

# VALE ROYAL ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

Autumn  
2004

## Empty Roads

The Empty Roads project aims to help people without access to private transport, and particularly those of marginalised social groups, to visit Britain's National Parks. It also aims to encourage those with private transport to use more environmentally-friendly ways of reaching the parks. It's welcomed by the Youth Hostels Association and the National Parks. Supporting it, here is Ian McMillan's poem, "Empty Roads":

Empty roads, like ribbons on the landscape  
an empty road like a belt across the moor  
empty road for a great big escape  
leave the car at home and shut the garage door

Sharon takes the train from Salford Crescent  
asked for her reaction, she says its very pleasant  
but that's just what she says when we ask her to her face  
when our backs are turned, she says it's chuffin'  
ace!

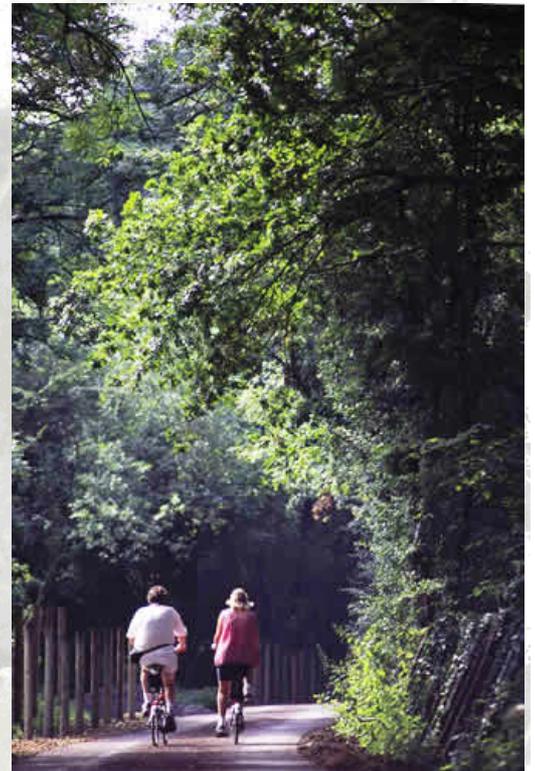
Jean and Derek, grey-haired as the suit  
Derek used to wear on his daily commute  
from Horsforth to Leeds every single day  
now Derek's chucked his suit & briefcase away  
and Jean's packed in her high-powered post  
but they don't sit in bed and eat brown toast  
because they love their Weekend Breaks  
bussing to the Hostel in the Lakes

Empty roads, like ribbons on the landscape  
an empty road like a belt across the moor  
empty road for a great big escape  
leave the car at home and shut the garage door

Simon and Liz have a lifestyle to foster  
nice food, fine wine on the outskirts of Gloucester  
but every now and then they leap on the train  
read Hello then read it again  
and a few hours later they find themselves shelling  
out much less than they thought for three days in  
Helvellyn

Tom and his mates, well they like to chill  
a few days on Dartmoor and they get their fill  
biking up from Exeter, breeze in their hair  
Exford and Lynton are really out there  
after chilling and chilli for a long weekend  
they freewheel back to Uni with their souls on the mend

Empty reads, like ribbons on the landscape  
an empty road like a belt across the moor  
empty road for a great big escape  
leave the car at home and shut the garage door.



*(from YHA's magazine 'Triangle', picture by J Bewley, from Sustrans' website)*

Vale Royal Environment Network

wishes to thank its many sponsors, supporters and volunteers.

Offices at: Yarwoods Arm, Navigation Road, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 1BE  
tel 01606 723160, email vren@groundwork.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

## More Transport

### The Places You Wouldn't Cycle

One of the things putting many people off cycling is the fear of cars and other vehicles. Some may practice their skills on quiet village or country roads first, but the commute, school run, shop or whatever may have ominous dangers even for experienced cyclists. We at VREN are seeking your help to compile a list of bogies in Vale Royal – blind corners, fast traffic, rough surfaces, uncut hedges – that put you off. Let us know, by letter or email please, whether you're a cyclist or a motor vehicle user on that route, and how much you're affected. The list will help our councils make our roads more cycle-friendly.



### Safe Routes to Schools Training

A training day for teachers, parents, governors and young people (15+) will be held in Manchester Velodrome on 22nd November. See [www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk), email [sarahj@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:sarahj@sustrans.org.uk) or tel 0117 915 0100. (pic by David Rose, from Sustrans' website)

### Practice your Pedalling

If you're thinking about taking up cycling, you can attend a short, informal course. It's ideal for those who've recently bought a cycle for exercise, leisure, work or local trips. Each half-day course will start with a classroom sessions covering pre-riding checks (brakes, tyres, chain, etc.) and hazards (parked cars, pedestrians, junctions, etc.) An off-road area is used for practising manoeuvring. Then there is an option to practice the lessons on a suitable road or cyclepath. The courses are run by Cheshire County Council: tel 01244 603728.

