

## Don't let HDTVs and gadgets burn a hole in your pocket!



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Given what's happening to energy prices most of us are looking for every chance to cut our bills. We in WFEG are trying to help with our light bulb campaign, energy audits and now the insulation offer. But there are hidden dangers that can send your energy bills soaring again –

all part of the trend for new consumer electronic gadgets.

For instance the UK is switching to digital television. Whilst this is great for the picture and sound quality, many of the new TVs, digital radios and set-top boxes are power-hungry guzzlers! For instance:

- The new large flat screen TVs can cost nearly three times as much to run as traditional TVs. This can add up to a surprising £63 to a typical household electricity bill every year
- Digital radios use more energy than analogues: in some cases up to 5 times the amount.

- Listening to the radio through your digital set top box and through your television uses in some cases up to fifty times more power than your old analogue radio.
- By 2020 televisions, DVDs, digital radios and computers will account for nearly half of all electricity used in the home. This will need the equivalent of 14 average sized power stations just to run our home entertainment systems.

But help is at hand! The Energy Saving Trust website has a lot of very useful information on this (and lots of other stuff too). Visit their site at [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) and click on Energy Saving products. From that page there is an easy link to lists of energy-saving domestic appliances and electronics stuff with info on prices and features too. Do your research before you buy to make sure you're getting the most energy efficient model!

If you already have an HDTV you may be able to cut the power consumption considerably by changing the screen mode (e.g. from "Dynamic" to "Cinema"). You can borrow one of our power meters to find your most energy efficiency TV settings (see article: Winter Fuel Blues on page 1).

And don't forget to turn stuff off rather than leaving on standby – save it!

## How green are my veggies?

Organic, seasonal or local – which is best? A new BBC website can help you with the right answers to this question and many more. Visit [www.bbcgreen.com](http://www.bbcgreen.com)

## WFEG Health Checks Lead to Funding for Village Organisations

Like over a hundred residents, several of our village organisations took up the offer of a free WFEG energy health check earlier this year. The Village Hall, Church Hall, and Parish Council (pavilion) all received advice on the best ways to reduce their energy consumption and carbon footprint.

Subsequently WFEG have been working with these organisations to find funding and practical solutions to the issues identified. We are now delighted to announce that we have been granted funding through the Staffordshire Aggregates Levy Grant Scheme - amounting to over £2000 in total - to provide 75% of the cost of the improvements. This work should make a significant difference to keeping down energy bills (and hence costs to users) as well as reducing the villages' carbon footprint.

We were also able to obtain 1.5 days consultancy from the Energy Savings Trust to provide a more in depth energy study of the pavilion and also of Whittington School and we will be working with them over the next few months to see what additional funding we can attract to get even better outcomes.

Free energy health checks are still available to residents - call Cynthia on 01543 432188.

## Join our Wildlife Group

Member Peter Jackson joined WFEG at the Big Green Fair back in February and while he was keen to join a WFEG wildlife group we hadn't managed to persuade him that he was the man to get it all going!

Until recently that is....Anyway he's finally succumbed to the pressure (!) and agreed to lead the group so it's all systems go! Peter has a wealth of experience in many areas of wildlife and is looking

for people who share his passion to join our new subgroup. You can make as large or small a commitment as you like – all ages and experts or beginners alike are VERY WELCOME.



If you are interested than please email Peter at [peter.g.jackson@live.co.uk](mailto:peter.g.jackson@live.co.uk) or call him in the evenings on 01543 310593.



This project has been supported by funding from the

Staffordshire Aggregates Levy Grant Scheme (SALGS)



# WFEG Newsletter

September 2008

On a journey to a low carbon future...

## Let's banish the unfilled cavity wall!

WFEG proudly announces an initiative to help Whittington and Fisherwick become the first community in the UK where all households have insulated cavity walls!

There has never been a better time to consider insulating your home. Energy costs are sky high and thanks to the grants currently available, the cost of insulating has never been cheaper.

The pay back in energy cost savings is estimated at just 12 months!

