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I. Cambridge Carbon Footprint News and Upcoming Events

- **A Carbon Conversations Course taster session**

Heard about the wonderful Carbon Conversations Course, but no idea what it is? Eager to learn more before you enrol? CCF will be offering a taster session for the Carbon Conversations Course at the Coleridge School **21st March, 10am-1pm**. Contact Karin (karin@cambridgecarbonfootprint), or the Parkside Federation for more information. <http://www.parksidefederation.org.uk/adult-learn-train/saturday-courses/how-live-climate-friendly-life-taster/>

- **Carbon Conversations – a training workshop**

Tuesday 17th March, 7:30-9pm
Friends Meeting House, Jesus Lane, Cambridge

A workshop on talking about climate change at stalls, talks, and workshops, at work and home, with family, friends, and neighbours. Ro Randall will explore how to get people talking, draw out their concerns and connect with the issue; make carbon reduction feel relevant, achievable and enjoyable; understand and deal with objections, doubts, and difficult questions. Please contact Karin to book: karin@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org.

- **Enjoy a Seasonal Meal!**

Sunday 22nd March, 6.30-9.30pm
Ross Street Community Centre, Cambridge

We're looking forward to seeing you at this end-of-winter party, a chance to celebrate together and enjoy one another's seasonal, local and organic dishes.

Bring food and drink to share, along with musical instruments, dancing feet, stories and anything else to you'd like to add to the evening.

Stuck for ideas? Need a recipe? Contact either Mary Geddes 01223 563127, m.geddes40@ntlworld.com, or Karin and Ro in the CCF office. If you are able, it would also be helpful to let Mary know what type of food you will be bringing.

- **Talk and workshop by George Marshall:**

Cambridge Carbon Footprint has invited George Marshall of the Climate Outreach Information Network to Cambridge for two events that should be of interest to anyone interested in action on climate change.

'Confronting Cynicism: positive thinking for difficult times.' George will be speaking at our AGM on Wednesday March 25th 7.30 at the Michaelhouse, Trinity St. Tickets are £5.

'Communicating Climate Change: a workshop on what works and what doesn't'. George will be running this workshop Thursday, March 26th 1-4pm at the Judge Business School. Places are limited so please book soon: £12 for individuals, \$24 for charities & local authorities, £49 for businesses.

George is one of the leaders in the field of how to get public engagement on climate change and energy reduction and is an extremely effective and entertaining speaker and workshop leader. Please email karin@cambridgecarbonfootprint to book one or both of these events.

- **Blocks, Resistances and creative solutions – a training workshop**

Wednesday 1st April, 7:30-9pm
Centre at St. Paul's, Hills Road, Cambridge

A workshop on how to think creatively about climate change and carbon reduction. Led by Anne Miller, the author of 'How to Get Your Ideas Adopted (and change the world)' and is on the board of Stop Climate Chaos. Email Karin to book.

- **Grow Your Own Session III**

Tuesday, 7th April 7:30-9:30pm,
Ross Street Community Centre, Cambridge

Now that the growing season is in full swing, here's another seasonal look at what there is to do in the kitchen garden or allotment in April and May. A chance to improve your growing skills as we approach one of the busiest times in the gardening calendar. For the first half, local gardener Keith Jordan will give guidance on seasonal weeds, pests, and what plants, including the more tender crops (sweetcorn, courgettes, squashes, etc.), can be sown in April and May. In the second half there will be time for discussions with other gardeners and a chance to ask specific gardening problems you may have. Contact Karin to book: karin@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org

II. Local News and Events

- **Age of Stupid**

The **Cambridge Vue** is among 64 cinemas nationwide showing the World Premiere of “The Age of Stupid”, a dramatic film about climate change, at 5:30pm on **Sunday March 15th**.

Ro Randall (CCF director) and **Tony Juniper** (ex-FoE director, prospective Cambridge Green Party MP) are talking at the cinema after the showing on the spectrum of ways we can help avert the climate disaster shown in the film. Do come to see a powerful film and join CCF supporters in conversations on how to beat climate change.

www.ageofstupid.net/premiere. Tickets from the cinema or www.myvue.com/Cambridge/. This will also kick off the “Not Stupid” campaign.

- **Earth Hour – Switch off your lights on 28 March, 8:30pm**

For the first time in history, people of all ages, nationalities, race and background have the opportunity to use their light switch as their vote – Switching off your lights is a vote for Earth, or leaving them on is a vote for global warming. WWF are urging the world to VOTE EARTH and reach the target of 1 billion votes, which will be presented to world leaders at the Global Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen 2009. Events will be taking place in and around Cambridge on the 28th to encourage Earth Hour. For more information, visit www.earthhour.org.