*Motorcyclists can have a day with an off-duty police motorcyclist, gaining road skills. Contact CCC on 01244 603602.*

### CROW: Your Right not to Roam

The new Countryside Rights of Way Act (CROW) offers access to open country, ie "mountain, moor, heath and down". Vale Royal has some heath, and Cheshire has some moorland. These areas are marked in yellow on the mapping section of the relevant part of the Countryside Agency's website - [http://cms.countrysideaccess.gov.uk/static\\_pages/further\\_information/access\\_land\\_maps](http://cms.countrysideaccess.gov.uk/static_pages/further_information/access_land_maps) - and highlights little in our area other than some open water to walk over.

### Sea Journeys are Fun?!

The Jubilee Sailing Trust operates two tall ships, The Lord Nelson and Tenacious. They welcome both the able and handicapped to participate in journeys, and have a programme of sailings between the UK and West Indies and more local waters. A one month Bermuda to Southampton trip costs £2500; the 7 day Portsmouth to Waterford run £750. One way, but apparently an "adventure of a lifetime". Those both able and willing to take on lots of hard work can go half price or free on future journeys. See [www.jst.org.uk](http://www.jst.org.uk)



### Hard-to-get-to Northwich

Ask for rail routes to Northwich from elsewhere in the country and you'll likely be sent via Stockport rather than Hartford. Campaigners like Clive Steggel of CRS Consultants would like to see Hartford Station renamed Hartford (Northwich) so that it shows up as an alternative, but Network Rail say this would involve much expense and the involvement of numerous private rail companies changing software and signage across the country. Others suggest platforms where the Mid Cheshire and West Coast Mainline cross.

### Manchester University Transport Seminars

At the Cordingley Lecture Theatre in the Architecture and Planning Building, west of Oxford Road and to the SW of the Precinct Centre, 5.30pm – all welcome. The lectures, all Wednesdays, are: 13<sup>th</sup> Oct: "A Transport Policy Viewpoint"; 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov: "A Town Planner's Viewpoint"; 1<sup>st</sup> Dec: "The Train Operator's Viewpoint"; 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb: "The Bus Operator's Viewpoint"; 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar: "The Community's Viewpoint" and 13<sup>th</sup> April: "An Academic's Viewpoint"

### Cultivation

#### If you hate gravel as a mulch...

A Frodsham company, Dunweed, has just launched a new mulch product based on recycled rubber. It comes in various colours – terracotta, slate grey, fluorescent pink and more – and lasts for years, unlike biodegradable woodchip and bark mulches that end up feeding the soil. Gravel itself comes from quarrying or offshore dredging operations that have other environmental impacts, and can last longer than it's needed.

### A New Gardening Club

A new gardening club is being set up for the Weaverham area, with interesting organic/non-organic factions. Meetings are proposed to be on 4th Tuesdays at Wallerscote Primary School. Contact Joy Brain, 01606 853197 for details.

## Looking for a Darling

Like the Wareham (abbreviation of Weaverham) Russet apple, which was read of and ultimately found, an apple called The Darling is now sought. Records indicate it was in Cheshire in 1685, and that it resembled a Harvey (which may be obtainable from Brogdale National Fruit Collections), but are there any real Darlings left? Please let Tony Gentil, our local apple expert, know on 01270 780828. Wareham Russet has now been propagated, and plants are growing in school grounds. He's also seeking a pear called Aston Town. Of the various Astons in the county, Aston Town refers to the Aston south east of Runcorn, and the most likely place to find it still growing. (Picture "The Aston Town Pear" by the Victorian, Mrs. Augusta Withers – evidently greener than the similarly shaped, russety Autumn Bergamot we pictured last year.)

## Inspirations: Ashlyns Farm, Essex

Ashlyns Farm started converting to organic in 1997, and now produce 40 types of organic vegetables and herbs in what is "something of an organic desert". They have a website and newsletter, have developed farm trials that start at the shop, have some rare breed livestock near the shop, and a full-time education officer for guided visits. Apart from a vegetable box scheme and an outlying farm shop, they've also launched a gardening club, helping to extend organic techniques into suburbia. They supply three local schools directly. One acre rented out in 2003 to a local Bangladeshi for planting with ethnic vegetables has become 2 acres, and supplies lau, sheem, khira and dugi without airfreighting. (Lau – a bottle gourd, grown on a trellis; sheem – Bengali runner bean (aka hyacinth bean); khira – between cucumber and watermelon; dugi – an amaranth leaf vegetable.) See [www.ashlyns.co.uk](http://www.ashlyns.co.uk), tel 01992 525146. (HDRA)

