



## Ghana Visit

Katherine McAloon, who was chosen as the Wirral's Fairtrade Ambassador made her visit to Ghana in November 2012.

Katherine was excited and thrilled to see Fairtrade in action. The most important discovery she made was that it was not so much the money aspect that the people she spoke to were concerned about, but the knowledge that they were being treated fairly. It just proves, as if we needed to know, that people are the same the world over. Before they became part of Fairtrade, they were often cheated by the scales being set to weigh too light.

As well as receiving a fair price for the goods produced, the Fairtrade farmers receive a premium to be used for the benefit of the community. The photograph shows a school which was built using this money.

Katherine took many more photographs, which can be seen on the 'Wirral Loves Fairtrade' Facebook page.



### Wirral Environmental Network

Working to advance the education of the public about the environment and its protection.

**Patrons:** Pat Sykes (MBE), John Guilleband, Tina Fox, Jonathon Porritt, Charles Secrett, Dr Joanna Sharples.

**Reg. Address:** Wirral Environment Centre, Sandon Building, Falkland Road, Wallasey, CH44 8ER

**Tel:** 0151 639 2121 **Fax:** 0151 639 4826 **Email:** info@la21.net **Website:** www.la21.net  
**Registered Charity no.** 1068306 **Co. Ltd. by Guarantee no.** 3462312

# Wirral Fairtrade Success



The campaign to find Wirral's Champions and Ambassador reached its climax in March 2012, when all the winners were presented with their trophies and a Fairtrade hamper at Heswall Hall.

The other main achievement to report is that Wirral's status as a Fairtrade Borough was successfully renewed. I would like to thank the Steering Committee for their hard work in gathering the necessary information, which made my part of the job much easier.

Katherine McAloon, the Ambassador, and I had a meeting with Wirral's Mayor in August 2012, when we discussed our ambitions and hopes for the future. He took a great interest in what we had done, and promised a Reception to honour all the Champions and contributors to the campaign.

True to his word, we were all invited to Wallasey Town Hall in November 2012, when I formally handed over the certificate to the Mayor. Most of the Champions and members of the Steering Committee were able to attend, and it felt like a suitable conclusion to the work.

I have visited several schools, church groups and Beaver groups to talk to them about Fairtrade, and have further bookings into 2013. I hope to be able to continue this part of my work, and will be actively looking for more bookings in the near future.

## Annual General Meeting

Wirral Environmental Network are pleased to announce that the next AGM is on the 23rd of January 2013. It will be held in the Stork Hotel, Price Street, Birkenhead at 7.30 pm. All are welcome.

### Agenda

- 1) Apologies
  - 2) Agree Minutes—to confirm the minutes of the last AGM
  - 3) Annual Report—To receive report for the year 2011-2012
  - 4) Accounts for 2011—2012
  - 5) Election of Trustees
  - 6) Appointment of Auditor/Examiner—to propose that the Trustees are given authority to appoint an auditor/examiner
  - 7) Any other urgent business (not for announcements)
- \* Copies of documents will be available at meeting

# FROG

## Falkland Road Organic Growers

We are based in the grounds of the Sandon Building Falkland Road Seacombe. In February of 2012 we were given permission to build a community garden here. The area was tarmac so we decided to build raised beds to grow our veg. We were awarded a grant and with the money, FROG was developed with help from Carol Seery (our gardening tutor). After lots of group meetings and measuring out, we constructed the raised beds out of timber. Then came the delivery of the soil. Our growing could begin.

Eight months later and FROG have managed to produce some wonderful veg in our raised beds. All the members who meet weekly on a Wednesday morning have taken home spuds, onions, sweet corn, beans, beetroot, carrots and lots more. We also share recipes and ideas on what to cook with the veg. We have a really good voluntary team and we are very lucky to also have shared use of a large polytunnel. This allows us to grow more tender crops Oh! And keep us dry when it rains in the tea break. We always welcome more people to join our group, who like us want to grow fresh veg for the dinner table

Come along on a Wednesday from 10am to meet or join FROG or 07974040580



## Wirral Tree Wardens: Activities during 2012

Our year started with a burst of activity. This year we were given the care for Brimstage orchard, numbering around a hundred trees: apples, pears, and plums. Its a beautiful spot, but the trees had not received the care they needed for some time, so we recruited as much help from tree-minded people as we could, and started pruning, with a view to getting them in order over three years.

It has been a learning experience for many of us in how and when to prune the various varieties represented. In May we had a work day to record the amount of blossom and any presence of canker on the trees. September we tasted some of our crop, both as fruit and as juice, and found that what had developed in a poor fruit year was nevertheless very good indeed.

On two summer weekends in June and August, we operated the Servedy at Royden Park and raised both our profile and sufficient funds to pay for such things as membership of the Tree Council and tools.

