



**Women's
Environmental
Network**

NEWSLETTER

October 09

Note from the secretary -

Wow! What a quick summer break we had! Only seems like a short while ago we were thinking about what to grow in our allotment and planning our summer break! Here we are now in October with the clocks having gone back and dreading the long winter ahead. Here at WEN, we don't mind the winter. It's time to catch up on friends, (old and new), share our summer stories and bring ourselves back together to see what we can do to help others realise just how easy it can be to help others obtain a healthier and happier lifestyle to the one that is called 'mainstream'. Since moving in with my boyfriend, I have realised that some of my 'fancy' environmental ideas can be a bit 'ahem' trying on the 'uneducated'. But with a bit of training, explaining and being 'a stubborn cow' my thoughts are being brought more to the norm. He's still not sure where the veg peelings and tea bags go when they get taken from the kitchen (the wormery honey), or what the strange black box thing in the garden is (the wormery honey), but he knows that the stuff coming out of it helps the herb box grow some of the healthiest, tastiest herbs he's ever seen. Now I just have to convince him that the silicone thing left in the bathroom sometimes is not a strange shot glass (its a mooncup honey).

Are you looking for a part-time job?

Organisation for Responsible Businesses (ORB) will be launching soon and we need some extra help! ORB is a business membership organisation, encouraging businesses to be more socially and environmentally responsible. We are based in Southend-on-Sea and launching in Essex, but our goal is to expand nationally as soon as possible. We are currently looking for admin / PA staff and telesales / customer service staff. Staff need to be experienced and, very importantly, share the challenge we have set ourselves in bringing about a mind set change in the business community so that "people and planet" are always considered in any business decisions. The positions are part-time with a modest salary to start, but loads of potential for the right people.

Text Alerts

If you wish to receive information on the next WEN event direct to your mobile, text 'Yes Please' with your name to 07941154166. You will not be charged for any texts you receive, and you can cancel at any time by texting 'no more' to the same number. Its a great way to receive a little reminder in the busy world we live in.



Dig in Community Allotment

We are approaching the end of our first year of cultivation and we have done very well. We have a wonderful shed – The WENdi House. There are raised beds, tools and all the equipment to grow wonderful vegetables and flowers.

Most Fridays Eileen has a group of learning disabled young adults from SummerCare and they greatly enjoy themselves. In July she took them to the refectory in Priory Park to participate in the East Anglia in Bloom event. They took along a few samples of our produce and ‘networking’ took place.

Also, on 9th September, Dig In were invited to attend The Good for Leigh award session in the council offices, where we were given a Good For Leigh Certificate for our contribution to the local community.

Mainly due to Eileen’s regular radio appearances, we are gradually attracting new members who come when they can on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays. We are planning on asking the people who have shown interest in Dig In if they would welcome different hours for the sessions. They are currently organised for 10 until 12 on these mornings. We were wondering if people would like to have later sessions, eg 11 until 3. So we may be changing the times.

So far this year we have harvested, cabbages, cauliflowers, runner beans, fennel, carrots, beetroot, swiss chard, potatoes, parsley, basil, bay leaves, onions, garlic and the most abundant tomatoes. So far, we have picked over 70 lbs of different types of tomatoes and there are still plenty more to come. We will shortly be lifting all the rest of the potatoes and can have a final weigh-in for these as well. We have been donated a large pair of scales so we are able to record the weights of all our harvests.

Our resident badgers are still collecting our straw, which does mean that they trample over some vegetables but, by and large, we are managing to get along with them very well.

There are plenty of pictures taken throughout the year on our blog at www.seewen-allotment.org.uk

National WEN - Our national 'mother' organisation is (like many of us!) suffering financial difficulties and has had to move into smaller offices in order to cut costs. WEN nationally do sterling work co-coordinating and supporting branches and are often consulted by government and others on various issues so it is important that we continue to give them our support. If you are not a member of WEN *please* look at their website - www.wen.org.uk - and JOIN TODAY! Its not expensive and your membership will make all the difference. *Other ways to help - Remember to use www.everyclick.com when accessing the national WEN website cos then WEN gets some money for every hit!*
Easy donations can be made through the WEN website, just click the paypal link.

