

**Summary of decisions reached at
Exeter Eco-community Project meeting
7th May 2008**

Exeter Eco-community project



Members present: Sue (Chair), Cally, Diana, Andrew (minutes)

Member apologies: Chris, Mitch, Hal

Observers/participants: Aduaye, Chukumeka

Playing: Iona, Farah, Lily

A. Closed part of the meeting (members only)

Membership

Wide and ongoing discussion about membership.

AGREED: that all members should signing a contractual agreement and that each agreement should begin with “agree to abide and *promote*...”

We need a clear policy on conflict resolution.

B. Open part of the meeting involving observers

Financial Report

A bank account has been opened with the Co-op. The group decided to begin monthly payments of £36.36 from June 08.

Skills Audit

All members have completed a skills audit. Members agreed we need clarification on how the forms are to be used and also need to decide on a final format for new members. Sue suggested a format for collating information – essential as there is a need to identify not just skills but skills gaps.

AGREED: a final version of the skills audit form to be drafted in light of suggestions; that the information on the forms would be collated to identify strengths/gaps etc; the final version of the form to be sent to all potential new members to complete along with expression of interest form.

Financial model and business plan:

There was a discussion around the business model and an activity organised by Diana to identify what to fill the ‘scorecard’ with, i.e. activities now, soon and later for social and environmental outcomes, business model, financial model and organisational development. Diana to collate ideas and send out with minutes.

Community handbook

The following policies/areas were suggested as additions to the handbook, and will need further discussion and development:

- An exit process – voluntary and compulsory
- Repayments of finances and loanstock – how, when etc
- ‘Vulnerability’ – how do we respond to members with health issues?
- Something around how we address the tensions and issues associated with adapting to a new community; living with others etc
- Transport/car policy
- Consensus decision making
- Conflict resolution

Observers were asked if they could think of any useful questions that might help the community develop the handbook.

Ecological Footprint

The importance of measuring our footprint before and after community living had previously been agreed. No particular tool yet agreed. Andrew suggested a few 'popular' versions that might be good starting points and useful for own information, but these are generally considered too simplistic for our needs. See box below. Other suggested avenues to explore include Open University, Best Foot Forward – which has a very detailed measuring tool but you have to pay for it, Global Action Plan. There was also a suggestion that the ecological footprint tool could become something we could 'market' as an eco-community and so paying for something could be a worthwhile investment.

Andrew to explore further and contact Global Action Plan.

Ecological footprint calculators:

Most 'popular' and well used seems to be the Redefining Progress quiz:
www.myfootprint.org/en/visitor_information/

Also see: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/fun/370863/ which needs slightly more detailed info and gives quite specific measurements for each category, e.g. food, transport etc.

Property

A discussion about the advert drafted by Sue for use in magazines etc took place. A few changes were recommended. Agreed that we can limit words by sending people to the website for further information. Cally is now the identified contact with Stags. Need to ensure they are sent the Estate Agent Brief agreed by the group. We also need to identify other agents and other people to become the named contact.

AGREED: Sue to redraft advert in light of comments and bring back to next meeting; Estate Agents to be sent our Estate Agent Brief. Andrew to send this out to all members and put up on the website; Cally to send to Stags.

A discussion also took place over lunch after the meeting about a site in Shillingford St George, following detailed plans and financial info from the owner. Everyone agreed the location is great and people liked the site however based on our current ideas the site wouldn't enable us to achieve our broader vision, wouldn't be large enough to accommodate the potential number of people interested nor be affordable for the number of people the site could currently accommodate. The group reluctantly agreed that, at the moment, the site doesn't meet our criteria.

Weekend away

Cally suggested Alpaca trek on Dartmoor and Sue suggested a stay at Keveral Farm Community in Cornwall or Postlip Hall in Gloucestershire.