



# THE GREEN NETWORK

## The Environmental Network of North Somerset

Issue 4

January 2009

A Happy New Year to all our members

### Green Talk@The Blakehay

Following the huge success of last year's Festival, we have moved on to our next exciting project - yet another first for Weston! On Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March we are launching Green Talk@The Blakehay a day of inspiring talks and information at the Blakehay Centre in Wadham Street, Weston-super-Mare



The Blakehay Centre

environmental topics that affect us all – and a valuable opportunity to network informally with likeminded people.

The aim is to bring people together, spark enthusiasm and discussion, and provide the information, inspiration and encouragement needed to take action and help create a better, safer and greener environment. Green Talk focuses on three essential topics: energy, local sustainability and food

The morning session will look at how we can conserve energy and the changes that we need to make to create a greener, safer planet. Discover how to reduce the cost of your fuel bill and the alternatives that we will be forced to consider as the world's oil reserves run out. Learn more too about pioneering models of environmental sustainability that are being adopted by a growing number of cities, towns and villages throughout the UK and how everyone of us can play a part in safeguarding and protecting our planet.

The afternoon session will examine good food options that needn't cost the earth. Learn how

With some great speakers (shortly to be announced), we will be offering the opportunity to learn more about some key

eating food that's naturally and sustainably produced could be better for you and the planet.

Tickets for Green Talk@The Blakehay will be available in advance via the enclosed booking form or on the door. Due to the expected popularity of this event advance booking is advised.

### AGM

Those who came to our AGM enjoyed mince pies and mulled wine and when the main business was finished, were entertained and educated with presentations on butterflies and bats.



Tony Moulin

We said farewell to Len Dowie who has retired from our committee and thanks were made for the valuable input from him over the years. We are pleased that he is remaining as a TENONS member. Also leaving us is Gareth Price whose new job has meant that he has moved up to Lincolnshire; we wish him good luck with his new role.

Welcomed to the committee were Sonia Russé and Muluh Nkem. Sonia has, as a co-opted member, already contributed greatly, not least with the Green Festival@The Quarry.



Sonia Russé

As a networking group up to now we have never charged a membership fee. However, we now have to raise finance in order to cover ongoing costs of insurance, newsletters, website, hire of meeting halls and speakers' fees, so a decision was made to introduce a small fee of £5 per person. This was put forward and passed by those present at the meeting.

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## **Zero Waste Challenge Week**

**Lucy Elston: NSC**

Over 350 zero waste packs were requested before the zero waste challenge week which ran from September 29<sup>th</sup> to October 5<sup>th</sup>. The week was successful in raising the profile of waste minimisation, although only 35 packs were received back.

The feedback from the participants that did return their forms was very positive, and almost all (33) said that they would take part in the challenge again in the future, with the other two saying they would take part again if they thought there was something extra that they could do next time. Many participants managed to reduce their waste by three quarters, with one resident cutting their waste from eight carrier bags to just one.

North Somerset Council have made good links with several community groups across the district, and the key to further success next year will be to maintain a close working relationship between the two, working together from earlier on in the year to make sure the week is promoted more effectively.

Other suggestions for improvements were to have an online feedback form and to advertise more, and get more publicity. If you have any suggestions or comments about the zero waste challenge week then please contact Lucy Elston, Assistant Waste Minimisation Officer on [lucy.elston@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.elston@n-somerset.gov.uk)

## **The local Access Forum**

### **Public Rights of Way and Open Access**

**Richard Greenland : LAF Member**

Those of you have seen the January issue of Life from North Somerset Council will have noticed that there is a large section on getting healthy in 2009, getting more active and a walk on the Strawberry Line. These items highlight the opportunity to work off some of the Christmas excesses, get some fresh air in your lungs and improve your general health while doing

something that is environmentally friendly, does not cost the earth and allows you to enjoy the wonderful countryside in North Somerset.

