

# Cavity Wall Campaign

## 80 enquiries & rising!

Through our initial energy health checks we have learnt that up to 60% of the village homes in Whittington and Fisherwick do not have cavity wall insulation. This is bad for our environment and bad for our pockets.

By having your cavity walls insulated, you can cut the heat lost through your walls by more than half, saving up to 30% on heating bills, and considerably reducing your carbon footprint.

We have teamed up with Lichfield District Council's approved installer to help us insulate as many homes in the village as possible.

They will visit and carry out a survey to show how your house could best be insulated, and then provide you with a quotation. They have access to all of the grants available and will advise on the most cost effective way of getting your house insulated.

Typically, if you have up to a standard 4 bed detached house, the cost of cavity wall insulation will be £149, and if you are aged over 70 or receive benefits there is a good chance it will be FREE.

It is also currently recommended that loft insulation thickness should be 270 mm. Full loft insulation or top up starts at £199 for a typical 4 bed property, and again, if you are over 70 or receive benefits then it is very likely to be FREE.

Also, for every house that is insulated in the village, the installer will donate £20 to WFEG to fund a community insulation or renewable energy project in the Parish.



To register your interest, or just find out more, please contact our Project Co-ordinator Julian Floyd by calling 01543 432910 or by emailing him at [julian@wfeg.org.uk](mailto:julian@wfeg.org.uk)

## We Are Not Alone.....

Whittington and Fisherwick's low carbon community is increasingly being seen as a model for other communities in Staffordshire and beyond.

We are getting an increasing number of enquiries from surrounding villages in Staffordshire, Leicestershire and Shropshire according to WFEG Chair, Mike Kinghan, who recently made a presentation about our villages' low carbon journey to the Staffordshire Association of Parish Councils Annual General Meeting. Mike has also given presentations at the launch of the 'Sheepy Greens' campaign in Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire and at Audley in North Staffordshire.

A party of visitors from Essington, near Cannock, came to our Cuba event in November and spent a considerable time talking to WFEG members about what we are doing. Web enquiries have come from Stafford and very recently from North West Leicestershire District Council. Nearer home interest has also come from Yoxall and King's Bromley.

Staffordshire County Council and their partners have adopted the aim of having at least one low Carbon Community in each of Staffordshire's nine districts as an aim of its Strategy - with Whittington and Fisherwick as the model. In addition, Lichfield District's Sustainable Environment Partnership Plan sets out 'to encourage parish councils and local environment groups to follow the lead of Whittington and Fisherwick Environment Group to become low carbon communities'

Further afield we are part of a growing movement of low carbon communities as WFEG members Julian Floyd and Mike Kinghan discovered in October when they attended the Low Carbon Communities Conference in Llangollen. About 200 people attended the Conference which featured presentations from Mark Lynas and Penney Poyzer (who spoke at the WFEG launch last year). There were lots of interesting presentations from other groups like ours and some really good ideas that we will be looking at to help us on our journey.

As a result of the Conference a national Low Carbon Communities Network (LCCN) is now being formed. Our Chair Mike Kinghan is on the interim Steering Group. He says it is a really exciting and important development. "There is a potentially huge grass roots movement here of people who recognise the vital role that communities can play in reducing carbon emissions and in pressurising governments to get to grips with issues like promoting renewable energy."

Anyone interested in finding out more about the LCCN should go to <http://lowcarboncommunities.net/>

# WFEG

## Newsletter

January 2009

On a journey to a low carbon future...

## IT'S HERE! THE BIG GREEN FAIR 2009



**Our second Big Green Fair will take place on Saturday 7th February 2009 at Whittington Village Hall from 11am until 4pm.**

Building on the success of the first fair in 2008, when nearly 1500 people were welcomed through the doors, we aim to make the 2009 event even bigger and better this time around.

We're keeping it all under wraps, but just to whet your appetite...

There'll be plenty of live music and entertainment for all the family throughout the day. As last year, our good friends from the WI will be providing a £1 homemade soup and bread lunch - made from locally sourced ingredients - along with home made cakes, tea and coffee.

There'll be Morris Dancers and we hope to have horse and carriage rides through the village once again, along with more stalls than ever selling delicious food and drinks, toiletries, cosmetics, and gifts and gadgets of all kinds - to name but a few...

There will be craft and cookery demonstrations and plenty of free advice and guidance on energy saving and "greener living" available from real experts in the field; and we hope to be giving advance notice of our own Parish foot-printing project.

It's FREE and FUN FOR ALL, so mark the date in your diary NOW and we look forward to seeing you on 7th February!



discourage us from leaving them on standby. We also save electricity by using low energy light bulbs and minimising the use of the tumble drier.

We have had solar panels installed on the roof that heat a large percentage of our hot water. In the summer it produces nearly all our hot water but even on cold sunny November days it will heat a full tank. We have replaced the gas fire with a wood burning stove which cuts down our use of the central heating quite a lot. We have been given quite a bit of reclaimed timber, and the logs we buy have been forestry waste.