- Cavity walls insulated - £149 (standard house up to 4 bedrooms)
- Loft insulation and top up - £199 (as above)
- Free to over 70's and people in receipt of benefits

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.

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.

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.

Cont on page 2...



## Get ready now to beat the winter fuel blues...

Rising energy prices are putting pressure on everyone's household budget so now might be a good time to think about planning for those winter fuel bills!

If you haven't yet had one of our free Energy Health Checks, they are still available and you can book one at your convenience.

Thanks to our grant from SALGS we have been able to train a number of WFEG members to carry out these checks, so if you would like to learn how you can save some money and help the environment at the same time then please contact Cynthia Knowles on 01543 432188 or email her at [ck500@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ck500@tiscali.co.uk)

Our light bulb library and energy meters are also still available for free loan - contact us if you'd like to borrow either item.



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Whittington & Fisherwick Environment Group

The newsletter from the Whittington & Fisherwick Environment Group

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

All wall insulation on offer has a 25-year guarantee from the Cavity Insulation Guarantee Association.



## 1 million...

The number of animals – including deer, foxes, badgers, otters and squirrels – that are killed each year on UK roads.

These figures released by Post Office Insurance – do NOT include birds – which are thought to account for another 10 million road deaths annually.

The month of September is an especially critical month as our wildlife is especially active at times of the day which coincide with peak travel times (rush hours) as the days grow shorter.



So starting from now how about slowing down and driving more efficiently and economically and help cut down the number of animal road deaths?

## Still waters don't run cheap

Each year we spend around £1.68 billion on bottled water and most of it could be replaced with good old tap water - filtered using a home jug-type filter if you prefer.

Tap water is much kinder to the environment than bottled water and costs a fraction of the price - around 141 times less!

- The facts:
- In the production of bottled water, two gallons of water are wasted for every one gallon put into a bottle.
  - Extra Water miles are created if you buy bottled water produced outside the UK.
  - Most of the plastic bottles used go to landfill – enough each year to fill Wembley Stadium twice over!

Courtesy of "Which?" Magazine

## Going even Greener at Elswick House Nursery School

In case you all thought we'd been resting on our laurels since you last heard from us, here's an update:

We incubated nine quail eggs and those which survived have thrived and will shortly be on their way to Bradley's house. Sally - Bradley's mum - says she thinks they will make excellent pets, as they are so interesting and need so little upkeep. The chicks have created such a lot of interest, we may have to hatch a few more!

Our Eglu has arrived and is in situ next to the quail (the parents of "Bradley's Chicks"). We now have 5 chickens (bantams), which are getting used to being the objects of great attention in their new home. They are currently 14 weeks old, and we expect our first eggs when they reach about 20 weeks.

Our allotment is coming on apace. We have dug our first potatoes and they taste delicious. We have had an 8 foot sunflower and the sweet peas gave us beautiful deep pink blooms. The beans, which grew at a fantastic rate, didn't produce anything edible and the only pumpkin we planted was weeded out by mistake!!!



Olivia and Cameron with the fruits of their hard work!

All in all, our considerable successes outweigh the occasional disasters and more to the point we all love doing this. We are also trying to heed our 10 Do's and Don'ts (see below) - our recycling is now well established and we are composting enthusiastically!

Richard Green

## Elswick House Nursery's Top 10 Tips for saving money and the Planet

1. Gas. Keep rooms to recommended temperatures in cold weather.
2. Kettles. Do not overfill kettles.
3. Dishwasher. Always fill dishwasher; do not run when only half full.
4. Laundry. Wash sheets at 60°C. All other washing at 30°C.
5. Tumble Drier. Set the tumble drier to the correct time/temperature. Do not over dry. Use the washing line whenever possible.
6. Electrical Appliances. Do not leave the computer, printer, photocopier, kettles and other equipment on 'stand-by mode'. Turn them off when not in use.
7. Microwave. Set the microwave to the correct time and temperature.
8. Recycle as much as you can. Composting or green boxes.
9. Reuse as much as we can. We do a lot of this already in Craft activities.
10. Reduce wastage. - For example food waste, water, craft resources and materials.

