

ATC CONTACTS

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The views expressed by individuals on the Green Page do not necessarily represent the views of the ATC.



A willow weaving and dry stone walling workshop was held recently in Primrose Garden (across the canal from the ATC) run by Helen Blackwell and Bill Rofe. Work continues to complete the project. If you would like to be involved, contact Susy Feltham at the ATC.

NORTHGATE HOUSE GOES GREEN AND SAVES MONEY

The civic offices at Northgate House in Halifax are Calderdale MBC's largest electricity consumer. A common supply feeds the Central Library and the offices at Princess Buildings.

Typical annual electricity consumption is close to 1.5 million units, at a cost of around £55,000. The Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions as a result of generating this amount of electricity are approximately 586 tonnes. CO2 is of course one of the main greenhouse gases, which contributes to global warming.

Calderdale's Energy Management Unit has negotiated a contract for the supply of electricity generated from renewable or "green" sources for Northgate House from 1st April 2001. This electricity is supplied by Yorkshire Electricity and is mainly sourced from their various wind farm facilities.

The savings in the CO2 emissions that will result from this switch to green power will be in the region of 526 tonnes. Even though there is an 8% premium charged for the green electricity there will still be a financial saving due to electricity from renewable sources being exempt from the new climate change levy. This saving will be approximately £2,500.



Children at Stubbings Infant School created a mosaic with Mandy Dessant and Paula Chambers as part of a project developed in co-operation with the ATC.

CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

Jamie Johnson outlines a low cost alternative to the loan sharks.

Unfortunately the current monetary system that plays a dominant role in many of our lifestyles is not very green. Financial debt and its often calamitous side-effects adversely affect the living standards of a large proportion of our society.

Fortunately there is some local help at hand. Calder Valley Credit Union, which recently celebrated its fifth year in business, is an effective community bank which offers its members a low-cost alternative to making loans with non-ethical High Street Banks and other loan sharks that masquerade as credit agencies. It encourages its members to save regularly and then take out low-cost loans from the combined savings of all the membership.

The APR is fixed at 12.68% - that's just 1% a month. Therefore the interest payable on a loan of £100 over the course of a year would be only £6.50. Calder Valley Credit Union has recently made loans to local people ranging from £50 to £1,000. Loans can total up to three times the amount that a member has saved.

A Credit Union is regulated by the Financial Services Authority but is operated by its members for its members and is a not for profit organisation. Used effectively Credit Unions can play a positive role in supporting local economies and communities.

To become a member locally you must live within the Calder Valley area. For more information contact Calder Valley Credit Union through the Ground Project at Salem Community Centre on Mondays between 7.00 - 8.00PM and Wednesdays 10.30 - 11.30AM.

PLUG INTO THE GREEN NETWORK

TRADITIONAL FORMS OF GENERATING ELECTRICITY GENERATE HIGH LEVELS OF CARBON DIOXIDE, with domestic consumption accounting for over a quarter of all electricity generated. In order to help reduce CO2 emissions the Government has set a target of 10% electricity generation from renewable sources by the year 2010. Renewable energy generation results in very low levels of carbon dioxide.

Most energy suppliers are now offering

options for you to support electricity from renewable sources.

There are two types of environmental payment options:

1. The amount of electricity you buy each year is matched by your suppliers purchases from renewable sources.
2. You can choose to support future investments in new renewable energy. The amount you pay is put together with contributions from other consumers into a special fund

(often supplemented by the supplier) to stimulate investment in renewable energy.

A new scheme called Future Energy accredits electricity tariffs that support or invest in electricity from renewable energy sources. This allows consumers to be confident about electricity suppliers claims about renewable energy.

Switching to green electricity is a key contribution that both organisations and individuals can make to combating climate change.

Green electricity can be generated by a number of sources: wind turbines; solar energy captured using photo-voltaic cells; hydroelectric power through hydro power devices and from tidal and wave power machines; energy from wastes - the burning of waste, or of gas collected from landfill sites; energy crops - plants (eg fast growing trees like willow and poplar), grown specifically for use as a fuel.

There are currently 15 renewable energy offerings managed by 13 different energy suppliers accredited under Future Energy.

Yorkshire Electricity, for instance, offers Green Electricity from wind and biomass.

Friends of the Earth have produced a league table for green electricity suppliers and give their highest rating to Unit[e] as the UKs only 100 per cent renewable domestic energy supplier.

Although more expensive at present from most suppliers, the more renewable energy we use the cheaper it will become.

