

Killhope Green Newsletter

INTRODUCTION

I have the great honour of announcing that Killhope has been awarded a GOLD award in the Green Tourism Business Scheme. We will be attending an awards ceremony in May where we will formally receive our award and I will report back on the event in the next edition of the newsletter.

Its getting to that time of year when you can almost taste summer in the air, but it's not a time for rest and relaxation as there is so much to be done in the garden. You can follow our list of tips of what to do in the garden this month and then when you're tired and need a treat you can use some of the herbal remedies detailed in Craft Corner!

Thanks Helen

What to do in your garden: May and June

Sow vegetable crops outdoors, including salad crops, peas and cabbages. When all danger of frost has passed plant out tomatoes and courgettes in grow bags.

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Renewable Energy

Alternatives to burning fossil fuels, from wind and solar power to heat pumps and biomass fuels, produce less greenhouse gases and can be cheaper to run than conventional energy.

Renewable energy technologies in the UK include solar photovoltaics (solar PV), solar water heating, ground source heat pumps, small scale wind turbines, small scale hydro systems and biomass heating systems.

♦ **Solar Photovoltaics**

Solar Photovoltaic (solar electric power) produces electricity from special PV panels normally placed at roof level. The electricity produced is stored in special batteries for immediate or later use. Solar PV is suitable for urban and rural environments and over a year can provide a household with 30-50% of its electricity needs.

♦ **Solar Water Heating**

Solar Water Heating (SWH) is a system for heating water-using energy from the sun. Solar energy is collected by a panel, which is connected by pipes to a hot water storage device such as a hot water cylinder. Systems can be installed for domestic hot water, swimming pools, caravans and similar applications.

♦ **Small Scale Wind Turbines**

Small-scale wind power is particularly suitable for remote off-grid locations where conventional methods of supply are expensive or impractical. Most small wind turbines generate direct current (DC) electricity. Off-grid systems

require battery storage and an inverter to convert DC electricity to AC (alternating current - mains electricity).

Wind systems can also be installed where there is a grid connection. A special inverter and controller converts DC electricity to AC at a quality and standard acceptable to the grid. No battery storage is required. Any unused or excess electricity can be exported to the grid and sold to the local electricity supply company.

- ◆ **Ground Source Heat Pumps**

Ground source heat pumps take heat from under the ground using liquid (water and antifreeze) circulating in horizontal pipes or a vertical borehole. The heat extracted is generally used to warm water for space and under floor heating.

- ◆ **Biomass Heating Systems**

Biomass is often called 'bioenergy' or 'biofuels'. Biofuels fall into two main categories:

- ◆ Woody biomass includes forest products, untreated wood products, energy crops, short rotation coppice (SRC), e.g. willow.
- ◆ Non-woody biomass includes animal waste, industrial and biodegradable municipal products from food processing and high-energy crops, e.g. rape, sugar cane, maize.

For small-scale domestic applications of biomass the fuel usually takes the form of wood pellets, wood chips and wood logs.

- ◆ **Biomass and your Home**

There are two main ways of using biomass to heat a domestic property:

- ◆ Stand-alone stoves providing space heating for a room. These can be fuelled by logs or pellets but only pellets are suitable for automatic feed. Generally they are 6-12 kW in output, and some models can be fitted with a back boiler to provide water heating.
- ◆ Boilers connected to central heating and hot water systems. These are suitable for pellets, logs or chips, and are generally larger than 15 kW.

Renewable Energy in Weardale

Wear Valley District Council have provided a small grant towards encouraging the take up of domestic energy renewables to private householders.

As a guide they will go some way towards matching those grants from the Low Carbon Building Programme. ie £400 towards Solar Thermal systems and up to £2000 towards Wind turbines.

This years allocated funding is only £30,000 and it is expected to be exhausted before the end of the year. It will be allocated on a first come first served basis and only after the systems have been installed and proof of Low Carbon Buildings funding has been produced.

For more information contact Ian Bloomfield on 01388 761596.

CRAFT CORNER

Herbal Remedies

Try these amazing remedies at home.

- ♦ *Vinegar Bath*

For itchy dry skin add a cup of vinegar to the bath.

- ♦ *Pear Cleanser*

Mash and sieve a ripe pear and use to cleanse and tone greasy skin.

- ♦ *Blackhead Banisher*

Rub lemon juice on the skin to banish blackheads and acne.

