

Environmental Action for a Better Leicestershire



News from the Leicestershire Environment Partnership

ISSUE 16

Summer 2009

What's been happening with ENABLE?

ENABLE has been busy working alongside the Climate Friendly Communities in Tilton on the Hill, Billesdon and Ibstock. A lot has been happening in all three communities with the Tilton Green group storming ahead. Tugby and Billesdon Primary Schools have recently joined the Eco Schools programme and are working with Tilton Green, Sustainable Billesdon, the County Council and Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire to green their schools.

The Rural Community Council ran two well attended Climate Change Seminars for community groups in Kibworth and Thornton in October on behalf of ENABLE and both ran workshops at the recent Leicestershire Together Conference and Parish Council Liaison Meeting at County Hall promoting the Climate Friendly Communities programme. These workshops have been made possible with funding from the Leicestershire Rural Partnership.

CLIMATE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Leicestershire's three communities have recently been awarded funding from Leicestershire County Council...

Tilton Green was awarded £3000 to help pay for the printing of the Tilton Green newsletter, promotional cloth bags, £50 grants for local householders for energy efficiency works and the purchase of a low energy lightbulb library. See

www.leicestershirevillages.com/tiltononthehill/tiltongreen.html

Sustainable Billesdon had £1000 to help towards installing insulation in the Church Hall. See

www.leicestershirevillages.com/billesdon/sustainablebillesdongroup.html

Ibstock Does Climate Change had £1000 towards promotional items, cloth bags and banners. See e-voice.org.uk/ibstockclimatechange

Tilton Green have also been successful in receiving a further £7000 funding from GOEM to assist the production of resource packs for schools and Parish Councils, an energy efficiency study for Tilton Village Hall and further help with energy efficiency measures in local homes

For further information on any of these schemes, please contact Hetal Patel, Tel. 0116 305 7068 or email hetal.patel@leics.gov.uk

Other News and Announcements

ENABLE on the web

ENABLE's Climate Friendly Communities programme and Energy Monitor Loan Scheme now appear as best practise case studies on two national websites used regularly by community groups and local authority officers.

CAFE — Community Action for Energy -

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe

CAFE provides advice to community groups on energy and climate related issues. There is now a case study of Climate Friendly Communities on the CAFE website and we have already had a number of enquiries from people from other councils interested in running similar projects —

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe/Community-Action-for-Energy/Community-Projects/Add-your-project/Climate-Friendly-Communities>

IDEA — Improvement and Development Agency for local government—

www.idea.gov.uk

IDEA helps local government to deliver services and make places better. It runs a Beacon Scheme to help local councils share best practise. A case study has recently been uploaded about the Energy Monitor Loan Scheme in libraries helping residents to measure their home electricity use—

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=10210717>

ENABLE has also revamped its own website, hosted by Leicestershire County Council. Check out the new site and Leicestershire County Council's environment pages at www.leics.gov.uk/enable and

www.leics.gov.uk/protectingourplanet

WHO IS ENABLE?

ENABLE is the Leicestershire Environment Partnership, with members from environmental organisations throughout Leicestershire and members of the public. If you would like to join ENABLE or contribute to the next newsletter call 0116 305 7332 or email enable@leics.gov.uk

The Green Challenge

Leicestershire County Council is working hard, to use less energy to help save the environment and your money. Our main projects focus on reducing carbon emissions from buildings, street lighting and our vehicle fleet. Other initiatives are improving how we manage waste, energy, water, wildlife sites and buying goods and services.

In 2007 our total carbon footprint was just under 88,500 tonnes. The table shows were the emissions came from.

We have pledged to reduce our emissions by 4% by March 2010 and another 4% the following year. This will save almost 7,000 tonnes over the two years.

Actions already taken:

- We have built four replacement high schools which include many environmental features
- We are trying to support environmentally friendly products
- We are reducing our waste and increasing re-use and recycling.
- Our travel plan and 'work well' programmes aim to reduce commuting mileage
- We have signed the Carbon Trust's prestigious Local Authority Carbon Management Programme.

Taking the Footprints Challenge in North West Leicestershire

The Footprints Challenge is helping to make North West Leicestershire greener through a series of environmentally themed events and activities being held throughout the district.

The challenge, run by North West Leicestershire District Council, aims to encourage residents to think about their local environment and to take action to reduce their carbon footprint.

