

The Forum 21 Flier



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SEPTEMBER 2010

<http://www.forum21.org.uk>

The Forum 21 website is updated regularly and includes a link to the F21 Constitution and to the new Energy Efficiency Pack as well as a downloadable membership form and a Library of Forum 21 articles which have appeared in the *News Trader*. If you have any items for the website please e-mail them to Marlene at forum21@btinternet.com

Please help us save paper.....

If you receive this newsletter by post but now have access to email and could receive it electronically, please let us know. This will help us keep you up to date on events and useful information too. Alternatively, if you no longer wish to receive newsletters, please let us know. Email : forum21@btinternet.com

Read It Online!

The **new** Energy Efficiency Pack for Householders

Forum 21 and Transition Minehead and Alcombe (TMA) have worked together to put together a comprehensive energy information pack. Its aim is to collect together in one place up to date energy information for our team of energy volunteers to use when they carry out energy surveys. But this information is useful for anyone who is interested in saving energy.

As well as an Introduction the six sections are:

- Homes in West Somerset - the West Somerset context
- Planning and building regulations
- Making our homes more energy efficient
- Microrenewables
- Materials, suppliers and costs
- Paying for it - grants and loans

We intend to keep it updated. If any readers have any suggestions, or more recent information, we'd like to know about it.

Email to mail@forum21.org.uk

We welcome you to the
Forum 21 AGM
Thursday 14th October, 7.30 pm

**Methodist Church Hall,
The Avenue, Minehead**

AGENDA

Welcome and introduction

Apologies

1. Notes of AGM 8th October 2009
2. Reports
 - Summary of the year 2009/10
 - Financial report

3. Election of Steering Group

4. Appointment of Auditor

Followed by a talk on Community Investment

Community Investment



The speaker this year will be Paul Sander-Jackson, Executive Director of Wessex Community Assets Ltd

Free entry, all welcome. Refreshments provided

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A Note about Membership

We welcome anyone with enthusiasm, initiative or time to help run projects. Or if you have a project you would like advice on, get in touch and we may be able to help or put you in touch with someone.

We would like to act as a source of information for local people to help in achieving a more sustainable, self-sufficient West Somerset.

If you wish to become a formal Forum 21 member which allows you to vote in new Steering Group members at our AGM, please fill in the form on the website and e-mail to Marlene Allinson at forum21@btinternet.com Thanks.

Forum 21 News

This was our tent!

Our stand at the Dunster Show ended in disaster. We put the tent up the day before. When we came back early next morning, this is what we saw. The tent had flown about 200 metres, coming to rest just before reaching the A39. So, no tent and no show. The tent was a write-off, with poles bent and broken and fabric torn. So better luck next year - with another tent!



CSA News

SHARING THE HARVEST

Meeting on Community Supported Agriculture, Minehead July 1st 2010

"CSA is a partnership between farmers and consumers where the responsibilities and rewards of farming are shared."
(Soil Association)

There has been interest in setting up a local CSA scheme for some time. Forum 21 and Transition Minehead and Alcombe organised this meeting to assess the strength of local interest and to inform people about the options.

After a slide presentation provided by the Soil Association, we had a very stimulating talk from Ed Hamer who was instrumental in starting the successful CSA scheme on Dartmoor. Their scheme is organised like many others: members are recruited, land is rented and workers employed to grow the produce. An initial grant made this possible.

This is not the only way to organise a CSA. Twenty people registered their interest after the meeting, and the project is being taken further by Carol Stone, Food for Living co-ordinator for West Somerset. What form an eventual CSA project will take will depend on local circumstances and local people.

If you are interested in the project, please contact Carol on 01643 708 815 or e-mail carolstone@ukonline.co.uk.

Extract from the Soil Association Newsletter Issue 14, September 2010

Community supported agriculture & organic buying groups

RESEARCH

UK Research on CSAs Needs Your Help - Calling all CSA farmers/ consumers/ community groups!

A student at the University of Reading is conducting research on CSAs throughout the world, looking at the similarities, differences, opportunities and threats and how these are contributing to local food systems and sustainable development. Having completed a very successful survey of the US, she is turning her focus on the UK. The results of this research will be very useful to the CSA network, so I encourage you to spare a few minutes to complete the survey even if your CSA is still being developed or very young, your answers will be invaluable. For more information, e-mail research.csa@gmail.com

Invitation to tender - Evaluating the Impact: CSA an agent for change

The Soil Association is looking for a research partner to tackle head on some of the common questions raised about Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). The central aim of the research is to understand the social, environmental and economic impacts of CSA and to gather evidence on some specific areas of enquiry with the cooperation of selected CSA projects. There are also many events listed in the Newsletter. Follow the link on the Links page of the Forum 21 website.

