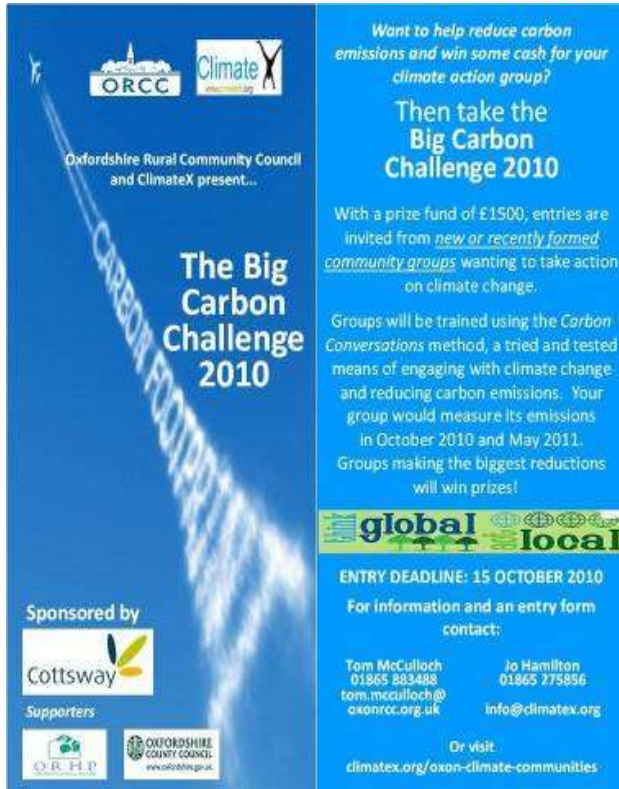


# OXFORDSHIRE 'BIG CARBON CHALLENGE' REPORT

## July 2011



Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and ClimateX present...

### The Big Carbon Challenge 2010

Want to help reduce carbon emissions and win some cash for your climate action group?

**Then take the Big Carbon Challenge 2010**

With a prize fund of £1500, entries are invited from new or recently formed community groups wanting to take action on climate change.

Groups will be trained using the *Carbon Conversations* method, a tried and tested means of engaging with climate change and reducing carbon emissions. Your group would measure its emissions in October 2010 and May 2011. Groups making the biggest reductions will win prizes!

**global local**

**ENTRY DEADLINE: 15 OCTOBER 2010**

For information and an entry form contact:

Tom McCulloch 01865 283488  
tom.mcculloch@oxonrcc.org.uk

Jo Hamilton 01865 275856  
info@climatex.org

Or visit  
climatex.org/oxon-climate-communities

Sponsored by  
Cottsway

Supporters  
ORHP OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Big Carbon Challenge competition was organised by Oxfordshire ClimateXchange (CXC) and Oxfordshire Rural Communities Council (ORCC) under the Oxfordshire County Council funded Low Carbon Communities programme. The aim of the competition was to help new groups take action on climate change through providing support, tools and resources. It was launched in October 2010, with the competition period running from December 2010 until the end of May 2011.

The competition was sponsored by Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership and Cottsway Housing Association, which provided the budget for training and materials start up costs for community groups and the £1,500 prize fund.

All groups were supported through visits and liaising with ORCC and CXC. Additional training for running Carbon Conversations was provided, together with all the materials needed to run a Carbon Conversations group.

The original publicity flier



Groups at the launch and Carbon Conversations training in January 2011



This report contains a brief overview of the winning groups, plus details and pictures of the group's activities.

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**Group winners**

After six months of activities, the groups produced a report of their activities, a summary of which is included below. The groups were judged according to their overall carbon reduction and their engagement strategy and plans for the future. An extra prize was included for existing groups who entered. The organisers would like to express their appreciation and gratitude to all the groups who took part and worked really hard over the competition period, and to the sponsors of the competition for their support.



Group winners, plus organisers and sponsors at the prize giving event in June 2011.

## **Prizes**

- **The group that cuts its carbon footprint the most: *Shrivenham***

Shrivenham achieved a reduction of 5.4 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, which included an increasing amount of renewable energy production through installation of solar PV panels.

- **The second placed group: *Hendreds Environment Group***

Hendreds Environment Group achieved a reduction of approximately 5.2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from 10 people.

- **Continued group engagement and development of plans: *Green TEA – Transition Eynsham Area***

Green TEA impressed the judges with the range of outreach from an existing group, liaison with Siemens, plus their 'Enjoy the challenge' day.

