

# JUNK MAIL

Newsletter of Devon's Community Recycling & Community Composting Networks  
Incorporating Devon climate change news

## No Tables at County Show !



2,265 people took part in the reduce reuse recycle quiz at the County show ground  
See bottom of page 2 for story

Summer  
2007

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# Editorial



Once in a while something remarkable happens to rekindle one's hopes – and on this occasion it is what has happened in Modbury with the plastic bags. It made international news and showed that people really do care and want to do something about problems, locally and globally, and that the most powerful changes come from communities.

To that end this issue brings a new section – Devon Climate Change News – to reflect and inform on the changes occurring within our communities as more people begin to organise and act on climate change.

The editors feel it is imperative that community activists should be forging links and working closer together to get their messages across as the issues are so inter-related, and for effectiveness and efficiencies. Likewise, LA's must work across departments more to tackle the issues – and shake off some of their separate 'silo' thinking. It seems most of the voluntary sector is now re-positioning how it presents its working issues within the framework of climate change, and our sector should be no different.

'Carbon impact' must become a much bigger part of the waste (resource!) management decision hierarchy – REDUCE, reuse, recycle – and carbon emissions given

greater weighting in the final disposal options.

It sounds impressive that recycling just one plastic bottle saves the equivalent energy to run a 60w lightbulb for 4 hours – but what about the energy expended to collect and transport bulky lightweight items to reprocessing? – The public demand plastic recycling, but surely the answer is to minimise the use of packaging plastic in the first place and adopt reuse where possible. Remember the reusable glass milk pinta?

I had the misfortune to be stuck behind a dustcart through a certain town recently, and I must say what was going in the back of it was rather depressing. It was as if hardly anyone had heard of recycling or climate change and household and business waste were being collected together. It's hardly surprising then that despite Devon's impressive recycling figures, over 75,000 tonnes of paper & 25,000 tonnes of glass are still going to landfill every year in Devon (not to mention all the other recyclable/compostable materials that make up 80% of household waste!)

Richard Gomme

***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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## Money from old rocks



Community projects in specific parishes that have been affected by aggregates extraction can apply for grants up to £20,000 for environment schemes, community buildings and other categories. DCC have £112,000 to allocate to local projects up until March 2008 from the Aggregates Levy. Applications by 16

July 2007. Full details - including list of eligible parishes (is there a quarry near you?) - on the web from the link below.

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/planning-system/rockets.htm>

## No Tables shock!

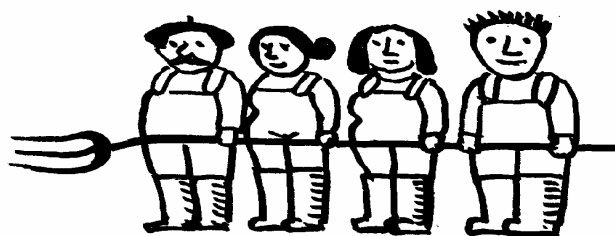
People were queuing up for the chance of winning a 2 night mini break for two at Two Bridges—the lucky winner comes from Honiton, 2nd prize was a hamper full of local produce from Dart's Farm, won by someone from Crediton and the winner of the third prize a wind up radio comes from Budleigh Salterton –and everyone went away with something a cloth

shopping bag, a composting book, pens, pencils, stickers, colouring books, rulers all manner of products made from recycled materials.

Recycling staff from Devon County Council and the Districts were almost overwhelmed at times by the thirst the public had for recycling and composting information.



# Local Groups news



## RiO Grand-

Ottery St Mary's reuse and recycling project 'Recycling in Ottery' are very proud of their RiO Grand scheme. At this years Rio Grand Open Day money was donated to more than 6 local charities and community projects that benefit disadvantaged people.

Money is donated that has been generated from sales of donated reusable items and from volunteer input.

RiO collect surplus furniture and household items around East Devon.

Contact: 01404 815825

## Otter Rotter's Alchemy project.

OR's research and development project aims to demonstrate the viability of local, small-scale, anaerobic digestion of kitchen and catering waste and establish a transferable model for wider use. Based at a plant nursery in Combe Raleigh in East Devon, the project is setting out to prove that technology can be used to divert such waste from landfill by conversion into

added value products - high grade compost suited for commercial uses and renewable energy in the form of methane for heat generation. The application may be suitable for a variety of places with catering waste, Guys Marsh Prison in Dorset have expressed interest.