If you have an environmental issue you wish to write about and share, please submit an article to us via email or post and it may feature on this page.

The Somerset West Affordable Warmth Multi Agency Conference will take place on Wednesday 20th October at Taunton Conference Centre: you can download the details and a booking form from the Links page on our [website www.forum21.org.uk](http://www.forum21.org.uk)

More on the Feed-in Tariff (FIT)

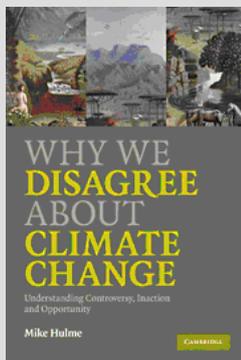
Installers are busy fitting photovoltaic panels on local homes. Forum 21 member Charles Birch says it's a no-brainer: produce your own electricity and be paid for it. But that's OK for those people who can afford the upfront cost of around £10,00. What about those who can't? People who have trouble paying their expensive fuel bills aren't likely to have this sort of amount available, and yet they are the very people who could benefit most from some the scheme. Even more unfair is the fact that the cost of the FIT will be borne by everyone through their electricity bills, while only the fortunate will reap the benefit.

So it's not surprising that some commercial companies, including British Gas, have come up with schemes to help people afford it. A typical scheme offers the householder free installation of the PV panels, thus saving the upfront cost. The company makes its money by taking the income from the FIT: currently 41.3p per kilowatt generated. The householder gets the free electricity, saving perhaps a third of their bill. A reputable company will cover maintenance and insurance costs. And no problem if you move - the scheme transfers to the next householder.

Sounds good. So what's the catch? Well, it's been estimated that the company could be earning £35,000 over the 25 years of the scheme, an easy and guaranteed income. The householder will be getting much less. One financial journalist has estimated that if the householder took out a loan to pay for the installation themselves, even at an interest rate of 12% (far higher than it is now), they would be paying a total of £20,000 over the period of the loan, and gain the £35,000 from the FIT. So, much better off. Another no-brainer? Probably yes. But not so good if you move house after a few years.

The previous government was toying with making low interest loans for renewables that would act like a mortgage, to be transferred to a new owner. This might still happen with the change of government but is by no means certain. Meanwhile, there is a low interest (3%) loan scheme operated in West Somerset by Wessex Home improvement Loans. Available to home owners on low incomes, loan can be used for home maintenance and improvements, including renewables. West Somerset residents can phone the district council for more information, on 0845 241 7243.

This month read:



“Why we disagree about climate change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction and opportunity” by Mike Hulme, Cambridge University Press, ISBN 978-0-521-72732-7

Climate change is not ‘a problem’ waiting for ‘a solution’. It is an environmental, cultural and political phenomenon which is re-shaping the way we think about ourselves, our societies and humanity’s place on Earth. Drawing upon twenty-five

years of professional work as an international climate change scientist and public commentator, Mike Hulme provides a unique insider’s account of the emergence of this phenomenon and the diverse ways in which it is understood. He uses different standpoints from science, economics, faith, psychology, communication, sociology, politics and development to explain why we disagree about climate change. In this way he shows that climate change, far from being simply an ‘issue’ or a ‘threat’, can act as a catalyst to revise our perception of our place in the world. Why We Disagree About Climate Change is an important contribution to the ongoing debate over climate change and its likely impact on our lives.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- **Thurs 30th Sept** - Quantock Eco Energy Efficiency Workshop at Over Stowey Village Hall. 4-8pm
- **Sat 2nd October** - Transition Minehead and Alcombe, Living Simply Celebration. Minehead Methodist Church Hall, The Avenue. 10am-3pm.
- **Wed 6th October** - Exmoor National Park Wood Fair, Cutcombe. Ring Ben Eardley on 01398 323665 to book a place.
- **Thurs 7th October** - Exmoor National Park Renewables Tour. 10am-4pm. Ring Ben Eardley on 01398 323665 to book a place.
- **Fri 8th October** - Minehead Farmers' Market: LETS stall.
- **Fri 8th October and Sat 9th October** - Community Matters Days, a Sustainable Living Event at the Genesis Centre, Somerset College, Wellington Road, Taunton TA1 5AX. 10am-4pm drop in anytime.
- **Sat 9th October** - Transition Minehead and Alcombe, LETS Jumble Sale and Flea Market, Minehead Methodist Church Hall, The Avenue. 10am-12noon.
- **Thurs 14th October** –Forum 21 AGM, Minehead Methodist Church Hall, The Avenue. 7.30pm.
- **Wed 20th October** - Somerset West Affordable Warmth Multi Agency Conference, Taunton Conference Centre, 9am-2.30pm. Contact j.comer@tauntondeane.gov.uk
- **Sat 30th October**—Transition Minehead and Alcombe, Allotment Open Day, Friends and Family Allotment, Harepark Terrace, Alcombe. 2-4pm.
- **Tues 23rd November** – Transition Minehead and Alcombe, Public Meeting with Charles Dowding on “No Dig Cultivation”.