## Companion Planting – does it work?

Companion plants are planted with other plants to help them, either physically (eg for support), chemically, or to deter pests or diseases. To quote HRI Wellesbourne (now Warwick HRI), the only requirements of a companion plant for pests is that it's green! Also, no companion plant should outcompete. For example, undersowing with clover can reduce pest levels, but sown at the wrong time can reduce the crop. Sowing carrots with mixed hardy annual flowers can hide them from carrot fly. The Henry Doubleday Research Association is seeking examples of companion planting that you have tried, over a couple of seasons or so, with or without success. Is it worth others trying? Send details to The Editors, The Organic Way, HDRA Ryton Organic Gardens, Coventry CV8 3LG; email [enquiry@hdra.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@hdra.org.uk)

## What is Organic?

There is a range of UK certifying bodies, but the Government has minimum standards set out in the new "Compendium of UK Organic Standards", which supersede UKROFS. Both can be accessed from [www.defra.gov.uk/farm/organic/legislation-standards/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/organic/legislation-standards/index.htm)



## Wildlife

### Equipment for Outdoor Work and Education

Envisage supply butterfly and dipping nets, sampling accessories, various traps, hand-held test instruments, torches and floodlights, waterproof notebooks/pads, surveying equipment, endoscopes (for looking inside nest boxes), lenses and binoculars, camouflage, litter pickers, wildflower seeds and plants, nest boxes for birds from wrens to buzzards, bat boxes, bat

detectors and gloves, boxes and shelters for mammals, reptiles and insects, books and other items. They also have bat homes designed to be incorporated in walls, while denying access to the roof void or wall cavity. Contact Envisage at The Old Brickyard, Kiln Lane, Swindon, SN2 2NP, tel 01793 538822. (not on web)

### Free Trees

Cheshire Landscape Trust has again got free trees for planting for public appreciation. Choose from alder, ash, beech, silver birch, blackthorn, bird and wild cherries, crab apple, guelder rose, hawthorn, hazel, holly, hornbeam, horse chestnut, lime, field maple, oak, Scots pine, black poplar, rowan, spindle, yew. There's also a selection of apple trees. Contact Katie Lowe at CLT at Fountains Building, Upper Northgate St, Chester, CH1 4EF, tel 01244 376333, email [cheshire@landscapetrust.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:cheshire@landscapetrust.fsnet.co.uk)



### At Groundwork:

**Helen Jackson** is the new Project Manager for Northwich Community Woodland. She's had previous positions as River Valley Initiative Officer for Glazebrook (near Leigh) and air pollution specialist with Women's Environment Network.

## WET Activities with Mersey Basin Trust

Helen Riley joined MBT and United Utilities in April – a joint post, part helping Val Cooper supporting schools' river studies, part at the Environmental Education Centre at Leigh (a good day out for schools) and a new centre at Fazakerley.

Claire Wheeler joined last November as a Community Officer – river clean-ups and fun days with local groups. New this year are Water Exploration Trips (WET), run this summer with the Black Environmental Network. Young people (11-18) were taken on a variety of watery activities such as gill scrambling, canoeing, raft building and wind surfing. The trips help build environmental awareness and other skills and understandings. If your group would like consideration for a future WET project, contact Claire at MBT.

MBT moved this spring to Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick St, Ancoats, Manchester, M4 7HR; tel 0161 273 4207, email merseybasintrust@hotmail.com

## Do It

### EU Consultation on Sustainability

The EU is reviewing its Sustainable Development Strategy, to include a review of progress since 2001 and a roadmap for the long term. A consultation (it could take some time) is open until 31st October on <http://europa.eu.int/yourvoice/forms/dispatch.jsp?form=331&lang=EN>



### TV Company seeks Good-Lifers

Have you shed a stressful job for a more rural, self-sufficient lifestyle, or planning to do so

soon? Contact Emma Hayes, Development Researcher at the independent television company Mandrill Television, tel 01904 788700, [emma.hayes@mandrill-television.com](mailto:emma.hayes@mandrill-television.com)

## Delivering Sustainable Communities Summit 2005 in Manchester

2000 delegates from the UK, Europe and beyond are expected to converge on Manchester, 31<sup>st</sup> January to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2005, with senior Government Ministers and leading national and international experts consider the impact of current trends.

There'll be talks, workshops, fringe events, an exhibition, organised visits, refreshments and 2 lunches, a gala dinner – all for £650 +VAT (plus some at an amazing £250 + VAT for delegates from community and voluntary groups, black and minority ethnic groups, faith groups, students and senior citizens). Plus transport, accommodation... See [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk) or tel 01564 797620.



