

WIRRAL EVERGREEN



Issue 18 A Winter 2011

The magazine of Wirral Environmental Network
Promoting Wirral's environment and sustainable living

Let the sun shine on... by Gen Woodland

Buying a new house is not an easy thing, when I was looking with such a narrow view I thought it would be even harder but... the fifth house was perfect. So we moved in on a cold November day and spent two days trying to work the boiler. By early spring I knew what I wanted to do first to the house, **install insulation!** We did the loft ourselves with a guide and a company came from the Energy Saving Trust advice line to install cavity wall insulation. (it's now free in Wirral- call 0800512012)

With the heat loss addressed, we looked to the gardens. The front was just paving slabs so up four slabs came, compost, variety of bulbs, heathers and lavender planted. The back garden was more scary, no worms and flooding! So, a water butt and compost bin and Lena gave me some worms to help the poor garden along. The next year, we realised, with two dogs, we needed a raised bed for our veg. This was built out of old fencing slats that were in the garage and filled with our first compost.

Then came the vestibule at the front of the house. It doubles as the conservatory even though it is only small, our tomatoes love it. Then came the replacement windows for the old metal frames and finally a new boiler. Now we had a house which has small bills, we grow as much of our own food as we can. We recycle. So what next?? **Photovoltaic Panels!**

We contacted Northern Solar, a Liverpool based company who have been installing PV panels for years and have a good reputation. Within a few days, I was talking to the boss about just how perfectly south my roof was with a good orientation (he knows me and my knowledge and was happy to do this. **(Other people should expect a full survey)**). Once I'd had the quote through with the expected FIT tariff, Saving on my electricity bills and export estimate, I couldn't wait.

Within the month of the survey and full discussion about the system (I can fit 10 panels) I had two gentleman down, installing the panels. It took the entire day but when they were finished we had a working system.

We have a 2.45 Kw system and I am pleased to report we have seen our system producing the maximum amount on numerous days. Payback period is about 10years but, as prices go up, the time will come down. The initial added value to the house is £25,000. The neighbours reaction? Wonderful, pleased and met with general approval all round. We're happy to report it is now a local talking point for primary school children in the area as they are learning about PV in school.



Wirral Environmental Network

Working to advance the education of the public about the environment and its protection.

Patrons: Pat Sykes (MBE). Tina Fox, Jonathon Porritt, Charles Secrett, Dr Joanna Sharples.

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Registered Charity no. 1068306 **Co. Ltd. by Guarantee no.** 3462312

We do not inherit the world from our parents. We borrow it from our grandchildren.

New Office & Repaint Opening Hours

W.E.N. OFFICE

MONDAY 9-12, 1-5

TUESDAY 10-5

WEDNESDAY 1-5

THURSDAY CLOSED

FRIDAY 9 -12, 1-5

SATURDAY BY APPOINTMENT

SUNDAY CLOSED

After hours please leave a message on 639 2121 (for next working day)

email info@la21.net
(which may be picked up sooner)

REPAINT

MONDAY 1-5 SUMMER, 1-4 WINTER

TUESDAY CLOSED

WEDNESDAY 1-5 SUMMER, 1-4 WINTER

THURSDAY CLOSED

FRIDAY 1-5 SUMMER, 1-4 WINTER

SATURDAY BY APPOINTMENT

SUNDAY CLOSED

Christmas closing—WEN and RePaint will close on Friday 16th Dec @ 4pm.

WEN re-opens @ 10am on Tuesday 3rd Jan
RePaint re-opens @ 1pm on Wednesday 4th Jan.

Incredible Guerrillas in Hoylake Mist! *By Sally Scott*

Months ago, way back in March, two women with guerrilla gardening aspirations wanted to do something about making locally grown food more readily available, to spread the ideas, expertise and pleasure of 'Grow-your-Own' in the Hoylake community.

The idea of **Incredible-Edible-Hoylake** caught on, in fact Rose and Sally who started it all were amazed and delighted at the enthusiasm of individuals and businesses, and from those early beginnings there is now a group of people who have produced seven sites where herbs, fruit and veg are growing, ready for local people to pick what they need for their own use.

Unused or forgotten patches of land and soil have been renovated. Rubbish and old soil cleared, compost added and some uninviting spaces have been nurtured into sufficient health to grow food.

Other sites are brand new ... like on Manor Road Station, where Mersey Rail provided planters and compost.

Underpinning the whole venture are ideas of good health, sustainability and community. Where possible we use things normally thrown away, like spare plants, or old bricks and wood for growing beds edges. Local café owner, Nick, has joined in the spirit of it all by

collecting waste coffee grounds from his Market Street café, 'Flavours' for Incredible-Edible-Hoylake to use as a slug deterrent!

