

**MINUTES OF THE ECO-SCHOOLS MEETING
23 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 4.15 PM AT
ST LEONARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, STAFFORD**

1 Present:

Judy Smythe – St Leonard's, Dunston
Emma Ray – Staffs Waste Management Partnership
Vicky Rees - St John's
Michelle Evans - St Paul's
Lynda Cooper - St John's
Fred Lambert - St Paul's
Karen Davies, Stafford Borough Council
Rob Hine – St Leonard's, Stafford
Gordon Taylor - Stafford Sports College
Julia Barraclough - Groundwork
Chris Jones – SCC Waste Management
Kate Russell – SCC School Improvement Division
Lesley Howell – St Leonard's, Stafford
Sue Alibon – Head Teacher, St Leonard's, Stafford
Rob Deaville – St Leonard's, Stafford
Katherine Hill, Leasowes
Juillie Smith, St Michael's First School

Apologies: Mrs Spooner, Bishop's Lonsdale, Richard West, Penkridge Middle School, Jenni and Karen, Barnfields.

2 MINUTES of the Last Meeting and Actions Arising

An evaluation of the Eco-Action Day held in June gave very positive feedback and the report is attached. Photos from the day have been put on the website and can be viewed at:

<http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/live/welcome.asp?id=6834>

Elliott the Eco-Cat still needs mending. **Judy** volunteered to do this (*many thanks!!!*) and will take him to Gordon at Stafford Sports School thereafter.

3 THERE IS NO PLANET B

There has been an offer from St Mary's in the town centre, to give space for an event or a display relating to 'green issues'. The event may have some help and support from the group 'Sustainability Matters'. We discussed ways in which schools might get involved. We felt that an activity in the Spring would work well, where each Eco-School put together a display illustrating its different eco-activity. This could then be on display during the March half Term, when lots of children could then bring their parents along. (**ALL SCHOOLS** begin to think about pulling items together for this).

FEEDBACK FROM ECO-SCHOOLS

St Leonard's, Dunston

- Second in Perkins Environment, Awards
- Made sensory garden over summer holiday with a barefoot walk
- All children take part in gardening club
- PTA have just bought new planters

St John's

- Have planted a veg - patch and done a sensory garden
- Planning a gardening club
- Runner up in Perkins Awards

St Paul's

- The Big Dig has just begun
- Have started a wildlife area too
- Planning an Eco Week

St Leonard's, Stafford

- 23 camped out in conservation area
- SWT lent a moth capture kit and bat detectors
- Greenhouse project is now up and running – solar heated!
- Have already held a conservation day this term
- Year 6 went to Conkers in July
- Chosen as SCC pilot school with a focus on energy saving measures

Stafford Sports College

- Looking at energy efficiency of Year 8 involved, doing maintenance Focussing on lights and 'switching off'
- Recycling - collect some cans, bottles and paper. But not very easy!! Hope to get Eco-Schools bronze award soon

Leasowes

- Celebrated Green Day in June - junk modelling, insect hotels, everyone dressed in green
- Want to extend recycling to include cardboard
- Children are also checking rights

St Michael's, Stone

- Now have a Recycling Service!! (yippee!!!). This includes receptacles/bins, posters - etc. This is real milestone. St Michael's are part of SBC schools trial – more later!
- Emma Ray helped with 'Money Day' which related to Eco-Work
- Have just set up Gardening Clubs for this year
- Loads of stuff

Barnfields (sent by email)

- Last summer term we held a weekly gardening club – we weeded the vegetable plots, bordered them with recycled bricks and planted beans and herbs. We had a bumper crop of strawberries which the eco-team sold to parents at the end of school
- We had a weed out of classroom and library books during the summer holidays. Our Year 6 librarians held a nearly new book sale last week and sold/recycled many of them to children after school. Our caretaker is going to recycle the leftover books at the Oxfam depository at St. Albans Road tomorrow (we like to involve everyone!)
- We take part in The Big Tidy Up and regularly collect litter from our school grounds and the area around our perimeter fence.
- We have ordered our free hedge pack from the Woodland Trust.
- We are having a big push on saving energy and cutting costs by reminding everyone to switch off lights and computers when not in use.
- We have purchased a supply of WRAP-N-MATS, a re-usable sandwich wrap and placemat in one, which we originally saw at the Eco Show and are selling these on to our children and parents.

5 **NEWS FROM ELLIOTT**

Need to get him mended! Gordon will host him and update his diary this Hal Term, then he will go to St Paul's to join in their Eco-Week/Eco-School launch after Half Term (**Judy, Gordon, St Paul's and Karen** to liaise on Elliott's activities).

