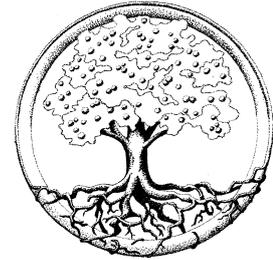


# COLE STREET FARM COHOUSING COMMUNITY

***THE THRESHOLD CENTRE***  
Cole Street Farm, Cole Street Lane,  
Gillingham, Dorset SP8 5JQ



## NEWSLETTER – June 2005

We have now been the owners of Cole Street Farm for six months! And the changes are continuing.

We are gathering momentum (and numerous bits of paper) towards the Planning Application, which we are intending to put in in July.

We have completed work with a local architect on designs for the building conversion.

Richard Swann, of Bruges Tozer in Frome, has done a fine job on this. The main work is converting two disused barns: the Timber Barn will become a group space with workspaces upstairs. Settebrook Barn will be converted to four residential units plus two B&B guest rooms. If you'd like more information about the facilities being created, ask us for a copy of the Project Outline. At our Open Day, the designs will be on show, and Richard Swann will be here to explain them.

The core group here, especially Alan, have already done a lot of work to prepare for the planning application. Letters of support will be very important in helping gain approval: if you are willing to write one, please let us know, and we will brief you.

Letters of support from leaders who might wish to use the community facilities when they are built will be very important. If you are one such, please leave a message for Caroline on 01747 821929 and she will get back to you.

We are now compiling information display boards to use at various events. The first of these will be an informal get together to inform our neighbours of our plans and get feedback and hopefully, their support. The next will be in the Community Tent at the Gillingham Festival on July 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>.

In the meantime, we continue becoming residents of Gillingham and East Stour. The brook that creates one of our boundaries is the border between Gillingham and East Stour, so we can rightly consider ourselves residents of both! Last weekend we went to the village hall to join in a celebration of St. Aldhelm, (founder of Sherborne Abbey), who turned out to be an interesting and colourful character. We shall be researching the village pubs, the new farm shop, and using the re-instated Post Office when it happens.

### **Phase 2**

We are having a meeting for those people seriously interested in joining us in Phase 2, in the afternoon of Saturday June 25<sup>th</sup>, starting with a shared lunch at 1.00pm. Most of the core group will be available to meet you. If you would like to come along, please let us know as soon as possible, especially if you will require B&B accommodation. (£15.00 per person per night.)

### **Open Day**

Not to be confused with Phase 2 day, we are holding an Open Day on the afternoon of Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July. This will be for people who want to find out what we are doing here, have a look at the plans, meet the residents and ask any questions they may have. Anyone wishing to come and stay B&B, please fill in the accompanying form.

### ***Spring/summer at Cole Street Farm***

The baby swallows have left the nest in the woodshed! I went in to sort out the re-cycling the other morning to find the air full of flying swallows. So I left the door open, just in case their aim is not yet true and they miss the gap.

The great tits have discovered the new bird feeder and are emptying it in a day. This could prove an expensive hobby, but we are more than repaid with the incredible richness of song that fills the place. Thanks are particular due to the blackbird that sits on the chimney in the evening and serenades the setting sun.

A little grass snake was sunning itself on the path this week, and nearly met its end when I stepped on it – but all was well, and we put it safely back on the lawn to recover.

### ***Courses***

(Costs given are non-residential unless otherwise shown. Vegetarian B&B is available on site for £25 per person per night. 10% accommodation concession for those arriving by public transport, and we will meet you from the station, with advance warning!)

### ***July***

Ongoing **Taize Singing** and **Circle Dancing** with Christina Baines. Enquiry's ring Christina on 01747 835298.

***Make your own Eco-paints***:- a weekend with Paulina Wojciechowska (see [www.earthhandsandhouses.org](http://www.earthhandsandhouses.org)) Her book 'Building with Earth' is published by Chelsea Green Publ. @ £24.95. Date Weekend of **July 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>**

Cost: £90 Deposit: £20

The toxicity all around us in our homes (the sick building syndrome) gives rise to grave concern, especially when we have children or elderly relatives, but sometimes the 'green' alternatives seem very expensive.