It's still early days and there's more to do, but people have started to pick what they need of the first crops ... locally grown food to share. ... and now the group has a grant from the Your Wirral Fund to plant Fruit and Nut trees in the Hoylake area ... watch out for some community planting of fruit trees.

Come and join us...
incredibleediblehoylake@gmail.com or
07884041950 and on
[Facebook.com/ Incredible-Edible-Hoylake](https://www.facebook.com/Incredible-Edible-Hoylake)



Summer view of one of the Manor Road Station planters

Trees are Bees 'n' Knees

Following the Launch of the 'Great Tree's Of Wirral' website, training is now available to any-one who wishes to join the Group as a tree surveyor. John Moffat is offering training on how to measure the height and girth of trees to help the website evolve. Anyone wishing to find out more about this rare training opportunity should contact Gen on 079797 54011 or you can contact John directly through the 'Great Trees of Wirral' Website and following the link to Flaybrick

We would like to thank the Caldy Society for inviting the Wirral Tree Wardens to give a talk to some of their members.

We would also like to thank the Rangers service and all the visitors to Royden Park for the warm welcome we have received on both weekends we ran the servery. The Wirral Tree Wardens served an assortment of drinks, home made cakes and biscuits which were sold out before the end. Thank you.

Falkland Road Organic Growers – FROG

What is FROG?

We are a newly formed group of volunteers who are just starting out to build, create and produce to organic fruit and vegetable garden plot on site at the front of W.E.N.'s Sandon Building in Falkland Road, Wallasey. We welcome new volunteers along to FROG.

This is an exciting venture, so if you are keen to grow your own fruit and veg. (maybe you don't have the space at home) please come along and get involved. We need the help with building the raised beds and keeping up the plots. Lots of rewarding work.

Plants on Plates

Our original organic allotment in Illford Avenue, Wallasey still has open work days on Tuesdays for those looking to practice their skills on established allotments.

Anyone interested in joining should arrive at the allotment site at around 10am. Please wear old clothes, boots and bring your own lunch.

AGM notification

Wirral Environmental Network are pleased to announce that the next AGM is on the 3rd Wednesday in January, which is the 18th of January 2012. It will be held in the Stork Hotel, Price Street, Birkenhead **at 7.30 pm** All are welcome.

- 1) Apologies
 - 2) Agree Minutes—to confirm the minutes of the last AGM
 - 3) Annual Report—To receive report for the year 2010-2011
 - 4) Accounts for 2010—2011
 - 5) Election of Trustees
 - 6) Appointment of Auditor/Examiner—to propose that the Trustees are given authority to appoint an auditor/examiner
 - 7) Any other urgent business (not for announcements)
- * Copies of documents will be available at meeting
- 8) Presentation by Kenny Peers
 - 9) Quiz time.



There is no prize for the quiz but it is a fun time for all and there will be food to enjoy at the same time. Please feel free to stay and talk to the Trustees and staff/volunteers.

When the Waters Rise *Wirral Gardener Wins Gold at Tatton*

Ledsham gardener Dori Miller working closely with her architect son Howard, was awarded a coveted RHS Gold award at Tatton, for their “When the Waters Rise” show garden which was sponsored by Oxfam.

Oxfam are helping farmers all over the world to deal with the effects of climate change whether it is drought in Africa or flooding in Bangladesh. To highlight this work, Oxfam approached Dori to design and then create a garden at the prestigious Royal Horticultural Show at Tatton. The gold award for the garden is all the more exceptional as “amateur gardener” Dori only designed her very first show garden for last year’s Tatton Show.

The brief was to create a garden that demonstrated ways communities were trying to find responses to the changing climate. It also emphasised the vital role that women play in producing food from their own land. These ideas included planting crops on “floating gardens” to keep the produce safe from floods and switching to drought-tolerant seeds to protect their yield during the increasing dry seasons. They also used specially designed willow baskets, planted with seeds that can be moved around as floods rise and fall. Where flooding is becoming increasingly common, farmers are now raising ducks which can cope better than chickens with the wet conditions. In the show garden these were depicted by some floating willow “ducks”.



Of course much of the display had to include plants and materials that were local i.e. British, rather than from developing countries. One of the exceptions to this and a big feature of the garden was the Kodu, a huge plant that was grown in Dori’s conservatory and blocked her kitchen back door for a while! The Kodu produces huge pumpkins – which are very popular in Bangladesh, but a bit tricky to grow in the UK.

Produce and plants in the garden had been grown by many friends, neighbours and school children and indeed the garden was put together on site by a band of local volunteers after the groundwork contractors had finished. The garden was also featured on the BBC’s Gardeners World TV programme and both Monty Don and Carol Klein loved it!

Even though it’s encouraging that farmers are finding ways to adapt, climate change remains an extremely important issue that needs inspirational ideas and creative skills like this.

