

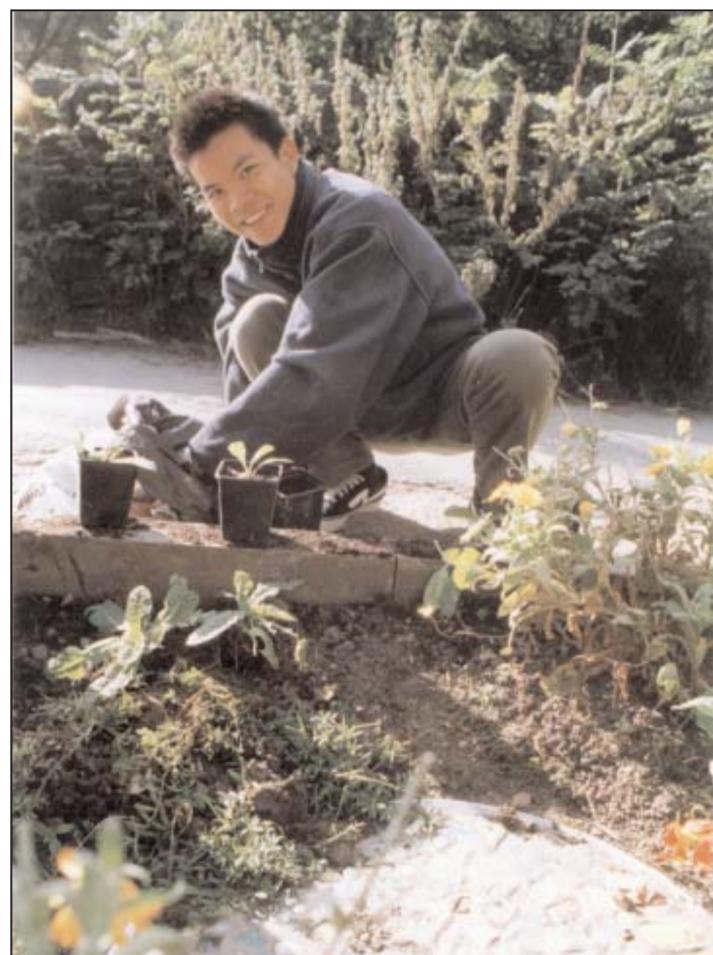
the green page

News and information from the Hebden Bridge Alternative Technology Centre

ATC CONTACTS

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The views expressed by individuals on the Green Page do not necessarily represent the views of the ATC.



LEFT: VSO volunteer Sothep Khaophrom potting up teasel seedlings in the Little Theatre Garden, Hebden Bridge. "Thep" is currently working with fellow volunteer James Corre at the ATC as part of World Youth Millennium Award Scheme.

Both will be based at the ATC's Hebble End Mill base for three months completing an intensive programme of projects designed to introduce them to all aspects of the Centre's activities.

MISSING SERVICES

The most recent edition of *Calderdale Call*, the newspaper of Calderdale Council, included a list of Council telephone numbers for "the services you need". Somehow they have inadvertently overlooked their commitment to the environment by missing out the contact details for their Environmental Strategy Team, Local Agenda 21 and Sustainability Forum.

These bodies can all be contacted on 392250. Contact details for the Home Energy Conservation Officer (392487), fly tipping and dumping (392319), and hazardous and toxic wastes (0113 2440191) were also omitted!

A to Z of recycling

The I's have it!

I's

Ideas – always research tried and tested practical solutions to problems! Many of today's so-called alternative technologies are merely recycled traditional ideas that employ the best examples of modern engineering. (The latest 2.75-megawatt wind-mill on Orkney can supply a whopping 1,700 homes with renewable energy!)

Incineration – Dioxins, furans, acid gases and heavy metals – just some of the pollutants created by burning waste. Incineration means that potentially valuable and reusable materials are destroyed forever. The Zero Waste strategy in New Zealand

has proven that by minimising waste and introducing effective recycling systems incineration is unnecessary. For more incineration information see www.foe/campaigns/waste/issues.

Industrial waste – many types of industrial waste can be recycled. Contact Calderdale's Recycling Officer on 392356 for further information.

Inkjets – recycle your inkjet cartridges! The ATC has freepost bags to send used cartridges to 'Tommy's Campaign' – the national baby charity. Many other charities run similar schemes.

Insulate – badly insulated buildings waste energy. (You can recycle the heat in your rooms by putting foil behind radiators to reflect heat back into the room, shelves above radiators also help to positively

change the heating pattern in rooms.) Many thermal insulation products are made from recycled materials. Warmcel is manufactured from 100% recycled newspaper and contains no toxic substances.

Investments – recycle your money ethically by switching your account to a bank or building society with sound environmental policies and letting your old bank know why you've changed! Last year the Co-Op bank declined £2.5million of income from sources that breached its ethical policy!

Irons – don't throw them away when you 'upgrade', donate your working irons to *Sitting Comfortably* (839482), remove plugs for re-use and recycle the flex and all metal parts of broken irons with *Kerbside* (01422 881110).



