



Cambridge Carbon Footprint

May Newsletter 2009

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I. CCF NEWS & EVENTS

Carbon Conversations Group - last chance!

Final chance to join a Carbon Conversations group before next autumn. There are a couple of spaces left in Ro and Mark's group starting on Thursday, May 14th and meeting May 28th, June 11th, June 25th, and July 2nd. The group will meet from 7.30-9.30pm in St. Luke's on Victoria Rd.

If you've missed this round and want to make sure to catch the next series of groups starting in September, please send Karin an email and she will make sure you receive the information on the groups as soon as it's available:

Karin@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org.

Sing Your Heart Out For the Climate - Thursday May 7th

Bev Sedley and Hilary Taylor will lead us in an evening of joyous and celebratory singing with songs from around the world with a climate change theme. You don't have to be an expert to join in! Thursday May 7th, 7:30-9:30pm, Ross Street Community Centre. Help us plan for numbers by emailing karin@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org.

Renovating for the future - Wednesday May 13th

Spread the word among your builder-friends!

CCF and the Centre for Sustainable Development at Cambridge Regional College are offering a free seminar for builders from 5:30-7:30pm at the SmartLIFE Centre, Cambridge Regional College. Builders will learn about the size and demands of the growing market, how to reduce the energy demand of existing buildings, and how to sell these improvements to clients. For more information, visit our website: <http://cambridgecarbonfootprint.org/blog/renovating-for-the-future>.

Tour of Donarbon Waste Facility - Thurs June 25th

Getting rid of waste accounts for about 3% of your CO₂, and we have a rare opportunity to learn about this firsthand at Donarbon. As a part of environment week, Cambridge Sustainable City and the Donarbon Waste Facility are offering a tour to CCF members beginning 10am on June 25th. It should prove very enlightening. Places are very limited, so please email Karin to book. If you are able to drive and can offer a lift to four others, please let us know as well.

Join in the summer events (and learn to calculate footprints)!

Enjoy the sun while helping people to reduce their carbon footprints. CCF will have stalls at the following events:

- Environment Festival on June 13th
- Environment Festival Installer's Event: June 23rd
- Big Day Out on Parker's Piece July 11th

We need lots of volunteers to help, and hope that you will be able to join in the fun! Please contact Karin if you can help out in any way: karin@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org.

Tuesday, May 26th Rosemary Randall will be training new volunteers on how to use the footprint calculator to engage people in conversation about climate change and carbon reduction. All are welcome-whether you want to volunteer on stalls or just

learn how to footprint your friends and family. There will be a daytime training at 2pm and an evening session at 7:30pm, both at the CAR office on Gwydir Street.

II. LOCAL NEWS & EVENTS

Renewable energy survey

Cambridgeshire Horizons, a partnership comprising the county's local authorities and tasked with delivering sustainable new communities, is inviting local residents to give their opinions on the use of renewable energy. The survey was launched on Friday 6 March 2009 and will run for three months. As well as asking for public opinion, the Cambridgeshire energy survey website provides information about renewable energy options and demonstrates how they can be installed - please visit www.cambridgeshireenergysurvey.co.uk

Inauguration of Sustainable Shelford: May 13th at 7:30pm

Interested in village-size projects for sustainability? Live in Shelford, or have friends who do? Come to the launch party of Sustainable Shelford to share ideas and energy, Wednesday 13 May at 7:30pm in the Memorial Hall Committee Room in Great Shelford. For more information, contact Helen Harwood: Helen_harwood_uk@yahoo.co.uk.

III. POLITICS & CAMPAIGNING: Tom Bragg

Good news this month: our government has accepted a binding target of 34% cuts in UK emissions by 2020. This target may not be tough enough, but it's a big step, particularly with the aim of not buying credits from projects which have reduced emissions abroad. 34% cuts in average UK personal emissions is a challenge for each of us and for CCF.

Also a qualified cheer for requiring carbon capture and storage for new coal-fired power stations, as opposed to just providing space where this could happen, but the devil's in the detail and technological viability. Here's an overview from Stop Climate Chaos:

www.stopclimatechaos.org/09/apr/reaction-decc-coal-announcement

But £2000 for replacing your car is for industry, not the environment:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/georgemonbiot/2009/apr/22/budget-travel-and-transport>

IV. ASK ANDY: Preparing for summer by *Andy Brown*

Q. Now I have turned off the heating, what do I have to think about?

Of course, you should get out and enjoy the good weather, but there are a few things to think about over the summer.

- 1) If you have a wood burner, now is the time to think about next winter's wood. Get it delivered now so it can season and dry before you use it. You should also get the chimney swept, so lookout for summer discounts!
- 2) If you have a gas or oil boiler, you should get it serviced before the autumn (for both safety and efficiency). Think about any upgrades (like replacing failed thermostatic valves) that you can have done at the same time. It's also a good time to insulate pipes, while they are cool.
- 3) The summer is a good time to take down the secondary glazing and clean the windows.
- 4) It never feels like a good time to go into the loft, but now might be a time to look at all the things 'stored' there and see if you can make room for more insulation.
- 5) Have your bike serviced for the summer. Oil the chain, pump up the tyres, adjust the brakes, take it for a ride and think about the possible days out without the car.

V. MAY IN THE GARDEN - Keith Jordan

Time to get your tender plants acclimatised to the great outdoors!

