

particular news

Spring 2006

Spring Greetings

sustainability is about living together



Water

Through our houses little rivers run, we turn on the tap, we flush the loo, we have a shower and the water we borrowed flows through. Where did it come from? Where will it go?

We share our water with farmers and gardeners, office blocks and golf courses, woodland and wild creatures, individual trees and the birds in the garden. We think little about this until we face the extremes of drought and flood. But everything is connected.

Parts of southern Britain have had about half the normal winter rainfall this year, aquifers everywhere are more depleted, and we are yet to experience the real impact this will have on rivers, wild life, vegetation and ourselves.

Between 1998-2001 we worked on an Arts Lottery funded project called Confluence, (see www.commonground.org.uk) a musical celebration and environmental exploration of the River Stour in Wessex. Above you see Pipeworks - a serious re-design of plumbing parts to make music theatre. The River Stour dances across the Cool Calorifier, beside the Water Pipe, the Immersion Beater and the Boghorn.

We find ourselves drawn to rivers and water again. We shall offer ideas for bringing the water cycle into our everyday consciousness with Parish Water Mapping, the Naming of Rivers, Brooks and Bridges, Water Markets and River Festivals. More information will be available on our website and in our forthcoming pamphlet Producing the Goods 3 on water.

Simple ways of saving water

- * Just use less - imagine you have to carry it from the standpipe down the street ...
- * Only flush the loo when you need to.
- * Put a 'hippo' or a brick in your lavatory cistern (cutting a 9 litre flush to 6).
- * Don't leave the tap running while cleaning your teeth.
- * Have a short shower, not a bath.
- * Do your washing up in a bowl, not a dishwasher.
- * Collect a full load before using the washing machine.
- * Drink tap water not bottled, bottling and transport use water as well as fuel.
- * Store rain water from roofs in rain butts.
- * Clean your car with rain water or 'grey' (eg bath) water using just one bucket for cleaning and one for rinsing.
- * If you must water the garden, do it when evaporation is less, in the evening.
- * Mulch your flower/vegetable beds after rain.
- * Remember plants, trees and wild life need water, too.
- * Keep bird-baths and low troughs filled or ice free.

The Water Market

ENHANCE the natural features - rivers and brooks, hills and valleys, woods and heaths. Never let a stream be collected, out of sight and open to abuse. We need **ENCHANTMENT**, clear streams as well as clean water in our daily lives.

Common Ground initiated the first Water Market in August 2000 as a demonstration project. The Local Agenda 21 Officer of North Dorset District Council joined with us to host it in Blandford Forum, Dorset.

Its aims were to: (1) draw attention to the rivers and water (eg through our pipes and taps and from roofs) that run through a place; (2) celebrate the cultural, historical, economic and ecological aspects of watercourses; (3) show how water can be conserved, rivers can be made less detached from their surroundings/floodplains and friendlier to people and wild life, (4) demonstrate the range of water saving devices that we could and should be buying for use in our houses and gardens and (5) demonstrate the potential running water has for energy generation.

We thought laterally but demanded real focus; we have seen too many festivals that have lost their way by not staying true to their original intentions. Our priority was to invite stall-holders primarily engaged in water conservation, food producers who used water from the river (watercress/fish) or energy from it (flour milling), and companies engaged in hydro power – mills, turbines and hydraulic pumps. We invited the Green Shop with their rain water harvesting devices, the Environment Agency, Wessex Water, Bournemouth Water Company, Dorset Wildlife Trust, the Institute of Plumbing were asked to show people how to mend dripping taps....



(Above and below) Scenes from the first Water Market in Blandford Forum, Dorset, August 2000.

Blandford Forum has a fine formal market place and adjacent Corn Exchange building. We positioned stallholders who were selling things in the market place and those demonstrating water saving devices such as the Wessex Mills Group, Green & Carter with their hydraulic rams, Hall & Woodhouse offering beer tastings etc were in the Corn Exchange. (As the day on which the Water Market was held was one of the wettest on record we were all grateful for this covered space).



'Water miles'

bringing bottled water to Blandford Forum

Blandford tap water - by pipe to tap - 2.5 miles

Abbey Well Morpeth, Northumberland - 365 miles

Aqua Pura Armathwaite, Cumbria - 388 miles

Ash Parks Steventon, Hampshire - 60 miles

Ashbourne Derbyshire - 191 miles

Ashridge Hertfordshire / Buckinghamshire - 122 miles

Brecon Carreg Trap, Carmarthenshire - 161 miles

Buxton Derbyshire - 208 miles

Chiltern Hills Toms Hill, Hertfordshire - 110 miles

Cotswold Spring Gloucestershire - 60 miles

Devon Hills Chulmleigh, Dartmoor - 91 miles

Highland Spring Blackford, Perthshire - 468 miles

Hildon (Broughton, Hampshire) - 35 miles

Kingswood (Penselwood, Somerset) - 24 miles

Malvern (Worcestershire) - 123 miles

Stretton Hills (Shropshire) - 169 miles



We wanted to provide a range of activities to ensure that families had something for all age ranges and interests, and to link with the River Stour through which the Bland Ford once dipped 200 yards from the market place.