Photos: Courtesy of Oxfam (Manchester)
www.oxfam.org.uk

For more photos of the Garden go to www.flickr.com & search for tatton oxfam



The Blooming of a Flower? *by Sue Pearson*

Well it all started eighteen months ago, I did a three tier course, Planning, Building and then Planting a garden. This was through the Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service (WLFLS) with tutor Carol Seery, a lady who to me is very down to earth and very easy to understand. The people in this group at this time were also very pleasant, although one or two could be over-powering. I was the quiet, self conscious person who used to sit close to the door so I could escape if I needed to. I never spoke or joined in unless I had to, I preferred to do things on my own.

By the end of the course I could build, plant and grow fruit, vegetables and flowers. More importantly I had made and kept new friends, who with me, look after and grow in the garden we built.

Those members including myself from the Traflea garden now help the local community in coming together more. They now actually stop by and show great interest in what we are doing, some have even joined us. Twelve months ago I would never have had

the confidence to talk to people and would have stayed in the background. Not any more!

Being more confident meant I was happy to enrol for a second course with WLFLS, and again with Carol doing another three tier course - The Productive Garden. I now sit furthest away from the door, join in conversations, discussions and even make comments when needed. I am no longer frightened to ask questions if I don't know or understand something, which at one time I wouldn't think of doing. The learning of seasons, vegetable categories, pest and diseases, what to look for and prevent, growing of fruit trees and bushes, taking cuttings will help me tremendously if I ever get and want to start a garden of my own.

I can now enjoy all that I have learnt and put into practice. I don't stay in the background hoping not to be noticed anymore thanks to the people I have met and made friends with. The confidence I have now, the laughter I share, but most of all I SMILE.

New Pedestrians Group for the Wirral

For decades, road conditions for pedestrians have steadily deteriorated. This has had a big impact on the many people on the Wirral who would like to get around on foot, for health or other reasons, or who have no choice due to having no access to a car. They have to put up with antisocial, illegal and dangerous parking (on streets corners, on pavements, and at schools), with traffic speeds that are too high, with illegal cycling on pavements, with poor pavement surfaces, and with many other impediments. Many parents feel that roads are not safe enough for their children to

walk to school, or to their local shops or playground.

A new group of Wirral residents aims to reverse this trend. So far we have formed a committee of eight, and are discussing aims and other details. We would welcome anyone who can contribute a bit of time to join us.

Please contact the Chair, Ian Campbell on 0151 6251449, or via wirralpedestrians@gmail.com.

Caption Competition Winner

We are pleased to announce the winner of the caption competition in our last issue of Wirral Evergreen is:-

Barbara Hardcastle with the caption

"Nearly got a full house here"

Congratulations and thank to Barbara and everyone who entered.

She's won a twelve months free number in our centre support draw.

If you would like to enter our centre support draw, please see page 7 for details and the last two months winners.

Energy Matters

Over the past year or so there have been several important reports and initiatives that highlight how the world, let alone the U.K. could obtain **all** of its energy from renewable sources using technology that is available right now. We would like to highlight several of these :-

"The Energy Report" 100 Per Cent Renewable Energy by 2050

Published in January 2011 by WWF

International says, "By 2050, we could get all the energy we need from renewable sources. This report shows that such a transition is not only possible but also cost-effective, providing energy that is affordable for all and producing it in ways that can be sustained by the global economy and the planet". The report goes on to say that they, "hope this report will inspire governments and business to come to grips with those challenges and, at the same time, to move boldly to bring the renewable economy into reality. There is nothing more important to our ability to create a sustainable future."

American university researchers have also laid out what they call, *"A Plan to Power 100 Percent of the Planet with Renewables"* by as early as 2030. Their more recent work has subsequently covered issues such as the land use required; the generation and transmission costs of such a system versus the current conventional electricity generation and the strategies required for overcoming the challenges of energy mixes such as the wind and sun not necessarily generating at the same time.

Another exciting project is *the "Desertec Foundation"*. Desertec was developed by a network of politicians, scientists and economists from around the Mediterranean. It is working on the idea that "within six hours

deserts receive more energy from the sun than humankind consumes in a year". Again, through using technology that is already proven called concentrated solar-thermal power and a high-voltage grid system this energy could be distributed from a remarkably small area of land. This technology could also be scaled-down and smaller pieces of land used for more local consumption.
www.desertec.org

The Centre for Alternative Technology published *"Zero Carbon Britain 2030"* fairly recently and this report again makes a convincing argument that we can move to a sustainable energy future relatively quickly, particularly using off-shore wind turbines.
www.cat.org.uk

And finally:- Back in May 2010, inspired by the *10:10 Campaign*, the new coalition Government pledged to cut central government carbon emissions by 10% in twelve months. The results were announced recently: a 100,000 tonnes decrease in government CO₂ emissions, a 13.8% reduction. A very good achievement - however the government still has a long way to go before they can claim to be "the greenest government ever", but this announcement is quite impressive. Many said it was impossible for big organisations to cut emissions fast – this proves that it is possible.