Otter Rotters provide weekly collections of kitchen waste to 500 households in

Honiton and Dunkeswell. Participating households are given 2 bins- a small kitchen caddy and a larger one which is emptied by the collection crews. Material taken includes all vegetable and fruit peelings, dairy foods, bread etc  
Contact: PHIL FOGGITT  
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# Modbs ban Plastic!



Picture from [www.icount.org.uk](http://www.icount.org.uk)  
Sign up to add your voice to stop climate chaos

In April 2007, Modbury, in Devon where I was born and raised, with its 43 shopkeepers and traders, was thrown into the spotlight. We never anticipated that our decision to turn our backs on plastic bags and stop selling them or giving them away would hit such an international chord of approval.

First came a storm of emails, letters and phone calls. In one day I received more than 800 emails – wanting to know how we had done it. I was completely overwhelmed. But now I find myself in the bizarre position of being the country's leading source of knowledge about how to turn a town plastic bag-free.

Many of the people said they would like to follow Modbury's example, and asked if I could come to their town to do the same. But, the truth is, this will not work. Sadly, there is no quick fix. My best advice to anyone who wants their town to be free of plastic bags is that they are going to have to fight the fight themselves.

Also, there can be no blueprint because every town is different. Every town has different traders, different needs and different attitudes. If you want to change attitudes in your town you must have the trust of the traders, and to do that it has to come from a local resident.

The first step is the laborious job of doing your homework. To make Modbury plastic shopping bag-free took weeks of research and hard work. Sorry guys, nothing in life is easy, especially changing people's attitudes.

I suggest you learn what plastics are doing to the environment, to animals, and how, in particular, plastic is entering the food chain and could be affecting us. This last subject has the potential to shock even the most conservative individual into action.

A good place to start for the facts is our website ([messageinthewaves.com](http://messageinthewaves.com)). After reading up you will see clearly why I was driven to act.

The next step is to approach the traders directly. Remember, you are going to have to educate the people in your town on how their actions could be damaging, and to do this you have to know your subject matter. You must be prepared to answer all their questions. A handout from me or anyone else will not persuade them. Engaging in conversation is the best way to win them over.

Many people have asked if I applied for help with my cause through grants, or the local council or chambers of commerce. But I did none of these. If I had, I am certain we would still be spinning wheels and caught up in red tape.

Instead, I started with the traders who were my friends, suggesting to them the possibility of making Modbury plastic shopping bag-free. After that, I invited all the town's traders to a screening of the BBC film I had made about the effect of plastic bags in the Pacific Ocean. I then provided them with the names of bag wholesalers with environmental bag alternatives.

Some days later, I began individually approaching those traders I was less familiar with, and was pleased to see that word of my campaign had already reached them. Slowly, I started to tick off the list those who backed my efforts to be plastic-free. But it was not all easy going, and some said: "I like my plastic bags." This is where the research into what plastic does to the environment came in very handy. Once I started throwing a few statistics at them, their faces dropped and we soon got into conversation. For anyone still sitting on the fence, I called in the help of those traders already on board.

While visiting the shops, I asked what plastic bags they used and for what purpose. Things then became a lot more complicated. Nearly

every trader needed something different from bags, whether it was strength, size, appearance or material.

The next step was to research environmental bags on the market. ([www.plasticbagfree.com](http://www.plasticbagfree.com)).

*(NB this is a very good website about Modbury and plastic bags)*

However, it is imperative that you learn about where your bags have come from. Are they fair trade? What materials are they made from? Where and how are those materials sourced? Are they sustainable?

If there are supermarkets or large chain stores in your town they will surely ask you these questions. If you can't answer them, they will not take you seriously.

As the magnitude of the task I had undertaken dawned on me, I started to look for advice from other areas in the country that had made this move. To my shock, I realised that nowhere in Europe had. My rescue came from Australia and a brilliant charity called Planet Ark. The co-founder, Jon Dee, had helped more than 20 Australian towns go plastic bag-free, and was a great help to me and a world of advice.