In December we will plant three trees at Dibbinsdale and celebrate a good year for WTW. In May we will have a tree walk in Dibbinsdale and look for Ash Dieback. Information on the disease, and what you can do if you find it, can be found on this website: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/halara>

# Learning in Deprived Communities ( LIDC )

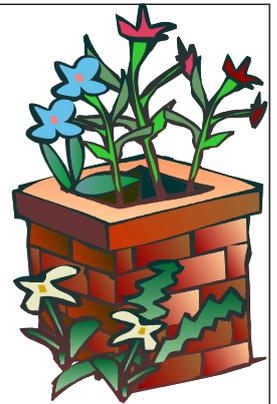
WEN has been awarded a two year contract by the council's lifelong learning department to deliver short courses focussing on promoting food growing in some of Wirral's most disadvantaged communities. If any community groups are interested please contact Kenny ( [kenny@la21.net](mailto:kenny@la21.net) ) or Carol on 639 2121



Members of Wirral Mind community growers with certificates

## Guerrilla Gardening Comes to Hoylake by Christina Wojtak

As a self-confessed complete non-gardener, I recently plucked up the courage to move out of my comfort zone and get involved with the amazing group that is Incredible Edible Hoylake. I am attracted to the whole philosophy behind this project and the dynamic duo of Sally and Rose who are leading it but have neither the required practical skills, nor much knowledge so I was a little anxious about what I was letting myself in for.



Sally suggested a whistle-stop tour of the twenty sites so we met at the Station and finished at Urbane gift shop. There isn't space to do justice to each individual site but what is clear is that this project has so many aspects linked to community development that it is much more than a whimsical notion or a nod to days gone by. There is a definite whiff of the 'digging for victory' Blitz spirit running through it but its different in that it is organised by the people for the people, not on orders from a council or government. I like the fact that it embraces the three strands of community, education and business.

Community engagement includes the local police station, rail staff, local businesses, churches, and residents who have loaned space and made rhubarb gin.

It's fantastic to see parts of barren, litter-strewn landscape being transformed into an invitingly useful environment. This project has the potential to have a huge impact and Sally has even got me planting!! Its great fun for anyone, especially anyone like me who has little knowledge.

If you want to follow us, find us on Facebook. We post about events, crop development and our current sites.

# The Moneyless Manifesto: Live Well, Live Rich, Live Free

by Mark Boyle

**That we need money to live – like it or not – is a self-evident truism. Right?**

Not anymore. Drawing on almost three years of experience as The Moneyless Man, ex-businessman Mark Boyle not only demystifies money and the system that binds us to it, he also explains how liberating, easy and enjoyable it is to live with less of it.

In this book, Mark takes us on an exploration that goes deeper into the thinking that pushed him to make the decision to go moneyless, and the philosophy he developed along the way. Bursting with radical new perspectives on some of the vital, yet often unquestioned, pillars of economic theory and what it really means to be 'sustainable' – as well as creative and practical solutions for how we can live more with less – Mark offers us one of the world's most thought-provoking voices on economic and ecological ideas.



Mark's original, witty style will help simplify and diversify your personal economy, freeing you from the invisible ties that limit you, and making you more resilient to financial shocks. Mark Boyle has lived completely without money in England for two and a half years, an experience which formed the basis for his first book, *The Moneyless Man*. He is also the founder of *Freeconomy*, an alternative economy with local groups across 167 countries. Visit his website : <http://www.moneylessmanifesto.org/>



## Project to map and support environmental action across the Wirral faith sector begins

Faiths4Change will be making contact with faith community groups in Wirral over the coming months. The group is working with VCA Wirral as part of a programme to strengthen support for environmental and volunteer activity in the local Faith sector. The programme involves mapping and creating a database of local activity as well as support for the delivery of some neighborhood projects and events.

The support will be delivered by Calvin Stockton (Associate Project Manager) at Faiths4Change, who hails from Bromborough and is working with Wirral VCA.

Faiths4Change is a charity founded in Liverpool but working across the North West with people of faith and goodwill to support environmental action and community regeneration. For further information see [www.faiths4change.org.uk](http://www.faiths4change.org.uk).

Calvin can be contacted via Faiths4Change through email: [calvin@faiths4change.org.uk](mailto:calvin@faiths4change.org.uk), telephone (0151) 705 2108, or mobile 07894423248; or via VCA Wirral email [calvin.stockton@vcawirral.org.uk](mailto:calvin.stockton@vcawirral.org.uk), telephone (0151) 353 9700 ext 216.

# Community RePaint



## The end of the rainbow.....

It's a myth. There isn't one. I can quite categorically state, without fear of contradiction, that there is *no* pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. I know that personally as I have *reached* the end of the rainbow. For me there are no more reds, oranges, yellows, greens, well, you get the idea.....

After more than 13 years at WEN, seven of them running the RePaint scheme, I am retiring from running it at the end of 2012 to be ably replaced by Hannah Armstrong. She is the young lady featured on the left in the photograph on her first day.

The important point is that the opening hours will change because both myself and Hannah have other commitments, as have so many workers in the voluntary sector.

By the time you read this we will almost certainly be closed for Christmas holidays.