In the garden we have two water butts to store rainwater, one of which was salvaged from a skip. We have a compost heap and plans for a vegetable patch. Growing some of our own fruit and vegetables should reduce our food miles.

Simon wins our prize of £20 worth of Vouchers from our local Co-op. WFEG is delighted to have their support.

**Please send us your Traveller's Tale and be our next winner! Email to [nichola@wfeg.org.uk](mailto:nichola@wfeg.org.uk)**

## Traveller's Tales Winner... "We're Saving £550!"

*In our last edition we asked readers to tell us about their own journey to a low carbon future. Here's our first winning traveller's tale from Whittington resident Simon Thorncroft:*

We are still tracking our savings but so far our direct debit for gas and electric has come down by about £700 a year (offset by £150 for wood fuel)! Here's how....

The loft was insulated and I have topped this up by boarding out half of it with boards made from cut up wardrobes. We used local tradesmen to upgrade the central heating to make it more efficient including the fitting of thermostatically controlled radiator valves. Using local tradespeople is neighbourly and also cuts down road miles.

The upstairs windows were rotten in places and these have been replaced with wooden double glazed units. The computer has a special plug, so that when you turn it off it automatically turns of the printer etc. We have set up the television etc so that they can easily be turned off together to

## Adopt A Highway!

John Smith, Chair of the Parish Council, writes: It is slightly disappointing to note the amount of litter lying around the village. A couple of years ago the Parish Council implemented a litter clean up scheme called 'Adopt a highway', where local residents volunteered to keep a particular road or area litter free.

We are looking for more volunteers. If you are prepared to have a go please give me a ring on 432848 and I will be delighted to explain more.'

Thanks for your support  
John Smith



**This project has been supported by funding from the**

**Staffordshire Aggregates Levy Grant Scheme (SALGS)**



**This newsletter is printed on recycled paper using vegetable inks**



Whittington & Fisherwick Environment Group

The newsletter from the Whittington & Fisherwick Environment Group

# Helping Our Community Buildings to Go Low Carbon

Village organisations are benefitting from WFEG's efforts to encourage our community's low carbon journey. Our Village Hall and Pavilion have both been insulated with the help of grant funding obtained by WFEG from the Staffordshire Aggregates Levy Grant Scheme (SALGS) and assistance for the Thomas Spencer Hall is imminent. The benefits should mean both lower energy costs and lower carbon emissions.

The impetus for this originally came from the energy health checks provided with SALGS funding late in 2007 and early 2008. We were then able to go back to the County Council with clear evidence of need and the CO2 reduction benefits of action to install insulation.



Sarah Dyott with the insulation destined for the Thomas Spencer Hall

The health check for the Pavilion identified quite a number of energy-related issues and as a first stage in tackling these the Parish Council was recently able to install insulation with the help of the SALGS grant obtained by WFEG. They are now planning to investigate the costs of better draught-proofing and of double glazing. WFEG is hoping to be able to provide some further support.

At the Village Hall the same funding has contributed to the installation of cavity wall insulation. In the Thomas Spencer Hall loft insulation is soon to be installed, again with SALGS funding – and the same grant aid is also helping to pay to replace the current lighting with low energy equivalents.

WFEG is also working with our Primary School where a more detailed energy audit has been conducted and we prepared a paper for the Governors on how they could obtain funding to improve energy efficiency and install renewables. We are looking forward to working with them in the coming months to look at the possibilities in more detail.

Parish Council Chairman John Smith said 'The Parish Council is very grateful for the assistance from WFEG and SALGS to improve the insulation at the Parish Council Pavilion and fully support WFEG's work with village organisations to save money, energy and lower carbon emissions.'

# Transform your garden into a wildlife haven in 2009

Wildlife is increasingly reliant on our gardens for food, water and shelter, so it's great that many people are becoming more committed to making their homes and gardens more wildlife friendly.

The RSPB project Homes for Wildlife was launched in October 2007, with 54,451 people registering to take part and receive tailored advice. Through Homes for Wildlife, the RSPB are trying to reverse the alarming declines of familiar birds such as house sparrows, starlings and song thrushes. Large numbers of these birds make their homes in our gardens, so the time committed by you in taking actions really will help create a better future for them and other wildlife in the not too distant future.

The RSPB have made a fantastic start, but it's really important that more people get involved. 2009 is a great time to think longer term about turning your garden into a haven for wildlife and here are just a few ideas to get you started.



