

A day for primary children at Coombe Country Park

When Jenny Sansom phoned me a few weeks ago and asked me to be a Group leader for a Local Sustainability Education event at Coombe Country Park, I agreed a little reluctantly but to my delight it was a most inspiring day.

It was a brilliant event (including the weather) and over the three days approximately 1,350 young children from 8 to 11 years old were introduced in a very lively way to the serious issues relating to environment and sustainable development.

Action 21 plus District Councils from Nuneaton, Warwick, North Warwickshire, Rugby and Coventry City Council had planned the three-day event together, pooling resources and staff, and they set up 15 events per day looking at issues ranging from fair trade, water, recycling, biodiversity, energy, transport and conservation. The events were all interactive and the activity leaders had impressive skills for engaging the interest of the children. Visually it was most attractive, Coombe Park being a beautiful venue, and providing a perfect backdrop for the story-telling 'Green Man' and for the inflated, elegant model of the planet as well as the various nature investigations and trails. The majority of the funding came to Action 21 from ONYX through the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme.

As group leader I followed one school through five of the events and can vouch for the excitement, interest and learning experienced by the children. It was a very impressive day and I would strongly recommend that the local authorities responsible, consider repeating this annually. This is a crucial step in the campaign to save our planet.

I congratulate the organisers of Local Action 21 for the Action they are now leading after all the talking of the past...

Cllr Jane Knight, Warwick District Council

TRANSACTION

Summer 2003



Hello again! As of today we are delighted to welcome **Jeanne Ashkenazi** as the new editor of *Transaction*. Jeanne has experience as a technical editor and it's great to have her on board. For the moment please use my e-mail address to contact Jeanne about this newsletter.

To follow up our recent article on food growing, the hard work of the Black Lane Allotments Association with help from Action 21 has resulted in 29 new tenants! Enjoy the read!

Jenny

(01926 456067; jenny@action21.co.uk)

Seeking a new chairperson

Rachel Berger, who has been involved in Action 21 for six years, has decided to stand down as our chair. Rachel's skills have been invaluable to our organisation and we are sorry to lose her in this position, although we understand that there is much pressure on her time at present.

To take over this role, we are now seeking an experienced and capable volunteer with a broad understanding of sustainable development issues and a commitment to the principles of Local Agenda 21.

The responsibilities of the chairperson include: helping steer Action 21's work, line management of one or two staff, representing the organisation, chairing meetings and committee skills. Experience (whether paid or voluntary) in the field of environment and/or sustainability is vital.

If you think you may be able to take over Rachel's role, please contact Jenny Sansom on 01926 456 067.

DIARY dates DIARY dates DIARY

AUGUST

Monday 11

Energy Theme Group Meeting
7.30pm, Sikh Community Centre, Mill Street, Leamington Spa. Come and help us plan energy-saving Christmas lights and other projects. Contact Steven Coulsting on 01926 858895.

Sunday 17

Mela in the Pump Room Gardens, Leamington Spa. Would you like to help on our stall at this Indian cultural festival? If so, contact Jenny on 01926 456067.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 20

Warwick District One World Link with Bo
Guest Speaker **Lord Frank Judd**, Former Director of Oxfam and VSO, at 11am followed by discussion, African-style lunch and AGM. Contact Bill Evans on 01926 314986 for details of venue to be confirmed shortly.

Monday 22

European In Town Without My Car Day
Action 21 is helping organise an event in Market Square, Warwick with displays and activities to promote sustainable transport. Can you help? If so, contact Jenny on 01926 456067.

TBC

First Meeting of the **Environmental Strategy Steering Group** of the **Local Strategic Partnership**
Contact Bhajan Aulak on 01926 456010.

OCTOBER

TBC

Transport Theme Group Speaker Meeting with **Chris Crean**, Friends of the Earth. Contact Simon Peter on 01926 422497.

Monday 13

Tractors and Trollies – A demonstration in London against the commercialisation of GMOs. Information from Friends of the Earth on 0207 490 1555.

TBC

Pumpkin Day at Bath Place, Leamington
Recipes, activities, growing advice & fun!

For more information and events check out www.action21.co.uk.



Above: Coombe Country Park – collecting grassland bugs and learning about climate change with the Earth Balloon.

Action 21 at the Peace Festival

It was warm and still; and that early morning calmness set the tone for the weekend. The Action 21 crew was busy figuring out which of the various gazebo poles fitted together – helped by the eager little hands of children fixing the coverings. Our end of aisle pitch provided us with three frontages to the public. The size of the pitch and its accessibility from all sides enabled an open layout, through which people could wander between the theme group displays.

The highlight of our Energy Group display was the Energy Cycle, complete with flag, which allowed people to renewably power the onboard radio as they pedaled. The energy stand also included material supplied by Warwickshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre and a solar-powered torch developed by ITDG. Warwick Area War on Waste had a professional stand from RAPRA, an organisation involved in the recycling of plasters and rubber. 'Using your head by using your legs' was advocated by the very informative Transport Group display. Eco-house had information on its two main projects which have blossomed in the last twelve months. The Food Group displayed pictures and had basil plants for sale. There were many entrants for the competition to win a solar-powered wind up radio.

People who visited the stands went away with plants for their gardens, save water bags for their WC cisterns, plenty of information on green living, and possibly hearts and minds buzzing with hope for the planet.

Music drifted across the festival and people came out in droves on both days. The weather was fabulously hot and the entire event had a real peaceful festival mood.

Steven Coulsting
A21 Energy Group Chair

Recycling Roadshow



The War on Waste Group's 'Recycling Roadshow' has had a flying start with five school performances since June. Chris Philpott who plays Mr Rubbish in the 20-minute sketch says 'It's so important for children to realise the rate at which we consume resources and create waste and our impact on the planet. The Roadshow is a way of making it fun.' The show will continue its tour of primary schools at the start of the Autumn term.

Making music

In May Community Arts workshop and Action 21 jointly organised workshops for people to make musical instruments out of things we would normally throw away. The aim was to change the way people think about waste and encourage them to think of it as a valuable resource not useless rubbish. The sessions were run by local artist Kev Renton and people were amazed at how good the instruments made from water pipe, plastic containers and fishing lines could sound.



We want to be GM free!

And if you are a child eating your school dinner, or any county council food for that matter, then you can be! On 20 May Warwickshire County Councillors voted to prevent GM crops and food being grown on their land or served in any of their meals including school dinners. They will also ask the government for special protection as a geographical area from growing of GM crops. Action 21 is delighted as we believe commercialising GM crops at this stage would be against sustainable development.

For more information on GM crops visit
www.fiveyearfreeze.org

Open below with care



For more information about Action 21's past and present projects visit
www.action21.co.uk

If you don't have internet access then we'll post information to you.
Contact Sustainability Officer: **Jenny Sansom 01926 456067**
Email: jenny@action21.co.uk

Address label to seal here.

Volunteer Opportunities

- **Recycling Roadshow helpers wanted!** If you are free on Monday or Friday mornings and would like to help prompt, carry props and help improve and develop this short children's play, please get in touch! Call Chris on 01926 735626.
- **Car Free Day** – Would any volunteers like to help out on Car Free Day on 22 September? If you are really keen you could even help us plan it! Please call Jenny on 01926 456067.
- **A desk and office facilities** are now available at Riverside House for A21 volunteers who need them.