## Investing in Success

The Cheshire Community Strategy Innovations Fund seeks to encourage innovation to improve the quality of life in Cheshire. Exclusive grants of up to £5000 from a fund of £50,000 are available for projects within the realm of Cheshire County Council that help further develop or enhance a currently successful project or enable its application elsewhere in the county. Other conditions apply. The closing date is 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004. Contact Alison Armstrong on 01244 603336 for details.

## Promote your Museum

'24 Hour Museum' and its young sidekick (interactive, aimed at 4 to 11 year olds) website 'show.me' provide details, sometimes dry, sometimes more lively, of museums throughout the country. It also contains news of their events. Contact them at [info@24hourmuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@24hourmuseum.org.uk) See the sites at [www.show.me.uk](http://www.show.me.uk) and [www.24hourmuseum.org.uk](http://www.24hourmuseum.org.uk)

## Against the Transformer

The Substation Action Group, SAG, is fighting plans by National Grid Transco and Network Rail to develop a large transformer and trackside box on greenbelt land between Weaverham and Acton Bridge. (It might help Virgin Rail compete with Virgin Air!) The planning applications are due to be considered by Vale Royal BC no earlier than 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Meanwhile, they're seeking further signatures on their petition – contact Joy or Heather, 01606 853197 or 851560 respectively. See also [www.nopylon.co.uk](http://www.nopylon.co.uk)



a substation

## Make a Difference Day – October 30<sup>th</sup>

BTCV is working with Community Service Volunteers (CSV) for Make a Difference Day – a fantastic opportunity for groups to attract new volunteers, gain publicity and build new partnerships with other organisations. No age, institution or social barriers. BTCV are actively seeking groups who can organise conservation activities for this day. A free action pack is sent to every group who registers an activity – T-shirt, waterproof tabards, thank you certificates, pin badges, tips and hints, posters etc – to help make your day a success. Registration and details on 0800 284 533, [www.csv.org.uk/difference](http://www.csv.org.uk/difference)

## Get Political!

To help raise the green profile, Howard Thorp wishes to start a local Green Party. Contact him on 01606 330263

Members of Vale Royal Environment Network receive this newsletter in print or electronic versions, along with invites to VREN events, and can also receive our e-news bulletins. Membership is currently free. If you'd like to join, please contact us: see details on the front page.

## Local News

### VREN AGM at Pettypool Outdoor Centre

Some highlights of general interest that followed a game of Human Bingo and preceded an excellent buffet:

It is planned that Ineos Chlor Landfill Tax Credit money for **Green Schools Grants** will be used for biodiversity projects; forms will be going out to Green Schools Network members.

Responses to a **questionnaire** sent out with the last newsletter include requests for training events including First Aid, Fundraising and Publicity.

**Groundwork** are improving recreation grounds on Weavervale Housing Trust lands, and there's now an excellent BMX facility on Winsford's Mount Pleasant Estate. Neil Collie is doing a user survey of greenways for a Greenways Improvement Strategy.

**Wildlife Watch** can now call on 8 leaders and are keen to work with schools – with tree dressing and surviving winter events planned for Cuddington and Sandiway Primary Schools respectively. Ken Dickinson is currently at the helm.

**Friends of Anderton and Marbury** cover the whole of Northwich Community Woodland – 1000 acres. They have 100 paid up members, 10 on the committee, 1 in the chair. They run 12 meetings a year.

**Friends of Marshall's Arm** had 75 people at last year's Bat Walk. They do a lot with local schools. Some members went on a course "Running a Small Woodland for Profit" which was very interesting; the talker casting a new light on trees. They got some help from BTCV's Natural Breaks scheme – 15 or 20 working holidaymakers can do a lot; it cost money but was worth it, they say. Due to some antisocial behaviour and motorbikes, they've teamed up with British Waterways and the police to form the Waterways Action Group.

### Cheshire Energy Efficiency Advice

**Centre (CHEEAC)** offer energy advice over the phone, or can talk to groups (tel 0800 512012). Their CLASP arm has taken local farmers to Herefordshire to see the energy crop Miscanthus growing. There are now grants for renewable energy infrastructure. A small biomass power station planned for Eccleshall, N Staffs, will have a planned 25 mile fuel sourcing radius taking in southern Vale Royal.

**Badger** numbers are down, not due to roadkill (about the same) but environment changes and food – setts a mile apart can enjoy either full families or none reared. There are no intentions to increase badger cull boundaries. Culls increase tension, resulting in more bovine TB – in cull areas, there's a 27% increase in bovine TB.

Brookhouse **allotments** (Crewe) are successful, with mini-plots and health plots (the latter for doctor-referrals).

**Margaret Oldman** is grateful to the VREN E-News service for information relating to a grant scheme for a display she's exhibiting at schools and events.

