



Working together for a greener, warmer city

Climate Change Festival special issue

Birmingham's first Climate Change Festival held in early June showed the real momentum that is gathering in Birmingham to take action on climate change. This issue has all the highlights of the week-long event.

Other news in this issue includes the launch of the Northfield Energy Efficiency Partnership and also the Northfield Eco-Centre.

Birmingham is set to benefit from a project set up by Bill Clinton to tackle climate change—see page 9.

Plus we have news of three Birmingham community projects in line for a major award for their work on climate change.

Page 12 features news of funding for renewable energy projects.

If you have something you would like to see featured in this newsletter, please contact us.

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Inside

Sisters on the Planet

Events diary

Faith and climate change in Birmingham

News from Northfield

Old home, superhome?

Home grown energy



Contact us

Birmingham Sustainable Energy Partnership, Groundwork West Midlands, 5 Scotland Street, Birmingham, B1 2RR, Tel 0121 237 5895

E-mail phil.beardmore@groundwork.org.uk

Web www.birminghamenergy.org.uk

- local action on climate change and affordable warmth -

Birmingham Cutting CO2 targets announced at Festival

Birmingham's ambitious targets for tackling the city's carbon dioxide emissions were launched at the Climate Change Festival on 5 June.

Dame Ellen MacArthur joined Cllr Paul Tilsley, chair, Be Birmingham and deputy leader, Birmingham City Council and Rod Ackril, president, Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry and chair, Chase Midlands for the launch. Dame Ellen challenged everyone in Birmingham to cut their CO2 emissions by 100kg this year. (see www.youtube.com/bebirmingham)

The launch was followed by the Birmingham Hothouse Debate at the ICC, which brought together Birmingham's professionals, designers and civic leaders to debate how we create a sustainable city. The Hothouse also saw the publication of *Cutting CO2 for a Smarter Birmingham: Strategic Framework* which is a strategy to achieve the targets. This has been published by Be Birmingham (the Local Strategic Partnership for Birmingham) and Birmingham City Council.

Birmingham's Local Area Agreement, which is an agreement between Birmingham and government on how services will be delivered locally, includes an indicator on per capita CO2 emissions for the first time. This will help to launch more action on climate change. An action plan is being developed to meet this target. The Local Area Agreement also includes an indicator on fuel poverty.

Some other highlights of the Festival:

- Birmingham schools joined in CABE's Green Day - a fun way to bring alive the connections between climate change and the built environment.
- Green Roofs tours of some Birmingham buildings with living roofs - the ICC, BVSC, Fort Dunlop and the University of Birmingham.
- Street theatre featuring Eco Girl, the Waste Warriors, Land Phil the human rubbish tip.
- EAGA, the UK's largest residential energy efficiency provider, held a forum entitled *Making Homes More Energy Efficient* to show what homeowners can do to reduce their CO2 emissions.
- Dr Bike - free safety checks by a professional cycle mechanic.

Plus many others too numerous to list! See www.climatechange festival.org.uk

Sisters on the Planet film launched during Climate Change Festival

The Custard Factory's cinema in Digbeth was packed for the launch during the Climate Change Festival of Oxfam's new film on climate change, *Sisters on the Planet*.



Sisters on the Planet is about the impact of climate change across the world, with a focus on developing countries, and particularly on women. This film is the story of four incredible women – Sahena (photo, bottom left), Melissa (photo, above), Muriel and Martina – and the remarkable things they are doing about climate change in four very different parts of the globe – Uganda, Bangladesh, the UK and Brazil.

We urge you to watch this film and get others to see it by organising a showing – at work, at school, or in a community group or place of worship. It is a truly inspiring story of the link between climate change and social justice and some of the things that people are doing about it.

Please visit www.oxfam.org.uk for more information.

The evening also saw the launch of *From the Bottom Up*, a Birmingham made film telling the inspiring stories of people in our own community who are joining people around the world in the fight against climate change.



How can Birmingham cope if oil prices stay permanently high?

What can we do as communities to combat climate change?

The evening will include a screening of the thought-provoking documentary: *The End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream*

Time—7-9pm

Date: Thursday 26 June 2008

Venue: Birmingham and Midland Institute, Margaret Street, B3 3BS

FREE (donations toward costs gratefully received)

Birmingham groups close in on £1m prize to save the planet

Three Birmingham projects have made it on to the 100-strong nationwide shortlist competing for a slice of the million pound Big Green Challenge prize fund, by coming up with innovative ways of tackling climate change in their communities.

