
Newsletter April 2016

A busy year - and it's only just started!

A Message from the Chair

This has been a bit of a whirlwind year so far. Major activities have included the preparation for our big “Ludlow in 2040” meeting which takes place on 13th of this month (*I hope you have the date firmly fixed in your diaries*). If all goes well, that will mark a major shift in Ludlow 21’s profile and involvement with our community - more information elsewhere in this newsletter.

We had an excellent ‘Green Drinks’ Fairtrade night at the Blue Boar which marked the start of Fairtrade fortnight. Over 30 of us enjoyed nibbles and drinks from Fairtrade producers and watched two stimulating videos showing how the Fairtrade movement has improved the lives of farmers in many third world countries. The fortnight culminated in a splendid ‘Big Breakfast’ at The Wesley Cafe where we had a fascinating presentation from a member of a farming cooperative in Kerala India - see the report in this newsletter. The group are now looking forward to their Spring Fair on 16th April - another date for your diaries.

Green Drinks at the Blue Boar on 21st of each month is now becoming a really popular get together for all our members with numbers regularly in the 20s. If you have never been, do try to come along as it is an excellent way to meet your Board members, get up to date news and tell us what you like/don’t like about what we are doing. Just drop in, any time from 7.30 until closing time.

The website is looking a great deal better with thanks to Chris Deaves who has kindly volunteered to help us out with the technology and is trying to teach three of the Board, including me, some of the rudiments of Wordpress. Thankfully, he has a lot of patience! We would like to put up a ‘Members’ Page’ to include items of interest from all of you so if there is anything you want to tell us about, express an opinion on, or begin a discussion about, why not write to us?

Finally, our **VISION21** groups are really starting to motor now with many excellent projects emerging - some of these are highlighted in this newsletter - and we have our first grant which is for a 3R’s project which ticks all our ‘green’ boxes - work with children using recycled materials to create a model of an endangered animal - how good is that?

Denise

News From The Groups

Ludlow Easy Riders

Ludlow Easy Riders are a friendship cycling group who enjoy taking gently paced, sociable cycle rides through the lovely countryside around Ludlow. They welcome other adults joining them on an informal basis, riding at their own risk.

The rides won't be too far and routes are decided on the day to suit the group. The free rides are gently paced to appeal to those who have not cycled for a while or aren't too confident riding alone. Please bring your own bike (or contact Pearce Cycles) on 01584 879288 for a bike hire service).

Rides are usually on a Tuesday morning, meeting in Castle Square, Ludlow at 9.45am for a 10am start. Please contact Eliz-anne Williams (0779 6687 134) or Carolyn Rowntree (01584 877551) to check the ride is taking place.

Breeze Rides for Women

Please note that Breeze Rides for Women in Ludlow will not be taking place for a couple of months. Anyone wanting to gain confidence cycling or just enjoy a social ride, and is interested in joining these slow, friendly bike rides for women email Eliz-anne on smartycyclepants@gmail.com to join the mailing list and get to know dates when they are re-scheduled.

You can find out more about Breeze Rides: <http://www.goskyride.com/Breeze/Index>



Ludlow Swift Group

The swift group will be active again this year and we very much hope that many of you will enjoy the swifts with us. Help is always welcome and we will be around during the second week of May, our events week, to answer question and meet people.



On **Thursday 12th May** we will have our stall in the Market square and will be delighted to see as many of you as possible.

On that weekend, **May 14th and 15th**, we will be at the Charlton Arms at Ludford from 7 pm until dusk watching swifts, discussing nest recording and having a convivial drink. Please drop in and say hello.

If you are interested in joining the group please contact **Robin Pote: Tel: 01584 872851** or email robin@cherrug.dircon.co.uk

Ludlow Fairtrade Town Group

If you use Fairtrade spices, such as pepper, cloves, nutmeg, chilli, or cinnamon, and foods such as pineapples, dried coconut, coconut water, cocoa or coffee, you may well have used products grown and processed by Sheena Biju and other members of **MASS**, that's the **Manarcadu Social Service Society**, a farming co-operative in Kerala in south west India.



At the end of Fairtrade Fortnight Sheena spoke to a group of about 40 about the life and work of MASS. The group began in 2001 with 30 members and now has 1600, 300 of whom are women and many others tribal farmers. It is hoped that they will eventually have a membership of 5 000. Many members have small farms, some less than two and most less than ten acres. They face the problem of living in a rather remote, mountainous area, with poor roads and no

means of processing their produce so that middlemen would travel to them and offer lower prices. As their returns were so low some farmers were selling up, and others even committing suicide.