If you had friends from a hot country come to stay with you, it would be unwise to give them a camp bed in the garden in May without a sleeping bag - they would probably find a hotel on the second night! Similarly, tender (half-hardy) vegetables raised in a greenhouse or warm environment detest being suddenly plunged into cold conditions. Just one night of frost or even temperatures down to 2-3 degrees C can be fatal for any courgettes, marrows, squashes, outdoor cucumbers and tomatoes, sweetcorn, basil, chillies, French and runner beans planted outside too soon. Daytime temperatures during May can get very high, but beware of cold nights that can seriously damage or kill plants you may be tempted to plant outside.

Unfortunately many garden shops and centres start selling half-hardy vegetables far too early, especially for the unwary novice gardener. Remember to gradually acclimatise any bought plants or those raised yourself off in pots BEFORE planting in the great outdoors, preferably planting out near the end of May. For example, first put outside during the day, bring inside at night, then gradually increase their exposure to cooler conditions - perhaps in a home-made cold frame where you can increase the amount of ventilation until they are ready to plant outside. The danger of frosts diminishes throughout May, but in some years they can occur in the last week of May (or 1st June in 1991!) so be prepared to rush out and cover over plants with fleece, old net curtain or plastic sheeting. Potato stems are also very sensitive to frost so earth up rows as the plants grow. French and runner beans can be sown directly outside during May but any growth above ground is still vulnerable to frost, so watch the weather forecast!

VI. MARTIN'S MEMO: Halogen Replacements *by Martin Roach*

Halogen bulbs seem to become the designer bulb of choice in recent years but with 35 or 50w power usage and often 4-6 bulbs in a fitting they can eat up the energy. Unfortunately there has not been an effective low energy alternative which gives comparable light intensity and colour. That is until now...

There are three types of halogen bulbs, but only the first 2 are widely used in whole room lighting:

1. GU10 - which use normal 240v power and have two pin fittings with a knobby bit on the end of each pin. They typically consume 35 or 50 Watts each.

Most recent fittings use GU10 bulbs and now there is a great LED replacement. The Sharp ZENIGATA LED gives similar quality light to a halogen and yet consumes only 4W. It is available in a choice of cool or warm white. We now have one in the Lamp Library if you want to try before you buy. To find out more or purchase one try this link: http://www.yourwelcome.co.uk/acatalog/GU10_LED_Lamps.html Quoting carboncoach (must be lower case) at check out may save you an extra 10%. The bulbs cost £24 each but if used for 6 hours per day will recoup the extra expense in just over a year as well as saving lots of carbon.

2. MR16 - these use 12v power (and so are connected to the mains electricity via a transformer, often hidden in the ceiling or close by) and have two sharp thinner pin fittings (no knobblies). The bulb is 50mm in diameter and also comes in either 35 or 50W output.

For MR 16 bulbs there is also reported to be a good LED replacement - although I have not yet tried this one. See the "All purpose LED - MR16" on this link: http://www.yourwelcome.co.uk/acatalog/12v_Lamps.html. They consume just 2.3W but give the equivalent light to a 35W halogen bulb. Even if you currently have 50W halogens then with several bulbs in the fitting these new Led bulbs should give you plenty of high quality light to meet your needs.

3. MR11 - Like the MR16, also with two thin pins and a 12v transformer but these are of smaller 35mm diameter and often used in display cabinets

Since halogens in display cabinets are normally used for shorter periods their replacement is less urgent. But this link provides an alternative: http://www.yourwelcome.co.uk/acatalog/12v_MR11_High_Power_LED.html. Note that the website recommends that you also use a LED Driver to smooth the power input to get maximum life from the new bulb - probably worth it to protect the high initial cost.

Finally, if you need a new light fitting but want to avoid halogen bulbs then Cambridge Discount Electrical has just taken on a new low energy range with some stylish designs. We plan to hold the extensive catalogue in the Lamp Library. If all this seems daunting and you want some further advice then please contact me via the CCF Office.

VII. THIS MONTH'S RECIPE: Local Pesto by Jacky Sutton-Adam

The fine April weather could lull us into thinking that everything's growing well and locally grown; and that seasonal food is in abundance. The truth is very different - all those UK grown tomatoes crowding the market at the moment have come from energy intensive hot houses and their thin, watery flavour speaks volumes about their cultivation. The last of the winter roots are looking a little tired, and personally I'm really ready for my last taste of sprouting broccoli this year. Happily, Nature's wild harvest is now providing plenty of nutrient-rich, local, seasonal alternatives to a Spanish lettuce or box of Italian rocket, although I've yet to find a substitute for tomatoes! You can taste some of them at my [Wandlebury forage and lunch](#) event on Saturday 9th May; in the meantime, make the most of the last few weeks of the nettles season with this lovely pesto recipe. The more adventurous might want to add a handful of young dandelion leaves alongside the nettles, to give a slightly edgier flavour and a gentle spring tonic for the liver and kidneys.

Ingredients

1 colander of young nettle tops, washed,

10 or so young dandelion leaves - optional

75g pumpkin seeds

Garlic clove crushed

Sea salt and black pepper

Olive oil

Instructions

Wilt the nettles (and dandelion leaves if using) over a low heat in a covered pan with a splash of water until soft and floppy. Toast the pumpkin seeds in a dry non-stick pan until they start to pop, then whizz with a blender to a fine crumb. Crush the garlic to a pulp with some coarse sea salt with a pestle and mortar.

Drain the nettles and chop finely. Mix them with the pumpkin seeds and garlic then season well with salt and pepper, taste, and adjust the seasoning as required. Add a little olive oil to bring the ingredients to a pesto-like consistency. Serve on freshly cooked pasta. The pesto will keep in the fridge for a few days in a clean lidded glass jar.