

Greenshoots

Climate change is becoming a bore

GREEN groups tackling climate change and carbon emissions are facing yet another challenge – public apathy.

Thirty per cent of people feel there is too much coverage in the media about CO2 emissions and more than half of these are “bored of hearing about it,” according to a YouGov survey conducted on behalf of the Environmental Transport Association (ETA).

The poll also showed that although environmental apathy is a problem equal across social grades and regions, the same is not true for the sexes: men are twice as likely as women to be bored by messages about CO2 emissions.

Andrew Davis, ETA director, said: “It’s understandable that people are getting bored by endless green talk that is never translated into action – increasing public apathy is a real concern for those of us in the environmental movement.”

FACTFILE

Survey’s key findings:

■ 18% of people are bored by the amount of media coverage about CO2 emissions. A further 12% feel there is simply too much.

■ 6% of people are indifferent to media coverage of CO2 emissions, with a further 4 per cent admitting to not fully understanding what CO2 is. Another 4% are not aware of any media coverage on the subject.

■ Men are twice as likely as women to be bored by coverage about CO2 emissions (24% and 12% respectively).

Bleating and greeting

MEMBERS of the public are being invited to meet the flock of sheep used by Natural England, the government’s countryside agency, to help to maintain excellent conditions for wildlife at Cavenham Heath National Nature Reserve, about 10 miles north-west of Bury St Edmunds.

These sheep are managed by Matthew Unwin, of Longwood Farm, Tuddenham.

The public has the chance to meet the shepherd and the flock on the nature reserve on Good Friday from 2-4 pm. There will be opportunities to see and touch the ewes and lambs, and to hear about management of the sheep flock, the importance of grazing for wildlife and issues concerning sheep and dogs.

Visitors to the heath can also walk around one of the many well-signed routes, including one suitable for wheelchair and pushchair use.

Natural England staff will be on the site which is accessible to vehicles only via Tuddenham village, not from the side of the river in Icklingham.

Campaign looking for communities with vision to shrink their carbon footprint

FUNDING of £2.5million is available in eastern England over the next three years in a campaign to encourage communities to reduce their carbon footprint – the amount of climate change emissions for which they are responsible.

Cut Your Carbon is a

new campaign launched today by the East of England Development Agency.

It aims to persuade communities to become more energy efficient and to put forward “visionary and innovative” ideas.

Communities will have to raise 25% of the cost of

their projects from other sources.

Grants of between £5,000 and £200,000 will be available for individual projects.

Support staff will be available to help communities to establish their carbon footprints and develop their ideas for reducing it.

The campaign will also seek out the region’s “carbon heroes” – the people who are providing the leadership and inspiration in their communities.

“Cut Your Carbon presents an excellent opportunity to unite communities in the east of England around a

common cause which could make a real difference,” said Rebecca English, of the EEDA.

The campaign is the first of its kind to be launched by EEDA in its regions. Those judging the merits of applications for funding will include veteran environmentalist Jonathan Porritt.



POLAR EXPEDITION: Simon Marshall and Alex Henney with their hovercraft.

Photograph: CONTRIBUTED

Adventurers hope for a bio-fuelled journey

TWO men planning to become the first to travel to the North Pole by hovercraft are exploring ways of reducing the environmental impact of their expedition and hope to power the craft with biofuel.

Alex Henney, 30, whose parents live at Ashfield, near Debenham, and his friend, Simon Marshall, 43, from Somerset, are aiming to set out in April or May 2009.

However, they are exploring ways of reducing the “carbon footprint” caused by the expedition – in one of the most pristine environments on Earth.

“We will be doing everything

we can to minimise the impact we have and are exploring the possibility of using biofuel,” Alex said.

He walked to the North Pole last year as a member of the three-man Team Polar Horizon, which came second in a race across 350 miles of challenging terrain.

The two men recently trained on the beach in Somerset, using a hovercraft operated by Burnham-on-Sands Search and Rescue, a team which rescues people who become stranded on mudflats in Bridgewater Bay.

Mr Henney said the 700-mile round trip to the Pole was

“We will do all we can to minimise the impact

Alex Henney

expected to take them between seven and nine days.

In their quest, the duo are also attempting to raise £50,000 for the Burnham-on-Sea Search & Rescue charity. It has been using hovercrafts on the Bridgewater Bay area since the tragic death of Lelaina Hall in the mud at Berrow in 2002. During the first year of operation, the BARB

service rescued more than 50 individuals, and the funds that the team raise will help maintain this valuable service.

The hovercraft they will use is currently being built in Gloucestershire. Any company or individual interested in sponsoring the project should contact Mr Henney, email: alex.henney@hovercrafttothepole.com

He and Mr Marshall will be reporting back to base camp via satellite phone during the expedition, and will be keeping their website updated with snippets from their journals.

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