Teams are welcome to **Vale Royal Organic and Wildlife Gardeners'** Quiz Night on 19th November, at their new venue in Comberbach Memorial Hall.

Rosie from **Peace Child International** will be talking to Fallibroome High School sixth-formers about sustainable development soon; then those sixth formers will be taking it to the lower school.

The 400 members of **Mid-Cheshire Rail Users' Association** (MCRUA) campaign for a better rail service on the Mid-Cheshire line, also the Winsford/Northwich/Acton Bridge service and to open up Middlewich station. Support groups at local railway stations help with painting, planting and tidying. At Cuddington, long without a bin due to vandalism, a plastic bag tied to the back of a seat serves instead and helps to reduce litter. Since it's had 2 locals looking after it on a Sunday morning, it's looking better.

There's a **consultation out on the M6**, re parallel toll roads. Improved motorways might be one way to cut down on the harmful effects of air traffic.

**Vale Royal Borough Council** are conducting an Environmental Management System, EMAS. They will have to monitor throughout the year and present to the community. They're developing a Sustainability Guide for developers. The Regional Energy Project for this area will focus on renewable energy from biomass. *Contact us at VREN if you'd like a full AGM write-up, or details of the groups mentioned.*

### Historic Youth Hostel to Close

Maeshafn was the first purpose-built youth hostel. Of Swiss chalet style, it was designed by Portmeirion's architect Clough Williams Ellis and built in 1931 near Mold off the Ruthin road. Most of its 22 beds are arranged in alcoves in a single room. The Youth Hostel Association say they'll be sorry to lose a part of their history. They are looking for a replacement hostel to link with their recently-developed Offa's Dyke National Trail network. To book a stay in a bit of history before it becomes just that, phone 0870 770 6113.



## Waste and Recycling

### A City Problem

Manchester City Council are looking for innovative ways to expand the recycling service offered to residents in the dense inner city centre. Barriers that currently restrict the service offered are poor access to buildings and lack of storage space for recyclables. Experience, advice or examples to Jonathan Sadler (j.sadler@notes.manchester.gov.uk). (*Warmer 23 2004*)

### Hazardous Waste (batteries included)

Recent changes to EU law mean it's now illegal to bin hazardous waste. That includes batteries, used oil, fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescents, computer monitors and TVs. Check whether your waste is hazardous using Environment Agency guidelines at: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wm2> Contact Vale Royal Borough Council for advice on disposal.

### **WEEE Legislation Kicks In (batteries excluded)**

The EU's Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive is due to become law this autumn, with most of its requirements coming into force in August 2005. Producers of electrical and electronic goods will be responsible for paying the cost of recycling them. Any business that manufactures, brands, imports, sells, stores, and treats or dismantles electrical or electronic products within the EU will be affected. Waste sites that want to treat electronic equipment will require a permit and must meet standards set in the legislation. Tungsten light bulbs, batteries and domestic wiring are excluded. (*Warmer 17 2004*)

### **A Need for Incineration?**

A new consultation by Cheshire County Council is asking for opinions relating to proposals for an energy from waste plant or plants. It includes options for Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT), whereby residual waste (from green bins) is sorted for plastic, glass and metal, then either composted or fermented to produce biogas for energy production. The residue could be a 'soil conditioner' (subject to animal products regulations, and possibly containing non-biodegradable fractions) or dried to produce Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF). The need arises due to Landfill Regulation targets: it's anticipated that the 300,000 Cheshire households will be producing about 400,000 tonnes pa or more of residual waste by 2020 (a wheelie-bin busting 8 stone per fortnight!). See [www.cheshire.gov.uk/waste/consultation.htm](http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/waste/consultation.htm) or tel 01244 603000 for information. The response deadline is 19 November 2004.

### **A Biodegradable Plastic from a Toxic Waste**

Styrene, a toxic by-product of the polystyrene industry, can be fed to bacteria to make a biodegradable plastic. Researchers at University College Dublin have found that *Pseudomonas putida* converts the chemical into polyhydroxyalkanoate, which potentially has uses for medical purposes, plastic coatings for cardboard and heat-resistant plastic. (*Warmer 23 2004*)

### **Nova Scotia saves money by recycling**

A study by Halifax-based GPI Atlantic has found that through recycling, Nova Scotia saves between C\$33 and C\$178 per inhabitant per year. The biggest part of this is comes from using recycled materials, saving energy converting raw resources. Next comes the reduced need to find new landfill sites. Nova Scotia recycles 46% of its waste. More from [www.gpiatlantic.org/publications/summaries/solidwastesumm.pdf](http://www.gpiatlantic.org/publications/summaries/solidwastesumm.pdf) (a 0.3MB pdf) (*Warmer 23 2004*)

