

**Issue 37**  
**Autumn 2010**

# Environmental Education News

The newsletter of Cambridgeshire Environmental Education Service

**Supporting Sustainable Schools**

## CEES to host Important National Professional Development Event **Opening Doors To Learning: Curriculum development in the outdoor classroom**

Opening the classroom door to explore the potential for curriculum development outdoors offers scope for a wide range of innovative, creative approaches to learning and to raising achievement.

Headteachers, teachers, governors and all who are interested in learning outside the classroom are invited to join this unique professional development opportunity for just one day or all three. The event, based at Girton College, Cambridge runs from 5 to 7 January 2011.

Cambridgeshire Environmental Education Service (CEES) and the National Association of Field Studies Officers (NAFSO) have joined forces to compile a comprehensive programme comprising quality keynote presentations and a choice of more than 20 different workshops, visits and discussion groups led by experts in their fields. For details see page 2.



### Christmas is coming!

For details about CEES' seasonal Christmas Nativity and Victorian Christmas day courses for Foundation to Key Stage 2, see page 4

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**CEES to host Important National Professional Development Event:**

## **Opening doors to learning — continued from page 1**

Delegates to this event may choose to attend a single day, or two days, or all three at a cost of £50 per day including lunch and refreshments.

The first day, Wednesday 5 January, includes a choice of seven half-day workshops on a range of subjects such as recycling, urban/rural links, growing gardens in schools, environmental art, IT in the environment, using museums and learning from plants. There will also be key-note addresses from Dr Jake Reynolds of the Sustainable Development Commission and Dr Helen Phillips of Natural England.

The second day, Thursday 6, is based not at Girton, but at a variety of locations around the County including Coldham Wind Farm; Donarbon at Waterbeach; Grafham Water Centre; Paxton Pits Nature Reserve; Ramsey Heights Countryside Classroom; Burwell House;

Stibbington Centre; and Wisbech Castle and Harbour.

The final day has a choice of eight workshops including climate change, diversity, literacy and numeracy, managing risk, music and storytelling, inclusion, spirituality and waste and recycling. Key note addresses are by Rob Lucas of the Field Studies Council and Leszek Iwaskow HMI, National Adviser for Geography.

CEES and NAFSO have a long history of collaboration on professional development and if past events are anything to go by, this will prove to be a stimulating, thought provoking, practical and extremely useful event in a supportive and friendly atmosphere.

A full prospectus and booking form is available at [www.cees.org.uk](http://www.cees.org.uk) (click News, Views and Events)

## **Learning Outside the Classroom Project finale**

A project funded by Cambridgeshire County Council draws to a conclusion in October with a gathering of representatives from 18 schools at Grafham Water Centre.

The Learning Outside the Classroom project was launched in Spring 2010 and invited teachers to develop new ideas for using the locality of their school for learning activities. The project was led in partnership by Cambridgeshire Advisory Service, the Outdoor Education Advisory Service and Cambridgeshire Outdoors (comprising CEES plus Burwell House and Grafham water Centre).

Three of the schools that took part will share the outcomes of their project at the finale: Elton and Milton Road Primaries, and Chesterton Secondary.

Though this will be the finale of the project, it will certainly not be the end of learning outside the classroom for the participating schools. The emphasis of the project has been on developing approaches to learning outside that will be sustained in the future.

## **New Government, New Direction?**

At the time of publishing this newsletter we are still waiting with baited breath to find out what the change of government is actually going to mean to the education community. There can be no doubt that cuts are coming — probably deep cuts. However, despite all the speculation, the reality of this is unlikely to be clear until after the spending review.

One change that is clear, however, is that the Rose review and the proposed new primary curriculum has gone, and along with it the Sustainable Schools programme.

Whatever direction the new curriculum takes, it is clear that the carbon reduction targets behind the push for sustainable schools are still in place. Many schools have found the Sustainable Schools / Eco Schools approach a valuable one for enriching the curriculum, enhancing whole school ethos and contributing to raising achievement.

CEES will continue to assist schools in tackling their environmental footprint and working towards Eco Schools status. Emissions from school buildings account for 80% of carbon emissions from Council buildings. Finding ways of reducing that figure is far too important to be stalled.

## CEES Centres' News — 1

### Stibbington Upgrade

During the Summer holiday period major refurbishment works at Stibbington Residential Centre have resulted in much improved facilities for visitors, thanks to County investment.