III. Politics and Campaigning *By Tom Bragg*

While Obama’s budget announced about \$100 billion of environmental spending, our government is being very slippery on climate change:

This month WDM showed how carbon emissions savings elsewhere are being claimed as ours: www.wdm.org.uk/news/governmenthidescarbonemissions03022009.htm

Other “savings” result from China doing our manufacturing, with a third of their emissions now from producing goods for export:

www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/feb/23/china-carbon-emissions

Also the UK is dismally failing to meet its climate-aid pledges:

www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/feb/20/climate-funds-developing-nations

Please help hold our government to account in your own way. Stop Climate Chaos, the national coalition we are part of, lists several: <http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/action>

IV. Ask Andy: clothes drying and condensation *By Andy Brown*

Q: When I dry my clothes in the house, I get terrible condensation on the windows. People also suggest that if you have to open a window to ventilate the damp air from clothes drying it will use more energy than the tumbler dryer.

A: Drying clothes inside should not be a problem, but it will help to think about how your house works.

You will get condensation on your windows if:

1. The windows are not double glazed and the walls are not insulated.
When walls and windows are insulated, there is more chance for the moisture to disperse before it condenses on the surfaces
2. There is a lot of moisture in the house.
Wet washing is just one source of moisture. Breathing may cause more, and showers and cooking have a significant effect.
3. There are places in the house with insufficient ventilation.
When you draft strip your house, you must make sure there is controllable ventilation, especially in bathrooms and kitchens. You should be able to open windows for short periods to clear the air and bathrooms should have humidity controlled extract fans.
4. There is not enough ventilation.
This is unlikely! Even the best built houses have more background ventilation than we need. But if you have done a really good job with the draft sealing you might need a little extra ventilation where the clothes are drying.

In energy terms, drying your clothes in the house is more efficient than even an A rated tumbler dryer. In carbon terms, per kilowatt-hour, most home heating causes less CO₂ than an electric tumbler dryer.

If you can't dry your clothes outside, the best place indoors would be upstairs, on the down wind side of the house (probably the north-east) and in an unheated space.

V. Gardening Guidance *By Keith Jordan*

MARCH – THE GROWING SEASON BEGINS IN EARNEST!

A pleasant sunny March day spurs many gardeners into frantic action after seemingly months of dormancy. However, March weather is usually very fickle - mild one day, sudden heavy hail storms or snowing the next - so accept the diverse, unpredictable nature of our Cambridge climate and be prepared to hold off sowing and planting outside until soil and weather conditions improve. It's best to sow and plant 'a little and often' for three reasons.

1. prolonged cold, wet spring weather can mean seedlings die and even the experienced gardeners have to re-sow
2. to extend the cropping season as much as possible - take a risk and sow some vegetables early (e.g. lettuce, rocket, carrots, cabbages, etc), then keep sowing a few more every two weeks throughout the season to produce a continuity of crops.
3. Unlike bulk crops like onions and potatoes (that can be stored), most other vegetables and fruit are needed in the kitchen in relatively small amounts, and continuously throughout the year. In general, don't sow the whole packet all in one go, and try experimenting and taking risks – that's the fun of gardening.

Many varieties have been bred specifically for early, main or late crops – check the seed packets. Earlier crops can be covered with sheets of horticultural fleece or 'environmental mesh' to provide a microclimate, to protect against some pests, and to retain moisture during spring droughts. It can often be left on the whole life of the plant. By using a combination of different varieties, successional sowing times and protection like fleece, you can then increase your cropping period both earlier and later in the year.

VI. Martin's Memo: Magnetic Attraction *By Martin Roach*

I saw an elegant secondary glazing system (thanks to Penny) held in place by magnetic strips around the frame. It is very effective in cutting down draughts and heat loss and can be fitted almost flush to the window so you hardly know it is in place.

Each pane is made to measure from Perspex held in a narrow white plastic frame and backed with magnetic strips. The magnetic strips are attached to similar strips installed around the original window frame. In summer, one pane can be lifted off, flipped over and stored over its neighbour, the magnetic strips again holding it in place.

A typical sash window (1.6 x1.3 meters) costs £170-200 with a 25% discount for DIY installation. They are also suitable for casement windows.

For more details see: <http://www.magneglaze.co.uk>, or contact :

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Loft Insulation

You may have seen the fantastic offer (unfortunately now closed) of loft insulation at B&Q and Focus in the week ending 12th February. One meter wide rolls cost just £1 each compared with the normal £15-30. If you did not manage to take advantage then keep watching the newsletter and we will try to alert readers next time.

For more information about Cambridge Carbon Footprint, please visit www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org