A Sideways Look

John Morrison

Road to Nowhere

Whenever the traffic threatens to grind to a shuddering halt (and that seems to be every other day here in sunny West Yorkshire) the cry goes up to build more roads. Or, as now, to widen the roads we already have - with the M1 and M62 the latest candidates for expansion. It's a hugely expensive option; worse, it fails to address our underlying transport problems. It's like trying to cure obesity by letting our belts out by a few more notches.

In the good old days, roads used to go from place to place. Now, to ensure the smooth flow of traffic, roads go wherever places aren't. Instead of being slim ribbons of tarmac, motorways gobble up the greenery on either side of them. They soon become

bloated with roundabouts, slip roads and cloverleaf junctions: a spider's web of concrete and tarmac spreading across the landscape. Businesses sprout up alongside the motorways as they did around the railways 150 years ago. Little Eaters, Happy Chefs, filling stations, distribution centres, car auctioneers and out-of-town shopping malls, conveniently sited in the middle of nowhere. Huge tracts of land are swallowed up in this way, just to keep the traffic moving. It wouldn't make much sense anywhere in the world; in an island as small as ours it's utter madness. It is a salutary experience to stand on a bridge spanning one of our motorways, to watch lorries filled with corn-flakes, underarm deodorants and other

staples of life in the 21st century heading north... and different lorries filled with corn-flakes, underarm deodorants and other staples of life in the 21st century heading south. I wonder, in my simplistic way, whether all these journeys are strictly necessary. If we weren't quite so insistent about moving goods around the country, maybe we wouldn't need to build so many new roads and mortgage our precious landscapes to the internal combustion engine.

It's amazing how accepting we are. If any other major system worked as inefficiently as motor traffic - with 25 million road deaths in a single century, appalling pollution, depletion of finite fossil fuels, huge increases in needless journeys and the number of vehicles - we wouldn't even entertain the idea. But we still cling to the much-vaunted 'personal freedom' a car is supposed to give us, like shipwrecked sailors clutching at driftwood.

Talking of shipwrecks, I am not the kind of person who gloats at others' misfortunes. So it gives me no pleasure to learn that MacDonalds and the nuclear power industry (two outfits close to Sir Bernard Ingham's heart and wallet) are having a few troubles. No pleasure whatsoever. Cheers, drinks all round.

BEYOND THE VALLEY

Positive green news stories from outside the Calder Valley.

SHAPING THE FUTURE

The Worldwatch Institute's annual study of world trends (*Vital Signs*) has uncovered promising news about the global production of renewable energies. Wind power capacity rose by 38% worldwide in 2001 to make it the fastest growing of all energy sources. Photovoltaic solar capacity increased by 36%, whilst a 15% surge in sales of energy efficient light bulbs potentially saved the energy equivalent to that produced by 40 coal-fired power plants.

TAKING THE MUCK

Following the abundant examples in Germany and Denmark, Holsworthy in Devon now has a Biogas power plant that will be able to generate all of the town's electricity needs as well as supplying hot water! Farm slurry will be collected from about 30 local farms and fermented to produce methane gas to power the plant. Pasteurised manure for farm use is returned at the end of the process.

PRIMING THE PUMPS

Whilst Yorkshire based Rix BioDiesel claim to be the first commercial producers of a diesel fuel made purely from vegetable oil and offer a delivery service to suppliers throughout the UK, a low-emission blended biodiesel (consisting of 5% rapeseed oil blended with 95% ultra-low sulphur diesel) went on sale to the public at Holbrook garage in Gloucestershire. Biodiesels offer lower emissions than existing mineral diesel and Rix BioDiesel claims to be compatible with existing diesel units thereby not requiring any engine modifications.



This month's nomination for Green Room 101 comes from Malcolm Stroud of Todmorden who puts the case for banishing excessive food miles.

'Food miles', the distance our food travels to reach us, with all the associated impacts that its transportation has on our lives.

In January our family of five weighed all the food we bought in one week and tried to record its origin. We measured distances on

the children's globe, allowed for indirect routes, did a little research and made some informed guesses.

We made sure to buy some legendary green beans from Kenya. If they really were air freighted, those 168 grammes of beans were the biggest single offender on our shopping list, putting almost five times their own weight of carbon dioxide (CO2) into the atmosphere. The next biggest offender was again from Africa, cane sugar, for a birthday cake. We assumed that came via sea and land.

Those two items made up 40% of our food miles carbon dioxide. The other worst performing foods were, in descending order, lager (Germany), potatoes (Portugal), olive oil (Greece), peanut butter (USA), mandarins and lettuce (Spain), and grapes (South Africa).

The most virtuous food was some local cottage cheese. Next were local sausages,

corn snacks produced in the UK, local eggs, butter and carrots. The milk that we have delivered comes from nearby Lancashire farms. By comparison, supermarket milk (assumed to be from France) could account for over 20 times as much carbon dioxide.

The lesson for us was that heavyweight imported items and anything likely to be air freighted needs to be watched out for. It transpired that typical figures for food miles carbon dioxide are between 1% and 3% of household emissions. We need all the reductions we can get, we continue to watch our food miles.

To comment upon this nomination, read previous suggestions or submit your own Green Room 101 nomination visit www.alternativetechnology.org.uk/101/