Fire precautions have been upgraded to include a sprinkler system. This required a major overhaul during which several other improvements were made.

High grade insulation was incorporated into the ceiling void and the whole centre had the ceilings replaced. This will help to maintain comfortable temperatures throughout the building at reduced energy costs. The lighting has been replaced with low energy LED type striplights, which, together with the new ceilings, has greatly improved the lighting in the Centre, again at reduced running costs.

Together with the new boiler, which was replaced last year, and runs on a mix of fish oil and mineral oil, the improvements have reduced the

carbon footprint of the building significantly as well as making the building more economical to run.

Alongside the major property improvements, the bedroom accommodation has also been improved. New carpets have been laid throughout and new furniture provided for the children's rooms. Recent young visitors who described the changes as "cool" probably were not describing the new 'cool wall' safety radiators!



To arrange to view the residential facilities, tel 01780 782386 or e mail [cees.stibbington@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:cees.stibbington@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

One of the newly refurbished children's bedrooms. Single rooms for adults are nearby!

### Going, Going, Gong

Sadly, not all the changes at Stibbington over the summer were positive. The old school bell which is used regularly on Victorian and Evacuation day courses, was stolen from the roof. Presumably by now it will have been sold on, either as a collector's piece, or for scrap. Centre staff would be very pleased to hear from anyone who has an old, unused bell they would care to donate.



The original school bell is shown here with Mr Tom Stafford, Stibbington School's Head Teacher in the 1940s. Mr Stafford and colleagues are standing in the boys' playground. The fence that separated the boys from the girls can be seen on the left!

The original school bell is shown here with Mr Tom Stafford, Stibbington School's Head Teacher in the 1940s. Mr Stafford and colleagues are standing in the boys'

### New Turbines breeze in at Coldham

The Co-operative Group are building on their success with Coldham Wind Farm. The existing eight wind turbines which form Coldham 1 currently supply enough electricity each year for around 9,000 homes. Work has just started on the infrastructure for Coldham 2. This will see a further seven turbines built by next summer.

Of course, major construction projects do not necessarily sit comfortably with school visits. However, after careful discussions with the project team, CEES has been assured that its operations can carry on at Coldham throughout the build period, although there may be a few days during the erection of the turbines themselves when visits will not be possible. This is likely to be the second half of summer term and the builders have given assurances that they will give as much notice as possible so any scheduled visits can be rearranged. To avoid complications however, it might be a good idea for teachers to confirm their Coldham visit as soon as possible during autumn or spring term.

Remember, due to generous funding by Fenland District Council and the Co-operative Group, visits and follow up workshops in school are free to any school. Additionally schools in Fenland District can reclaim the cost of transport to and from the Wind Farm.



One of the existing turbines at Coldham

## CEES Centres' News — 2

# Creative curriculum impact at Christmas

CEES is now taking bookings in November and December for its Christmas-themed impact days for Foundation stage to Key stage 2:

### Christmas Nativity

Bring the Christmas story to life in the environment at Stibbington, Upware or Wisbech (aka Bethlehem) for Foundation stage and Key stage 1.

### Victorian Christmas

Christmas traditions from times past are re-enacted, along with Victorian servants' life at Christmas (at Wisbech) or Christmastide school days (at Stibbington and Upware) for Key stage 2.

For details and availability tel the CEES bookings line on 01780 782386 or email

[cees.stibbington@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:cees.stibbington@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or visit [www.cees.org.uk](http://www.cees.org.uk).

## New term, new technology - Exciting times!

Thanks to funds raised by the Centre's charitable trust, Stibbington Centre has invested in two class sets of 'gadgets' which will enhance many of the courses and activities run at the centre.

- A set of Smartphones with Wildknowledge software installed will enable pupils to take technology out and about into the environment, using identification keys, following routes and completing forms and surveys.
- A set of pupil response systems will be used predominantly in classroom based activities. These will allow all pupils to participate interactively with presentations, answer questions and give feedback.

CEES would be keen to hear about any successful activities or problems that have been encountered by teachers who have experience of using either of these devices. For more information contact CEES IT and Geography leader, Helen Johnston at Stibbington Centre on 01780 782386 or email [helen.johnston@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:helen.johnston@cambridgeshire.gov.uk). Helen would also be interested in hearing from any teachers who would like to help with developing courses using IT in the environment.