Full details available from the ATC or check out the FoE website at: www.foe.co.uk



Children from Spring Hill High School in Rochdale attend a wind power workshop at the ATC during a one week residential course based around the centre



A Sideways Look
John Morrison

THE SUMMER OF 2001 IS NOT ONE THAT WALKERS WILL REMEMBER WITH ANY GREAT AFFECTION. We did the decent thing and obeyed the footpath restrictions. We stayed away from livestock because we understood the farmers' plight. Self-denial seemed a small price to pay, if it helped to eradicate foot & mouth disease.

It's been a tough time for hill farmers, there's no doubt about it. I read some while ago that the hill farmers of the northern counties are to the Labour government what the miners were to the Tories. Which, if true, is not good news for the hill farmers. As the government has been learning, rural tourism is more important - in purely financial terms, at least - than farming.

The hill farmers have our sympathies. It must have been traumatic to stand by and watch as their animals were slaughtered: like witnessing the death of a much-loved member of the family. Or - perhaps more accurately - a much-loved member of the family

who had a one-way ticket to the abattoir.

It's been frustrating for walkers to watch the landscape change from spring to high summer, without being able to get out and enjoy it. I've hardly crossed a contour line since March. All that nonsense about the countryside being 'open

for business' only made matters worse. There are still a few intrepid souls around who want more from a day out than just driving to some honey-pot village, parking in the pay & display and mooching listlessly around the gift shops. We want to enjoy the freedom of the hills, not just buy a tea towel emblazoned with Yorkshire beauty spots.

Like everyone else, I was glued to the news bulletins on TV, gob-smacked by the scale of the foot & mouth epidemic. Seeing animals being bulldozed into pits, thousands at a time, or burnt on

huge pyres, created some very uncomfortable associations. This wasn't the rural Arcadia committed to canvas by John Constable or Thomas Gainsborough. No, this was an apocalyptic vision conjured from the feverish imagination of Hieronymus Bosch.

With so much of the countryside off-limits, I tried a few town walks. But, since I don't like passing any pub without sampling the beer, an intimate exploration of Haworth took eight hours - of which the last two were just a blur. I tried to climb the precipitous north face of the Tourist Information Centre, followed up by a lateral traverse of the Branwell Brontë Massage Parlour and Tea Room (rated as 'severe' in a brand new book, Teashop Climbs in West Yorkshire, published by the Opportunist Press).

Car and share

A number of cities in Britain now have car share clubs. In Leeds for instance there is Co-Drive, a small scale car share club which was established in 1998. They use internet booking through www.u-reserve-it.com or you can contact them on Tel. 0113 216 5146 or Email: co-drive@heads.demon.co.uk

There are also a number of schemes organising lift shares. Liftshare.com specialise in providing journey-matching services for individuals, groups and communities. They can be contacted by e-mail: ali@liftshare.com Website: www.liftshare.com Tel: 08700 780225.

Freewheelers is another lift share website linking drivers and passengers to share the cost of travel to and from work, sports events, festivals etc. The aim of Freewheelers is to reduce pollution by reducing car usage. It also saves you money. They can be contacted via: freewheelers@freewheelers.co.uk Website: www.freewheelers.co.uk

The Community Car Share Network helps to set up car share clubs around the country. They see car share users as usually fitting into the following three categories:

People who do not currently have a car, but would like to have access to a car for occasional use, perhaps two or three times per week for social or business trips.

Families who run two cars, but who could manage with one car if they had occasional access to a car club vehicle.

People who currently run a car and are not doing high mileage, eg less than 8,000 miles per annum, and could manage without a car if they had access to cars through the club.

As yet there is no car share scheme in a rural area, but maybe Hebden Bridge could again achieve a green first. Jae Campbell at the Ground Floor Project is looking into the possibility of setting up a car share club locally.

Get in touch if you would like to be involved. Tel. (01422) 844991 or e-mail: GFProject@Aol.com

More information about the Community Car Share Network from: The Studio, 32 The Calls, Leeds, LS2 7EW. Phone: 0113 234 9299 Email: office@carshareclubs.org.uk Website: www.carshareclubs.org.uk

But I was forced to give up. Partly due to the lack of foot-holds, but mostly because armed police were shouting at me through a loudhailer.

So let's throw our woolly hats in the air, and offer heartfelt thanks that the footpaths are now being reopened. Of course, the landowners haven't let the grass grow under their feet while we've been away. A lot of them have seen their land free of rambles, and they've come to prefer it that way.

Most of the foot & mouth notices may have been taken down, but I've seen some disturbing new signs going up in their place. 'Keep strictly to the way-marked footpath through the estate. We maintain this so-called right of way under protest, and begudge every second that you are on our land. Yes, that means YOU... and the rest of the rambling riff-raff. Woody Guthrie was right: it's not your land... it's OUR land, and don't you forget it. So clear off sharpish, before the gamekeeper sets his dogs on you'.