



UPDATE ON GREEN TEAMS PROJECTS FUNDED BY DEDHAM VALE AONB & STOUR VALLEY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND.

Post Office Campaign. Following the good news that both Stoke by Nayland and Polstead post offices have survived, the Green Teams have continued to urge local people to make the most of these essential local facilities, to support both post offices and the shops where they are based. Owners of Stoke by Nayland shop and post office say that the campaign had a good secondary effect in generating a lot of interest in the shop - more people calling in, talking to each other, generally a better feeling of cohesiveness in the village. This is something we hope to build on with the Bags campaign.

Say NO to Plastic Bags campaign. This is wholly funded by Dedham Vale AONB Sustainability Fund. From 17th March 1000 organic cotton bags will be distributed by five local shops/farms. The shops will also be supplied with a start-up batch of corn starch bags to replace their usual plastic carriers. The aim is to help local people to understand WHY we need to stop relying on plastic bags and giving them a practical opportunity to make the switch.

Each cotton bag contains a leaflet explaining differences between ordinary oil-based plastic bags, de-gradable bags and bio-degradable bags. The leaflet also describes the dreadful (and avoidable) waste and litter damage which we all see every day and the less well known deathly impact on animals, birds and marine life.

If local people reduce their reliance on carrier bags (by switching to re-usable bags) the five local shops/farms are committed to make the trial use of cornstarch carriers permanent. But this has big cost implications for small businesses and will depend on the goodwill of customers - eg no longer expecting a bag to carry their newspaper to the car!

Village Green Teams website. The cost of setting up the website is being fully funded by Dedham Vale AONB Sustainability Fund. Outline plans have been agreed and it is expected that the website will be open to the public before the end of April 2008. As part of the project, two Green Teams supporters will be trained to update and extend website contents.

As well as providing up to date information on Green Teams activities, the website will provide environmental information relevant for this area (eg. local shops & services, public transport, home insulation schemes, water use, rubbish collection and re-cycling facilities, organic gardening and composting...etc.) It will include easy linkage to numerous other eco/green websites and its also hoped that the website will become a hub for sharing other community information between the three Green Teams villages. (The Green Teams are grateful for hospitality offered by the Polstead Village website pending the opening of their own site.)

Cooking Club for Children. The Dedham Vale AONB Sustainability Fund agreed to fund this project but in the short timescale it was not possible to do the vital "marketing", so not enough children signed up. If the funding becomes available at a later date it is hoped to resurrect this project which involves taking groups of children to buy local and seasonal food and cook delicious food. We believe this brings together current ideas on children's diets, reducing food miles and making the link between farming and what we eat - and we hope children would have fun in the process.