### **Hard Evidence of Waste Reduction**

Consultant Brook Lyndhurst has been commissioned by Project Integra (PI) to examine the underlying reasons behind municipal waste arisings and identify opportunities for waste prevention. They're keen to hear of innovative projects on waste prevention (especially those other than green waste and nappies); quantitative evidence; and technical documents on the reasons for waste increase/decrease. Contact Jayne Cox or Philip Downing at Brook Lyndhurst on 020 8233 2972 or by e-mail

([jayne.cox@brooklyndhurst.co.uk](mailto:jayne.cox@brooklyndhurst.co.uk), [phil.downing@brooklyndhurst.co.uk](mailto:phil.downing@brooklyndhurst.co.uk)). They will be very grateful for any help or leads. (*Warmer 23 2004*)

### **If You Wondered...**

#### **Young, apathetic, low income, poorly educated, generally male...**

A research project by the University of Exeter sought to examine the underlying influences on different types of environmental actions within and beyond the home. We can be Committed Environmentalists, Non-Environmentalists, or rarely do anything to help the environment.

They believe environmentalism has become institutionalised, part of the social norm, but more centred on recycling than sustainable consumption – that will need more consideration for the environment. All groups felt a tangible threat from ecological problems. The few Committed Environmentalists know why, and enjoy participating. The Non-Environmentalists engage to the social norm. The difficult group, who tend to be young, apathetic, low income, poorly educated and male-dominated, are more interested in material goods and believe humans are dominant over nature. Environmental action, for them, doesn't work, is inconvenient, not part of their social scene, and best avoided. However, they do enjoy it on occasions when pushed.

They conclude that personal behaviour has to be changed by new social norms rather than direct concern for the environment.

See the report at [www.regard.ac.uk/research\\_findings/R000239417/report.pdf](http://www.regard.ac.uk/research_findings/R000239417/report.pdf) (*Warmer 15 2004*)

### **The Energy Electricians: Train to Install Photo-Voltaics**

A new C&G course, N<sup>o</sup> 2372 in domestic PV installation has

been developed and is being offered at colleges including Blackburn (the nearest). Each training organisation has or is setting up a test rig including a mock roof and small PV system for student use. The 5 day course, suitable for practiced experienced electricians with or studying for NVQ level 3 and having knowledge of current wiring regulations, costs around £500. It provides accreditation for installation under the Solar Grants Scheme. Contact Graham Mawdsley at Blackburn College, tel 01254 292533, or visit [www.blackburn.ac.uk](http://www.blackburn.ac.uk)

A course for domestic heating engineers to learn to install solar water heating systems is also being developed, involving the Solar Trade Association and makers Filsol. A pilot course will run shortly. Contact the organisers, IT Power; tel 01256 392700, email [info@itpower.co.uk](mailto:info@itpower.co.uk) . See:

[www.itpower.co.uk/pvtraining.htm](http://www.itpower.co.uk/pvtraining.htm) (*Energy World, 9/2004*)



## Stanlow looks to Renewables

Groundwork Wirral and the Cheshire and Warrington Business Environment Association, with money from North-West Development Agency and others, are surveying Stanlow companies. The project intends to substantially improve conditions within the industrial area for the local community, have scope to reduce costs for companies situated there, and improve the environmental performance of the area as a whole. One aspect is to assess the feasibility and potential for some form of renewable energy on the site. Contact Groundwork's Enworks team for the Chester/Ellesmere Port area on 0151 373 4330.



## More help for Farmers wanting Wind Farms

Last autumn we announced National Wind Power were seeking to help farmers to develop wind farms under their WindWorks banner. United Utilities have joined them, offering free site assessments to Cheshire farmers and landowners, along with guidance and support and taking care of the planning process. For Windworks, write to "Freepost WINDWORKS" (that's the full address), tel Pam McEvoy, 01628 532300, or visit [www.windworks.ltd.uk](http://www.windworks.ltd.uk) For United Utilities' Green Energy tel Hayley Jackson, 0161 886 7881 or email [hayley.jackson@uuplc.co.uk](mailto:hayley.jackson@uuplc.co.uk) In addition, all-renewable suppliers Good Energy and Ecotricity are seeking suppliers: contact them at: [generation@good-energy.co.uk](mailto:generation@good-energy.co.uk) or tel 01249 766097 [gary.freedman@ecotricity.co.uk](mailto:gary.freedman@ecotricity.co.uk) or tel 01453 756111 respectively.

