



Warwickshire Climate Change Community Newsletter

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/climatechangepartnership

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Random Acts of Kindness

Late one night, in a curry house in Loughborough, we were talking about what a Heart & Soul Group for the Transition Towns Initiatives would mean. The conversation ranged from the meaning of happiness, how you would start a happiness project and what our personal experiences of random acts of kindness were. Talking about all the times we had been on the receiving end of a random act of kindness from a total stranger and what those acts had meant to us and how special they'd made us feel, brought tears to all our eyes. We decided that if we had such heart warming stories to tell about such thoughtfulness and generosity then many other people would have stories too. Not knowing who those generous persons were who gave their random acts of kindness to us, we've never been able to thank them, or tell them, even though it is many years later, how much we still remember their action and what it meant to us. We decided to capture both our stories and ask others for their stories as a way of expressing our heartfelt gratitude.

So, we're asking for your stories about your experience of being on the receiving end of random acts of kindness. If you have anything you're willing to share with us, then please get in touch email

Jackylawrence@warwickshire.gov.uk.

Some random acts of kindness

In 1965, while recuperating from glandular fever, I was traveling in a crowded sitting compartment on an overnight train from Thessaloniki to Athens to meet my future wife when I was overcome by violent gastroenteritis. I was already so weak I could hardly see straight. When we at last reached the Athens railway station, a Swiss lady in the compartment gathered me up, escorted me to the taxi

stand, phoned to book me into a pension, told the driver where to take me, paid him and sent me on my way. I never even found out her name, and I never saw her again. But her kindness might have saved my life. I've never forgotten it, or her.

I would like to tell you about an Act of Kindness given to me. I was touched by a young boy in my need of help. I lost my daughter at the age of 22 years and this young boy helped me get through some of my hardest days of pain and sadness because he needed my help. But, unknown to him or anybody else, I needed his help more. He helped me through the 'dark times' because I knew he needed me as well. He gave me someone to focus on, to use my negative energy and turn it into positive energy on him. We laughed, we cried and we played together. He was my light at the end of a very long tunnel. God bless him for all he did for me.

Events

- ❖ Action 21, Photography competition – “Re-use: the possibilities are endless” (information here: http://www.action21.co.uk/press_release_08-02-2010.html) . Winning photographs will be displayed in an exhibition on March 18th at the Oddfellows Hall, Leamington Spa.
- ❖ Action 21, Woodland work parties at Dobson Lane Community Allotment on Saturday 20th February and 20th March (email Louise@action21.co.uk to sign up for these) - Come and help us clear routes through wood; thin and coppice; clear brambles in the middle of the wood to provide an area for educational purposes; and clear rubbish.
- ❖ The Renewable Energy Club will be hosting a talk by Dr. Sarah Darby of The Environmental Change Institute, Oxford on Smart Metering – A short history and a look at possibilities. 7:30pm, Monday 8 March 2010, The Dale Street Methodist Church, Dale St, Leamington Spa. CV32 5HL

NEWS



❖ The power regulator Ofgem is bringing in a new scheme designed to show if a supplier is making real cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

Its "green energy certified" label is designed to give users a real guide to who is doing most to source renewable power. The idea is to reassure householders and small businesses that paying for green energy is actually worth it. Energy companies are committed to using more renewable power. Before the introduction of this new labelling plan, a supplier could claim to be helping the environment, but in fact simply be meeting its existing promise to use renewable energy.

Now, suppliers will have to demonstrate to an independent panel of experts that they are taking extra steps to cut their use of non-renewable power in order to merit the "green" label.

The panel's chairwoman, Solitaire Townsend, said: "Only 2% of Britons currently buy green energy, but I hope that a trustworthy label will convince many more to go green." bbc.co.uk 09/02/2010

❖ Action 21 Re-useful Centre – has practically all the household goods you'd ever need: TVs (Safety tested), furniture, books, cutlery, bikes and more. All the goods are donated second-hand items and all have been saved from landfill. Thinking of having a spring-clean? Donate your unwanted goods to Action 21 here. The Re-Useful Centre is open Friday-Sunday, 10am-4pm. Tel: 01926 453030. Address: 5 Ramsey Road, Sydenham, Leamington Spa, CV31 1PL.

❖ Approx 20 allotments will be available this year at the Dobson Lane Community Allotment, a new project by Action 21. Contact Louise@action21.co.uk to sign up. The inaugural AGM of the Allotment Association (all ploholders are automatically members) will be on Thursday 24th March 2010.

❖ New rules mean that from early February, any retailer who sells over 32kg of batteries per year (about 1 pack of 4 AAs a day) is required to provide a free recycling point for consumers to return their used / flat batteries. In practice, this means that most retailers who sell batteries will now have a collection point; making it easier for everyone to recycle. On average, each UK household uses 21 batteries per year – that's over 600 million - with a staggering 97% of those going to landfill where harmful chemicals can leak into the soil. The new rules should enable us to significantly increase our collection and recycling rates from 3% to 25% by 2012 increasing to 45% by 2016.

❖ BOILER SCRAPPAGE SCHEME—The installation of an efficient heating system is an effective way of reducing household energy bills and carbon emissions, as domestic heating accounts for 14 per cent of the UK's CO2 emissions. There are approximately three and a half million homes in England with the least efficient type of boiler (G-rated or worse). To help the Government have introduced a scheme offering 125,000 households £400 towards the cost of upgrading their G-rated boiler to a high efficiency A-rated one.

Normally the high cost of replacing a boiler may deter people from changing, but running costs should be lower with a new boiler. A-rated boilers have rated efficiencies of 90 per cent or more meaning that they use less fuel, resulting in lower CO2 emissions and running costs. Upgrading from a G-rated boiler to an A-rated one, could reduce your household heating bill by about a quarter - a saving of, on average around £235 a year.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL THE ENERGY SAVINGS TRUST ON 0800 512 012

❖ Stratford Insulation Scheme – Able to pay scheme

Stratford District Council have recently negotiated a specially discounted rate with Rockwarm Insulation from £99 for cavity wall and £149 for loft insulation. Contact Act on Energy on 0800 988 2881 or www.actonenergy.org.uk for further information.

❖ Throughout March Act on Energy are holding weekly advice surgeries in Warwickshire where you can come and talk face to face with one of their advisors about issues or questions you may have relating to energy, including fuel bills, insulation, renewables and schemes. For dates, times and venues log onto www.actonenergy.org.uk

Have your say



This is your newsletter and your opportunity to publicise any events you may be holding, and let other groups know what you are currently up to share your experiences. What do you want to see in future editions?

Please send all comments or enquiries about this newsletter and suggestions, for news items, case studies, details of events etc to

emmaclarke@warwickshire.gov.uk



Fact of the month

The average roof collects about 85,000 litres of rain each year – enough to fill 450 water butts with free water. Great for those hot summers when the plants need watering.