The challenge, launched in April 2008, now has over 450 local families, 26 local businesses and twelve schools signed up to take part in activities such as:

- Big Switch Off energy efficiency campaign
- smart meter loan scheme
- recycling and compost awareness events
- wildlife art/photo competitions
- green travel week activities
- energy awareness week events
- green business events
- Free Tree Scheme
- Freeuse scheme
- Footprints Awards

Further information is on the Footprints website at:

<http://footprints.nwleics.gov.uk/awards.html>

If you would like to borrow an energy meter, email footprints@nwleicestershire.gov.uk. Meters can be loaned by schools, householders and business in North West Leicestershire.

Big Switch Off

A big thank you to everyone who took part in the Big Switch Off 2008 helping to make our first year a success. Overall, Leicestershire reduced energy use on the Big Switch Off Day Friday 17th October by 4.5 megawatt hours switching off unnecessary lights and electrical appliances. The savings were biggest during the first hour of the campaign 4 – 5pm compared to the previous week.

The energy saved is enough energy to power 45,000 standard 100 watt electrical light bulbs for an hour or 2,250 kettles being boiled for one hour.

Savings were most noticeable in offices, workplaces and schools.

Council buildings

Council buildings across Leicestershire made significant savings....

Leicestershire County Council staff reduced energy consumption by 13% at County Hall switching off lights, computers and printers. This could cut County Hall's electricity bill by £5,600 a year if carried out every day.

North West Leicestershire District Council staff saved a massive 64.5% of energy use during the Big Switch Off week saving 219kg of carbon dioxide. Over a year this could save 11.4 tonnes of carbon dioxide – enough to fill 68 double decker buses.

Leicester City Council saw a reduction in energy demand of 10.1 % at its eight main buildings. If this was repeated every working day, over a year the council could save £6,000 from these buildings alone.

Blaby District Council recorded a 48 per cent reduction in electricity used in its offices. Over a year, this would save 13.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide, approximately 79 double decker buses lined bumper to bumper.

School Competition

Schools across the county also took part in the Big Switch Off. All Eco Schools were invited to enter a competition to see which could save the most energy.

The winners, Latimer Primary School, in Anstey, won a renewable energy education kit for recording a 69 per cent drop in energy use, compared with the previous week. The kit includes a mini wind turbine, solar panel and solar hot water kit.

Big Switch Off 2009

This was the first year of the campaign and there are plans for the Big Switch Off to be bigger and more wide reaching this year. It will take place over the period of a week:- 12th—18th October. Plans are already being made for events and involving schools, businesses, universities, colleges and community groups and Organisations to help save energy in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The next issue will feature more about Big Switch Off 2009.

Free Help to cut fuel bills

Leicestershire libraries have a new loan scheme available. The Environmental Action Team has supplied every Leicestershire library, including mobile libraries with an energy monitor which can be borrowed absolutely free for a week.

The OWL energy monitors can help cut electricity bills by measuring how much energy is required to power appliances in the home. By switching off individual devices and leaving one running, the monitor shows how much energy that device uses whether left on or on standby and more importantly how much it costs to power that device.

The OWL energy monitors come with an instruction booklet and are easy to install, simple to use and helps to reduce the amount of energy you use.

It is estimated that householders in Leicestershire waste over £13 million by leaving appliances on standby. The average household in the UK spends around £1,300 per year on energy, which is set to increase even more with sharply rising energy prices. For example, a PlayStation 3 left in idle mode uses the equivalent of three 60-watt bulbs; and could add £164 a year on to electricity bills.

Julian Bird from Tilton on the Hill borrowed an OWL monitor recently through the Family Challenge in October as has made huge savings on his energy bills at home just by changing some habits. Julian has:-

- stopped using the tumble dryer to dry clothes
- unplugged a video recorder which has not been used for three years
- switches off lights in rooms which aren't being used
- replaced lightbulbs with energy saving versions
- turned down the room thermostat
- turned thermostatic radiator valves to 0 in spare bedrooms
- tries not to have the heating on before 5pm

The biggest savings (5%) are from not leaving the laptop on standby over night. Julian reckons he can save up to 33% off electricity bills and 11% off gas bills if he keeps up his good work.

Pop along to your local library and start saving on energy bills. For further information contact Hetal Patel Tel. 0116 305 7068 or email hetal.patel@leics.gov.uk



A Greener Shade of Blue

At Leicestershire Constabulary we have made significant progress in our commitment to ensuring that we minimise any negative environmental impact resulting from our day to day service delivery. Over the last 18 months we have reviewed our entire approach to environmental management.