The ingredient around which this workshop is based is clay, and here in Gillingham we are sitting on clay, so we hope to be able to put it to good use! Topics covered will include: theory of natural paints – clay paints and stabilisers: hands on painting with clay paints: theory of clay plaster: mixing clay plaster and its application: sculpting onto walls (if time permits).

Paulina says 'homemade natural paints and plasters are healthy, are cheaper than those purchased, create beautiful interiors with natural colours and textures, and are environmentally friendly.'

To book, please use the booking form at the end.

### ***August***

***The Ancient way of Council***:- a weekend with Pippa Bondy (see [www.ancienthealingways.co.uk](http://www.ancienthealingways.co.uk)) - a practice of speaking and listening from the heart, a path towards peacemaking. A must for anyone who is part of a group/team /family/ business where clear and measured communication is vital.

Date: August 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> Cost: £90 Deposit: £20

To book, please use the booking form at the end.

### ***September***

***Creating cohousing*** - what cohousing is and how to get started. Led by Threshold Centre residents Alan Heeks, Michael Giddings, Christina Baines

Date: September 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Cost: £70 Deposit: £20

### ***October***

***Nurturing Break weekend*** - come and unwind in the peaceful setting of Cole Street Farm.

There are times in our lives when we become stressed. Causes may range from over-work to personal and emotional crises, and at such times we need space to just 'be' and to receive whatever level of support is acceptable and appropriate. These breaks will be offered at times

free from other activities here when the peace of the garden and the beauty of the surrounding countryside can be experienced, your body rested and recharged and your spirit renewed. Cosy log fires in winter, tasty vegetarian wholefood, local and organic as far as possible. You may like to access our library of books and tapes, spend some time in the meditation room, or just relax in the sitting room with its inglenook fireplace.

Gentle therapies will be on offer, if you choose. You may like to experience a healing session, reflexology and foot massage, or a deeply relaxing energy-balancing aromatherapy massage. Special healing sessions combining aroma, sound and colour will be available. A meditation or relaxation session will give you tools to take back and use in your everyday life. Coaching and counselling can also be offered.

Date: October 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Cost: £100 half board, with 1 therapy session.

***Experiencing Community*** - come and join in our day-to-day activities and experience living in an informal cohousing community.

Date: October 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> Cost by negotiation. Guideline £30-£40 per day, half-board.

### ***November***

***Becoming Bolder instead of Older*** with Persephone Arbour – could ageing possibly be the grand adventure?

Date: November 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Cost £90 Deposit: £20

For further details of any of our activities, please contact Caroline Sharman or Gay Ellis at 01747 821929 or e-mail [sharmancaroline@hotmail.com](mailto:sharmancaroline@hotmail.com) or [ellis@g-ls.freeseerve.co.uk](mailto:ellis@g-ls.freeseerve.co.uk)

If you would like details about hiring our group space, please phone 01747 821929 and leave a message for Jane.

### **Report on the Healing with Sound workshop**

Saturday June 4 – Find Your Own Sound

Shirlie's workshop was completely inspirational, and very powerful. The day went incredibly fast.

It was nothing to do with learning to sing, but rather to discover the natural sound that dwells in all of us, with which we resonate with ease.

We limbered up our bodies and our voices, and then started to play with different ranges until, by a process of elimination, we began to discover where we felt comfortable, with lots of breath and no strain. When we used these sounds all together, the power of the combined voices was magnificent and all encompassing.

The day was punctuated with Shirlie's own songs, some of which themselves resonated at a deep level, bringing emotional responses from the participants. She spends much time in Slovenia and this beautiful country provides great inspiration for her music. Some of her children's songs are also very funny, so there was much laughter too during the day.

By the finish, we all had a range of our own notes, corresponding to our individual chakras, to take home and continue the work.

Those who took advantage of the one-to-one sessions found them revealing, thought provoking and rewarding, and came away with a series of sound 'tools' for our development. Shirlie has promised she will return next year with a longer workshop. I, for one, have my name down already!

We look forward to seeing you at our Open Day afternoon, Sunday July 24<sup>th</sup>.