The next stage was to set a date. All the Modbury traders agreed to a complete changeover just one month away. The big day was May 1. We created a chamber of trade letter, a gentlemen's agreement, stating that from then on no plastic bags were to be issued.

Over the following month we had weekly group meetings, at which one of the key issues to resolve was what to charge for the reusable and compostable bag alternatives (£3.95). We kept our mission simple, thinking only of what we were doing as a service to the environment, never to make a profit.

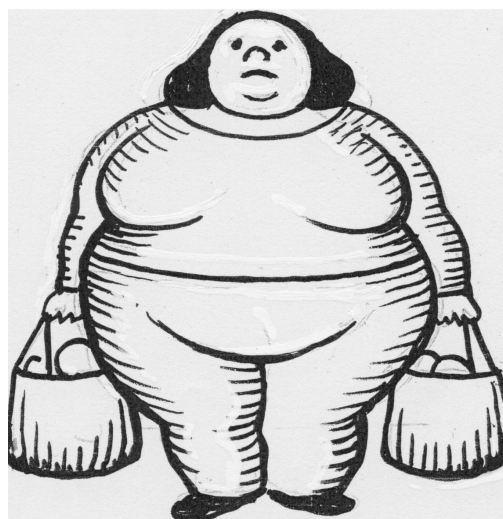
In Modbury, the campaign has galvanised the traders and a new community spirit has awakened. As for me, I only ever saw myself as a bridge between what I witnessed while filming in the waters around Hawaii and the traders of my home town. My place in life is educating people, through my camerawork, about what is happening to our environment - and that is what I am now returning to.

I could only have done this campaign in Modbury because the traders trusted me. The town has a great community but we are nothing special - neither am I.

All we did was get out there and make it happen. I hope our story will inspire you to take the message to your own community and do the same.

## Plastic plague

- The world uses more than 1.2 trillion plastic bags a year - an average of about 300 bags for every adult, or 1m bags used per minute.
- On average, we use each plastic bag for 12 minutes before discarding it. It then can last in the environment for decades.
- 47% of windborne litter escaping from landfills is plastic - much of it plastic bags.
- About 80% of all marine rubbish comes from off the land, and nearly 90% is plastic. In June 2006 the UN environment programme estimated that there were an average of 46,000 pieces of plastic debris floating on or near the surface of every square mile of ocean.
- Plastic bag litter is lethal in the marine environment, killing at least 100,000 birds, whales, seals and turtles every year. After an animal is killed by plastic bags, its body decomposes and the plastic is released back into the environment, where it can kill again.
- A report, Plastic Debris in the World's Oceans, by Greenpeace, suggests that at least 267 marine species are known to have suffered from entanglement or ingestion of marine debris. An estimated 1 million seabirds choke or get tangled in plastic nets or other debris every year.
- Countries and cities that have banned or discouraged the use of plastic bags include: Australia, Bangladesh, Ireland, Italy, Taiwan, Mumbai, Scotland, France, West Bengal, Zanzibar, Tanzania, Switzerland, Rwanda, Denmark, Germany, South Africa, California, Somalia, Botswana, Philippines.
- Plastic bags do not biodegrade, they photodegrade - break down into smaller and smaller bits, contaminating soil, waterways and oceans, and entering the food chain when ingested by animals.



Rebecca Hosking



# Don't Stand By—Turn Off!

*'Everybody talks about the weather but nobody does anything about it'*

**Mark Twain**

On the 20th February Tony Juniper, the director of Friends of the Earth UK, gave a talk on climate change in Chagford. For those of you that have seen Al Gore's film 'An Inconvenient Truth' little that he said will have come as a surprise. The fact that global warming is caused by human activity,

problem in the first place. So, on a domestic level we must change our habits.

Reducing the amount of energy we consume and waste is a vital first step.



**Tony Juniper comes to Chagford!  
He's the one on the left  
(Nicky Scott on the right)  
Photo by Oz Osbourne**

in very recent history, i.e. since the industrial revolution started using coal as it's energy source. There no longer is any doubt about this.

All the fluctuations in temperature, which we can study by looking at the atmospheric records in ice cores, confirm this. Never before has so much CO2 and other damaging gases (like methane) been poured into the atmosphere.