- ***The group demonstrating the most inspiring community engagement strategy: Hendreds Environment Group***

Hendreds Environment Group impressed the judges with the range of new people the group had managed to engage, through the Carbon Conversations course, the work with the schools, Tea on the Green and the outreach talks, plus the continuing momentum of the projects initiated.

- **The second placed group for community engagement: *Hailey Parish Action Carbon Reduction PACO2***

Hailey PACO2 impressed the judges with their activities, the Spring Green Fair and initiatives that came out of it, such as the litter pick, the school eco project, the energy saving actions of Abingdon and Witney college, plus their future plans.



<b>Group:</b>	<b>Hendreds Environment Group</b>
<b>Existing Community Activity:</b>	Formed in 2007, HEG has held 2 film showings, information stalls at several village events and published regular 'Green Columns' in the village bulletin. Participation in the Big Climate Challenge has initiated energy focused events.
<b>Aims of the group during the Big Carbon Challenge Period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run a Carbon Conversations Course to help people explore their feelings about Climate Change and make reductions in their carbon emissions.</li> <li>• Work with Hendreds Pre-school in the Eco Schools scheme.</li> <li>• Work with one or both primary schools to reduce their carbon emissions.</li> <li>• Talk to other interested community groups about carbon reduction.</li> <li>• Start a campaign for a cycle route linking local villages and Wantage.</li> </ul>
<b>Group activities during the Big Climate Challenge Period Outreach and Engagement activities during the Big Carbon Challenge</b>	<p><b>Carbon Conversations course</b> 12 people, including 2 facilitators, took part in a Carbon Conversation course. People recruited were those new to the HEG, gave positive feedback about the process, and expressed a desire to keep meeting in the future.</p> <p><b>HEG worked with Hendreds Pre-school and helped them achieve their Bronze Eco Schools award.</b> Environmental Audits carried out by adults and children, Action plan written. Those actions involving carbon reduction included: 1. Discussing with children about switching off lights when not in use (10<sup>th</sup> Feb). Make children light monitors. Make switch off light signs with the children. 2. Investigate how many of light bulbs are energy saving ones and replace those that aren't. 3. Find out how the children travel to Pre-School. Discuss with children modes of transport with least emissions. Ask parents to consider different ways of travelling to Pre-School . Eco Schools bronze award achieved.</p> <p><b>We have talked to Hendreds Primary school about their travel plan and arranged to come up with a map of car free ways to school with the help of the children</b></p> <p><b>Talk to the Downs Golden Age community group</b>, approximately 60 people. <i>'It was really interesting to hear about the skills and upbringing of older people. They felt their 'waste not, want not' attitude should be taken up by the younger generation. They were keen on reduced car use, for lots of reasons besides climate change.'</i></p> <p><b>Tea on the Green</b> This event aimed to be an informal and non-threatening event which allows people to socialise and find out more about Hendreds Environment Group, Low Carbon Living (Carbon Conversations) and local conservation.</p> <p>This event had quieter and busier times and at some points there was a great vibe with people finding out information from members of the group and the children having really good fun with the activities provided and the ice creams. The quiz allowed an opportunity for parents, children and members to discuss environmental issues.</p> <p>The bike path sign-up sheet had several people interested and further work will be</p>

	<p>done with this during the events organised for bike week, with a view to holding a public meeting in the future.</p> <p>Several items were borrowed from the resource library including the smart meters, so hopefully more actions will be taking place within the community to reduce carbon emissions. When people return the items we can ask them if they have made any changes to their lifestyles.</p> <p>We have started collecting names of people who would support a cycle route campaign.</p>
<b>Carbon reductions achieved by the group</b>	Approx 5.2 tonnes CO2
<b>Future group plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Tea on the Green' will happen monthly, next one on 11<sup>th</sup> June to coincide with the Hendreds festival week. We will promote energy saving and loan books and smart meters.</li> <li>• Free bike checks at Hendreds Primary School Fete on 18<sup>th</sup> June, which coincides with the start of national Bike Week.</li> <li>• Led bike ride to Wantage on local Sustrans route on 25<sup>th</sup> June (Bike Week event).</li> <li>• The Energy Bus is booked to visit Hendreds Pre-School on 28<sup>th</sup> June. Hendreds Primary School and St Amunds Primary School have also been invited to visit it.</li> <li>• Early July, reunion of Carbon Conversations group.</li> <li>• Draw up routes to school map with Hendreds Primary School in June/July term.</li> <li>• June/July/August collect support for cycle route campaign with the aim of organising a public meeting in the autumn.</li> <li>• Second Carbon Conversations course starting 21<sup>st</sup> September.</li> </ul>



