

Low Carbon Oxford North News

Taking the CO₂ out of OX2



Spring 2014

Join Summertown's E-Car Club

Oxford's first community electric car club, is here! Set up in partnership with Low Carbon Oxford North (LCON) this is the UK's first entirely pay-per-use E-Car Club, and offers local people the convenience of a full sized private car without the high cost of owning one.

The car, a NISSAN LEAF, has a designated parking space in Diamond Place, it can go up to 75 miles on a charge, and there are plenty of charging points around Oxford and on the motorway. An LCON survey found there was a demand for this initiative locally and here it is - perfect for your local journeys.

E-Car Club membership could replace a second car, reduce your fuel bills and do its bit to reduce local traffic congestion. If you have any questions about the scheme, or the electric cars

'It goes really well. I've joined to get a sneak preview of a sustainable driving future. It gives me another travel option for work and private use.'

- new member, Tim Nicholson.



please do contact one of the E-Car Club team (Buster or Charlie) on 020 3603 2259 or email info@e-carclub.org.

With a one-off joining fee of £50 and a hiring fee of £6.50/hr, this is good value.



Local food can be fresher, tastier, cheaper, with less preservatives, less packaging, less transport energy and therefore less CO₂

Local Farmers' Markets

- **Cultivate's VegVan**, North end of Summertown shopping parade Thursdays, Noon - 3pm
- **North Parade**, 4th Saturday of the month, 9am - 2pm
- **Summertown**, Banbury Road, every Sunday, 10am - 2pm
- **Wolvercote Primary School**, First Turn, Sundays, 10am-1pm (with a cafe)

Local Veg-Box Schemes

- **North Aston Organics**, 01869 347 702
- **Veg-in-Clover**, Sandy Lane Farm, 01865 427 359

North Oxford affected by flooding?

In North Oxford, rising up to 10 metres above the Thames, householders rarely have to worry about flooding. But that doesn't stop the area feeling the effects of flooding elsewhere in the city.

This winter, with two main roads out of action for a week and the railway line also affected, disruption to transport and commuter travel affected everyone. Hard hit too were local traders. For some, recovering their financial losses may take a long time. Is there a link between recent weather and climate change? The Prime Minister is on record saying he suspected there was, and two leading UK climate scientists, Myles Allen of Oxford University and Peter Stott of the Met Office, have said that he was right to do so. Both stressed that unusually high rainfall could happen in the absence of global warming, as part of the natural variation of the weather, but that human influence on the climate was making such extremes more common.

Recovering from the effects of flooding is costly, but so too are strategies to prevent future flooding misery, and to protect individuals and communities.



Photo (cc) Michael O'Donnabhain

The County Council is thinking of building a £160 million flood relief channel to take flood water away from the city. Some are asking how this might affect communities further downstream. Others are suggesting a closer look at the Thames river system as a whole. What might help its upper reaches to retain more water and release it more slowly? In the short term these measures may prevent local flooding but won't solve the long term problems caused by climate change. In the meantime we can do our bit to slow down climate change by reducing our travel and stopping the waste of energy at home.

Good returns from Green Investments

With the weather becoming more and more uncertain, scientists are connecting this to the burning of coal, oil and gas. Yet a large proportion of investments we make in this country is made in these types of companies, including the pensions and savings of ordinary families.

From the experience of two recent local schemes, savers can get a return and do good at the same time. Share offers from both **Oxford North Community Renewables**, putting solar panels on local schools, and **Osney Lock Hydro**, putting a turbine into the Thames, were both oversubscribed. What's more, the majority of shareholders lived within a mile of these projects. Now the **Low Carbon Hub** is inviting schools across the County to do the same. **Ethex**, a locally based ethical investment service, offers a range of ethical opportunities to interested investors.

So do **Microgenius** and **Abundance**, both of which focus on renewable energy and community projects. Or you could simply move your cash to Triodos, or the Ecological Building Society.

Local investors are increasingly switching to make sure they are part of the solution, putting their money into green and ethical schemes. So much so that Ethex's recent survey found that Oxford has become one of the UK's ten hot spots for green investment.

See www.LCON.org.uk for links to these organisations.

Seen Big Belly?



Meet Oxford city's brand new **solar powered waste bin**. Each one is wired up to measure waste levels inside. When there's enough to compress, it is solar powered to do that, and then, when it is nearly full an alert is sent electronically to recycling@Oxford to say it's time to collect. A really smart bin!

Upcoming events

ReFashion@Oxford, Town Hall,
Oxford Thurs Feb 27th, 1-7pm.

Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop, at
Barracks Lane Community
Gardens (off Cumberland Road),
Sat, March 8th 10.30am -1.30pm

LCON AGM May (date tba)
Speaker: Jamie Hartzell, MD of
Ethex, Ethical & Green Investment

Low Carbon Oxford Week
June 14th-22nd 2014

Oxford City Green Open Homes
June 14th-15th

Summertown Summer Fair,
Friday June 29th, 3.15-5.30pm

This newsletter is published by **Low Carbon Oxford North (LCON)**, run by local people wanting to do their bit for climate change. If you can help please contact us by email, on the website, or on Twitter: [@LowCON](https://twitter.com/LowCON)



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The People's Power Station

The scheduled demolition of the iconic cooling towers in Didcot will not upset many. This follows the closure of Didcot 'A' power station after its 44 years of life.

And what of the 50% of the County's electricity that has been lost? For one local organisation, this is an opportunity rather than a problem. Barbara Hammond of the **Low Carbon Hub** explains *'the closure gives us a chance to build an alternative source: a People's Power Station replacing fossil fuel with energy reduction and renewable energy generation.'*

This can be done in a number of ways. Residents can install their own personal power station with solar panels, getting income from the government's feed in tariff; and they can reduce their own energy use through more efficient equipment and better practices at home. Much more information is available from the **Energy Saving Trust**.



Didcot Power Station Photo: (cc) Howard Stanbury

Another way, much in the news recently, is for house holders to switch their electricity provider to a green one such as **Good Energy**, **Green Energy**, **Ecotricity** or **Co-op Energy**. While the price plans of energy suppliers have been criticised by the government for their complexity, where they get their energy from is much clearer. You can make an immediate impact by switching supplier with the help of **Uswitch**. For links to these groups see: www.LCON.org.uk

Join us at: www.LCON.org.uk or email Sam on info@LCON.org.uk