Forum 21 is an environmental group in West Somerset working with West Somerset District Council and other partners to help avoid climate change and to promote sustainability

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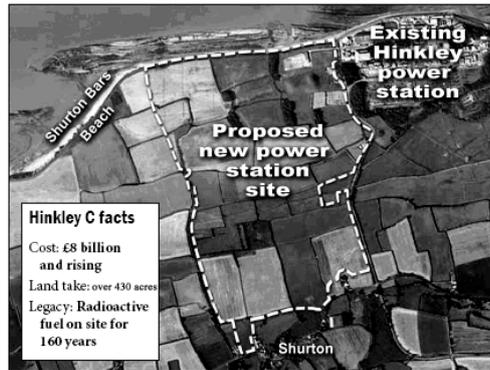
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Thank you for reading,
we hope to see you at
some of the
up-coming events!

Renewables Help Keep the Lights On



Hinkley C facts
Cost: £8 billion and rising
Land take: over 430 acres
Legacy: Radioactive fuel on site for 160 years

Renewable energy continues to expand in Britain, with the government's target for about a third of our electricity to come from green sources by 2010. Wind power registered a record output at the beginning of September, meeting 10% of the country's electricity supply, according to the National Grid. If you want to see how renewables and other sources could keep the lights on without any need for new nuclear power stations then check out the No Need for Nuclear website – www.noneedfornuclear.org.uk

EDF Revises "Hinkley C" Plans – Make Your Comment by 4th October

EDF (Electricite de France) has published revised (Stage 2) plans for the construction of its proposed new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point. These include a shifting round of where the accommodation hostels will be located and concentrating more of the park and ride and freight consolidation facilities near the M5 motorway. None of these changes have fundamentally altered the continued opposition of local communities and both local authorities affected (West Somerset and Sedgemoor) to many of EDF's proposals, however. Apart from the nuclear element these plans will still result in massive disruption to both traffic and the daily life of local people – and without any serious compensation.

If you want to comment on the EDF Stage 2 proposals, go to www.edfconsultation.info but remember that you can submit other points apart from answering the very limited questionnaire which the website offers. The deadline is 4th October. Forum 21 will be submitting its own comments to EDF, emphasising the point that the negative effects of a new nuclear power station, including at least 160 years' storage of radioactive waste, far outweigh any potential benefits to West Somerset.

"Preliminary Works" – EDF Jumps The Gun

Developer EDF is proposing to completely destroy a large area of the West Somerset coastal countryside in advance of obtaining full planning permission for its proposed new nuclear plants. Called "Preliminary Works", the application to West Somerset Council, expected soon, will mean:

- Removal of the majority of trees and hedges, including ancient woodlands
- Blocking off all badger setts (already agreed)
- Closure of existing footpaths and bridlepaths, including the coast path
- Security fencing round an area of more than 400 acres
- Stripping topsoil and vegetation to make terraced area for the proposed nuclear reactors
- New roads across the site
- Underground streams re-routed
- The excavation of more than 3.2 million cubic metres of soil, sub-soil and rocks. **This is more than has been excavated to prepare the site for the 2012 London Olympic Games.**
- Construction of new sea wall along the coast and a jetty out into the sea

EDF says it will "restore" the site to its original state if it does not receive planning permission for the power station. This is impossible – you cannot recreate a landscape that has taken hundreds of years to mature. *See photos on the Forum 21 website news page.* The coastline bordering the Hinkley C site is part of the Bridgwater Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Bridgwater Bay's shallow waters and mudflats are a sanctuary for thousands of waders, ducks and other sea birds, especially in winter.