They are: East Birmingham Community Energy Company; Balsall Heath Is Our Planet; and Faith, Climate Change and Birmingham. The Big Green Challenge is organised by NESTA, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. The three Birmingham groups were selected from among hundreds of initial entries. They are submitting detailed proposals to NESTA during June and are hoping to make the cut when the top 100 groups are whittled down to 10 finalists in July, each of whom will receive up to £20,000, plus advice and support to get their green projects up and running over a year. The groups with the most imaginative and successful approach to cutting carbon emissions at the end of the competition will win a share of the £1m prize up for grabs.

Climate Change computer game launched online and on CD-ROM

LogiCity, an interactive climate change computer game, is now available to play online by anyone with a reasonably fast Internet connection, or from a CD-ROM. This game provides an entertaining introduction to Climate Change, as players explore a 3D virtual city trying to reduce their carbon emissions and discovering some of the possible effects of climate change should emissions remain unchecked.

The game includes five main activities (set in a house, a low-energy workplace, an energy-wasteful workplace, a car showroom – with cycle rack, bus stop and railway station nearby – and a travel agents) where players are set the task of reducing the carbon footprint of an average resident. As players work their way through the game they will pick up information about climate change, and some of the main ways in which people contribute to emissions of the main greenhouse gas (CO₂). At the end of the game they are fast-forwarded to 2066 to see whether they have done enough to save LogiCity from the worst effects of Climate Change.

The game can be accessed at: www.logicity.co.uk/game

Events Diary

If you're organising an energy-related event and would like it including in this newsletter, please contact us. Information is believed to be correct at time of publishing.



Event	Date	Contact
NEA Fuel Poverty Forum, Sandwell	17 June 2008, am	Saran Jarvie, NEA, 024 7655 9191 saran.jarvie@nea.org.uk
Environmental Management Events for businesses in Birmingham	recurring	Georgina Smith, Groundwork Environmental Business Services, georgina.smith@groundwork.org.uk
Green Faith Day, Brierley Hill Methodist Church, all welcome	14 June 2008, 10am–3pm	Pat Nimmo, revpat@mac.com Barry Gilbert, barry_gilbert@talk21.com
Faith and Environment Circles, Birmingham	recurring	Rianne C ten Veen, Midlands Islamic Network for the Environment, riannetv@blueyonder.co.uk
Family Cycle Day, Sutton Park	15 June 2008, 10am–4pm	0121 464 6032
Transition City Birmingham presents film showing <i>The End of Suburbia</i> , BMI, central Birmingham	26 June 2008, 7pm	transitioncitybirmingham@riseup.net 07838 135924 07980 272940
NEA Annual Conference, University of Birmingham	15-17 September 2008	Gaynor Western, NEA, gaynor.western@nea.org.uk 0191 261 5677

Faith and climate change in Birmingham

The Birmingham Friends of the Earth (BFoE) Multifaith Project teamed up with Islamic Relief and the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES) to hold a networking event centred around the theme 'Love God, Love Creation'.

On 5th February 2008 organisations such as CSV Environment, Ulfah Arts, Interpal, Muslim Scout groups, St Pauls Trust, Unity FM and Birmingham Sustainable Energy Partnership attended The Zawiya (also known as 'Amina Trust') in Small Heath to meet and share experiences with those interested and committed to working towards a sustainable future. This event was part of a series of events in the week of 4-10 February 2008 to mark 'Love God, Love Creation' which was inspired by Stop Climate Chaos (SCC), a national umbrella organisation with members of diverse interests.

Rianne ten Veen, representing Midlands Islamic Network for the Environment (MINE) and one of the main organisers of the event, described it as a 'discussion evening on our duty of care for the environment, and a means to show our love for God and His Creation'. It included information about what Islamic Relief, IFEES and other organisations are doing to help the environment.

Maud Grainger, Multifaith Project Co-ordinator, spoke at the event of the importance of different faiths and communities working together on environmental issues. One of Birmingham Friends of the Earth's key campaigns is on 'Faith and Climate Change' and community groups are actively encouraged and supported to undertake environmental projects from tree planting to managing allotments right through to formal presentations and training. Maud undertook to provide support and encouragement for local initiatives in whatever way she could.

Various speakers from different groups and organisations highlighted the work being done to protect the environment on a local, national and international level. This work is often inspired by personal conviction and a deep rooted belief that faith in God must be demonstrated by practical action for the benefit of all creation.

By Shahien Khan

(thank you to Birmingham Friends of the Earth for this article).

Selly Park teenager named as regional champion by PM

A Birmingham teenager is among nine young people named as winners of a competition organised by the government to find regional climate change champions. Fourteen year old Ziana Kotadia successfully demonstrated to the judges how she would encourage behavioural change and tackle climate change in the local community.