Reading the book to the Pre-School Children



Light monitor switching off the toilet light



Children doing the environmental audit and checking for draughts with a candle



Resource Library with items for people to borrow



Checking the answers for the quiz



Parent and children discussing environmental topics

<b>Group:</b>	<b>Hailey Parish Action Carbon Reduction PACO2</b>
<b>Existing Community Activity:</b>	Before the involvement in the competition, some environmental groups already existed in the area, concerned with the community woodlands, wildlife habitats, School Eco-Club and the Community College.
<b>Aims of the group during the Big Carbon Challenge Period</b>	Hold a Green Event in order to raise awareness of energy use, growing food, recycling.
<b>Group activities during the Big Climate Challenge Period Outreach and Engagement activities during the Big Carbon Challenge</b>	<p><b>Hailey Spring Green Fair</b></p> <p>The aims of the fair were to help raise awareness within the community, involving as many groups as possible, of how to reduce their Carbon Footprint through: Transport, Food, Recycling, Energy, Carbon Games + Films.</p> <p>The event was considered a great success by the community and was thoroughly enjoyed by the approximately 100 visitors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Energy</b>– Rob Pritchard (Scottish and Southern Energy) came to advise people on energy saving. One local businessman displayed a range of <b>energy saving light bulbs</b> and advice. Another demonstrated <b>PV panels</b> and gave advice to interested parties. We had a range of <b>printed information</b> supplied by Mat Roberts of USEA for people to take home, and an energy metre from the WODC with information on its hire.</li> <li>➤ These stalls were much appreciated by the visitors as there was a lot of useful information to be gained from three well informed and helpful stall holders.</li> <li>➤ <b>Recycling</b> – The recycling game was very popular with the children and a number of residents signed a pledge for the pledge tree.</li> <li>➤ <b>Food</b> -The stall run by the Gardening Club, was most popular and interest elicited for the community vegetable stall and The Fair Trade stall was also much patronised. The free fair trade tea &amp; coffee, along with a variety of free cakes provided, was welcomed by the majority of visitors.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Litter Pick was held on 10.4.2011</li> <li>● There is an ongoing School Eco Project.</li> <li>● We attended an open day at the Agrivert Plant to aid understanding of anaerobic food composting and its transformation into energy.</li> </ul>
<b>Carbon reductions achieved by the group</b>	<p>Approx 4.9 tonnes of CO2 reduction was achieved by the members of the group over the competition period, including the Abingdon and Witney College.</p> <p><b>Abingdon &amp; Witney Community College (Hailey site)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Low energy bulbs fitted to car park bollard lights, and 12 hour security light timers replaced with 24 / 7 timers to reduce energy usage.</li> <li>● All buildings temperature reduced to 18 degrees from 21 degrees</li> <li>● Moved thermostats from computer room into a better room that is not excessively hot.</li> <li>● Weekly meter readings of site buildings.</li> <li>● Move to using local firms rather than multi-national companies for food sourcing.</li> </ul>
<b>Future group plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An Autumn Energy Saving event with films and discussion, plus the encouragement of residents to sign up to community energy monitoring.</li> <li>● A weekly Village Vegetable Stall to be held on a Saturday in the growing season in the Churchyard.</li> <li>● A foraging day in and around the Community Wood.</li> </ul>

