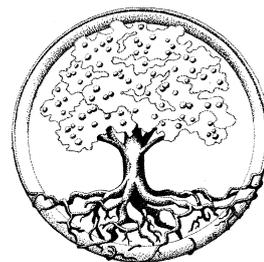


COLE STREET FARM COHOUSING COMMUNITY

THE THRESHOLD CENTRE
Cole Street Farm, Cole Street Lane,
Gillingham, Dorset SP8 5JQ
www.thresholdcentre.org.uk
info@thresholdcentre.org.uk



NEWSLETTER – January 2009

Dear Everyone,

BUILDING PLANS

As you will know by now, we were delighted to get our planning permission (finally!) at the end of our fourth year. So a big thank you to everyone who has supported us during this time, practically, emotionally and spiritually. The 'build group' are now up to their eyebrows in meetings with the housing association, service providers, architects, bio-mass engineers, photo-voltaic experts and various other contractors, thrashing out final quotations so our 'big build' can start in March. An unenviable task, so a big thank you to them. The first thing to be built will be the Bat Palace (these tiny creatures will be allocated almost as much space as a resident and I do not joke.) Fingers are crossed at the moment awaiting our Bat Licence, and after a heart stopping first refusal, we are on track to receive it very soon. To this end we are clearing the woodshed/ recycling centre, where the roof space will be connected to that above the laundry for the luxurious quarters. The build time has been estimated at nine months, so those of you coming to the courses held during the summer will be able to experience the renovations at first hand.

COMMUNITY ORCHARD

Amanda successfully applied for a grant from the Tree Council for our community orchard. The participants on our November work/gardening weekend prepared the planting areas for mound planting (on our heavy clay soil it is advisable to plant above the normal level), and a group of children from Stour Provost school gardening club came to help with the actual planting in December. We look forward to their continuing involvement throughout the years. We have 18 trees, with a mixture of apples and pears. We have chosen old traditional and local varieties with gorgeous names like Old Somerset Russett, Tom Putt, Beauty of Bath and Golden Ball. In January we held our first Wassailing, with toast and cider to encourage a good harvest next year, and much banging of drums to frighten off the evil spirits! Let's hope the recent incredibly cold spell killed off all the bugs and not the trees. They are well protected from the possible attention of deer (who will apparently jump the electric fence, erected after the rampaging cattle trashed the market garden).

LIVING AT THE THRESHOLD CENTRE

We are considering plans to convert the top floor of the stone farmhouse into a self-contained apartment. It would have a spacious living room and one large bedroom, plus a kitchen area and a shower room/WC.

It is not possible to offer a full lease on the space: we can offer a timeshare contract, whereby in return for a capital input in the form of a loan to the Threshold Community Interest Company, you would have the right to occupy the space yourself, or to rent the space out, subject to a tenancy accepting some cohousing obligations and being approved by the residents group. The value of the loan we are seeking for this arrangement is £110,000. You would be able to sell your rights to someone else who accepted the same obligations.

Another possibility would be to sell a timeshare to more than one person, thus reducing the capital outlay, but still allowing time each year to experience living here and enjoy beautiful Dorset! The amount of time could vary from 1-6 months, depending on how many wished to be involved.

We have had no scope for new owner-occupiers here for the past couple of years, and future vacancies are likely to be few, so this is a rare opportunity to be part of the cohousing community here. If you are

interested, can you let us know without delay? To discuss this possibility or to visit and see the space, please contact Jane on 01747 821906, or Caroline on 01747 835274.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS – 2009

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. 2009 charges: £130 for course, lunch and evening meal. B&B £25/£35 per night, depending on location.

February 20-22: April 24-26: June 26-28 : September 11-13 : November 13-15

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. 2009 dates so far.

March 13-15: May 15-17: July 17-19 :

Open Afternoons for Visitors/Enquirers

These take place on the Sunday afternoon of the work weekends. A chance for enquirers and potential joiners to have a look around, ask questions about cohousing and enjoy a cup of tea.

Sundays: 15th March, 17th May, 19th July. 2-4pm

Contact Caroline at info@thresholdcentre.org.uk or at 01747 821929 for booking form for any of the above.

Open Lunches

These take place on the **first Sunday of each month**, from 12.30-3pm. An informal gathering, chance to look around, and meet the residents. Please let us know if you would like to come, and bring vegetarian food to share.

Meditation

We hold an open meditation on **the first Thursday of each month**, from 8-9pm. Meditation and visualisation techniques suitable for all levels of experience.

It is helpful to know in advance if you would like to come to either of these events. Please ring 01747 821929, or email as above.

With best wishes from us all,

Caroline, Jane, Gay, Alan, Michael, Amanda and Peter (& Monty!), Nancy and Vita.

Not forgetting Paul, John, Muriel and Chris.