## Homes for Wildlife top 12 activities

- Provide seed mixes, particularly sunflower hearts and millet-seeds for house sparrows and starlings
- Provide fresh water for birds and insects and/or consider a pond
- Provide plants/shrubs of different sizes, shapes and ages
- Grow a range of plants to provide variety and extend the flowering season
- Provide flowering plants as a source of nectar for butterflies and moths
- Grow plants attractive to insects
- Retain dead flower stems and heads over winter
- Maintain any beds with a good layer of ground cover, shrubs and herbaceous plants for song thrushes and blackbirds
- Provide a variety of nest boxes
- Provide dense, thorny bushes for cover for song thrushes and blackbirds
- Prune trees, shrubs and climbers during January or early February (before nesting)
- Go organic

Take part in the Homes for Wildlife project and the RSPB will provide you with tailored advice to attract birds and other wildlife to your garden.

Get involved now by visiting [www.rspb.org.uk/hfw](http://www.rspb.org.uk/hfw)

Courtesy RSPB

# Smart Travel Tips for 2009

When Marches Energy Agency carried out our Energy Health Checks last year, one of the things that stood out was that travel created the largest foot print in Whittington. Given that it's now New Year, how about considering these resolutions as ways to reduce your environmental impact from travelling?

## 1. Join Lichfield Advanced Motorists group.

For only £99 (£79 if you're aged under 25) you get everything you need to pass the advanced driving test: a guide, "observed" drives and the test itself. You will be taught how to anticipate hazards earlier, and get in the right gear etc – all of which can be translated into "driving economically". Find out more at [www.lamm.org.uk](http://www.lamm.org.uk) or call 07020 940216.

## 2. Share Car Journeys

Get your employer to sign up for Staffordshire's Car share scheme at [www.share-a-lift.co.uk](http://www.share-a-lift.co.uk). Two or more people in a car halves the effective fuel consumption per passenger (it's possible to achieve over 100 mpg!). You don't have to share every day and this can cut up to 50% from your fuel use. If you can't find a scheme in the area you work get in touch with the relevant council or Jambusters at [www.jbgb.com](http://www.jbgb.com).



## 3. Drive Slower

Stick to speed limits in town (and never get a speeding ticket) and to 60 mph on motorways - and save 15-20% on fuel/emissions. Time the difference and you'll find that driving in the "old way" probably cost you 15% extra on fuel to save less than 5% on time.

## 4. Cycle

Save money, get fit and save the planet by USING a push bike. A wise man once said "There's no such thing as bad weather – only the wrong clothes". So get yourselves some proper winter waterproofs & gloves in the sales and you'll have no excuses. Lobby your employer to get a shower installed - hence saving yourself money on hot water at home too. To get fit, start with weekend "shopping" trips into town when you don't need to rush and then start adding a 1 or 2 commutes each week. By the time summer is here you should be ready for "le Tour".

## 5. Choose a low emission car

If you are replacing your car, choose the one with the lowest emissions you can. A look through "What Car" should show you that there are now several attractive choices in emissions Band A (< 100 g/km) – no road tax - with more arriving throughout 2009. Do you really need an estate or would a city car with a trailer hitch suit trips to the dump / Ikea / camping better as your interior won't take so many knocks? Likewise how big a car do you really need to tow that caravan or boat?

# WFEG Membership Renewal

WFEG launched its membership campaign at the Big Green Fair last February where many of you originally joined up. Our original plan was to seek renewals by 31 March this year for the 2009-10 financial year.

However our exciting new plan is to move to a web-based membership system, with sign-up and renewal on line. Membership will be free (though donations will be welcome!). This will take place later in the Spring when the necessary website redesign has been undertaken. In the meantime all current memberships are being extended until the new system is in place.

What this means is that if you are a member of WFEG or wish to join, it would be very helpful to have your email address so we can alert you as soon as the new system comes into operation. If you don't receive our regular Ezine then we don't have your email address. You can send it to us via [info@wfeg.org.uk](mailto:info@wfeg.org.uk)



The new website will allow residents to measure their carbon footprint online and a range of other exciting new features. More information will be available soon.

Full membership of WFEG is only open to residents of Whittington and Fisherwick Parish, although non-residents are very welcome to sign up as supporters and receive our Ezine and attend events etc.

Even a "little" BMW 118d or a Ford Focus 1.6 TDCi can pull 1200kg, both with emissions of just 119 g/km.

## 6. Let the train take the strain

This year how about going on holiday by train and then head to a harbour and go sailing (with the possibility of doing your Competent Crew/Day Skipper training as you go). Once on board you can visit several ports and coastal hideaways and use very little, if any, fuel on the way. Your energy and water use on the boat will be minimal and will most likely be topped up by wind & solar power. If going to the Med, stop off for a night in Paris to break up the journey. Most of the French TGV system is electric powered and nearly carbon free owing to the French preference for nuclear power. Alternatively stay inland near a lake and you can have hours of fun on the water without needing to use an engine all holiday. Kids as young as 6 can have supervised lessons - leaving you free to do your own thing. Like sleep. If you really do need to "take a look around" see if you can rent a bike.

Some lucky people who are able to do several of the above might be able to reduce 2009's travel emissions by over 80%. You don't need to wait until 2050! However don't despair if you can't. However little you can do - every bit counts.

Simon Heath