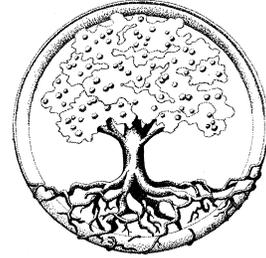


**COLE STREET FARM COHOUSING
COMMUNITY**

THE THRESHOLD CENTRE
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NEWSLETTER – Autumn 2010.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIVING AT THE THRESHOLD CENTRE

Our community is constantly evolving and opportunities for newcomers to join us arise from time to time. We are a friendly cohousing educational community with a sustainable living ethos near Gillingham, Dorset, and the first group to offer affordable housing in conjunction with a local Housing Association. Members can live here either as owners, part owners or rental tenants of the units, depending on availability. We also have rooms in the main farmhouse available for short/medium term self-catering stays for those who wish to get a taste of cohousing in action.

We welcome people interested in exploring co-housing or community, and people who just want a break in the beautiful Dorset countryside.

For Sale: private two bedroom cottage. Contact Nancy Winfield, nancywinfield@hotmail.co.uk for further details or phone 01392 211794.

For private rental: currently we have a large, newly decorated bedsitting room available in the farmhouse, contact Caroline Sharman on 01747 821929. The rent in the farmhouse is £85 per week, which includes bills, WiFi internet and free inland phone calls. As well as their bed-sitting room, guests can use the sitting and dining rooms in the farmhouse, enjoy the large courtyard garden, and will share the newly renovated farmhouse kitchen.

For rental via EDHA: a one bedroom cottage is available. Contact Amanda Pearson on aep123@hotmail.co.uk for details.

If you are interested in any of the above, or would like to go on our list for future vacancies, please get in touch. We seek residents who would enjoy being part of a supportive community and would join in shared activities – these include running workshops, some meals, meditation, gardening and social time. See our website for more information.

THE BUILD

At last the building work on the old barns is complete and we have 7 new units of varying sizes and 7 original cottages to make up our cohousing community. Also we have the biomass system installed with a boiler house and underground mains to all parts of the site, together with the new biodisc septic tank system. Work has now been completed in the shared farmhouse to comply with fire regulations and to offer more sound insulation and up-to-date bathroom facilities for our long term tenants. Community members past and present have been busily redecorating the rooms and we have just had new carpet and vinyl laid throughout. What a difference from the dark old house ‘the originals’ entered 6 years ago! The most amazing change has been the beautiful new farmhouse kitchen, which really has the ‘wow’ factor and will be so much easier to work in as a shared space. Many thanks are due to Caroline (with helpers) who coordinated the works, liaised with the various sets of workmen and made them cups of tea to keep them happy. All we have to do now is resurface the drive (after it had been dug up countless times), for all the major jobs to be done – but I rather think we are going to look at the downstairs decoration now with a more jaundiced eye and decide it needs refreshing.....!

GOODBYE AND WELCOME!

We have bidden a fond farewell to Alan and Linda, with heartfelt gratitude for all the work undertaken to get this project up and running during the hard early years. They have moved on to Bridport, which is the location for the next cohousing development. We wish them every success and happiness and many, many thanks.

Into their unit we welcome a family from Shetland, Jules, Simon and Carla who bring with them many skills and experiences, and music to enhance our community. May they enjoy a long and happy time with us.

We have also said goodbye to Luke and Sarah, who have moved to Hove, Sussex, where Sarah has had the offer of work in her chosen field of photography/video and Luke will be starting a course in body psychotherapy. We wish everything to go well for them in the next stage of their lives. Ironically enough, Ceri and Tina, who are to take over their unit in the timber barn have come from Hove and will be bringing with them, among other things, business and graphic skills as they run their astrological calendar, diary and chart business from home.

KITCHEN GARDEN

This summer we have needed to do a lot of watering as we had no rain to speak of throughout June and July.. However we have had masses of beans, beetroot, squash, peas, carrots, salad crops, etc., and plenty of leeks and greens to come. We have now devised a system to pump rainwater over the road from the massive tanks that collect off the long barn roof.

The polytunnel is our pride and joy this year as we have now created beds which are overflowing with tomatoes, peppers, aubergines, cucumbers, parsley, basil, marjoram, nasturtiums and sweet potatoes (– well, the plants are growing like mad but it remains to be seen whether they will actually produce sweet potatoes...)

