



ZEGG Receives Ecovillage Excellence Award

Two members of the German ZEGG community, Ramona Stucki and Wam Kat, received the 2005 Ecovillage Excellence Award during Green Week in Brussels in early June.

The Award was presented by French MEP and youngest-ever Deputy President of the Parliament, Marie Anne Isler Béguin. Speaking to journalists and to the Commission's own television network, Marie Anne especially commended ZEGG on the work it has done in taking the models and initiatives developed within the ecovillage – in the areas of waste water treatment, permaculture design and organic food production – out of the ecovillage and into the wider region in which it's based.

During the Green Week conference and exhibition, whose



theme this year was 'Climate Change', GEN-Europe was one of the very few participants promoting a systemic change in the nature and structure of society, as opposed to the adoption of piecemeal technological and institutional reforms.

At one of the conference

sessions, GEN-Europe Executive Secretary, Jonathan Dawson, suggested that ecovillages form an important building block of the new society that needs to emerge if we are to make the transition to sustainability. Email: jonathan@gen-europe.org for further details.

French Ecovillages Move Up A Gear

News on two fronts from the French ecovillage network. First, a group of French ecovillagers has created an association named 'les C.I.é.s' (Creation and Links for Ecology and Solidarity).

This new partnership aims to promote and link together economic, social and cultural initiatives that promote an ecological and cooperative lifestyle.

The first event organised by les C.I.é.s is 'FestiForum', a gathering that hopes to bring together concrete initiatives in the fields of habitat, science and technology, agriculture, nutrition, health, education, social relations and local economy. The event will take place between 30 September and 5 October 2005 at St. Antoine l'Abbaye, Isère.

For further details, please contact Jean-Michel Pochat at jeanmi3@hotmail.com.



Second, *Passerelle Eco*, the GEN-Europe partner magazine that carries news on ecovillages and ecological living, has announced that it is moving to a new eco-settlement in Bourgogne, between Paris and Lyon.

Event and workshop space is planned and it is anticipated that workshops will be offered in a range of eco-building and other appropriate technologies. Visitors are welcomed on a wwoof-style basis.

For more information about this, please contact Jean-Luc Massot directly at asso@passerelleco.info

Educating for 'One World, One Environment' at CAT

The education department at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) is involved in an exciting international education project, 'One World, One Environment'.

Funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and run by iEARN UK (International Education and Research Network), the project aims to get young people thinking about sustainability both on a local and global scale, via the medium of the internet.

CAT is an ideal partner in the project, given the Education department's considerable experience and expertise in sustainability.

As well as writing key resource materials for the project, a training session was held at the centre in January 2005.

Whilst at CAT, 20 teachers from Wales learnt about the concept of ecological footprinting and then calculated their own footprint. They were

astonished to find out that if every person in the world lived like them, then we would need 1 to 5 planets to sustain us! Armed with this knowledge, the teachers will be better able to help pupils find out more about their own footprint. The pupils will then be able to communicate with students around the world via the iEARN UK website about what they can do both locally and globally to make their footprint more sustainable.

The first phase of the project is due to be completed by July 2005, when there will be an online conference to celebrate its success. Training materials are available on the iEARN website for those joining the project. To get involved in the initiative email: iearnuk@aol.com

A downloadable teacher's resource pack used in the project called 'Where's the Impact' is available from the Education section of the CAT website: www.cat.org.uk



NEWS IN BRIEF

ECOVILLAGES PARTICIPATE IN FINNISH SOCIAL FORUM

A team from GEN-Finland took part in the third Finnish Social Forum, 9-10 April 2005 in Helsinki, offering a workshop on ecovillages.

A presentation about ecovillages in Finland was given by Liisa Jääskeläinen and there was a special focus on the three ecovillages that were represented at the Forum (Keuruu ecovillage, the Suomineito community and the Katajanmäki community).

The session was heavily over-subscribed and many who wanted to participate could not find a place.

