

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL MEETING

13TH MAY 2006

SOLUTIONS WE LIKE

[Comment: although the first task was set with an emphasis on *things* like wind turbines or cycle tracks, the discussion soon produced several examples based around *processes* which were seen as being just as fundamental to our solutions work]

- Joint working with councils (E.g. Environmental Partnership in Weymouth and Portland, Bristol Carbon Action) – opportunity to meet others and feedback to local authorities
- Exeter Traffic Reduction Strategy
- Bristol Transport Manifesto (drawn up by ~16 NGO's)
- Fair Trade Petition – brought together a large range of groups in the community
- Community based action on climate and resources – Ashton Hale, Chew Magna, Wye Cycle
- Cheltenham Fair Trade Town
- Cycleways, Traffic Calming, Sustrans Network
- Positive side of GM campaign – massive growth in organic, better school catering, local ventures such as Winterbourne Barn.
- Green electricity tariffs (but why aren't hundreds of thousands of consumers hooked up?)
- Shopping locally
- Farmers Markets and Veg Boxes
- "Ethical" meat (& less meat!)
- Car sharing, car clubs, 2+ lanes
- Cycling
- Congestion Charging (so long as public transport is good enough)
- Talking to friends and colleagues – e.g. telling them you don't shop in supermarkets
- Allotments becoming popular
- Growth in recycling
- Rainwater harvesting
- Ethical investment (watch this carefully – one person mentioned their "ethical pension" portfolio included Tesco)
- Online supermarket offering all local produce (setting up in Devon/Exeter)
- Freecycle – exchanging and offering goods for free
- Eco-communities
- The advanced stop line for bikes – most civilized innovation of the late 20th century
- Councils want to talk to us

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POTENTIAL PITFALLS IN PROMOTING SOLUTIONS

- Can be, or seem to be, exclusive. Not everyone has access to local shops, or enough cash to live in an eco-community
- Concepts hi-jacked, e.g. Tesco “local” shops
- Not everyone has access to computers
- People not knowing how to cook!
- People assuming they have no time to cook, shop local etc.
- Time pressure generally
- Strong emphasis on individual, consumer based solutions. What about changing corporate behaviour?

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WHAT ROLES FOR FRIENDS OF THE EARTH (LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL) IN PROMOTING SOLUTIONS?

- Put links from our national and regional website
- Refresh green electricity tariffs
- Target small businesses for increased recycling
- Local, Regional and National Eco-Awards for schools, businesses etc.
- Record of good campaigning practice in promoting solutions
- Local publicity, leaflets and directories, to promote lower impact living
- More group to group contacts
- Sign for identifying locally owned shops (not just food)
- Local Food directories
- Promoting “zero carbon communities”
- Measuring carbon emissions - guide to good practice by local authorities
- Donate books to libraries