh it all. The second piece of good news is that the 'import export' part of the legislation will be scrapped. Well we had hardly been troubled by

this since we had introduced the concept of 'Compost clubs' – however it does make life a bit simpler I suppose. And the final bit of good news, before we hit the downside of it all, is the adding of the 'waste transfer station' to exemptions. This means that you can run a staffed trailer or skip to collect and then move the collected materials to your site for composting.

The bad news is of course the charging. In the new system of exemptions community groups processing 5 – 50 tonnes of organic waste at any one time will have to pay £252 in the initial year

and £174 in each additional year and groups processing from 50 to 400 tonnes at any one time will have to pay £482 in the first year and £402 for each additional year. We estimate that this will cost the community sector nationally over £30,000 in registration fees every year.

Many of the groups have commented that they think it is particularly unfair that they are being charged for the privilege of trying to improve their local environment, in order to raise core funds for the Environment Agency. Surely the EA, which



Lympstone Community Composting project with a team from a learning disabled project from nearby Exmouth having a great day in June 2005

we accept is under-funded by central government, could raise income by successfully prosecuting and fining those who pollute the environment, not those who are trying to improve it.

Our members are all more than willing to register for the new exemption and be compliant with it, but they cannot afford the regulatory registration fees. What would be the legal position for a group that registered under the new system, but was not able to pay the charges? Will the Environment Agency force them to close down or

will it be possible to find a positive solution that means the group can continue to operate?

If these groups have to shut down from July 1st, the waste they are processing will have to return to landfill. This will happen at precisely the time when local authorities are facing their first targets under the Landfill Allowance



Please scrap the charges
Mr Bradshaw!

proposed charges to be scrapped and replaced with a one off fee to cover registration of new projects and for more funding become available for community projects through landfill tax monies. There is enormous potential for community projects to help Local Authorities meet recycling targets but they both need further incentives. Unfortunately, it is widely felt that these new charges are unnecessarily excessive, do nothing to encourage new groups to form and are in direct conflict with the Governments supposed commitment to sustainable waste management.

DEFRA have already stated that riding stables dealing with manure will be exempted – so why not us? In fact it seems somewhat bizarre that manures with their higher nitrogen content and therefore more likely to leach and pollute watercourses are seen as a lesser risk than the predominately woody garden materials that our members compost.

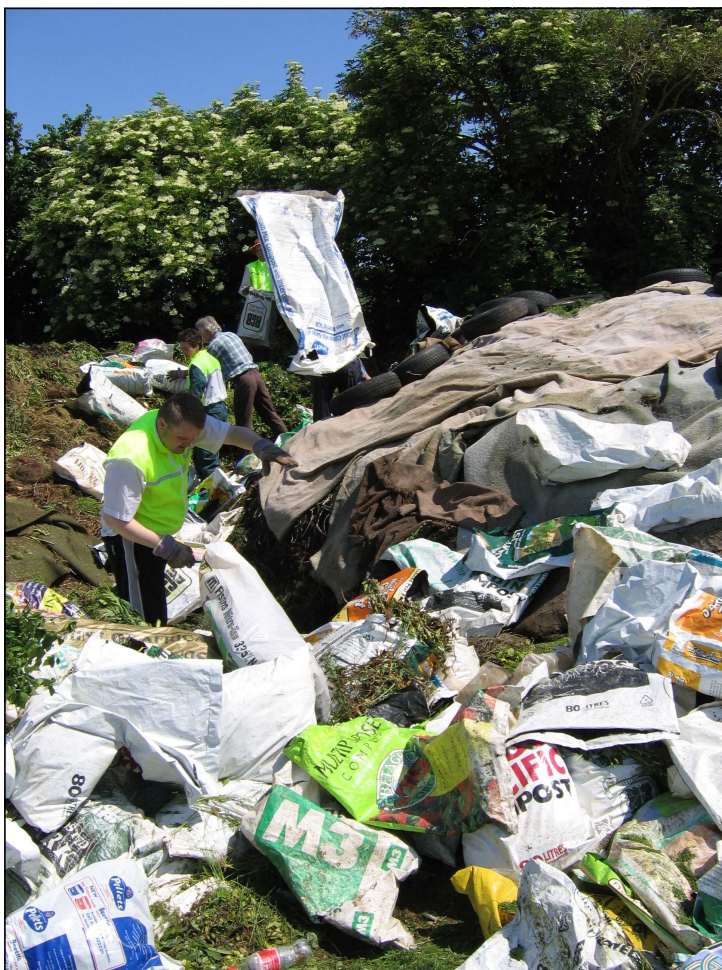
I would yet again urge all members to write to their MPs – to Ben Bradshaw, recently appointed as Minister responsible for this area– some of the above has been lifted directly from my letter to Ben Bradshaw and

from Nick McAllister, CCN's co-ordinator, letter to him.

Coming in 'under the bar' i.e. shifting compost off site more quickly to avoid paying – or to avoid paying so much will result in the members producing inferior compost – so I can see nothing good in this proposal. The fees come in on July 1st but with a three month amnesty period – in other words don't pay anything until September at the earliest! Devon County Council have also written to the Minister expressing their concern and have stated that they want to make monies available to community groups as an emergency funding gap measure – but whether they can cover the initial costs of every group remains to be seen. Would all groups please let me know how or whether you will be able – or indeed intend – to pay!

Trading Scheme, and should this waste return to landfill, it will have a negative impact on their ability to do so.

I would like the



Invite the Agency in to tell you how much tonnage is on the site

Chew Magna Zero waste village

It may be a tiny dot on the planet, but the village of Chew Magna has set out to save the world!

The community of 1,100 in the Chew Valley, south of Bristol, hopes to become the first in Britain to cause no damage to the planet.

Engineering students from the University of Bath have already drawn up options to power the village using renewable energy.

And the villagers are well on their way to buying an old mill, which they hope will become a miniature power station as well as a recycling depot, an education centre and campaign headquarters.

In 2001, the South West consumed 48 million tonnes of materials and products and generated 20.3million tonnes of waste - just over four tonnes per person.

Chew Magna residents are aiming to cut their share to zero by changing the way they shop, eat, travel and think about rubbish. They have also made links with communities in Ghana, southern India, New Zealand, Canada and Sri Lanka in the

hope that their grassroots mission will become a global enterprise.

Ian Roderick, one of the brains behind the project, admitted the biggest challenge would be getting enough villagers committed to such an ambitious vision. So he was thrilled when hundreds turned out for the first Chew Magna zero-waste action day on Saturday. The church hall was packed with exhibition stands showing residents where they could buy local food, how they could cut electricity bills through better house insulation and how to join a car-sharing scheme, among other ideas.

Mr Roderick, who is a member of Schumacher UK, the renowned West institute promoting sustainable development, told the assembled crowd not to feel daunted by the ambitious agenda. "If you think you are too small to be effective, you have never been in bed with a mosquito," he told them, quoting the late social scientist Kenneth Boulding. He added: "We want to do this in a way that enhances the spirit, to make sure it's an exciting venture and a great challenge for the future."

***Continued on page 2
Drawing by Bob Gale***