The big questions are; what can we do about it and by when? Tony told us that we have to act now! Big businesses have lobbied the Government to say that changes (that pollute less) are crippling expensive, but the truth is that delaying these changes will merely increase costs in the long run. But what are the changes that have to be made? Firstly this is a global problem and it is not something that we can leave to Governments and industry to sort out. We all have a part to play; after all humans created the

Green Books have a useful little book on this called 'Energy - Use less, save more'.

- We must switch off appliances rather than leaving them on standby. If we all did this two power stations could be shut down.

- Another simple thing we can all do is to install energy efficient light bulbs.

If every household put in just one low energy light bulb, it is estimated that we could shut down one power station.

Energy efficient light bulbs are now much better, more attractive and cheaper than they were a decade ago. Changing 24 light bulbs (a typical household amount) could save you over £200 a year. Other

key actions we can all take are:

- Shopping locally for local products; support your local farmers and producers.
- Change to a less gas guzzling car - do you really need a four wheel drive?
- Drive slower! If you drive at around 55 -60 mph you do at least burn fuel in the most efficient manner.

*When the fuel protesters effectively ran the fuel supply down in the Country we had a moments taste of what it would be like to live in a post oil economy. I was at the Annual Community Composting Network conference in Derbyshire and the whole family had gone for a few days holiday. Great timing! It was amazing being on the road then with very few cars and all going very sedately between 50 and 60 mph to conserve as much fuel as possible. It struck me then that it's not the cost which changes habits but the supply!*

- If you have more than one car give one up, join a car club. For every household that

joins a car club around eight cars are removed from the roads. (see [www.moorcar.co.uk](http://www.moorcar.co.uk))

- Make sure your house is properly insulated.
- Turn down the thermostat on your heating by one degree – this can reduce your heating bill by 10%.
- [www.devon.gov.uk/climatechange](http://www.devon.gov.uk/climatechange)

Of course the biggest challenges come from changing the habits of big businesses, but even there we have enormous power as consumers, by either voting with our feet

- Just don't shop there!

Or as shareholders

- By raising pertinent questions at shareholders meetings.

Actually many large corporations are getting greener, this is very often saving them money, not costing them the earth.

We also have the political process - we should all lobby our MP's to ask questions on our behalf and the big campaign that Friends of the Earth currently are running is called the 'Big Ask' - go [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk) for more information.

## Climate Change Fortnight

### South West Wildlife Trusts 'climate friends' fortnight.

SWWT are planning a community based climate change awareness campaign 15-30th September, with the aim of getting 500 events throughout the South West, working with partner organisations, community groups and volunteers for maximum impact. Does your group want to take part? If so contact Devon Wildlife trust 01392 279244 E-mail [contactus@devonwildlifetrust.org](mailto:contactus@devonwildlifetrust.org)

The aim is to celebrate what is already happening and a positive vision of the future, bringing together action to tackle the causes of climate change and to help wildlife adapt. Headline messages being developed: save energy – insulate; cut down waste: compost at home (closed loop); enjoy local food; walk more (one less car journey a week); garden for wildlife – help wildlife adapt.

The SWWT website will be launched at the end of May, including a climate change portal: information, resources etc for the campaign will mainly be available through this. They are



The internet based reuse swap and giveaway service, Freecycle, now has 768,991 members in 421 groups listed in the UK. Devon groups have grown and are listed below. To join go to [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org), you can join your local group to donate or receive, or set one up in your area without leaving the house.

- **Axe Valley (Axminster, Colyton & Seaton)- 475 members**
- **Bideford- 884 members**

- **Dartmouth and Kingsbridge- 142 members**
- **Exeter- 5362 members**
- **Honiton- 590 members**
- **North Devon (Barnstaple, Ilfracombe, South Moulton)- 1146 members**
- **Plymouth- 3426 members**
- **South Brent (Ivybridge, Totnes)- 697 members**
- **Tavistock, Okehampton & Dartmoor- 639 members**
- **Torrey- 1492 members**

# Stick or Carrot?

## The Government have announced their latest waste strategy review The new waste strategy pledges:

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#### The new waste strategy pledges