## Local Food Event

A date for your diaries...

Thursday 16th October at 8 pm at Whittington Social Club

Come along and meet some of our best local food producers and suppliers... tastings, demonstrations from Whittington-based Gourmet Chef To Go (Steve Stack) and the opportunity to try and buy lots of lovely fresh, local produce.



For more information call AnnaMarie Stone on 01543 432005

## Staffordshire Wildlife Trust



Based at the superb Wolseley Centre just north of Rugeley, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust protects and enhances the wildlife and wild places of Staffordshire and promotes understanding, enjoyment and involvement in the natural world. It has 15000 members and manages 30 nature reserves across the County. The nearest reserves to Whittington are Croxall Lakes, next to the National Memorial Arboretum - a good site for wildfowl and waders - and Georges Hayes, on the edge of Cannock Chase - with its woodland flowers including a magnificent display of wild daffodils in spring.

Lichfield Wildlife Group is the local Trust group covering this area and organises regular talks and activities. It has just completed a major project on the conservation of wildlife in and around Lichfield Cathedral. Admission to talks £2.50 for adults, £1.50 concessions.

The next three Lichfield Wildlife Group events are:

- Close and Personal With Birds of Prey - A Live Presentation by David and Valerie Chant at St Mary's Centre Lichfield - 7.45pm, Monday 22nd September
- Fungus Foray at Cranebook Lane, Muckley Corner Common. Joint event with Lichfield District Council - 2pm - 4pm, Saturday 4th October. Booking required on 01543 308183 or email denice.deverall@lichfielddc.gov.uk
- Environment and Wildlife of East Africa - talk by Peter Norbury at St Mary's Centre Lichfield - 7.45pm, Thursday 13th November



For more information on Staffordshire Wildlife Trust including how to join visit [www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk](http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk) or phone 01889 880100.

## Text your waste away...

To recycle your household waste simply text 'waste' followed by a UK postcode to 60060 and they will reply with all the info you need to recycle more at a site near to your home.

Same applies with unwanted electrical items - text 'elec' plus your postcode to the same number.

Texts cost 50p each plus your standard network charges or visit [www.recycle-more.co.uk](http://www.recycle-more.co.uk)

## ENERGY CHECKS REACH 100 NOT OUT!

Following the recent completion of over 100 energy health checks, residents in Whittington and Fisherwick are in line to make hundreds of pounds worth of savings when they take on board the recommendations from the surveys.

Mrs Ros Chester was the 100th delighted recipient of the free service when she was presented with her report by Simon Ross of Marches Energy Agency (MEA) who carried out the first wave of Energy checks on behalf of WFEG.

She said 'This is a tremendously useful report, with lots of ideas about how I can reduce my energy costs. I am looking forward to studying it carefully and then, hopefully, making a big dent in my bills, while reducing my carbon footprint to combat global warming too.'



Another Whittington beneficiary of the health checks is 95 year old Harry Bond. Harry said 'I was very pleased to find out that I have been doing the right things. I've a bit more to do but not a lot. I think everybody should have one of these surveys.' Simon Ross of Marches Energy Agency who are carrying out the surveys said 'Harry has one of the best insulated houses and lowest energy bills of anyone I have visited. He's really clued up. He has insulated his cavity walls and has fully insulated his loft up to the recommended 270mm - and he has a really efficient condensing boiler.'

We can still offer free Health Check surveys and anyone interested should contact Cynthia Knowles on 01543 432188 to make an appointment - you will need to allow an hour or so for the survey to be completed.

## Looking for speakers?

If you run a Parish organisation and are looking for speakers, members of WFEG with excellent presentation skills and a wealth of knowledge, are available to speak at your meetings.

We can tailor our presentations to suit your audience and can make them as long or short as you wish with plenty of fun, interactive elements if required.

If you would like further information, contact us at [www.wfeg.org.uk/contact](http://www.wfeg.org.uk/contact)