In 2008 the group heard about Fairtrade, which offers the farmer a guaranteed minimum price for crops, and the Fairtrade Premium, guaranteeing an income to be used to benefit the whole community. A new processing centre has been constructed so avoiding contract processing and the huge cost of transporting coffee beans to private processors more than 100km away..

The Premium has also enabled farmers to be more productive, to conserve water, to employ a 'plant doctor' team providing advice on organic farming and climate change to the entire community.

Using the Premium group has built a health clinic, funded a health insurance scheme and helped towards the cost of education



The most important thing at present is training farmers in order to improve the quality of crops in an organic, sustainable way. The group is also increasing the use of biogas, changing from chemical to organic fertilisers and planting of thousands of trees.

MASS faces problems of climate change, the need to diversify crops, finding markets and keeping their young people in the area. Many are lured away from the farms to the cities or to become labourers in Dubai. To prevent this MASS hopes to establish an agricultural university to train local students and then it is hoped more will stay in Kerala.



Sheena is a wonderful example of two of the important changes that have taken place: the improved status of farmers in general and women in particular, and receiving a greater reward for their labours.

As Ludlow was her last talk in the UK Sheena has now returned to her family of three children, her garden and her community work. We wish MASS every

success and will continue to support them by buying Fairtrade products from the various Ludlow outlets

Ludlow Car Club

The Ludlow Car Club is part of the Shropshire Car Club which has 5 cars in Shrewsbury and 2 in Ludlow; the Ludlow branch now has over 40 members.

It is not a formal Ludlow 21 group but we support its ideals (sustainable transport) and are therefore happy to pass on news about the club in our newsletter and website. The latest is that Ludlow is acting as a pilot for the new visitor scheme with a local B&B offering advantageous membership terms for guests. This is seen as added value for those B&Bs and hotels in the town centre with no parking facilities since guests can arrive by train and use a club car during their stay.



Car Clubs, nationally, are fast becoming a preferred option for many families who have an occasional need for a second car or for people who have decided to give up car ownership altogether.

We are also promoting the club on event square every other month - the next will be on 21st May so do come and say hello.

WE ARE TALKING ABOUT....

Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre

Congratulations to the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre (Craven Arms) for its wide range of (low cost or free) activities held there, including a Discovery Club every other Saturday.

Natural, often outdoor fun – get them back outdoors!

These include a “wheels for all” club, a “wobble and ride” cycle club for youngsters, pond dipping (for frogspawn), science with a bang, clay modelling, making trees and even orienteering. There’s chain-sawing and Caribbean & Asian Cookery and bread-making (grow, cook, Learn) for the adults.

The Best Family Day Out (small venue), this visitor centre is one of the few with a Mammoth and a balloon trip over Shropshire, a trip back to the iron age, an award winning café and the 30 acre Onny Meadows.

For more information, see <http://www.shropshirehillsdiscoverycentre.co.uk>

Brexit (Britain’s exit from Europe) – An environmental discussion

What stance, if any should we take about the EU? The population of the UK has a vote on the 23rd June on whether it should “stay in” or “exit” the European Union. David Cameron has obtained a package of reforms relating to migrant welfare payment, sovereignty, trade discrimination and competitiveness. He has also pledged to stop coal mining.

On the other hand, if the UK leaves, the EU’s current trend towards solar, wind and tidal energy compared to the UK’s trend towards fracking, more offshore oil drilling and nuclear power will leave us out on a limb (dis/advantageously).

Add to this the likelihood of Europe (possibly UK) signing a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the USA in the mid-term. Whilst it is not our place to suggest which camp you vote with, it is perhaps the topic of home or pub conversation.

Come to **Green Drinks at the Blue Boar on 21st of the month** to discuss this or any other topic.

Pentabus play “This Land” – The Impact of Fracking on a Rural Community

Ludlow 21 members have been invited to a special performance (following their UK tour) of the Pentabus play “This Land” which deals with the impacts of fracking on a rural community.



This special showing will be on Friday 6th May 2016 in the Pentabus Theatre, Bromfield (opposite the Ludlow Food Centre). Tickets are only £10 and can be booked via the website: [www. Pentabus.co.uk/ThisLand](http://www.Pentabus.co.uk/ThisLand)

It starts at 7:30 and is recommended for those aged over 14. To find out any further information, visit the website. The theatre has only 50 seats so **BOOK EARLY!**

Ludlow 21 Young Environmentalists (Kids Zone)

We plan to set up a youth wing of Ludlow 21 and several Board members are involved in taking this forwards. What do you think about the idea? If anyone is interested in getting involved, please let us know.