- Landfill tax escalator to increase by £8 per tonne per year until 2010/11 (doubling tax from current £24/tonne to £48 in 2010)
  - Town halls to consider cash rewards for people who cut waste and boost recycling - consultation
  - Voluntary agreements with industry to cut junk mail by developing an opt-out service
  - Reduce plastic carrier bags by 25% by 2008
  - Aim to get supermarkets to phase out free single-use carrier bags.
  - Higher national targets to ensure the average household recycling rate (currently 27%) rises to 50% by 2020,
  - Pressure for higher EU recycling targets after 2008
  - Recycling bins next to litter bins in public spaces, such as airports and parks
  - More generation of energy from waste - partly by collecting household food waste separately
  - Crackdown on illegal fly-tipping
  - Reduction of packaging through consultation with industry; obliging producers to use the lightest packaging
  - Pressure on the European commission to make it easier for members to take action against excessive packaging
  - Help for charities and social enterprises to increase their collection and re-use of waste
- Discussions with the construction industry on a target of halving its landfill waste by 2012
- Mr Miliband told MPs "Our key objectives are simple: less waste, more re-use and recycling, more energy from waste and less landfill". But opposition politicians and green campaigners criticised the government for promising only consultations and voluntary agreements with industry and for setting unambitious recycling targets.
- Chris Huhne, the Liberal Democrat environment spokesman said "The government's 50% [household] recycling target for 2020 does not even match the best current standards in Europe such as Germany's 58% and the Netherlands' 65%."
- And the shadow environment secretary, Peter Ainsworth, accused Mr Miliband of "dither", adding: "You want a voluntary arrangement with industry to reduce hugely unpopular, unnecessary packaging,

but a system of fines for households struggling to cope with waste packaging they didn't want in the first place."

There will be a consultation on possible incentive schemes. According to a Local Government Association survey, two out of three people would back a "save-as-you-throw" scheme. England alone generates 100m tonnes of waste a year and Britain sends more to landfill than any other country in Europe, despite a 9% fall between 2001 and 2005

#### Incentive schemes : The likely options for Britain

Different countries and authorities have tried different incentives for reducing waste and improving recycling. Some work best in urban areas, others in rural areas. These are the most likely to be used in the UK, with the Government stating they do not want the householder to pay additional charges for waste:

##### Frequency

Householders sign up to a number of collections at the start of the year (twice weekly, weekly, fortnightly, monthly) and households pay upfront, with the option of having more. At the end of the year the authority calculates the total number of collections used and returns the fees paid to the householder. Defra calculate this achieves recycling rates of 30-50%, with 170kg reductions per household year

##### Sack-based

Householders buy special local authority sacks to fill with their non-recyclable waste. Shops return the money to the local authority, less a small commission, and at the end of the year the authority returns the money to households. Sack-based schemes would likely be most suitable for urban areas where multiple wheelie bins are not possible.

##### Volume

Householders pay for a particular sized bin. If they need extra capacity, they can buy a larger bin, or extra sacks. At the end of the year the authority returns the money to households. This could give recycling rates of between 31% and 49% and a saving of 126kg per household per year

##### Weight

Householders put non-recyclable waste out for collection in wheelie bins fitted with transponders. The authority records the weight and at the end of the year it calculates a bill for each household. This, says Defra, can increase recycling rates by up to 53%

(Source: The Guardian)



# Blitz spirit' needed to tackle climate crisis.



Former Environment Minister Michael Meacher has said the Government's climate change bill which proposes targets of 60% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction by 2050 is inadequate and that a breathtaking change of mindset is required at all levels.

## 90% CO<sub>2</sub> cut by 2030 – what does it really mean?

In a nutshell, climate scientists agree that greenhouse gas emissions must be cut by this amount to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

Greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are currently 430ppm (parts per million CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent), and rising by 2.3 each year. They have risen from 280 ppm in pre-industrial times. Almost all Scientists accept that greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere must not exceed 450ppm CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent, and then must be reduced to avoid a higher than 2 degrees rise in temperatures. There is also a delayed effect on temperature of carbon already in the atmosphere.