Pictures from Hailey's Spring Green Fair



Fun for kids of all ages

Saturday March 26th  
11 am - 3.00pm

Make a frog mask



Make a  
Bird Box

# Hailey

Film Show

Carbon  
Games



Raffle

# Village Hall

# Spring

Grow your  
own Food

Bike to work

Check your  
Carbon  
Footprint

# Green

Energy Cost  
reduction with  
PV Panels



Waste and  
Carbon Offset

# Trail

School Eco  
Club

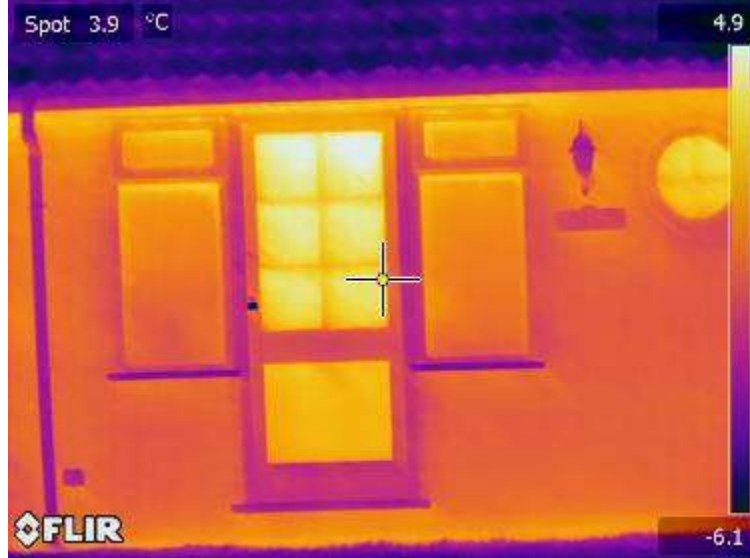
Free Refreshments

Free Entry



<b>Group:</b>	<b>Shrivenham</b>
<b>Existing Community Activity:</b>	<p>Activities: through a questionnaire, in 2009, it was established that there is an interest in Shrivenham becoming more sustainable.</p> <p>Shrivenham, Watchfield and Longcot Primary Schools all have Eco-Clubs and have Eco-Schools status. Shrivenham has just achieved silver status.</p>
<b>Aims of the group during the Big Carbon Challenge Period</b>	<p>During the competition period the group aimed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise awareness on how to reduce carbon footprint by taking simple individual/household actions</li> <li>• encourage households / individuals to make personal commitments</li> <li>• sow seeds to create a collective village approach</li> </ul>
<b>Group activities during the Big Climate Challenge Period Outreach and Engagement activities during the Big Carbon Challenge</b>	<p>A) Held a well-publicised <b>meeting</b> on 24<sup>th</sup> March with</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. clear, original displays (some interactive) on ways to reduce carbon footprint in 6 themes,</li> <li>2. Thermal images of homes in Shrivenham</li> <li>3. Opportunities to discuss with professionals</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fuel consumption reduction</li> <li>• cycling (including PowerPoint presentation)</li> <li>• eco- home improvements</li> </ul> <p>B) <b>Email</b> contacts (5 sent over 3 months) and direct personal contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to introduce Big Carbon Challenge</li> <li>• to encourage registering energy use</li> <li>• with energy-saving offers,</li> <li>• publicising meeting,</li> <li>• opportunity to have house thermally imaged</li> </ul> <p>C) Lots of individual <b>networking</b> with friends and at meetings by various members of the group</p> <p>Three firm commitments and some progress from and by the community to create momentum e.g. web-site, community orchard local food project, establishing partnerships</p>
<b>Carbon reductions achieved by the group</b>	5.4 tonnes (including solar PV generation)
<b>Carbon reductions achieved in other parts of the community</b>	Aims of village hall hampered by

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ being a listed building</li> <li>○ a major, expensive problem with the roof</li> </ul> <p>However, interest being taken in a 'switching off' campaign Due to networking, one house (not in group) now has PV, five residential properties and one commercial are expected to install solar PV within a few months.</p> <p>Fete committee interested in being involved with encouraging cycling Council keen to support Community Orchard</p> <p>Barrington Arms hotel considering installing PV Another 5 homes (not in original group) planning PV plus 1 in original group.</p>
<p><b>Future group plans</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through the Orchard, on a community planting day, incorporate principles of local food and wider concepts of carbon reduction</li> <li>2. Encourage more cycling by providing bike racks in village, hosting a bike surgery at the fete, holding social bike riding events and promoting bike buddies through the local magazine and the fete.</li> <li>3. Through partnerships with school and Parish Council (particularly the Village Action Group) continue promotion and develop the suggestions in middle column</li> <li>4. Continue networking to encourage more PV solar panels, solar heating for hot water and ground source heat pumps</li> <li>5. Develop partnership with WeSET (Westmill Sustainable Energy Trust, part of the Wind Farm at Watchfield) who <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are now linked to the Oxford Hub to bring their carbon cutting programme to about 30 households in the local area. This is a stimulus towards raising understanding and enthusiasm for what is possible.</li> <li>○ Have an annual Open Day with an emphasis on sustainability</li> <li>○ Intend to hold Sustainable Surgeries in the area</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Basis of web-site ready – need a web-master. This would be to promote further ideas for individual carbon savings as well as the wider community interest.</li> </ol>