We re-open on Monday 7th January 2013 and the new opening hours will be:

### **MONDAYS ONLY**

11am – 4pm Winter (Oct – March)

11 am – 5pm Summer (April – September)



The telephone number will remain the same (639.2121) and the new email to use will be [hannah@la21.net](mailto:hannah@la21.net)

It's been hard work, often cold, often unpaid, and incredibly tiring but when you see the sheer joy and disbelief on the faces of people, perhaps young couples in their first house or people starting projects in shops, both of which I can empathise with personally, you forget all the work involved instantly.

## Gardening Courses at WEN

The gardening courses will run again starting January 8th. Please remember to sign up early as the places run out quickly. Again, there will be productive gardening and the ever popular, fruit and veg growing. We look forward to seeing you in January.



# Wind Power and the Wirral



Many of you will have read about the latest proposal for an expansion of the Burbo Bank Wind Farm. It's claimed that this development would mean the off-shore plant could be capable of generating 250 megawatts of electricity - enough to power 170,000 homes.

Yet wind farms generally face opposition from a vocal minority who raise all sorts of spurious arguments against them. We'd like to take a closer look at just some of these arguments. Also, now that the Government has finally accepted recommendations from the Committee on Climate Change for tougher cuts in UK greenhouse gases (albeit with a get-out clause!), now is the time to encourage such appropriate developments.

Many critics say wind power is more expensive than other forms of generation, which currently it is. However, the cost of generating electricity from wind has fallen dramatically in comparison with other forms of generation over the past few years and should continue to do so. They can now produce electricity more cheaply from wind than from nuclear, and sometimes cheaper than fossil fuels, depending on the seemingly ever increasing price of oil.

Wind farms are **not** heavily subsidised by the government. Like all renewables they do receive "renewable obligation payments", paid by the consumer through their bills. Opponents of wind turbines seem to want to ignore the staggering amounts of subsidies both fossil fuels and nuclear energy receive, both now and in the past.

Some say wind farms have a very low productivity level. Research shows modern wind turbines operate for most of the time and produce electricity around 70-85% of the time, although they will produce different amounts depending on the wind speed.

Of course the wind blows at variable speed, variable intensity and sometimes not at all. But this variability is not a problem for the electricity grid. Wind is accurately forecast and this can be built into electricity generators short-term plans. Increasing the proportion of wind power in the electricity system does not require greater "back up" capacity, as is often claimed.

We are not saying that all our electricity should come from wind energy. Neither are we advocating a cavalier approach to these important issues. Proposed wind farms, either on or off-shore must be scrutinised properly like all other energy generating projects, to show they meet appropriate planning, economic and environmental criteria.

What we need is greater investment in renewables, to help secure a diverse energy generating mix; no one technology will suffice. Far more investment in energy conservation measures is also required to help us become more self-sufficient, more energy secure and sustainable.

Finally, an independent report published last year found that the wind, wave and tidal resource potential of the UK is **six times** larger than current electricity demand and that harnessing just 29 per cent of this could create 145,000 jobs between now and 2050.

Climate change needs us to take radical measures, now! For lots more "myth busters" about wind power have a look at:- [www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/wind\\_myths.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/wind_myths.pdf)

## Wirral Evergreen - advertising rates 2013

	BLACK & WHITE	COLOUR FRONT PAGE	COLOUR BACK PAGE
Full page	£50	NOT AVAILABLE	£100
Half-page	£25	£75	£50
Quarter-page	£15	£35	£25

*Wirral Evergreen* has been reaching people across Wirral for many years and is the primary newsletter for the environmental voice in the Wirral. To save trees our print run is only about 150 per issue and those are distributed to members without email, libraries, events, etc. We load it live on the WEN. website [www.la21.net](http://www.la21.net) so that it can be read across the planet.

We are pleased to announce that even though we are in a difficult financial climate, the editorial team have decided not to increase the advertising rates this year - and WEN. members can deduct 20% from the above prices! What you see is what you pay – we are not VAT registered. We will accept copy on paper to the office address but it is much easier if you can send it directly to the editors via email to [kenny@la21.net](mailto:kenny@la21.net)

Please remember that *Wirral Evergreen* is funded completely from members' subscriptions, donations and adverts. The editors would like to thank all the members for their support, as a percentage of membership income also goes to help pay for rent, office supplies, etc.

**CUT HERE.....**

### Would you like to join Wirral Environmental Network?

(Members receive 20% off stall fees at our events  
and 20% off advertising in Wirral Evergreen)

**£8 waged      £6 unwaged      £12 whole household**  
**£80 individual life membership**  
**£10 voluntary group      £20 commercial organisation**

**Signature.....**

**Name.....**

**Address.....**

**Postcode..... Telephone .....**

**Email .....**

**Please cut off this slip along the dotted line and send with your cheque to:-  
Les Bufton, 34 Ford Road, Upton, Wirral. CH49 0TF**

*Wirral Environmental Network publish this newsletter as a community information tool. Please note that the views expressed may not be those of Wirral Environmental Network, its trustees, staff or volunteers.*