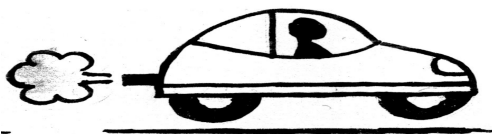
The latest warnings from the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) say Governments have just 8 years to put in place binding carbon reduction programmes. However, the longer people wait to act the deeper the emission cuts will have to be. If global temperatures rise by 2 degrees or more, then runaway catastrophic climate change will occur, driven by 'positive feedback' of increased greenhouse gas emissions from thawing tundra, the collapse of the Amazon and other sources. This will result in mass species extinction and the irreversible melting of the Greenland ice sheets leading to sea level rise of more than 7 metres. That's the world's major cities under water.

Temperatures have already risen by at least 0.7 degrees with 10 of the hottest years ever recorded occurring during the last 12 years. Temperature rises at the poles have been much more than this, leading to accelerating ice melt and collapses of sea ice.

On a positive note, commentators believe we can avert the worst effects of climate change by acting now, but that we cannot wait for Government and decision makers to act.

**Note:** 'PPM CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent' means the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere plus other more potent greenhouse gases such as methane, nitrous oxide, and hydrofluorocarbons, which increase the impact by around 15%.

Junk Mail believes that we must organise and act now as communities and to that end has arranged this year's DCRN/DCCN community conference on 29<sup>th</sup> June to incorporate climate change.



## CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on faster rise

Worldwide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions rose at a faster rate in 2000-2004 than the worst-case scenario imagined in this year's UN reports on climate, according to new research.

The rise over the first four years of this century is also greater than in the 1990s - 3.1% a year between 2000-2004, up from an average of 1.1% a year during the 1990s.

This is faster than scenarios developed by the

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), suggesting even its most alarming predictions of the effects of climate change may not tell the whole story.

"It's not enough simply to wear the badge of corporate responsibility. Business must accept that real change is the only response to climate change and other environmental crises."

**Jonathon Porritt**, founder director, Forum for the Future



# books



## Six degrees by Mark Lynas

Scientists predict that global temperatures will rise between 1 and 6 degrees over the next century. But what will this mean? How big a rise will it take for the Alps to melt, the oceans to die and desert to conquer Europe and the Americas? Mark Lynas sifted through thousands of scientific papers for his new book on global warming. And to see what life on earth might be like, Lynas also studied previous climate 'temperature spikes' in earth's prehistory.

### 1°C

The ecological effects of warming may be most apparent at one degree, with dramatic changes – for example the desertification of western America, much worse than the 1930's dustbowl depicted in Steinbeck's 'Grapes of Wrath'. The Alps will start melting alongside increased polar ice melt. The majority of the world's tropical coral reefs including the Great Barrier Reef may be wiped out, and marine biodiversity devastated.

### 2°C

Two degrees may not sound like much, but it is enough to make every European summer as hot as 2003, when 30,000 people died from heatstroke. Large areas of the southern oceans and parts of the Pacific will within a few decades become toxic to organisms with calcium carbonate shells, the acidic seawater will dissolve them. Carbon dioxide dissolves in the oceans and makes them more acidic. Many species of plankton – the basis of the marine food chain and essential for the sustenance of higher creatures, from mackerel to baleen whales – will be wiped out. The oceans may become the new deserts as the world's temperatures reach 2°C above today's. Two degrees is also enough to cause the eventual complete melting of the Greenland ice sheet, which would raise global sea levels by seven metres. Much of the ice-cap disappeared 125,000 years ago, when global temperatures were 1-2°C higher than now. While two degrees of warming will be survivable for many humans, a third of all species alive today may be driven to extinction as climate change wipes out their habitat.

### 3°C

Most importantly, between 2 and 3°C will be the "tipping point" where global warming will run out of control. The centre of this predicted disaster is the Amazon, where the tropical rainforest would burn down in a firestorm of epic proportions. Once the trees have gone, desert will appear and the carbon released by the forests' burning will be joined by more carbon released from the world's soils. This could boost global temperatures by a further 1.5°C –

tipping us straight into the four-degree world.

### 4°C

At four degrees another tipping point is almost certain to be crossed; indeed, it could happen much earlier. This comes as the Arctic permafrost – particularly in Siberia – increasingly thaws, releasing billions of tonnes of methane and carbon dioxide. The whole Arctic Ocean ice cap will also disappear, leaving the North Pole as open water for the first time in at least three million years.