## Diary Dates

Sat 30<sup>th</sup> Oct

**Make a Difference Day:** see article.

Sat 30<sup>th</sup> Oct

**Myths & Magic**, Marbury Country Park. Screams and howls in the haunted woodland. Not suitable for the under 5's, weak hearts or nervous dispositions. Refreshments available. Booking essential: please phone Chris Moseley on 01606 77741

Sun 7<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Coppicing** in Murdishaw Valley, Runcorn, 10am-1pm. Meet at Dukes Wharf. Tel Ian, 01928 701964

Sun 7<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Ince - Fields, Bikes and Dykes:** an off road bike ride along the boundary of Helsby and Ellesmere Port. Mountain bikes only. Booking essential: please phone Tim Lloyd on 0151 357 1991

Tues 9<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Solar Heating** – Introductory, by Construction Resources in London. Charge. [training@ecoconstruct.com](mailto:training@ecoconstruct.com)

9 – 11 Nov

**Restoration Ecology** (non-urban aspects of habitat restoration), for ecologists and other environmental professionals involved in restoration ecology. Royal Clifton Hotel, Southport. Dr Jim Thompson 01962 868 626; [conference@ieem.demon.co.uk](mailto:conference@ieem.demon.co.uk) [www.ieem.org.uk](http://www.ieem.org.uk)

Fri 12<sup>th</sup> Nov

**MIDAS Driver Training**, Bury. Rowena Maslaczky, BTCV, 01772 204651 e-mail: [nw-training@btcv.org.uk](mailto:nw-training@btcv.org.uk)

Fri 12<sup>th</sup> Nov, 5pm

**Hidden Aspects of Liverpool**, Tony Barratt. NDHS, Mid-Cheshire College, £1.50 to non-members.

Fri 12<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Birds of the White Peak**, John Power. Mid-Cheshire Ornithological Soc, Hartford Village Hall, 7.45pm. £2, children £1. Harold Fielding, 01606 882529

Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Nov, 10am

**Parkgate High Tide Birdwatch:** huge flocks of waders and waterfowl are pushed in by the incoming tide. Meet: Old Baths car park, Parkgate. RSPB 0151 336 7681

Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Introduction to Tree Felling with Hand tools**, Manchester. Rowena Maslaczky, BTCV, 01772 204651 e-mail: [nw-training@btcv.org.uk](mailto:nw-training@btcv.org.uk)

Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Mersey Basin Campaign Conference**, with Catherine Day, director general of the environment for the European Commission. Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. Fouzia Bhatti 0161 242 8200 [f.bhatti@merseybasin.org.uk](mailto:f.bhatti@merseybasin.org.uk)

Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Quiz Night** and AGM, Vale Royal Organic and Wildlife Gardeners. (VROWG) Comberbach Memorial Hall, 7.30. Non-members £1.50. tel Liz Picken, 01606 860149

Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Running Environmental Kids' Clubs:** running events, health, safety and welfare, educational games, involving all. Penwortham Environmental Education Centre, Preston. £40. 01772 751110, [mail@penwortham.cix.co.uk](mailto:mail@penwortham.cix.co.uk)

Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Buy Nothing Day** – try being a non-consumer! [www.buynothingday.co.uk](http://www.buynothingday.co.uk)

22nd – 25th Nov

**EWEC 2004 (European Wind Energy Conference)** at Wembley. Charge. [www.ewea.org/06b\\_events/events\\_2004ewec.htm](http://www.ewea.org/06b_events/events_2004ewec.htm)

Wed 24<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Social Housing : Sustainable Refurbishment**, by Construction Resources in London. £140. [www.constructionresources.com/seminars/](http://www.constructionresources.com/seminars/)

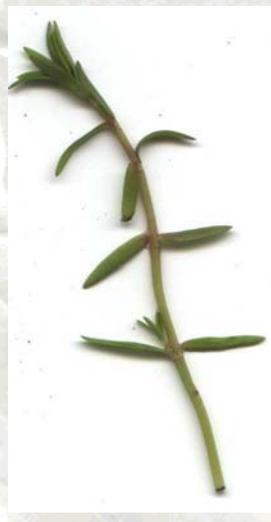
Wed 24 Nov – Sun 5 Dec  
**National Tree Week 2004.** Further details from Cheshire Landscape Trust on 01244 376333

Thurs 25<sup>th</sup> Nov

**Voluntary Sector Forum Network**, Mersey Basin Campaign. Tel 0161 242 8200

Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Dec

Wildlife Watch - **Tree Dressing** at Cuddington Primary School, 10am-noon. Tel Virginia, 01606 42667



Sun 5<sup>th</sup> Dec  
more **coppicing** at Murdishaw: see 7<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Sun 5<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Dec  
**Starting Out with Orchards**, one day course. Norton Priory Walled Garden, 10am – 4pm. Varieties, planting, care, harvest. £5. tel 01244 376333,  
cheshire@landscapetrust.fsnet.co.uk

Mon 6th Dec  
**Introduction to Coppicing**, Cumbria. Rowena Maslaczky, BTCV, 01772 204651 e-mail: nw-training@btcv.org.uk

Fri 10th Dec, 5pm  
**Managing a Large Country Estate** – Viscount Ashbrook, owner of the Arley Estate. NDHS, Mid-Cheshire College, £1.50 to non-members.