For further details on this event please contact Liisa Jääskeläinen, via email at: Liisa.Jaaskelainen@oph.fi

FINNISH ECOVILLAGE RECEIVES EU FUNDING

An innovative approach to ecovillage development in Finland has won financial support from the European Commission's Leader programme.

Kivisalo community village, based in Kuopio in the east of Finland, is pioneering a new model, shifting from a privately owned farm to the status of a co-operative. The farm covers 121 hectares, including forests and five kilometres of coastline.

The project has been awarded Euros 9,000 under the Leader scheme for the undertaking of a study into the legal issues involved in the switch in status and in getting the process started.

Preliminary estimation is that there could well be space for more than 100 places for individual buildings.

More members are currently being sought for the initiative.

For further information on the project see the website: www.kivis.fi

GOOD NEWS For The Roundhouse At Brithdir Mawr, Wales



The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park in Wales has decided for the moment not to proceed with seeking an injunction in an attempt to force Tony Wrench and Jane Faith to demolish the celebrated Roundhouse at Brithdir Mawr in Newport, Pembrokeshire until their new policy on low impact developments comes into force around May 2006.

This is the first time for over five years that the threat of imminent demolition has been lifted and is a tribute to the sustained support from countless people over the years to urge the authorities to give greater consideration to low impact and sustainable lifestyles.

The roundhouse dwellers, together with Emma Orbach, who has an embryonic community of strawbale huts nearby at

Tir Ysbrydol (Spiritual Land), will be putting forward an outline proposal for a low impact settlement within the new policy 50 when it is officially adopted. Until then, they have agreed not to build any more roundhouses in the immediate area.

Tony says: 'Thanks to all our supporters. We and the cats are extremely relieved. It has been a very instructive process to hold out against rules that have hitherto been taken as unquestioned gospel, and to see how a planning authority can be encouraged to change its policies as a result of people power on the ground. Ask your local planners what policies they are working on to encourage low impact and sustainable structures and living clusters, and keep your eyes open for a chance to join the consultation process, so

that your, and others', progress may be easier.'

Simon Fairlie at Chapter 7, has been collecting details of people prepared to help in similar situations where builders and architects are suffering under an unsustainable and outdated planning regime which favours volume developers over ordinary people. Contact Simon on 01460 249 204.

As friends of Tony and Jane *Permaculture Magazine* will continue to give readers updates on events surrounding the house and community. You can find out about Brithdir Mawr community by visiting www.brithdirmawr.com and www.thatroundhouse.info for updates and information. For further information email Tony Gosling at office@evnuk.org.

Tony and Jane based the design of their highly ecological home on Iron Age houses and the work of celebrated US cordwood builder, Rob Roy. They used local Douglas fir, recycled glass and other materials and built in the round, with a turf roof and used an array of low impact technology: simple solar water heating, passive solar design, a dry toilet and a small photovoltaic panel.

They built the house in 1997 and detailed the techniques and features in the book *Building A Low Impact Roundhouse* (Permanent Publications).

Ecovillages & 'Sustainable Contraction' in Italy

The ecovillage movement actively participated at Fa' la Cosa Giusta (Do the Right Thing), the Italian national fair on critical consumption and sustainable living, held in Milan on 18-20 March 2005.

Ecovillages Torri Superiore and Bagnaia, and the Italian network RIVE presented themselves and their programmes at the largest sustainability-related convention in the country, visited by over 10,000 people daily.

Their presence was focused on the promotion of the principle of sustainable contraction,

a much advocated cultural shift in the direction of deep social change, already researched and debated by distinguished scholars and ecologists worldwide, among whom are the French philosophers Pierre Rabi and Serge Latouche who write of 'Decroissance soutenable' www.decroissance.soutenable.org/ (Institut d'études économiques et sociales pour la décroissance soutenable).

During a presentation, Lucilla Borio of Torri Superiore said: "The marriage between ecovillages and sustainable contrac-



tion is a natural match, a direct application of the permaculture principle of taking direct responsibility over our lives through our daily actions... reduction of costs and increase in the quality of life walk together hand in hand."