The south polar ice cap may also be badly affected – the West Antarctic ice sheet could lift loose from its bedrock and collapse as warming ocean waters erode its base, much of which is anchored below current sea levels. This would eventually add another 5m to global sea levels.

### 5°C

To find out what the planet would look like with five degrees of warming, one must venture back in geological time to the Eocene period. The Eocene greenhouse event saw a major mass extinction in the seas. Fossils of sub-tropical species such as crocodiles and turtles have all been found in the Canadian high Arctic dating from 55 million years ago, when the Earth experienced a sudden and dramatic global warming. There was no ice at either pole; forests were probably growing in central Antarctica.

### 6°C

The end-Permian wipe-out occurred 251 million years ago. Oxygen isotopes in rocks dating from the time suggest that temperatures rose by six degrees. It is the nearest this planet has been to becoming just another lifeless rock in space. By the end of this calamity, up to 95% of species were extinct. The precise cause remains unclear, but what is undeniable is that the end-Permian mass extinction was associated with a super-greenhouse event. Sedimentary layers show that most of the world's plant cover was removed by rapid soil erosion. Rocks also show a "fungal spike" as plants and animals rotted in situ. Still more corpses were washed into the oceans, helping to turn them stagnant and anoxic (insufficient oxygen to support life). Deserts invaded central Europe, and may even have reached close to the Arctic Circle.

Lynas's message is this: that we mess with the climatic thermostat of this planet at our extreme – and growing – peril.

His prescription emphasises 'that humanity can solve the problem in the first half of this century by scaling up what we already know how to do'. However, the book does not supply much detail on solutions – see George Monbiot's 'Heat' for the most informed discussion of this.

# Change up a gear

## **Communities take action - Dartmoor Climate Circle**

13 local groups have signed a 'Dartmoor protocol' 'to work together to tackle climate change and promote sustainability in Dartmoor and surrounding areas' following a networking meeting organised by Bovey Climate Action in Bovey Tracey.

Groups included DCRN, DCCN, West Devon Environmental Network, Devon Association of Renewable Energy and community based groups such as Crediton Climate Action, Ashburton Futures, Ivybridge Action group, Transition Town Moreton, Chagford Sustainable Energy group, Sustainable South Brent, Ilington and Haytor, Holne and Scoriton.

Local actions have been varied. Awareness raising has included events in town centres, meetings, and screenings of films such as Al Gore's 'An Inconvenient Truth' and 'The Power of the Community' about Cuba's post oil society.

- Bovey Climate Action have set up a website, a newsletter and run a regular stall at the local market.
- West DEN have undertaken a pilot with Belstone Green Village project, which included a questionnaire sent to every house about lifestyles and work to encourage people to reduce their carbon footprints.
- Chagford have got together a bulk scheme for household solar hot water systems with over 30 households participating and the groups renewable energy expert Perran Newman is looking at restarting local redundant hydro-electric installations.
- Transition Town Moreton are promoting a shop local campaign and are looking at one large wind turbine for the town.
- Sustainable South Brent have undertaken a parish survey on possible green projects and had a talk by Rob Hopkins of Transition Town Totnes.

Transition Towns are part of a national movement to help communities prepare for peak oil – the tipping

point where oil demand outstrips supply and production declines. Working groups are formed to tackle a whole range of issues including waste, recycling and composting, local transport, local food, the Totnes Pound, low carbon housing, renewable energy, the psychology of change.

**DCRN and DCCN will be working to ensure groups realise what a big hitter waste issues are in carbon reductions.**

**For example, recycling just one plastic bottle saves the equivalent energy to run a 60w light bulb for six hours.**

**Home composting of kitchen scraps prevents methane release from landfill, methane being a much more potent greenhouse gas than CO2.**

**Community composting saves all that trucking of garden waste to centralised compost sites.**

**Reuse reduces the need to purchase new items and saves all the embodied energy of that item.**

**Community waste projects already produce 'carbon credits' through their activity but are not recognised for their role in reducing carbon emissions, so DCRN is working to represent community waste groups in the emerging carbon market, which is sure to grow.**

The local groups all have their own particular focus and have decided to take the initiative in their communities. What about you? Is anything happening in your area to address climate change? Do you want to get involved in doing something with others, or want to encourage your parish council to do more?