Ziana said on her blog: "I entered the competition to become a Climate Change Champion because I am really interested in the environment and I thought this might be one way to make a real difference. I have many goals which I hope to achieve while in post, but my main aim will be about raising awareness about climate change. You may have recycling facilities near to your home but if you don't know the value of recycling, you won't use them, which is why the awareness-raising part of this is so important. I really hope to promote the green cause."

One of Ziana's first duties has been to address the launch of the Birmingham Strategic Framework on Climate Change at the Birmingham Climate Change Festival (see page 2). She also addressed delegates to the United Nations Association conference on climate change.

Gordon Brown said:

"Across the world in every continent and for years to come, we will all need to examine our own lives, make changes and reduce our carbon footprints.

"Our young people have a crucial role in bringing about this change. These young ambassadors are the decision-makers of the decades ahead, and I feel greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm and passion of these young people. "

Joan Ruddock, Minister for Climate Change, said:

"Climate change needs to be tackled on every level and by everyone - governments, businesses and just as important by the commitment and action of all of us as individuals, right across the country."

"This individual action is a powerful force to be reckoned with and looking at England's new Climate Change Champions, I can certainly see why. These committed young people have a true desire to make a difference and I have no doubt they will each make a real and positive contribution to our fight against dangerous climate change."

Birmingham to benefit from Clinton initiative on climate change

Birmingham City Council has joined forces with IT Company Cisco Systems, Inc and former US President Bill Clinton in a project to develop environmentally friendly homes and communities. Birmingham is one of only seven cities worldwide to benefit from a slice of a \$15 million package to tackle climate change.

The Connected Urban Development programme (CUD) will give Birmingham free access to Cisco developers who will help the city design smart, eco-friendly buildings. CUD is part of the Clinton Initiative, set up by the former US President to bring together world leaders, not-for-profit organisations and businesses to solve climate change and other global problems. Birmingham will test the technology in new housing developments with the longer-term intention of using it across the city.

Mike Whitby, leader of Birmingham City Council, said: "This is an exciting world exclusive, firmly putting the city of Birmingham at centre stage globally in terms of finding new, innovative and very practical approaches to climate change."

Friends of the Earth spokesperson Chris Crean told the Birmingham Mail: "Birmingham has set itself some very tough targets in its climate change action plan, and this is evidence that they have the ambition to try to achieve them."

Birmingham Climate Change Network launch

Over 40 people from more than 25 different organisations attended the recent launch event of the Birmingham Climate Change Network.

The purpose of the event was for people who are running community or neighbourhood projects on climate change to get talking to each other to share ideas, information and good practice.

The meeting decided that the network will be informal, virtual and fun, with face-to-face meetings two or three times a year, study visits and a 'market place' approach where people can broker ideas and expertise.

If you are involved in work on climate change at a community or neighbourhood level in Birmingham and would like to know more, please contact us.

Managing Business Impact on Climate Change

As part of the Birmingham City Council Climate Change Festival, Groundwork West Midlands EBS held a breakfast seminar entitled 'Managing Business Impact on Climate Change'. Thirty five delegates from a businesses and public sector organisations attended to learn about practical actions they could take to start controlling and reducing their climate change impact.

The morning started with Phil Beardmore, Climate Change Development Manager of Groundwork West Midlands, providing the background knowledge into climate change. Phil illustrated a risk assessment method to ascertain whether businesses should take action or not to reduce their climate change impact against possible scenarios of the climate change theory being true or false. Using this approach it was clear that the option with lowest risk was for businesses to take action. This led to the next presentation by Assistant Lead EBS Advisor Louise Harvey on how to use Environmental Management Systems (EMS) to ascertain the main business environmental impacts and choose appropriate objectives, targets and action plans to improve these. Louise explained that whilst direct energy use would be an evident area for an organisation to reduce their climate change impact, often an organisation's indirect energy use through other activities such as raw materials, transport, waste production, packaging and water usage contributed more to climate change than direct energy use; an EMS would help identify all of these contributing factors.

The final two guest speakers provided practical case studies of how their businesses had successfully engaged in environmental management. David Hall from Supporta Terraquest spoke about their ISO 14001 certification). Supporta Terraquest's initial motivation for implementing ISO 14001 was to increase business competitiveness in contracts tendering. Through the initial review process they found that their major environmental impacts were energy, paper and transport, and through action programmes Supporta Terraquest managed to reduce paper usage by 50% and energy usage per person. Overall Supporta Terraquest found that although initially sceptical of the benefits that could be achieved from an office-based company, they were surprised at the savings that could be achieved from simple action programmes and actions.