Wisbech & Fenland Museum

### Wisbech Castle, Museum and Library

In an exciting new collaboration, CEES staff based at Wisbech Castle are working with staff at the newly refurbished Wisbech Library and Wisbech and Fenland Museum. Together they are seeking lottery funding for a joint project exploring life in Wisbech in Victorian times. Using the unique collections at the museum and library, and role play activities at the Castle, the project will allow children to follow the story of two children as they enter service at the Castle. Through this the children will gain an

understanding of the wonderful built environment heritage of Wisbech. Funding is being sought to cover the cost of developing and teaching the programme and for transport, enabling schools to take part free of charge.

The project team hopes to hear whether the funding bid is successful early in the new year.



Wisbech Castle

## Upware Centre and Burwell House

In an exciting new initiative, CEES will be working more closely with Burwell House from 2011. During the coming Spring Term, some of the day courses currently offered by CEES at Upware Centre will be developed for use at nearby Burwell House. Reduced rates will be offered for schools that would like to trial the new courses. For details contact CEES.

# News From our Partners

## Burwell House loses pink bath and finds a secret tunnel!

During August, September and October 2010, Burwell House has undergone some major building works which will make a hugely positive difference to customers. Firstly a complete new central heating system has been installed, allowing far greater fuel efficiency, and far greater heating control around the house. Paired with this, a complete sprinkler system has been fitted throughout, allowing fantastic peace of mind to all residents. At the same time as this, the much derided pink bathroom has finally been removed. A fixture of the house since the 1940's (the original receipt is still on file!), this is no longer practical - and the replacement of this with 2 toilets and 2 showers will increase the level of facilities on the first floor - something which customers have wanted for some time. The works have unearthed some hidden surprises - thus far an old well in the hall way, a secret staircase under the floor in the lounge and a mysterious tunnel leading out of the cellar have been discovered.

Plans are in place to photograph these and other discoveries and display the pictures around the house upon completion.

This continued level of investment in Burwell House shows the support from Cambridgeshire County Council, and the recognition of the positive impact the Centre has on the

learning of the children and young people who use it.



**The pink bathroom finally moves out!**

### Schools use little grey cells to go green

UK primary and secondary schools are being invited to join a Europe-wide project in which 8 to 14 year old pupils will become Carbon Detectives on a mission to find their school's carbon waste – and ways of eliminating it.



The Carbon Detectives programme is being operated in the UK by BRE. It will engage pupils and teachers in fun, interactive activities that help schools to become more sustainable, while delivering Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) elements into the curriculum and sharing experiences with other schools across Europe. To become involved, schools simply register at [www.carbondetectiveseurope.org](http://www.carbondetectiveseurope.org). They are then provided with their initial carbon footprint, and access to a range of new teaching materials, planning tools and carbon calculators to help reduce it.



### Attack of the Carbon Monster

Award winning workshops on Climate Change and carbon saving are now available for KS1 to KS3 pupils.

Devised by ex-Abbey College students Steph Jezewski and Natosha-Leigh Kilby, the half day KS1 workshop includes the story of the "Attack of the Carbon Monster", recently animated by the ITV Fixers team. The half day KS2 and full day KS3 workshops include pupil-friendly carbon footprint calculators. Enthused by the success of their project so far, Steph and Natosha have delayed their University studies to deliver free workshops in Cambridgeshire schools this academic year.

**For more information please contact Steph Jezewski at [ajdj@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ajdj@hotmail.co.uk)**

### CLASS VISITS TO WORKING FARMS

A farm visit can inspire learning about food, where it comes from and healthy eating. It can also be a rich resource for teaching and learning across the curriculum. For example maths, English and literacy, science, geography, history, drama, RE, music, PSHE, foreign languages and citizenship can all be based around food and farming.

There are several farms in Cambridgeshire that welcome school visits. Look especially for farmers who have completed the CEVAS (Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme) as they will be aware of the needs of school groups and be able to help teachers prepare a risk assessment for their visit. Better still look for a farm that has been awarded the LOTC Quality Badge. To find a farm that welcomes school visits check on:

[www.growingschools.org.uk](http://www.growingschools.org.uk) or contact FACE (Farming and Countryside Education) Regional Co-ordinator – Moya Myerscough, on 01603 731314 or e-mail [moya@face-online.org.uk](mailto:moya@face-online.org.uk).