North Somerset Council has a small team employed to maintain our Public Rights of Way (PROW) whether they be in countryside or urban areas. With hundreds of miles of footpaths and bridleways it isn't possible for the small team to monitor and maintain them all without the help of the general public and parish councils. There is also government legislation to be implemented. As years go by some little used paths can fall into disuse, become overgrown or damaged due to flooding, landslip, fallen trees, ploughing, etc.

Following the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 the North Somerset Local Access Forum (LAF) was established to advise North Somerset Council on the improvement of public access land. Although appointed by North Somerset Council the LAF is an independent body that works under national regulations to provide independent and impartial advice.

The LAF consists of 21 local members of the public (including three North Somerset Councillors) with an interest in countryside access. The members are drawn from three distinct groups to provide balance:

Rights of way and access land users (Ramblers etc)

Landowners and tenants (Farmers etc)

Other interests (tourism, conservation etc)

In the past year the LAF has provided help and guidance on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, given advice on Parish Plans, considered Horse Riding policy and problems in the district and debated the provision of path furniture such as gates and styles. These are major strategic issues that are always in our mind when considering more general items such as:

- Coastal access
- Planning and development issues
- Dog control orders
- Safety disabled access

- Vehicle traffic (parking, road crossing points and illegal path use)

We want everyone to enjoy the countryside, but there will always be problems and conflicts of interest. If while you are out enjoying your right to access to the countryside or use an urban access path and you encounter a problem, obstruction etc., do something about it as soon as you can. If it is something you can fix while on a walk, do it. If you cannot fix it report it to someone who can. The PROW team can be contacted on 01934 888802. You can also report it to your Parish Council as some parishes have a parish warden.

If you wish to comment on a major issue, then please contact the LAF secretary, Richard Philips, on 01934 888802.

To enjoy your walk to the full make sure you dress for the weather conditions and wear stout foot ware. Remember, it is always best to use the appropriate OS map which shows all PROW and follow the way markers along your route. Do not trespass on private property.

### The North Somerset Partnership

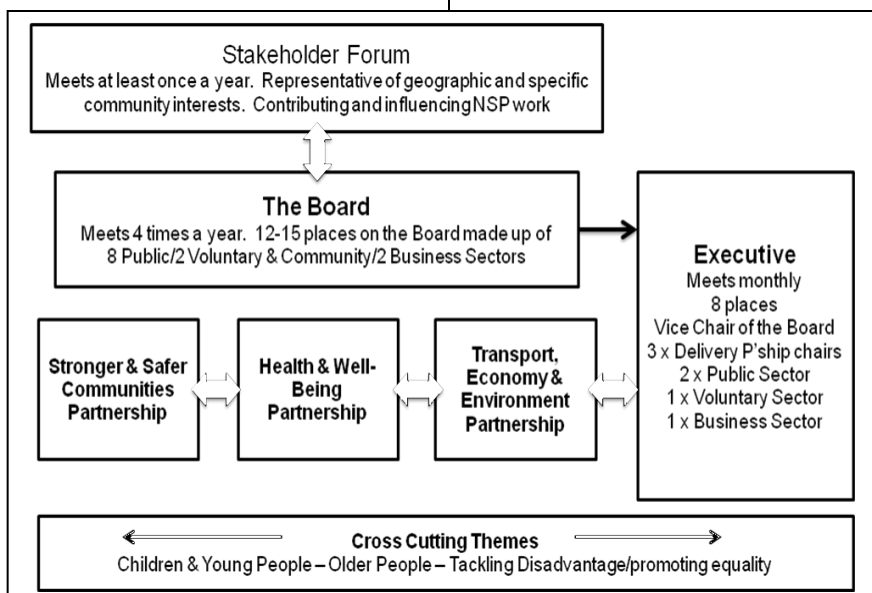
The North Somerset Partnership (NSP) is the strategic partnership for North Somerset. It is non statutory and brings together different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors, and its role is to work together to

improve quality of life for those living in, working in or visiting North Somerset. This is achieved through implementing the Sustainable Community Strategy for which the Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a key delivery mechanism. LAA decision making is devolved to a local authority level thereby making delivery systems more flexible and straight forward. Central to this delivery is a set of 198 National Indicators issued in 2008 by the Government, of which 11 are on environmental sustainability and cover CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, recycling, climate change, air quality, street cleanliness and biodiversity

Your NSP is changing to further improve their governance and performance management so as to be in a strong position to deliver the shared priorities and aims contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy. You will see the proposed new structure in the diagram.