Because of the building work we have only managed 2 gardening weekends so far this year but both were well attended and we managed to sort out and repair the compost bins and do lots of mowing, strimming and hedge cutting, so thanks to everyone who helped. Our next gardening weekend will be in October, (see the Events section below), so please do come and join us.

We are going to start taking on Wwoofers (Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms) once we get the farmhouse habitable again after renovations, as we could use the help and also think it will be fun to work with people from around the world. So wish us luck with that new venture!

Linda Philp, Gardening Co-ordinator.

WILDLIFE

We have had some wonderful bird experiences this year. The swallows returned to the nest above the front door and another nest appeared also within the porch. Rather less expected was the nest that was constructed on a beam in the old meditation room under the eaves where the skylight had been left open for ventilation. As of last week the brood had fledged – only hope they will be mature enough for the long migration flight they will need to take soon. More swallows have christened the eaves of the new long barn with a nest - outside on this occasion. For the first time in my experience here has been a charm of beautiful goldfinches seen feeding on forget-me-not seeds and the feeders behind the long barn. Also first observed on the long barn feeders were baby woodpeckers – also a first at Cole Street.

Foxes and deer have been spotted in the field opposite for some time, but this summer a fox was seen on the bank behind the original cottages.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS – 2010 (2011 events to follow shortly.)

The cohousing and work weekends have proved very popular this year, so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Cohousing Workshops :

These are residential and run from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon. They provide an opportunity for individuals or groups to experience life in a cohousing community for a weekend, at the same time learning how to go about setting up a project. They are very popular, so book early to secure a place. 2010 charges: £140 for course, lunches, snacks and evening meals. B&B £25/£35 per night, depending on location.

Nov. 12-14

Gardening/Work Weekends

We offer bed and board in exchange for your help and it's not all work! Arrive in time for Friday supper if you can, otherwise early on the Saturday.

Oct. 15th-17th.

Open Afternoons for Visitors/Enquirers

These take place on the **Sunday afternoon of the work weekends** from 2-4pm (see previous item). A chance for enquirers and potential joiners to have a look around, ask questions about cohousing and enjoy a cup of tea. There is no charge, but donations are welcome.

Open Lunches

These take place on the **first Sunday of each month from 12.30 – 3pm**. An informal gathering with a chance to look round and meet the residents. Please let us know (on 01747 821929) if you would like to come, and **bring vegetarian food to share**.

Meditation

We hold open meditation on the **first Thursday of each month from 8-9pm** offering meditation and visualisation techniques suitable for all levels of experience. Please let us know (on 01747 821929) if you would like to join us. There is no charge, but donations are welcome.

EXTRA EVENTS AT THE THRESHOLD CENTRE

We now have a beautiful new downstairs meditation room and, as well as using the space for meditation and therapy treatments, plan to hold regular events encompassing wider aspects of sustainability. Also coming up:

7 Wisdoms – beginning Sat. 11th Sun. 12th December.

This is a series of 7 weekends (second weekend of every month, ending in June) led by James Burgess and assisted by Richard Grey, both Threshold residents. Its purpose is to guide students through a process of personal transformation that addresses all major life issues from relationship to spirituality, decision-making to visioning. The course leads to a qualification as a certified 7 Words Practitioner for successful participants, the material for which will be presented as general life principles and demonstrated through many practical exercises so that they can easily be used as effective and intuitive tools for change.

Applications include counselling, self-examination processes and all aspects of personal and corporate management. Richard and James are happy to talk to potential applicants and explain things further.

Contact Richard Grey on 07736735298

Wednesday Evenings at Threshold 7.30 – 9.30pm beginning at the end of September.

First Wednesday – Sufi practice.

Second Wednesday – AstroDrama

Third Wednesday – Dances of Universal Peace

Fourth Wednesday – 7 Words

Fifth Wednesday – Magick

These spiritual development evenings are led mostly by James Burgess with occasional help from others.

James Burgess is our latest new resident. He is a Sufi leader, and has studied with teachers in Turkey, USA and London. His own 7 Words system is a simplified expression of the '7 planes of consciousness' a traditional Sufi teaching. He also has experience in astrology, music and dance and is the founder of Unicorn Camps. James has been living in Lithuania for some years, and is now returning to his origins in the West Country.

With best wishes from us all,

Jane, Emily, Caleb and JJ, Amanda, Peter, Monty the dog, Caroline, Bill, Michael, Gay, Andrew, Linda, Julie, Richard, John and Jamie, Jules, Si and Carla, Muriel and James .