6 **UPDATES**

(a) Stafford Borough Council

* Derrington Low Carbon Community - great Local Food Fair held recently (promoted via Cooper Perry School), Community Bench Building events, successful bid for £22,000 to improve energy efficiency at Village Hall, more events coming up soon – visit www.staffordbc.gov.uk/sd

* Lots of ongoing work on Local Nature Reserves

* Hope to install solar PV at council building, so researching this at the moment

* Lots of partnership working, information and advice – please see www.staffordbc.gov.uk/sd

(b) SWT

Please see these links – lots of useful info and resources for schools!

<http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/page/home>

<http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/page/environmental-education>

(c) Waste Update Staffordshire County Council/Staffs Waste Partnership

Emma Ray gave a presentation on the SBC Recycling Trials currently taking place. 5 First and Middle School and High School in Stone are involved. Each has received a large receptacle for all recyclables plus a poster kit. SBC are planning a combined presentation to schools with Streetscene.

Gordon added his children are looking for recycling facilities - surprised the school doesn't do recycling, as they think it should be the norm!!

Alan Carr added that S Staffs are working with Biffa to get more going there too.

There was a question about what happens to materials that are collected? Becky Martin from SBC does give talks on this and can be contacted on 01785 619749 or email wastemanagement@staffordbc.gov.uk.

SBC - starting a "Recycling Champions" Scheme, offering a training day, explaining what happens to waste and going on a trip to a MRF (materials recycling facility). A training day will take place on 22nd Oct.

Emma handed out Packs of Info to the group that she had collated for us. She is involved with lots of initiatives, with 5 main campaigns:

'Love Food, Hate Waste', aiming to reduce food waste (which equate to 20% of the contents of a typical household bin). This includes some good resources that link to Schools too eg Food Waste Diary. Home Composters are available at a reduced rate, water butts and wormeries also available.

A KS1 and 2 Teachers Pack is available from 'Recycle Now', available to download from Schools Section. Also composting games and 'worm's' eye view of a compost bin

Other campaigns include: Furniture re-use, Real nappies, Junk mail (MPS) - register at www.mpsonline.org.uk.

d) SCC School Improvement Division

Kate gave out a report called 'Celebrating Our Achievements' about West Midlands Sustainable Schools, with two pages covering Staffordshire.

7 FUTURE of 'Sustainable Schools'

The Government Office will be closing and this will impact on West Midlands Sustainable Schools Network. The previous government's Sustainable Schools Framework will also be going, with future support from the Coalition Government being uncertain at this point.

Karen commented this was a shame as Stafford Borough Eco-Schools Network had put a lot of effort into Sustainable Schools Framework, taking

a delegation to London to DFES with our MP David Kidney, to feed into the new Framework, and subsequently giving talks across Staffordshire at Primary Heads meetings to raise awareness and to encourage participation. On a positive note, the Eco-Schools programme continues to expand (see AOB). The very good Sustainable Schools website should remain. It would be useful to link this, SBC's Eco-Schools web-pages, and SCC (Kate's) web-pages up.

AOB

* Karen said there are now lots of opportunities for schools to consider solar PV installations. **Karen** to include details in minutes. Here they are: My Solar School! www.generationgreen.co.uk/solarpanels
Solar 4 Schools www.solar4schools.co.uk
Our Green School www.growyourownenergy.co.uk

* Doxey Primary has new-ish solar PV. **Karen D** to contact them to ask if they would share their experiences.

* Kate told the group that schools could have free visit to Upper Moreton Farm, near Wolsley Bridge, tel Carol Carney 07814 237211.

* Karen flagged up some imminent training courses about Becoming an Eco-School – book through Keep Britain Tidy at <http://www.eco-schools.org.uk/>

* In fact lots at this web-site!!:
Eco-Schools Conference, Reebok Stadium Bolton, on 23rd November
Eco-Schools stats – we are a growing movement!!
Do take a visit to this helpful, inspiring site!

* Karen advised that there is a free tree planting pack available for schools! www.woodlandtrust.org.uk Apply soon!

* Julia told the group about a possible funding source for wildlife projects at www.biglotteryfund.org.uk - the final bidding round is approaching!

* Julia also informed the group about an environmental project at the Wedgewood Memorial College which links to Forest Schools.

* Chris Jones wished to thank the group for all its efforts to promote and encourage recycling and waste minimisation. He was keen to point out that the Group has made a real impact in helping to raise the profile of the need to recycle and to provide recycling services in schools – and he asked me to minute a big 'Thanks and Well Done!' to this Network and its unflinching members! (*Thanks to you and your team too Chris!*)

NEXT MEETING: Thursday 25th November 4.15 pm to be hosted at Stafford Sports College (kindly offered by Gordon). Note change of date from 18th to 25th