The North Dorset Rangers and Environment Agency organised riverside/wild life walks; the Stour Valley Canoe Club gave canoe lessons; Blandford Civic Society gave town walks, we had challenged them to link bridges, wells, gutters, down pipes, sewers, pipes, manhole covers etc. The local brewer, Hall & Woodhouse gave brewery tours.

Terra Firma provided river inspired snacks, Styles supplied fine ice cream. Buskers sang water inspired music all day, and in the evening Pipeworks filled the Corn Exchange with new music.

For Common Ground, this was a one-off demonstration to show what is possible. Others have followed.

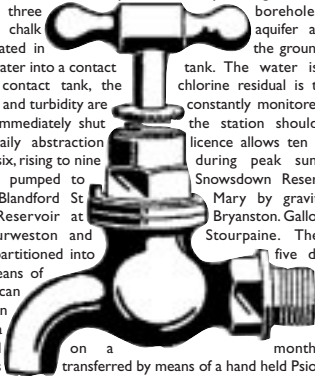
Water Market and Festivals 2003-2006

Hampshire County Council have done pioneering work with their Hampshire Water Partnership and the formulation of the Hampshire Water Strategy and subsequent action plan. Amongst other things they are encouraging local people to become Water Champions, so it is not surprising that they have held their very successful Hampshire Water Festival (which includes a Water Market) in Winchester for the past 3 years. Ten thousand people came to their first festival in 2003, and its popularity has grown each year. This August it is moving to another watery place in the county, Romsey on the River Test. Water for Wildlife is extending this across the south of England with Sussex and Kent joining this year.

Common Ground was contacted by the Parrett Catchment Project in 2002 who were looking for a way of both confronting flooding issues and uniting the top and the bottom of the catchment. The River Parrett Trail, a 50 mile footpath from source to mouth with gates, stiles, seats, bird hide etc made by artists and craftsmen, had been completed in 1999. The first River

BLANDFORD TAP

What did Mrs Cowley do at the cooker? She removed the saucepan to the left hob and carried the kettle to the sink in order to try the current by turning the faucet to let it flow. Did it flow? Yes, from the three metres deep into the chalk boreholes 76, 97 and 100 aquifer at Black Lane. Here submersible pumps located in the grounds at the rear of the pumping station raise water into a contact tank. The water is super chlorinated before it enters the contact tank, the chlorine residual is then reduced to the required level. Chlorine and turbidity are constantly monitored by fully automated equipment which will immediately shut the station should either rise above preset limits. The daily abstraction licence allows ten million litres a day - normal daily demand is six, rising to nine during peak summer periods. The treated water is then pumped to Snowdown Reservoir, which supplies Blandford Town and Blandford St Mary by gravity. There is also a transfer to Gallops Reservoir at Bryanston. Gallops Reservoir supplies Bryanston School, Durweston and Stourpaine. The Blandford Town distribution system is partitioned into five discrete zones, each being monitored by means of a flow meter. The flow information can then be recorded electronically by an attachment to the flow meter fitted with a microchip. The flow meter is interrogated on a monthly basis and the resulting information is transferred by means of a hand held Pison to a computer. Any deviation in the normal flow patterns can then be identified and investigated by the leak detection team, unless it happens to be a dripping tap in Mrs Cowley's house. (with apologies to Ulysses and James Joyce) © Common Ground 2000



Parrett Festival took place at Langport, Somerset in May 2003. In 2004 it moved to Taunton and to Bridgwater in 2005. This year it returns to Langport.

The Dart Water Festival is part of the Cycleau Dart Project run by the Devon Wildlife Trust. The inaugural festival took place in Totnes, Devon in 2004, and was repeated in 2005.

The future of Water Markets and Festivals should grow with the increasing importance of water in our lives and the need for water conservation. The physical Water Market where water conserving appliances can be bought or ordered should grow in significance.

Some Water Markets & Festivals in 2006

Remember to check they are still taking place before travelling:

River Parrett River Festival. Langport, Somerset, May 21st.
http://www.parrettcatchment.info/river_festival_2006.htm

Ashford Water Festival, Kent, Saturday, May 27th.

East Sussex is putting on a number of small events and **West Sussex's** Water Festival will be on Sunday, August 13th (planned for Arundel, but check nearer the time in case this changes).

Hampshire Water Festival, Romsey, August 19th
<http://www.hampshirewater.org.uk/festival.html>



(above, left) The Spurling Man performs and (right) a corner of the Hampshire Water Festival in Winchester

Parish Water Maps

Given our dependence on water and the increasingly erratic patterns of rainfall, it behoves us to understand more about our local sources of drinking water, local springs, streams and rivers and to ensure they are looked after.

Working together at a parish level could be a productive, fascinating and enjoyable start to being more conscientious about water and changing our profligate habits.