Residents in Newton Abbot, Throwleigh and Buckfast are also looking to start up a group. Anyone interested in local action can learn about many of the things involved by coming to DCRN/DCCN's annual conference in Crediton on 29th June where established and emerging groups and individuals will have a great chance to network. Rob Hopkins of Transition Town Totnes is the

**"You never change things by fighting the existing reality.  
To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model  
obsolete."**

**Buckminster Fuller**





[www.assurre.org](http://www.assurre.org) ]

Producing steel from recycled material saves 75% of the energy needed for steel made from virgin material [source: [www.scrib.org](http://www.scrib.org) ]

Every year, the average dustbin contains enough unrealised energy for 500 baths, 3500 showers or 5,000 hours of television. [source:

Making glass bottles and jars from recycled ones saves energy. The energy saving from recycling one bottle will:

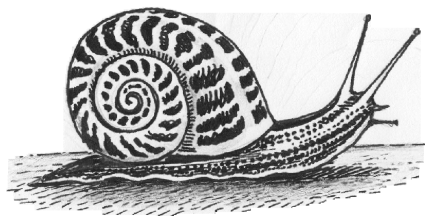
- Power a 100 watt light bulb for almost an hour
- Power a computer for 20 minutes
- Power a colour TV for 15 minutes
- Power a washing machine for 10 minutes

[source: [www.britglass.co.uk](http://www.britglass.co.uk) ]

## Cardboard milk bottle on the way

A milk bottle made of cardboard with a biodegradable bag inside could replace current plastic milk bottles. The cardboard 'Greenbottle' could then be composted or recycled alongside regular cardboard. Only 7% of plastic milk bottles are recycled – or more correctly downcycled into a lower grade plastic, and over 100,000 tonnes of plastic are consumed for milk bottles in the UK. Asda have already trialled the new bottle.

The inventor, Martin Myerscough, came up with the idea whilst chatting in the pub to a landfill site worker: "I asked him what the tip was full of and he said: plastic bottles. People drink the contents and throw them away. The tip is full of air"



Wessex Reinvestment Trust is launching a 'slow money' scheme which aims to attract private money into investment in local community enterprises. Investors receive low interest and invest directly in community projects that benefit from accessing 'cheaper' money. Wessex have developed 2 legal structures for projects seeking

# Wave Farm

The world's largest wave farm planned off the UK coast has secured funding for the project to go ahead as early as next year, subject to planning permission.

A £21.5m regional development agency grant means the £28m Wave Hub project could soon be producing enough energy to power 7,500 homes with 20 MW of electricity, or around 3% of Cornwall's domestic electricity needs, and could save 24,300 tonnes of carbon dioxide every year when displacing fossil fuels.

[Wave Hub](#) will be sited 10 miles off St Ives on the Cornish coast and will test up to 40 prototype wave energy machines designed to harness the power of the sea.

The "hub" will resemble an "electric socket" on the seabed into which wave energy devices will be connected. It will be connected to the National Grid by a 15-mile cable linked to a new electricity substation at Hayle.

Groups of wave energy machines connected to Wave Hub are expected to float on or just below the surface of the sea to assess how well they work and how much power they generate.

The project could generate £76m over 25 years for the regional economy and create at least 170 jobs, the RDA says.

"Wave Hub has the potential to make an enormous contribution to tackling climate change and we believe it could transform the wave technology industry," said South West RDA spokesman Stephen Peacock.

On land in the south west there are currently 8 wind farms, 6 new wind farms have planning permission to proceed, and there are a further 10 proposals for installations. However, renewable energy generation targets for the south west were not likely to be met according to Regen SW, the body responsible for meeting them. Despite much controversy around land based wind farms, they remain 'cheapest and most powerful renewable technology available to us in the short term'.

## 'SLOW MONEY'

investment either as 'enterprise projects' (business development) and 'community asset' projects (for example to buy property) – these create the legal framework for private individuals to invest in their chosen community project. Contact: 01458 259400 [www.wessexrt.co.uk](http://www.wessexrt.co.uk)