

Green Centre News

Morsbags prove popular on Tynwald Day

The decision to promote Zero Waste Mann's Morsbags initiative - to help rid the IOM of plastic shopping bags - on the Fair Field at Tynwald turned out to be an inspired one as the stand proved to be incredibly popular.

Throughout the day there was a steady flow of visitors to the stand, either watching how the bags are made, or inquiring if they could make one themselves.

Over 150 Morsbags, many of which were made on the day, were exchanged for plastic bags handed in by members of the public, who were very keen to give up their tatty plastic bag for a posh Morsbag.

Even ZWM Treasurer, Roger Tomlinson took his turn on the manually powered, almost antique, Singer sewing machines.

ZWM would like to publicly thank Hilary Cairns and Julie Dropinski for their magnificent efforts in making this event a success.

In fact the initiative is proving so popular ZWM is in desperate need of material to make up the kits that are used to make the bags (see inside story).



The Morsbags crew hard at work

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TTXGP a whispering success

The inaugural running of the zero emissions race at the annual IOM TT races proved to be a far bigger success than could ever have been imagined.

Despite early organisational hic-ups, and only having a short time to build and test machines, several university and manufacturers teams were entered in both the open and pro classes; and contrary to the expectations of many the majority of the 13 starters completed the 37 plus mile course.

All the bikes ended up being battery powered electric machines as none of the proposed hydrogen fuelled machines satisfied the stringent NOx emissions standard.

However, it is hoped with further development they will be eligible to run in future events.



Chris Petty on his way to an 'open class' race runners-up spot

Local team ManTTX set the pace in practise for the open class but a problem in the race proved terminal and the bike stopped near Glen Duff. It is hoped to carry a 'road test' of this machine in a future addition of the newsletter.

Sensation of the week was, without doubt, the Agni X01 machine which lapped at an incredible 87mph, topped over 100mph along the Sulby Straight; and apparently still had quite a bit left in the 'tank' at the end of the lap.

Owing to the success of the TT event the FIM has now announced a world series.

Latest News:

- Thanks to support from HSBC, in the form of their 'environmental' awards, the Green Centre is now reconnected to the phone system. You can call the centre on 666029 or send an email to greencentre@manx.net

A house with no space heating costs



Will there be a passive house 'revolution' in the Isle of Man?

Put simply, a passive house is a house with very high levels of insulation, very low air leakage and a controlled ventilation system.

On a wet un-summer like Friday in July, MEAC attended a seminar on passive houses. A passive house is a house built to such high standards of insulation and sealing, with a controlled ventilation system, that it does not need any space heating system – that is zero space heating bills.

The seminar was organised by Wolf Environmental Consultancy, and the speaker was the Gothenburg International Environment Prize winning Hans Eek a world leader in the design and construction of passive homes. Hans develops passive homes in the cold Swedish climate, so our mild IOM climate is just so easy in comparison.

Hans travels the world to spread the word on passive houses. On a global scale, the energy used in buildings amounts to 40% of total energy use, so reducing this energy use can have a massively beneficial effect on global warming and climate change.

So did Hans spread the word on the IOM? Well very definitely yes. The seminar was presented to an audience of some 28 people made up of Government representatives (6), Architects (6), Construction / Developers (4), IOM College representatives (4), Engineering / Surveyors (4), and 4 others from conservation and the MEA. A wide spread of individuals all with a broad interest in the building industry.

Besides the seminar, there were specific presentations, on the previous day, to the planning department, building control department and housing department in DOLGE. There was also the obligatory radio interview,

so all in all the subject of Passive homes was well publicised on the Island.

Passive houses in more detail

Put simply, a passive house is a house with very high levels of insulation, very low air leakage and a controlled ventilation system. The Swedish definition of a passively heated home, for a single family dwelling, is one where the heat requirement to achieve an internal temperature of +20°C is no more than 12W per square metre.

This is achieved, in Sweden, by using 500mm of insulation in the roof, 400mm of insulation in the walls and 300mm of insulation in the floor. Windows are triple glazed and have a U value of 0.9W/m².K A most important item is the sealing of the home to prevent uncontrolled air changes. The sealing should be such that no more than 0.3l/s per m² of air leaks from the house when it is pressurised to 50Pa. A controlled ventilation system is then added to transfer the heat from air being exhausted from the house to the fresh air entering the house. A controlled air change rate of 0.5 is then used in the passive home standard.