Not just for books! Southend Central Library is currently loaning Energy Cost Monitors so you can see how much energy your favourite appliances use! You must have a library card and also bring a utility bill for identification and see where you can save money around the house. (The main one I found was by not ironing!!)

Another item to note happening at local libraries is the 'Cyclewatch' scheme, where you can get your bike fitted with a security tag so if it does get stolen and then recovered, it can find it's way back to you. This is a free service organised by Southend Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), supported by Southend Cycle Watch, Essex Police, Essex Fire and Rescue Service and Southend Libraries. Dates for tagging are Southchurch Library, Saturday 26th September 2009 (9.30am - 1.00pm), Kent Elms Library, Saturday 17th October 2009 (9.30am - 1.00pm), Southend Library Saturday 9th January 2010 (10.00am - 3.00pm), Westcliff Library, Saturday 20th February 2010 (9.30am - 1.00pm)

That time of year is nearly upon us and the main question on my lips is real or artificial? I am, of course, talking about Christmas trees. A real one is lovely to have, but in reality, a tree should be outside. An artificial one does last years but think of all that plastic! There are companies now that you can hire a tree from! Oh yes! They will deliver your required tree in a pot and then collect it in the new year to be planted in their 'forests'. You can even have your tree 'tagged' so you get the same one the following year! Its an expensive service, but one I think I will enjoy. See www.christmastreeman.co.uk for more details.

Saturday November 7th 2009, 10.30 am

Eco chat and coffee

NB: discussion of chemicals in baby products postponed until January.

Venue: Café Utopia, 2 The Royals, High St, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1DQ

To find out more phone: Eileen on 01268 752264

Saturday November 7th 2009

Bonfire Party

Bonfire Party at WEN's community food growing project 'DIG IN'

Venue: Manchester Drive allotments, Leigh on Sea

For more information call Carol on 01702 342148

Thursday November 19th 2009

Introduction to the Three Tonne Club

Monthly meeting at Fresh Horizons. The Three Tonne Club has been described as like Weightwatchers but you count carbon emissions instead of calories (and can still eat chocolate!)

Venue: Fresh Horizons, Ditton Court Road, Westcliff

Friday November 27th 2009

'WHAT A WAY TO GO

a film about Climate Change. Essential viewing for anyone concerned to work towards a better future

Venue: YMCA shop Southchurch Road 7 pm. Admission Free.

Saturday November 28th 2009

Natural cosmetics & toiletries house party

house party given by Neal's Yard

For more information call Jo Murrell on 079 4641 9282

Saturday December 5th

Eco chat with coffee

Venue: Cafe Utopia, 2 The Royals, High St, Southend SS1 1DQ. 10.30

Several members will be going to London for the Stop Climate Change Coalition march 'THE WAVE'

- if you'd like to join us on that please phone Eileen on 01268 752264

Saturday January 2nd

Would you like to save money while still ensuring your babies and children have the best possible start in life?

The Women's Environmental Network will be in the upstairs room of Café Utopia to share ideas about which products are best for your children – and which products should perhaps be avoided!

Ever more people are thinking about which food is best for baby, but does as much thought go into what we put on baby's skin? Are all the toiletries on the market completely safe?

If you'd like to know more do call in to see us upstairs at Café Utopia. We've lots of free samples to give away and it'll be good to meet with you!

Venue: Café Utopia, 2 The Royals, High St, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1DQ

To find out more phone: Eileen on 01268 752264

The Women's Environmental Network is one of Britain's leading environmental charities and aims to educate, inform and empower women and men who care about the environment. WEN campaigns on environmental and health issues from a woman's perspective and with a sound scientific basis. For more information - Local contact **Eileen Peck 01268 752264**; National Contact **P O Box 30626, London, E1 1TZ**; Website - **www.wen.org.uk**.

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