

Tuesday 23rd October
Women's Institute

'Sleeping lions' of the community pounce into action to encourage energy saving

Sometimes described as the 'sleeping lions' of the community, the Cornwall Women's Institute (WI) have an impressive 4295 members operating out of 170 group locations across the county. It is these dedicated and strong women who are taking steps to reduce their carbon footprint and encouraging their communities to follow suit.

The Cornish WI is raising awareness of climate change and encouraging members to save their 20 per cent of energy this week and through a series of programmes throughout the year.

From their new energy efficient Head Quarters, New County House in Threemilestone, the WI through their Environment and Public Affairs Sub Committee, have implemented a Green Charter, have instigated a renewable energy resolution which is now a national mandate and are taking part in the national Carbon Challenge.

Sheila Goldsworthy, Chairman of the WI Environment and Public Affairs Sub Committee said, *"The future generations of Cornwall are important to us as is protecting the environment that they live in. When challenged, the WI can be a formidable force. We believe in the fight against climate change so we want to push ourselves and the people around us to save their energy usage by 20%, and make saving energy a habit not a chore."*

Actions for change:

Head office - Chy Noweth an Conteth (Cornish for the New County House) - The plan for this building was to be environmentally and disable friendly as possible. It hosts an impressive array of photovoltaics to produce electricity, of which the excess is sold back to the grid and Underfloor heating provided by a gas fired boiler for the winter months. Knowing the importance of energy efficiency first, the building also has extra thick insulation and double glazed windows

Green charter - It was passed at a full council meeting making it a resolution that all members of the WI have to work towards. It includes; minimising their effects on the environment, considering the environment when making Executive decisions, create an action plan for change, to monitor and evaluate environmental performance.

Proposed Renewable Energy Resolution - *'This meeting urges all levels of government to put in place legislation and policy requiring the use of renewable energy technologies in all new buildings, re-building and renovation.'*

Upcoming events:

- Two to Travel - Competition to encourage car sharing

- Dousing Day - Teaching WI members to grow their own fruit and Vegetables to reduce food miles
- Splat Ridden - WI members learn how to re-using plastic from farmers fields used for growing crops, by turning them into garden furniture.

Rosemary Goodchild who wrote the Green Charter for the WI said, *“I’m an ordinary person with a scientific background and interested in maintaining the environment. I hate to see things wasted and used excessively, including energy. We can all save energy bit by bit; I believe that if you save your pennies, you’ll soon make up your pounds. Every time you turn your TV off standby, you save your pennies and reduce your impact on the planet.”*

-Ends

Photo details:

1. *WI1 from L-R Rosemary Goodchild, EEAC Advisor Phillip Cross, Sheila Goldsworthy*
2. *WI2 from L-R Phillip Cross, Sheila Goldsworthy, Rosemary Goodchild standing next to the solar energy meter reader in headquarters of the WI*

Notes to editors

- A WI member will be taking part in the launch of Energy Saving Week for more **photo opportunities**.
- For an **interview** with a member of WI to talk about their energy saving work, please contact Jasmine Reilly at CSEP on 01209 614 974 or email jasmine@csep.org.uk