By rigorously working to these techniques the space heating for the house is reduced to zero, or more accurately the heat needed to replace the meagre losses is obtained from the waste heat produced by electrical appliances, cooking, and the heat given off by the occupants. The conventional heating system with radiators etc is therefore eliminated. The savings made by eliminating the space heating system pays for the increased costs of the passive house, so the overall cost of a passive house is about the same as a 'conventional' house.

Continued on back page

More material needed by ZWM to keep Morsbags momentum going

The huge success of the 'morsbags' project being run by Zero Waste Mann means that the Charity desperately needs fresh supplies of discarded material, such as clean duvet covers and curtains.

People Island wide are busily sewing colourful shopping bags with the aim of displacing the ubiquitous plastic bag. Schools are getting involved as well as the inmates of Jurby Prison.

Hilary Cairns says: *"We're delighted with the response. There's no doubt that the public are in favour of*

eliminating plastic bags and this is a fun way for anyone, of any age, to do it.



What's been great to see is the

enthusiasm of parents and children promising to make a bag together."

ZWM estimates that there are in excess of 5 million bags used on the Island each year, despite the recent steps by some stores to discourage issuing bags.

It's just not sustainable to keep producing this number of plastic bags; and we should be aiming to become the first plastic shopping bag free small Island.



If you want to get involved with this exciting recycling project call in at the Green Centre, any Saturday between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

Donations of material can also be taken to Green Centre.

websites: www.morsbags.org

www.plasticbagfree.com



Hilary talks to yet another potential morsbagger

Enjo - Green Cleaning by Kathryn Kimmons

Replace cleaning chemicals, detergents and abrasives, both inside and outside the home with plain cold tap water!

Friedrich Engl, a pioneer of fibre technology developed in 1990 a range of cleaning fibres for all areas of the home. Surfaces have millions of microscopic pores that harbour dirt and harmful bacteria, the most powerful chemical cleaner cannot get into the little pores to remove the hidden bacteria. Using fibre technology the microscopically small

fibres reach into the smallest pores and crevices that are only visible with a microscope. The fibres trap and hold the dirt and bacteria which are removed quickly and efficiently without the need to use chemicals.

Each fibre is made up of 1056 individual fibres. The resulting filament is a unique wedge shape that has the ability to hold 7 times its own weight in water and contains edges that lift and trap dust, dirt, grease and grime within the filament which is only released when washed.

Using fibre gloves to clean your house will prevent 32 litres of chemicals per year going into waterways and 70 plastic bottles ending up in landfill. Your family's health will be safeguarded from exposure to harmful chemicals and money will be saved through not buying expensive cleaning products.

More information and fibre products can be obtained by contacting Kate Kimmons at Kathryn.kimmons@enjo.co.uk or telephone 308454.

Your family's health will be safeguarded from exposure to harmful chemicals and money will be saved through not buying expensive cleaning products

FoE Northern Gathering May 09 by Phil Corlett



For the 3rd year in a row IoM FoE attended this regular get together of local groups in the UK, the idea being to make connections, get ideas, learn techniques from the numerous workshops that run over the 2 days ranging from media training/better communication to running local groups better and updates on new campaigns.

As per last year it was at the Manchester Youth Hostel and yet again Phil Corlett travelled alone to the event (where are all the groupies?) – to get there in good time I left on the Friday ‘crack of dawn’ boat, then by train up to Manchester arriving at around 5pmit would have been earlier but I got lost in the BIG city for an hour!

FoE UK staff are very friendly and helpful and in the past I’ve helped set up for the start the next day at midday, which gets me free B&B on Friday night!

They’re an industrious lot and we were still working on the props up till 9pm when we went for a meal and a drink, returning not too late as it was an 8.30 start the next day.

It’s a lot more rewarding helping from the start as you get to see all the work that goes into setting up these events and after a fair bit of sign making, laying out leaflets, shifting tables and working on ‘a tree of ideas’, by 11.30am some of us went forth to the local stations to meet the expected 60-70 members of the Northern Groups who would be arriving at them.

After registration and lunch the work began with the start of workshops then discussion groups, one chaired by me on ‘Can we educate people to have fewer

children?’ - as population becomes more and more of an issue in today’s environmentally changing world, despite numerous other discussions going on at the same time 10 people attended an interesting group talk.