Together with this news, we now have the technology for both the UK and the world to move fairly quickly to a greener, more secure energy future. No one says it will be easy, but the evidence is mounting that we do have a realistic, alternative way forward.



.....STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....

W.E.N. is sorry to have to report that this will be the last issue produced with the assistance of Mike Lowe. He has been with us for over 18 months but, for various reasons, is moving to pastures new. We wish him all the best for his future endeavours.

Remember to come back now and then to say hello, Thanks for all your help—Ed

Dates for your diary - forthcoming green events on the Wirral

5th, 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th December 10am – 4pm

Christmas Fairs at Ness

Horsfall Rushby Visitor Centre

jenlemon@liverpool.ac.uk

second Saturday of the month 9am – 1pm

Wirral Farmers' Market

New Ferry Village Hall, Grove St, New Ferry

www.wirralfarmersmarket.co.uk

Swap Day, Grosvenor Ballroom, Liscard.

Saturday 28 January, 10.00-1.00

More details available on our website in new year. www.la21.net or ring 639.2121

Swap Day, here, Falkland Road, Seacombe..

NO LARGE ITEMS / VAN SERVICE

Saturday 25 February, 10.00-1.00

More details available on our website in new year. www.la21.net or ring 639.2121

Swap Day, Eastham URC, Saturday 23rd

June PROBABLY 10.00-1.00

More details available on our website nearer the time www.la21.net

...and it's always worthwhile watching our website!

Supporters Draw – July & August Winners

July

1st Wilf Hastings

2nd Gen Woodland

3rd Tina Fox

August

1st Tina Fox

2nd Anne Cuffe

3rd Anne Bufton

If you would like to enter our monthly, supporters draw, which is a great way of supporting W.E.N. please contact Les Bufton on les.bufton@btinternet.com

New Sustainable Living Project by Kenny Peers

I will be working on our new Lottery funded sustainability project which is aimed at raising awareness of the problems our society faces in the 21st Century.

The project will outline the problems of a single planet trying to satisfy the demands of an ever growing population—in 1900 Earth's population was 1.2 billion in 2020 it will reach 7 billion. Our present consumer lifestyle is unsustainable, founded on the use of irreplaceable fossil fuels to provide energy and using resources such as trees and water faster than the Earth can replace them.

As a pilot project, I will work with community groups and some schools to develop the concept of Environmental Community Development, an amalgamation of community work principles, and environmental issues. At the end of the project, I hope I will have created a toolkit that can be used by any community group/ organisation/ school to explore their own environmental concerns and develop their own actions plans.

There is already a great deal of useful work going on in Wirral, everything from new allotment projects, Transition Towns, Eco-Schools and Churches, Incredible-Edibles and I hope this project will provide a foundation of knowledge and understanding into why this work is so important and why we need to get people involved.

The project will be launched in mid October with invitations to community groups, schools, Councillors, etc with a 45 minute presentation and a Q and A session to follow.

For more info contact Kenny@la21.net



Wirral Evergreen - advertising rates 2011

	BLACK & WHITE	COLOUR – FRONT PAGE	COLOUR – BACK PAGE
Full page	£50	NOT AVAILABLE	£100
Half-page	£25	£75	£50
Quarter-page	£15	£35	£25

Wirral Evergreen has been reaching people across Wirral for many years and is the primary newsletter for the environmental voice in the Wirral. To save trees our print run is only about 160 per issue and those are distributed through members without email, libraries, events, etc. We load it live on the W.E.N. website www.la21.net so that it can be read across the planet.

We are pleased to announce that even though we are in a difficult financial climate, the editorial team have decided not to increase the advertising rates this year - and W.E.N. members can deduct 20% from the above prices! What you see is what you pay – we are not VAT registered. We will accept copy on paper to the office address but it is much easier if you can send it directly to the editors via email to mike@la21.net

Please remember that *Wirral Evergreen* is funded completely from members' subscriptions, donations and adverts. The editors would like to thank all the members for their support, as a percentage of membership income also goes to help pay for rent, office supplies, etc.

CUT HERE.....

Would you like to join Wirral Environmental Network?

(Members receive 20% off stall fees at our events
and 20% off advertising in *Wirral Evergreen*)

£8 waged £6 unwaged £12 whole household
£80 individual life membership
£10 voluntary group £20 commercial organisation

Signature.....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Postcode..... Telephone

Email

**Please cut off this slip along the dotted line and send with your cheque to:-
Les Bufton, 34 Ford Road, Upton, Wirral. CH49 0TF**

Wirral Environmental Network publish this newsletter as a community information tool. Please note that the views expressed may not be those of Wirral Environmental Network, its trustees, staff or volunteers.