Pictures of Shrivenham's Thermal Imaging study

<b>Group:</b>	<b>Green TEA – Transition Eynsham Area</b>
<b>Existing Community Activity:</b>	<p>Green TEA already had an active group with the following groups existing on: Energy, Food/Orchard, Transport, Waste, Challenge/ Policy</p> <p>Activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular monthly Sat morning café</li> <li>• 4 evening film or discussion meetings</li> <li>• Launch of First Apple Festival Oct 2010</li> <li>• Support to new growers</li> <li>• Pilot of carbon champions and pilot of Carbon Conversations Course</li> <li>• Links with LCWO about generation</li> <li>• Hosted meeting with David Cameron MP for West Oxon CAGs</li> <li>• Articles in village newsletters.</li> </ul> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.eynsham.org/teahome.html">http://www.eynsham.org/teahome.html</a></p>
<b>Aims of the group during the Big Carbon Challenge Period</b>	<p><b>Eynsham as Orchard</b> - to plant and care for fruit trees including old Eynsham varieties, promote foraging and reduce waste by fruit and produce sharing, educate on carbon impact of food and promote local shopping</p> <p><b>Transport:</b> investigating methods of reducing carbon use in transport - bike routes &amp; maintenance, bus routes, carshare</p> <p><b>Waste:</b> running and publicising 4 Swap- Shops in Eynsham and Aston</p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> helping ourselves and others to reduce personal carbon output</p>
<b>Group activities during the Big Climate Challenge Period Outreach and Engagement activities during the Big Carbon Challenge</b>	<p>New monthly energy clinic in the library - 27 people have attended</p> <p><b>Enjoy the Challenge event 2nd April</b> 150 people attended the various events: Seedling swap; <b>Magic Bikes</b>, bike repair workshop; composting demonstration; energy clinic; kids drawing competition and quiz; advice on food waste and recycling; Solar Thermal and Solar PV demonstrations; foraging walk.</p> <p><i>'The event helped to consolidate GreenTEA's position in the village as a continuing, significant and relevant presence'.</i></p> <p><b>Smarter Driving Course:</b> 9 attendees. Course run by the EST. Well attended, participants fed back that they had learnt a lot and could incorporate into their everyday driving. Potential savings were high.</p> <p><b>Carbon conversations:</b> one carbon conversations course finished, another started during the competition period</p> <p><b>May 9<sup>th</sup> – talk on the environmental impact of food.</b> 25 attendees, quite clearly changed a lot of minds about relative importance of distance, climate (and thus heating) and packaging in the use of carbon in food production.</p> <p><b>Promotion of PV on website</b></p> <p><b>Orchard planting events:</b> 16 trees planted in five locations, old Eynsham varieties identified and reintroduced, briefing and support to Siemens on their orchard. Engaged people not specifically interested in carbon reduction, and was an excellent building block for relationship with Siemens.</p>

<p><b>Carbon reductions achieved by the group</b></p>	<p>Estimated carbon saving from Swap shops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 12, Eynsham - est. 200 people 400kg carbon saved</li> <li>• March 26, Aston - est. 100 people 125 kg carbon saved</li> </ul> <p>Total 525 kg carbon.</p> <p>8 champions using Quicksilver in 2010 as pilot for LCWO 6 participants and 2 facilitators in Carbon Conversations: baselines were not compatible - not possible to present a combined figure.</p>
<p><b>Carbon reductions achieved in other parts of the community</b></p>	<p>As a result of group activities have been investigating how best to get PV installations onto many more of the roofs in Eynsham, such as Siemens, Bartholomew School, Baptist church and several other businesses.</p>
<p><b>Future group plans</b></p>	<p>Big Lunch and talk by Incredible Edible (21<sup>st</sup> June) Launch of Eynsham Community Renewables scheme – aims in process. Thermal imaging camera next winter.</p>

**Green TEA's poster, and caption from their website**



**Enjoy the Challenge**  
(Eynsham in the Big Carbon Challenge Competition)  
**April 2nd**  
**10 am to 12.30**  
**St Leonard's Church Hall**  
**all free**

**seedling & seed swap**  
**composting demo**  
**what happens to our waste**  
**energy: electric car, solar**  
**bicycle repair workshop**  
**games for children**  
**tea, coffee, cakes**

**bring: bikes (for repair)**  
**seedlings & seeds to swap**

**followed by**  
**Foraging Walk**  
**2 pm**  
**contact**  
**Adrian Moyes**  
**464 021**



**solar photovoltaic panels in Eynsham**

Several people in Eynsham are making their own money by installing photovoltaic panels on their roof. This page explains why they are doing it, how, and what the results are. A future page will set the standard for Eynsham (using the Sun to provide shelter).