A Strategic Environment Group has been created which is chaired by our Finance Director who is a member of our board, the 'Chief Officer Group'. The Group consists of a representative of the Police Authority as well as the Departmental Heads of Estates, Fleet, Procurement and Support Services, Health and Safety and Information Technology. Our three policing geographical areas are also represented on the Group which has formulated an environmental strategy, policy and action plan which identify the things that we must do to optimise our environmental performance.

We have created an environmental website, engaging staff groups by discussing issues such as sustainable development, climate change, biodiversity and waste management. This website has been promoted by 'drip feeding' weekly internal news items on important environmental issues where staff can have a direct positive impact through their own actions.

In the future, we will be assessing our opportunities for energy management, improving metering on our sites and reviewing our management of waste - while the Force has a history of recycling over 80% of its waste off site, we are keen to improve on these figures by trialling on site waste separation.

Peter Coogan Leicestershire Constabulary Principal Health and Safety Advisor

WISTOW MAZE

Wistow Maze, winner of Leicestershire's Best Visitor Attraction 2004/5 will re-open on Saturday 18th July.

This year the maze is in the shape of a polar bear, and the quiz trail will have an environmental theme with tips on how we can help save the planet. The maze also incorporates 10ft high bridges and viewing towers which give visitors stunning 3D panoramic views over the maze and the beautiful surrounding countryside.

For further information on opening times and special events please call 07884 403889 and select the tab on the Wistow Maze on www.wistow.co.uk

ENABLE

Uniting Leicestershire to protect and enhance the environment

Find out more about ENABLE
from our website at
www.leics.gov.uk/enable

ENABLE
Room 500
Leicestershire County Council
Glenfield
Leicester
LE3 8TE

Friends of Thringstone

Thringstone is a village in northwest Leicestershire, in the heart of the National Forest., proud of their heritage and their mention in the Domesday Book. Friends of Thringstone formed in early 2005, with the aim of improving the village and surrounding woodlands to make the area cleaner, tidier and more attractive to both residents and visitors.

Chairman Nita Pearson said 'I got involved with the group when it was set up, and became Chairman in July 2005 and have been voted to carry on in that role every year ever since. We just started doing litter picks and planting schemes, with the agreement and support of the local councils before planting and clearing areas of derelict land within the village. We've made various successful funding bids, and now have two National Forest village signs, published 3 walks brochures, and erected 15 blue historical plaques within the village, in addition to transforming 5 areas with our planting schemes.'

Last year, as part of The Big Tidy we linked with Coalville Army Cadet F Squadron, local explorers and leaders and also with Thringstone Primary School to do two large clear ups in the village and surrounding woodland. In Grace Dieu woods, we filled two large skips with rubbish, including dumped motorcycles, baths, a garage door and tyres. We have 70 members and whilst some of our membership comprises of retired folk, a lot of us still have jobs, and do things with the group in our spare time'.

Friends of Thringstone have regular eco-themed speakers along to their meetings, including recent information on thermal imaging and smart meters, and will continue with their litter picks and planting schemes, welcoming any help from residents in the area who want to get involved.

Further information on the group and how to join is available from the website

www.friends-of-thringstone.org.uk

Nita Pearson, Chairman

Free Green Cones for Leicestershire Primary Schools

All County Primary Schools can get one free Green Cone food digester to show pupils and staff how easy it is to reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill. This will be professionally installed. The Green Cone digests all types of food waste, including fruit and vegetable scraps, dairy products, and bread, as well as raw and cooked meat, fish, bones and organic kitchen waste so is useful for lunchbox and break time scraps such as bread crusts and apple cores. Due to their size, they won't be able to handle main kitchen and canteen waste.

For further information or place an order, please contact Nicola Howell on (0116) 305 7288 or email nicola.howell@leics.gov.uk

If you would like a green cone for use at home, Leicestershire County Council are currently selling them at £7.50, a hugely discounted rate! For further information see www.leics.gov.uk/food_waste_digesters, call 0800 019 2061 or order online at www.greencone.com.

New Energy Advice Centre

The East Midlands has a new resource for providing advice to householders on energy issues. The new centre is based in Nottingham and replaces the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, formerly in Leicester City Centre.

The Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre can give advice on a number of different issues relating to climate change including energy, transport and waste. Householders can contact the centre either by telephone – 0800 512 012, email or via the national Energy Saving Trust website at www.energysavingtrust.org.uk for queries relating to any of these issues or a free home energy check.