In the afternoon we had an outside event involving all of us spelling out various statements (by holding individual letters) about the new campaigns ‘Get serious about CO2’ & ‘Fix the Food Chain’ & a message for the Copenhagen summit this December.

After Saturday dinner there’s break out groups until about 9pm then if you have any energy left a few beers are consumed – the younger ones kept going after midnight with guitar playing & singing (some of us managed it till 12!).

Sunday morning I was up again for about 8am and after brekkie there were ‘Lightning Talks’ where you get 5mins to tell an audience about your local campaigns or group – I spoke about the way we here on the IoM have to change/adapt or even DO completely different ones from FoE UK’s campaigns as we’re pretty unique having our own government and laws – this raised a few eye brows amongst the members there as most weren’t aware of this.

The busy w/e was closed with a talk by Andy Atkins, Chief Executive of FoE UK who took over from Tony Junipa 1yr ago who also answered Q’s from the floor, one raised by me on why they’d dropped funding of Marinet, who have been so helpful to us on the issue of ‘proposed’ marine dredging off our coast. It seems FoE UK too have funding problems with the credit crunch as

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FoE Northern Gathering cont

many of these sponsors have been affected and now one and a half million pounds will have to be shaved off the organisations expenditure, probably affecting some of the UK staff?

To sum up I came away from the weekend tired but better informed, signed IoM FoE up to 'another'

campaign (Get serious about CO2), kept up good & useful communication links with UK staff and was also told by Rachel Hubbard (UK Network Developer) that IoM FoE should have a feature in the next change Your World....so remember to sign up to get it online

To sum up I came away from the weekend tired but better informed.

http://www.foe.co.uk/community/resource/get_cyw.html

And for info about the new campaigns:-

http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/biodiversity/press_for_change/food_chain_20419.html

<http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/newsletters/20689.html>



The Green Centre Yn Laare Ghllass

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Tel: 666029
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www.zerowastemann.org

www.meac.iofm.net

www.foe.org.im

Opening Hours: Saturdays 10.00 am - 2.00 pm
(Although often open till 4.00 pm)

Campaigning for the Island's environment



A house with no heating costs continued

By way of example, Hans quoted the time when a family first moved into a passive house. As the house had been empty it was cold. By the mid afternoon the temperature was still only around 16°C. The family contacted Hans for advice. Hans suggestion was to cook two mixes of scones. By the end of the baking session the family had a home at 20°C and scones for tea.

Thinking of building a new house

If you are thinking of, or about to start building a new house, then make sure you investigate the passive house concept. Ask your architect about them – and if he/she doesn't understand what they are then find another architect who does understand. It could well save you a lot of money, and cut your CO2 emissions at the same time.

Links www.passivhuscentrum.se

Article provided by George Fincher
MEAC

The Green Centre gets heat

In the recent HSBC 2009 Environmental awards, MEAC proposed, and was awarded the funds for the purchase of an air source heat pump. This heat pump will be used to demonstrate the technology to any unsuspecting member of the public caught passing the Green Centre. It will also provide some much welcome heat in the green centre during the long cold Saturdays of winter.

In the true spirit of recycling, the heat pump was purchased from Solar Tech as an ex demo model with an appropriate price reduction.

Thanks to the HSBC for funding this and please feel free to visit the Green Centre to view this example of heat pump technology.

Information provided by George Fincher MEAC

Don't forget to Compost

We are well into the growing season and if you are starting to struggle with the volume of grass cuttings, hedge clippings and other green waste help is at hand.

The Department of Local Government & the Environment is still providing financial support if you need to buy an additional compost bin.

In conjunction with Eden Park Garden Centre you can purchase a 330 litre compost bin for just £22, which is a saving of £27 on the retail price. Bases are available for an extra £10.

Eden Park also have 'compost tumblers' available for only £99; and it is claimed you can use these to make compost in just 21 days.

The Green Centre newsletter would be very pleased to hear from any one who has experience of the tumbler so we can provide feedback to other potential purchasers.

So did it live up to the claims and your expectations and would you recommend it to other composters? Or, conversely, was it an unmitigated disaster or some where between the two extremes?

Email your comments to greencentre@manx.net