**Green Tea:**  
If you're interested in making a change, now's the time to contact Eynsham's Green Tea Change group.

**what:**  
Photovoltaic panels use natural light that is invisible to the eye to make Direct Current (DC) electricity. You may think there isn't enough sunlight in Eynsham to make electricity, but the panels can absorb light through the clouds and as much as from direct sunlight. To get the most, you need a south-facing roof, but south-west or south-east facing roofs are OK - they are just not as effective as south-facing roofs.

The chart below shows the amount of electricity you would generate during an average year (the dark red) the usable electricity. Sunshine records in England are (slightly surprisingly) quite stable and reliable - so you should get what the chart shows.

**Normalized production (per installed kWp): Nominal power 2.15 kWp**

Category	Value
Loss: Collection Loss (Photovoltaic)	2.00 kWh/kWh/day
Loss: System Loss (inverter, ...)	2.2 kWh/kWh/day
Production: useful energy (inverter output)	2.21 kWh/kWh/day

<b>Group:</b>	<b>Cropredy W.I.</b>
<b>Group activities during the Big Climate Challenge Period Outreach and Engagement activities during the Big Carbon Challenge</b>	<p>Carbon Conversations course: ongoing. Two existing facilitators in Banbury are running this course, with recruitment done locally.</p> <p><b>Swap Shop</b></p> <p>As part of our Big Carbon Challenge, we set up a swap shop at the Village Hall on Saturday 30th April.</p> <p>We had advertised the event in the village monthly news sheet, the village column in the Banbury Guardian, and the village website. In addition we had distributed a flier to nearly every house in the village, and to several homes in neighbouring villages.</p> <p>When we opened at 10, a steady stream of supporters came in over the next two hours, laden with unwanted items for exchange. We had asked for unwanted but good quality household and kitchen ware; craft items, DIY/ gardening and electrical goods; toys and clothes</p> <p>At one o'clock we opened for swishing and swapping. Anyone who had donated an item in the morning had been given a ticket, and this was to be used as currency for selecting an item to take away.</p> <p>Thanks to the generosity of the supporters, items available to exchange ranged from a bicycle, a scooter, a chest freezer, an espresso coffee machine and lighting, through to Jaeger fashion items, a much-admired and sought-after evening dress, hand bags, jigsaws and paintings. Delighted swappers went away with nearly all the donated goods. Anything that remained at the end of the swapping session is to be sent to local charity shops.</p> <p>There was also a brisk trade at the refreshment bar. Teas, coffees and cakes were available. Ploughmans lunches – with homemade chutney and fresh crusty bread - proved very popular.</p>
<b>Carbon reductions achieved by the group</b>	Unknown at end of May 2011.
<b>Future group plans</b>	Further events and activities to be decided upon.

<b>Group:</b>	<b>Sustainable Charlbury</b>
<b>Existing Community Activity:</b>	Sustainable Charlbury <a href="http://sustainablecharlbury.org/">http://sustainablecharlbury.org/</a> Sustainable Charlbury works alongside Charlbury Area Waste Action group
<b>Group activities during the Big Climate Challenge Period Outreach and Engagement activities during the Big Carbon Challenge</b>	We had launched Carbon Conversations group well ahead of competition. During the period we put flyers out at events about the group. Two people were trained already - but hadn't been able to organise events during competition period.  Numerous events regularly attend - including Farmer's Markets and all Charlbury events.
<b>Future group plans</b>	Ongoing group plans

**Bicycle Repair Man is Back!**

**Get ready for Spring!**

Get your bike professionally serviced at:  
**Spendlove Centre Car Park**  
 Saturday 9 April 2011  
 10am to 1pm

**sustainable Charlbury**  
 going low carbon locally

[sustainablecharlbury.org](http://sustainablecharlbury.org)