VISION21

LUDLOW 2040

As you know, since launching our **VISION21** programme last July, we have several groups working hard on many innovative projects and we are making good progress, as you will see from the reports in this newsletter. However, it has always been clear that, to succeed in our objective of making Ludlow as sustainable as possible by the middle of this



century, we could not do this alone. We need to persuade the wider community to join us in a much larger programme which would be recognised by the whole of Ludlow, especially our Town Council.

The meeting we are holding on **13th April** will be the first step in this process. We have invited representatives of all the community groups who are actively trying to improve things for Ludlow. There are many of them and they are doing good things but, like us, tend to be a bit isolated. We are sure that, if we can pool our resources, share ideas and expertise, reduce duplicated effort and

all work together towards a common vision of what we want Ludlow to look and feel like in 2040/50 we can succeed.

If we can get this new initiative established, our own **VISION21** projects would form an important part of the programme but we can also act as a catalyst for change and offer help in planning and coordination.

These are exciting, as well as challenging, times but Ludlow 21 is well placed to play a leading role in this process and we hope that you, our members, will want to become more actively involved in due course.

NEWS FROM THE VISION21 GROUPS

Climate Friendly Food

This is the name now adopted by the **VISION21** Group associated with food and farming activities. Their 'Incredible Edible' project aims to support and inspire members of the community to cultivate food crops to provide healthy, local food for everyone. The group intend to plant fruit trees in any available waste ground within the town and plan to start in the centre and work outwards.



Work began this month in earnest and volunteers had a very memorable day for Ludlow's latest venture bringing food into the hands of the many. Some very public places frequented by Ludlow folk were planted up, can you guess where? There will be many more

edible plots to come...

See what they do in Todmorden - where Incredible Edible started in 2007:

<https://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/projects/>

Our trees were paid for by Incredible Edible Shropshire, **thank-you so much**, muscle power provided by volunteers!



The Group are also arranging a series of videos to explain just what climate friendly food is all about. The videos are all being shown at the Broad Street Methodist Chapel at 7.30pm as follows:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1) Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret | Wednesday 27th April |
| 2) Forks Over Knives date | Wednesday 4th May |
| 3) Vegucated | Wednesday 11th May |

so put the dates in your diary!!

As a collection, the 3 films will examine how a plant-based diet is healthier for the planet and for individuals. We expect the proposal to be controversial and welcome lively debate. No admission charge. Posters for each event will be seen around the town very soon.

The 3 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle)

Cycle upcycling: A first brain-storming meeting to see if it would be possible to set up a Ludlow Bike Project similar, but on a smaller scale, to that operating in Bristol was held towards the end of March and produced encouraging ideas with enthusiasm! A second more focused meeting is planned for April where we hope ideas can become outline plans. More details will follow as they become clearer.

Toy Library for Ludlow! Plans are encouragingly afoot to set up a Toy Library at the Appletree premises in Lower Galdeford. This will operate on Tuesdays as part of the pre-school 'ApplepiPs' programme - look out for more details in the next newsletter but if you have or know of any toys which need a new home please get in touch with **Di Lyle**.

It's not all rubbish!: The Group is taking a creative approach to the question of what happens to all our rubbish. In a series of workshops for young people at Rockspring Community Centre, thanks to funding from the Green Shropshire Xchange (GSX), they will be exploring how to reduce, reuse and recycle waste. Artist Jessica Jackson will be working with the young people to build a large scale endangered animal from recycled materials. The process of building the impressive large animal will consider approaches to waste reduction by thinking of how 'rubbish' can be used in a different and creative way. The model will be an example of an endangered species and making it from waste materials draws a link between what is thrown away and what is subsequently affected.

This model will be on display at the Centre and will also take pride of place at the Ludlow Green Festival on Sunday 28 August.

Transport Group

The transport group has prioritised 4 projects for this year.

Electric Car charging points

The sale of electric cars is rising exponentially as the technology becomes established and the benefits of ownership become clear (no CO2 emissions, low maintenance costs etc) but the infrastructure to support them is still in its infancy outside major cities and motorways. Shropshire is slowly catching up with good coverage in Shrewsbury and with charging points in Church Stretton and at Bromfield but there is then a big gap until Hereford. The Transport group see tremendous advantages in getting some charging points in our town and are currently talking to



hotels, providing advice on costs and installation. Philip Adams has produced a very informative newsletter about electric cars which is on our website under the Transport Vision group.