- ♦ *Sage tooth powder*

Use a mortar and pestle to grind sage leaves with sea salt. Bake in the oven until hard and then grind again into a fine powder. Put in a sealed jar and use instead of toothpaste.

- ♦ *Breath freshener*

Chew a clove to sweeten the breath.

Be a Book Worm

Use your local library to read up on *Green Issues* and learn more about the environment. They are also a great source of local information and help keep communities together.

Libraries don't just loan books. Lots of them hire out music cassettes and CDs, movie videos and DVDs, and even PlayStation games. Use your library to try before you buy to avoid dud purchases, or to save yourself the cost of building up your own collection.

Bottled Water

Buying bottled water costs you money, and the bottles generate unnecessary use of glass or plastic. Drink water from the tap instead - our water is much cleaner than it was 15 years ago thanks to EU laws, and is perfectly safe to drink. Alternatively, get a water filter - some manufacturers recycle the plastic cartridges in the water filters (see for example <http://www.brita.co.uk>) - or you can buy water filters with fabric sachets to filter the water (see <http://www.naturalcollection.com>).

If you have no alternative to bottles then try and find bottles that are made from recycled or biodegradable plastic—Killhope Café stocks Belu water which comes in a biodegradable plastic bottle.

Aluminium Foil

In the UK, we use 35,000 tonnes of aluminium foil a year to wrap food, but recycle just 12 per cent of that. Aluminium can be recycled over and over again with no loss of quality, but if you'd rather avoid it completely, try these ideas. Wrap packed lunches and picnic food with greaseproof paper - and then compost it afterwards. Store leftovers in the fridge in an empty margarine tub or tupperware container - or simply cover your leftovers with a plate.

Downshifting

National Downshifting Week ran from Saturday 21st - Friday 27th April 2007. The aims of downshifting are to inspire individuals, companies, children and schools to live simpler, happier lives and be kinder to the environment at the same time. Suggestions include very practical ideas such as eliminating non-essential purchases, cook a meal from local and seasonal ingredients, or finding alternatives to the TV for an evening.

Try these activities:

- ◆ Book a half-day off work to spend entirely with someone you love.
- ◆ Cook a meal from scratch, using locally sourced, seasonal ingredients.
- ◆ Cut up a credit card.
- ◆ Donate a bag of clothes, toys or useful items to a local charity shop, refuge or recycling centre.
- ◆ Hand make a simple card for the next birthday on your calendar
- ◆ Eliminate 3 non-essential purchases this week.
- ◆ Plant something in the garden you can cultivate and eat and start a compost heap.
- ◆ Turn off the television, switch on the radio, play a few games and talk.
- ◆ Volunteer an hour of your time to a local charity shop, etc

Red Squirrels

At Killhope we are lucky enough to have our own colony of red squirrels. Here are some amazing facts about red squirrels to astound your family and friends.

- ♦ Red squirrels are not always red, they can be brown, black or even grey.
- ♦ They store nuts in the ground and dry mushrooms in trees.
- ♦ Their young are called kittens.
- ♦ They can live up to seven years in the wild, or ten years in captivity.
- ♦ They do not hibernate over winter.
- ♦ They can swim.
- ♦ They eat seeds, buds, nuts, berries, flowers, shoots and fruit. They also eat fungi and insects.
- ♦ They moult their ear tufts once a year in late autumn, but moult their coat twice a year, in the spring and in late summer.
- ♦ They have four fingers and five toes.
- ♦ They live in a nest high in a tree made from twigs, leaves and moss called a drey.

Killhope Café

Our café at Killhope has a brand new range of Fairtrade, organic and local products to welcome in the new season.

As well as the usual wonderful homemade soups and sandwiches you can try a range of organic biscuits and drinks.

Pip has given me her secret recipe for a wonderful organic soup and has kindly agreed to let me share it with you!

Ham Broth

Use organic vegetables and locally reared ham if possible. Serve with warm homemade bread and organic butter.

Ingredients

250g/8oz carrots, diced

2 onions, diced

1 stick celery, diced

2 leek, sliced

7oz organic broth mix

salt and pepper

about 2.3L/4pt ham stock

Method

1. Add all the ingredients to the stock.
2. Simmer gently for a couple of hours.
3. If you wish, add a few ounces of ham into the finished soup.