Mark Clemson, co-proprietor of New World Solar Installations, a renewable energy installation company, explained how his decision to implement a certified EMS contributed to New World Solar's values and business model by enabling them to benchmark company environmental achievements through Key Performance Indicators.

News from Northfield

Northfield Energy Efficiency Partnership is a joint working partnership between Birmingham City Council and Warm Zone Ltd, funded by DEFRA and local energy supplier npower.

The scheme is looking to provide energy efficiency measures and advice with regard to fuel bills, energy efficiency etc - warmer and cosier homes throughout the Northfield Ward.

We launched the Northfield Energy Efficiency Partnership on the 4th of March 2008 - with Cllr J Lines, Cllr K Bardford giving their approval to the scheme.

There was the NEEP team available to explain the scheme, explain how the survey was obtained, the database and the measures available to the residents.

The monthly Prize Draw was also done allowing £50 pounds of local shopping vouchers being given to the winning residents who have completed the NEEP survey in their own home

warmer

Please feel free to contact the NEEP team on 0121 569 5810 to answer any questions with regard the scheme or - Northfield - warmer and cosier homes.



Northfield Eco Centre

Meanwhile in Northfield, Central England Quakers plan to open the Northfield Eco Centre in the summer of 2008. Its aim is to provide a place where residents in the local and wider Birmingham area can find information and practical encouragement to make their homes and lifestyles more sustainable. This will impact on both global warming and on global capacity to sustain life on earth.

For more information visit

<http://www.northfieldecocentre.org/>

Funding news

Community Sustainable Energy Programme

CSEP is an open grants programme that is part of the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces Programme.

The Community Sustainable Energy Programme will provide £8 million to community-based organisations for the installation of microgeneration



Wind turbine at Primrose Hill Community School,
Kings Norton *photo: Rob Hewitt*

technologies, such as solar panels or wind turbines and energy efficiency measures including loft and cavity wall insulation. It will also provide £1 million for project development grants that will help community organisations establish a microgeneration and energy efficiency installation will work for them.

See www.communitysustainable.org.uk/

There are other funds available through Changing Spaces, for example the Community Spaces programme, which is run by Groundwork UK. It funds community groups who want to improve local green spaces such as play areas, community gardens, parks, wildlife areas and village greens. For more information visit www.community-spaces.org.uk.

Please see www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_changing_spaces for details of the other streams of Changing Spaces.

Community Groups, public and non-profit groups can also apply to the Low Carbon Buildings Programme Phase 2. Please see www.lowcarbonbuildingsphase2.org.uk/

If you are a voluntary or community organisation in Birmingham that's looking to develop a sustainable energy or climate change project, please contact us and we'll do what we can to help.

Old Home, Super Home ?

Interested people were invited to visit one terraced house in Alder Road, Balsall Heath, that has reduced its carbon emissions by 75%. The visit during climate change week was part of the Sustainable Energy Academy's 'Old Home, Super Home' scheme' to spread best practice among home owners. John Newson was inspired to be the first open house in Birmingham.

John first insulated the external walls and the loft, and installed timber-frame double-glazing to reduce heat loss. "I realised that the house was a solar collector. By insulating it, I now hold onto the day's sun through the evening, so reducing my 'heating year'", says John. He was able to install a modest-capacity, condensing combi boiler, with new radiators and thermostatic valves. Together, the improvements showed a 70% reduction in gas consumption. By switching from regular electricity to 100% renewable supply from Good Energy the house now emits 75% less carbon from heating and power . "Green electricity is a bit more expensive", says John, 'but I have reduced consumption with a small A-rated fridge and low energy bulbs throughout."

The energy saving measures were part of a renewal of this house, built in 1884, for the 21st century, and John believes they have added a lot to the value of the house and are a good investment. The lower fuel bills are a bonus (which will increase in value as fuel prices rise). The house was also strengthened - just as well as it was in the centre of the tornado of 2005. This alerted John to the need to talk to everyone about the urgent need to take responsibility for our emissions of greenhouse gases while there is still time.

John learned a lot from the visitors' questions and suggestions about what he could do next to save energy. He has encouraged them to make changes to their homes, and to consider their own opening day, so we can all learn from people taking action at home.

The Old Home, Super Home scheme is organised by the Sustainable Energy Academy, who are looking for more green householders to join up, learning from and encouraging each other.. see <http://www.sustainable-energyacademy.org.uk/>

Please note that signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of Birmingham Sustainable Energy Partnership or any of its supporting members.

BSEP is supported by:



Campaigning for Warm Homes