We are pleased that TENONS is included in the new organisation with representation on the Transport, Economy & Environment Partnership. This will enable us to both feed in your views and pass information on to you concerning environmental matters.

Linking to the NSP is a new forum called 'The Voluntary and Community Sector Forum' and will consist of representatives of the Voluntary, Community and Society Enterprise Sectors. See their website [www.vansweb.org.uk](http://www.vansweb.org.uk) for more details



North Somerset Partnership

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Membership will include free entrance to our monthly meetings with a £2 charge for visitors. You will continue to receive our newsletter and can put articles on TENONS website free of charge. And, of course, your continued support will help towards planned future events.

### North Somerset Nappy Alliance

North Somerset Council in association with boocoo mother and baby ([www.boocoo.co.uk](http://www.boocoo.co.uk)) are developing a new real nappy network called the North Somerset Nappy Alliance. The aim is to launch the Alliance in Real Nappy Week 2009 (April 27 – May 3).

Nearly 3 billion nappies are thrown away in the UK every year. The vast majority of these (90%) end up in landfill. It could take hundreds of years for the plastics in disposable nappies to decompose.



Nappy Cat Walk Show

Real, cotton nappies are a great alternative to disposable nappies as they not only reduce the amount of waste being sent to landfill, but can also save parents money, are made of natural materials so contain less chemicals and now come in lots of funky styles.

The Alliance will act as an advice and information point for anyone interested in real nappies and their use. We would like to invite parents, health professionals, real nappy agents, sellers and stockists and anyone else interested in real nappies to join the network. We would like to spread the message of the benefits and

advantages of using real nappies, as recognition in North Somerset is currently quite low.

Our first meeting is being held 10.00 a.m. Wed 25<sup>th</sup> Feb at The Museum,

Burlington Road, Weston. If you would like to join the network, attend the meeting or just for more information see



[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/realnappies](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/realnappies) or contact Lucy Elston, Assistant Waste Minimisation Officer at North Somerset Council on 01934 426011 or [lucy.elston@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.elston@n-somerset.gov.uk)

### TENONS Website

A further change has been a ‘makeover’ for our website by our Webmaster, Andy Darvill. With a modern, clear design and two new additions being a directory of environmental groups and in due course a directory of speakers.

We hope to eventually have a directory of all green groups in the county ... and just over the border. We need permission from each group or organisation and if you want your organisation or social enterprise included, please just drop us a line, email or phone us.

### Dates for your Diary

Tues 10<sup>th</sup> Feb : 10.00 a.m – 2.00 p.m.  
‘Making the Most of Orchards’, Failand Village Hall, N. Somerset. Booking is essential.  
Contact 0117 953 2141 or email [info@forestofavon.org.uk](mailto:info@forestofavon.org.uk)

Wed 18<sup>th</sup> Feb : 7.30 p.m.  
‘Packaging UnWRAPped’ Sally White from WRAP (Waste Recovery Action Programme)

Wed 18<sup>th</sup> Mar. 7.30 p.m.  
‘How should we respond to the dangers of Climate Change’ Joe Burlington, Chairman of South Somerset Climate Action

Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Mar. 10.00 – 4.00  
Green Talk@The Blakehay : Inspirational day of talks and presentations  
Booking essential £3 morning session/£3 afternoon session or £7 all day including refreshments.

28<sup>th</sup> Mar : Earth Hour : All round the world people will be switching off at 8.30 p.m. Chance maybe for a candlelight dinner, cold buffet of course!

26-27 June : Bristol BioBlitz, Ashton Park a 30-hour race against the clock event where people work together to find and identify all the wildlife in a certain area. <http://www.bnhc.org.uk>

Views expressed by individuals or other organisations are their own and not necessarily those of TENONS