## Focus on Eco-Schools

### Eco-Councillors' Convention - last few places!

The hugely successful Eco-Councillors Convention at Stibbington Centre, reported on in the last issue, is to be repeated twice, in January and February. Up to 8 young Eco-Councillors from each school will come to the residential centre with a teacher for a series of inspirational activities and to share good practice with those from other schools. The convention on 7th—8th February is now fully booked but there are still places for the January 31st to 1st February one. Both pupils and teachers from Somersham, Holme, Rackham and Stilton Primary schools were full of praise for the first of these conventions last year and have already enthusiastically taken the messages learned back to their schools. Anyone wanting to snap up the last few places in January should contact Stibbington Centre for full details: Tel: 01780 782386

### Eco-Schools Inspiration Workshop for Teachers

**Carbon Footprinting and Carbon Detectives** is the subject of a workshop to be led by CEES at Somersham Primary School on 24th November from 4 to 6 pm.

The workshop will look at how to estimate a school's carbon footprint and how to involve pupils in both calculating the footprint and in

future action for carbon reduction. The workshop will include information on how to use the Building Research Establishment's Carbon Detectives Programme (see page 5).

To reserve places at this event at **no charge** tel CEES on 01780 782386 or email [cees.stibbington@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:cees.stibbington@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

### Celebration with the Mayor of Peterborough

In the summer term there was a flurry of Green Flags awarded to schools in Peterborough which meant the city as a whole now has 5 Green Flag schools. To celebrate this achievement all 5 schools were invited to a celebration with the Mayor at Peterborough Town Hall.

On 28<sup>th</sup> September the Eco Committees from St Augustine's Junior School, Werrington Primary School, Sacred Heart RC Primary, Southfields Primary and The Peterborough School all came along to receive Excellence Badges from the Mayor and to share a special Green Flag cake which was made especially in their honour. Each school gave a short presentation to the other pupils and the Mayor, sharing some of the work they had done in their schools to gain their Green Flag. For St Augustine's Junior School this was a

particularly impressive Green Flag as it is their 4<sup>th</sup>. There are one of only 120 other schools nationally who have achieved this.

At the end of the celebration the pupils were invited to put their ideas forward to the Mayor for how Peterborough could even further improve its environmental credentials. Ideas ranged from introducing solar street lighting, to having a city wide walk/cycle day every week to encouraging all businesses to turn off their lights at night. The ideas are being compiled and circulated to city councillors and other officials.



### 'Honeybees, Pollinators and Pumpkins' for Petersfield A Guardianship Community Partnership Project with the National Trust

The National Trust at Wimpole Estate is running a project about bees and other insect pollinators this year in which pupils plant, tend and taste a crop of pumpkins, an insect pollinated fruit.

Pauline Aslin, a local beekeeper, helped them run a 'bee aware' day in school. The children practised identifying bees and other insects and tasted different honeys. In April a display hive of honey bees was set up at Wimpole Home Farm and in May a swarm was introduced to the hive. The bees soon settled in and built a spectacular honeycomb. The fascinating life of the bees has been documented on a 'bee blog' <http://beesatwimpole.treesandbees.me.uk>

The children from Petersfield School have visited the bees on a number of occasions and their activities with the farm have been included in their lottery funded film project.

'Following Faded Footsteps'. Working with Philip Whaites, the Wimpole Head Gardener, the children planted lots of different sorts of pumpkins. These pumpkins are now ready for harvest. After half term the project will culminate with Pumpkin soup!



## Other News

### Educational visits — high cost and high value

Many schools recognise the value of educational visits but find it a struggle to meet the cost of taking children on visits, especially residential ones. Even where the venue for day visits is free, the coach costs can be prohibitive. CEES is keen to find ways to help. Its Energy Works programme based at Coldham Wind Farm, for example, is free for all schools thanks to funding from Fenland District Council and the Co-operative Group. Fenland schools can even get the cost of transport covered.

The government's promised **Pupil Premium** should make funds available to schools to support learning for children who meet selected deprivation criteria. Amongst the many ways in which Heads might allocate these funds, supporting the cost of visits for those children who qualify would surely be money well spent?

Another idea for supporting the cost of visits is described below by year 5 and 6 pupils from Oakington Primary School.

#### The Oakington Bring and Buy Sale

We organised our Bring and Buy sale because we needed the money to pay for the coach and for the Evacuation Day at Stibbington Centre. We didn't want our parents to have to pay for them both because that would be £25. Also, we have some pairs of siblings in this class so it would cost double for them.