Bus Shelters

Ludlow currently has only one bus shelter (outside the Assembly Rooms) but there are many stops where waiting for a bus in bad weather becomes a miserable experience, especially for the elderly and families with children. The plan is to campaign for two shelters, one in the town and one in the Rockspring area, targeting stops which are used most frequently. We are progressing this through the In and Out of Ludlow (IOL) forum.

Train Station

We are pressing the IOL forum to undertake a through review of the railway station which, at present, falls far short in terms of safety, information provision and aesthetics. We had a useful meeting on site with Andy Boddington and Richard Jones from SCC where the dangers for pedestrians from a chaotic traffic system became very clear. As a short term measure, SCC will install a pedestrian walkway in front of the station and make a designated crossing place at the island. A larger meeting is planned, with all the stakeholders, including Network Rail, to tackle the longer term issues.

20s Plenty

We have joined the National '20's Plenty' campaign which is a fast growing (the number of participating towns and cities has now reached 55) movement seeking to establish a standard 20 mph speed limit in all UK residential and urban streets. The primary reason is safety for pedestrians and cyclists and we have shown that a 20mph limit in Ludlow would delay a journey from the furthest point (Sheet Road) by only 78 seconds. This will obviously be a controversial topic and so we shall be seeking views from all community groups before proceeding.

STOP PRESS: At the IOL meeting on 31st March our proposal for bus shelters and improvements to the train station were considered. We are delighted that the meeting voted in favour of both proposals so we can now start working in earnest to make it all happen.

Renewable Energy Group

Renewable Energies Summer Course

Surprisingly, and unfortunately, we were unable to get sufficient interest to allow us to run the summer Renewable Energies Course; we will try to learn from this experience to run a Ludlow based 'h-Energy' type scheme in the autumn.

Ludlow Hydro Co-Operative

This week the Archimedes Screw was installed on site next to Ludford Mill to generate electricity. The idea for the screw dates all the way back to the 3rd Century BC.



Archimedes Screw
arriving on site



Screw channel ready to
receive screw



View from weir with sluice
gate and control hut

Water from the river will turn it and the group says it should produce around 150,000 kWh per year - enough to supply 40 homes. This form of turbine has been chosen, because fish can pass through it without being harmed. The work has been put on hold until now because the river levels were too high over the winter.

Solar Photo-Voltaic on the Library

It now appears unlikely that the Ludlow Library will have any Solar PV fixed to it anytime soon. The method statements which a preferred contractor put forward were deemed to be unsuitable and Shropshire Council is now looking at other buildings across the county. With government cutbacks, these Solar PV are less advantageous than even a year ago.

Energy Performance Certificate improvements

The Group plan to develop a sustainable energy award EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) but need to identify a small enough project to be affordable. However, by linking it to training of a community group (eg Ludlow 21 members, young families) this would have the benefit of being worthwhile in its own right. They are looking at the possibility of regular training sessions, with participants presenting a case for receiving the award for themselves. Two members of the Group have approximately 50 years of experience in this training.

Schools & Education Group

Unfortunately, this group has had a personnel crisis, losing two key members for various personal reasons so all work is currently on hold. If there are any Ludlow 21 members who

would like to join and help to move the projects forward, please contact us. However, we have one good thing to report.....

Ludlow Infant School – Highlighting success

Alan Stewart, a representative of Ludlow 21, gave an assembly address to the school at Ludlow Infant School. The school was going out litter picking in support of Keep Britain Tidy's Clean for the Queen campaign for QE2's 90th birthday this summer.



He had been invited by the school because of his work with Ludlow Pride of Place (POP), which does recycling and litter-picking in the town centre on the last Saturday of each month. They start from the cannon in front of Ludlow

Castle at 10:30 until 12:00. Further information and more photographs are available on the Facebook site Ludlow "Pride of Place" Recycling.

The next week a Keep Britain Tidy Eco-Schools Inspector came, spoke to children and saw their impressive posters in the hall. Suffice to say, they covered their Eco-Skills and can display their green flag once more.

If you are interested in joining any of the Vision groups please contact the Ludlow 21 member involved (see the table below).

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WEBSITES

Ludlow 21 Website	www.ludlow21.org.uk
Green Festival Website	www.greenfestival.co.uk
Local to Ludlow Website	www.localtoludlow.co.uk
Ludlow Open Days	www.ludlowopendays.org.uk
Shropshire Car Club	www.co-wheels.org.uk/shropshire
Green Shropshire Xchange	www.greenshropshireexchange.org.uk