Fri 10<sup>th</sup> Dec  
**The Wildlife of Northern France**, Roy Crouchley. Mid-Cheshire Ornithological Soc, Hartford Village Hall, 7.45pm. £2, children £1. Harold Fielding, 01606 882529

Thurs 16th Dec  
**Find Santa** on the Whitegate Way: a torch lit ride on the Whitegate Way to find Santa in his grotto with presents for children. Cost £8.00 per head. Booking essential: Oak Tree Riding Centre on 01606 888543

Sun 19th Dec  
**Ride with Santa** on the Whitegate Way: a pony ride with Santa on the Way with presents for the children. Cost £8.00 per head. Booking essential: Oak Tree Riding Centre on 01606 888543

Sun 19th Dec  
**Christmas Crafts**: make your own (free) decorations helped by the Rangers and Friends of Anderton and Marbury. Bring children, materials provided. 10.00am - 3.30pm by Marbury Rangers cabins. Marbury Rangers 01606 77741.

Fri 14th Jan, 5pm  
**Seventeenth Century Northwich**, including some previously unknown aspects of the salt production process. Tony Bostock. NDHS, Mid-Cheshire College, £1.50 to non-members.

Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Jan  
**Colorado Birds**, Brayton Halt. Mid-Cheshire Ornithological Soc, Hartford Village Hall, 7.45pm. £2, children £1. Harold Fielding, 01606 882529

Sundays 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> Jan, 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> Feb  
**Pruning Fruit Trees for Beginners** at Norton Priory Walled Garden, 10am - 4pm, £5. Tel Cheshire Landscape Trust, 01244 376333 or cheshire@landscapetrust.fsnet.co.uk



Fri 21<sup>st</sup> Jan  
**Running Stately Kitchen Garden**, Simon Tetlow of Tatton Park. VROWG. Comberbach Memorial Hall, 7.30. Non-members £1.50. tel Liz Picken, 01606 860149

Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan  
Wildlife Watch - **Surviving the Cold** and making bird pudding (to feed birds). Sandiway Primary School, 10am-noon. Tel Bev, 01606 882770

25th/26th/27th Jan 2005  
**Envirenergy North West**:  
Day 1: Renewables  
Day 2: Energy Efficiency  
Day 3: Environment/Waste by Washington Dowling Associates + Sponsors. Old Trafford. www.envirenergy.org.uk/index2005.html

31<sup>st</sup> Jan – 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb  
**Delivering Sustainable Communities Summit 2005**: see article.

Tues 8th Feb, 7.30pm  
**Anderton Lift, its decline and restoration**. Chris Thompson. Comberbach Memorial Hall. Friends of Anderton and Marbury, 01606 891242

Fri 11th Feb, 5pm  
**Stockport Hats** and how they were made. Howard Green. NDHS, Mid-Cheshire College, £1.50 to non-members.

Fri 11<sup>th</sup> Feb  
**All about Robins**, David Tideswell. Mid-Cheshire Ornithological Soc, Hartford Village Hall, 7.45pm. £2, children £1. Harold Fielding,

01606 882529  
Sat 12<sup>th</sup> Feb  
Wildlife Watch - **Making Bird Boxes** and wildlife on the net. Winsford High St. School, 10am-noon. Tel 01606 76473

Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Feb  
**Willow Weaving workshops** with Peter Wollam. VROWG. Comberbach Memorial Hall, 7.30. Non-members £1.50. tel Liz Picken, 01606 860149

Fri 11th Mar, 5pm  
**Manchester at War**: images and stories. Christopher Makepeace. NDHS, Mid-Cheshire College, £1.50 to non-members.

Fri 11<sup>th</sup> March  
**Nesting Birds**, John Lintin Smith. Mid-Cheshire Ornithological Soc, Hartford Village Hall, 7.45pm. £2, children £1. Harold Fielding, 01606 882529

Fri 18<sup>th</sup> March  
**Extending the growing season**, Margaret Bird. VROWG. Comberbach Memorial Hall, 7.30. Non-members £1.50. tel Liz Picken, 01606 860149

Sat 19<sup>th</sup> March  
Wildlife Watch - **Signs of Spring** at Marshall's Arm, 10am-noon. Tel Virginia, 01606 42667

**Transport Lectures**: see p2  
*Diary pages decorated with Swamp Stonecrop, Crassula helmsii: an introduced pest, escaping from garden ponds and causing ecological disaster in our waterways. The harmless Starwort is similar, but its floppy stems keep it largely submerged. It's capable of growing from small fragments transported by animals or remaining after clean-ups. Probably best composted in black plastic bags.*