First everyone voted for the people to be on the Bring and Buy Committee. The Committee would have to organise everything with some help from Mrs Carne. Everyone in the class had to help with the Bring and Buy Sale. Once we had been elected, we arranged what we were going to do and who would be on which stall. We started to make some posters and some letters and fliers which we had to count and give out. When the day came, we got the hall set up ready for the time and then we had our sale and games afternoon.

We had lots of stalls and games including Name the Teddy, Pick a Lolly, Sweets in a Jar, Beat the Goalie and a paper aeroplane contest. We also had a cake stall and the Bring and Buy Sale. At the end we counted the money and we had raised £241.68.

When we went to Stibbington for our Evacuation Day, we had a great time. We each had a real name of a World War II evacuee and spent the day acting like one. We ate real World War II food and played with toys they would have played with. When we were in the middle of learning our spellings, an air raid siren went off and we had to go down to a thin dark air raid shelter and listen to the planes going over. In the shelter, we sang some World War II songs. When it was all over, we came out, finished off our spelling and had our World War II lunch. We really felt like evacuees.

### October is *Walk to School* Month

Walk to School Month is the international awareness raising month held in October every year. Schools across the world join forces to promote walking to school ([www.iwalktoschool.org](http://www.iwalktoschool.org)). As it is in October, at the beginning of the academic year, it is the perfect time to start new travel habits or try something new .

Schools are encouraged to run their own walking campaigns, perhaps by choosing a specific week, or by running a campaign for the entire month. The Living Streets website ([www.walktoschool.org.uk](http://www.walktoschool.org.uk)) has lots of ideas and resources to help run campaigns, or schools could devise their own posters and incentives. The School Travel Advisor would be pleased to hear about schools' walking projects: [catherine.taylor@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.taylor@cambridgeshire.gov.uk). The best examples of events will feature in an Educational Schools Newsletter article after the end of the month long campaign.

### Gareth Malone's Extraordinary School For Boys

For an excellent example of how powerful Learning Outside the Classroom can be, this fascinating series is not to be missed. Although, as a mainstream television programme the tone is light hearted, there is a very serious message. In the series, Gareth shows a refreshing attitude to risk management. The boys in his group survive intact and, as importantly, enthused, thus opening the hearts and minds of viewers to the benefits of LOfC.

As the series may well be reaching an end by the time this newsletter is published, don't forget it will be available to view using the BBC i-player.

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The views expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of CEES or supporting organisations, nor does inclusion indicate endorsement.

Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the information contained in this publication is accurate, readers should always obtain independent confirmation of any details upon which they wish to rely.

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CEES is part of  
Cambridgeshire  
County Council's  
Children & Young People's  
Services.

<b>DIARY DATES</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Event and Venue</b>	<b>Contact</b>
21 Oct	Apple Day	office@commonground.org.uk
October 2010	Walk to School Month	www.walktoschool.org.uk
7—14 Nov	National Ethical Investment Week	events@nei.w.org
Late Nov — Dec	CEES Christmas Courses	Tel: 01780 782386 or cees.stibbington@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk
24 Nov	Eco-Schools Inspiration Workshop Somersham Primary School	Tel: 01780 782386 or cees.stibbington@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk
6 Dec	LOtC Making it Happen – An alternative approach to teaching & learning	www.lotc.org.uk
5-7 Jan	NAFSO/CEES Professional Development Event Girton College, Cambridge	Tel: 01780 782386 or cees.stibbington@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk
31 Jan -1 Feb	Eco Councillors Convention Stibbington Centre	Tel: 01780 782386 or cees.stibbington@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk
7 — 8 Feb	Eco Councillors Convention Stibbington Centre	Tel: 01780 782386 or cees.stibbington@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk
3 March	CAS course at GPDC: Geographical skills across the curriculum	Tel CAS: 01480 375286
8 & 17 March am	Cambridgeshire conference: Exploring your curriculum - a journey outside	Details available soon

**CEES Evaluation Draw, Summer 10:** Congratulations to the following winners of CEES draw last term.

A small token to thank them for returning their comments about the service is en-route to their schools:

**Upware Centre:** Mr P Asher of Steeple Morden Primary who “Investigated habitats” with his year 4 class in May

**Coldham Wind Farm:** Chris Fryer of Cottenham Primary whose year 5 class sampled “Energy Works” in June

**Stibbington Day Centre:** Mrs Cherrell of New Road Primary who brought her Year 3/4s for a “Maps, trails and treasure” day

**Stibbington Residential Centre:** Angela Roebuck of Kennett Primary whose year 4, 5 and 6 class stayed for 2 nights in July.