People with varied interests and knowledge drawn together to search and map aspects of our water courses, covering the geographical and ecological to the historical, economic and cultural and our relationship to the river catchment of which we are a part, can make a real difference.

Making a Parish Water Map can entail research, field studies, oral histories, photographic and archival documentation, exploring industrial archaeology and celebration. Where are the springs, wells, fords, swimming places, kingfisher pools? It should lead to increased awareness and care for our rivers, more careful use of water in our houses and gardens, the improvement of riparian habitats for wild life, the creation of Parish Water Conservation Strategies and Plans, and build an awareness of the use of water in the production of things we buy, from food to cars.

A Water Group could be formed to oversee the gathering of information and putting it on the map.

Practical action following from making the map could include: Lobbying for all new buildings locally to have the latest in water - saving devices such as underground water storage tanks to collect grey water to flush loos, low flush loos, and water butts to collect rain water. The adoption of rainwater harvesting and use of recycled water for schools and all public buildings as well as automatic car washes, parks and golf courses. The use of more local grasses for golf courses that need less water, and perennial plants in gardens. Specifying that any new hard surfaces such as car parks are made from permeable surfaces to lessen run-off.

Ensure the water authority doesn't abstract too much water from your river and that houses are not built on floodplains.

To help wild life conservation parishioners could take part in local composting schemes and using compost as a mulch after rain to prevent loss of water through evaporation. Specify riparian schemes for species such as water voles, otters (artificial holts/stick piles, road underpasses) kingfishers (bank profiles), the installation of open fronted nest boxes or 6" drainage pipes attached under bridges for grey and pied wagtails (and similar for dippers) to nest in and the conservation of flora by ensuring that herbicide sprays are kept well away from river banks.

Start a Catchment Club – a gathering of all the Parish Water Mappers in your catchment area for occasional meetings and outings.

Parish Water Maps and related work would inform a Parish Water Conservation Plan.

This should be part of your Parish Plan (which is devised by the Parish Council) , and should include water audits and plans for water conservation.

New Publications

Markets & Market Places From water markets to food markets. **Producing the Goods** ② highlights the cultural, economic and historical importance of markets and market places in England. It will focus on street and indoor markets, direct selling, market halls, market squares and places, the role of the market in bringing life back to our high streets and linking a town with its hinterland where local food should be grown.

New A5 full colour pamphlet 24 pp. For single copies please send A5 envelope with 35p postage.

Also available, **Producing the Goods** ①, goods that reflect and sustain locality, nature and culture.

Visit www.england-in-particular.info to see our new monthly calendar pages for seasonal happenings and events....

Our book: **England in Particular: a celebration of the commonplace, the local, the vernacular and the distinctive**, will be published by Hodder & Stoughton at the end of May, with 528 pages, nearly 600 essays, 450 b&w illustrations, £30.



nature and culture of running water. It offers ways of looking, and ideas for action for conserving and celebrating our springs, streams and rivers. It stresses the importance of river catchment management and catchments as physical and psychological areas which can help us to understand our own places and responsibilities in the water cycle. The pamphlet costs £4. To receive a copy of its free companion leaflet, please send an SAE.

A variety of postcards & greetings cards are available illustrating the life and architecture of rivers, poems and music inspired by waters and places infused with it.

ANDY GOLDSWORTHY: Full colour cards of river works on Scaur Water in Dumfriesshire. *Bracken stalks laid on water* - square postcard with envelope . 70p
Iceworks - 3 folded cards with envelopes. £3.30.
Panoramic cards - 3 double-folded cards with envelopes. £4.50.

CONFLUENCE: Three colour photographic postcards at 25p each (plus postage).

Cutwater Band on Colber Bridge. This group formed to celebrate Colber Bridge in Sturminster Newton for the town's first Cheese Festival, and Architectural Heritage Week in 1999.

Six Wells Bottom. The source of the River Stour above Stourhead Gardens, Wiltshire.

Gold Hill, Shaftesbury. Seen above the mist over the Blackmore Vale, Dorset.

FISH and BRIDGES of the STOUR: These two series of black & white postcards are reproductions of linocuts made for Common Ground by Peter Ursem.

Fish: Five cards at 25p each (plus postage) - Perch, Dace, Minnow, Roach and Chub.

Bridges: Three cards at 25p each (plus postage), showing the bridges of Sturminster Newton, Dorset - Town Bridge, Former Railway Viaduct and Colber Bridge.

THE RIVER'S VOICE: Cards featuring poems inspired by water and rivers, including three from Common Ground's poetry anthology *The River's Voice* at 25p each (plus postage):

On Sturminster Footbridge (Thomas Hardy); *Rivers Arise* (John Milton); *River* (Alice Oswald); *Dewdrops* (John Clare); *Ruskin Remembered* (Charles Tomlinson); *Springhead at Fontmell Magna* and *Downstream Effects - The River Stour* (James Crowden).

Postage: £1.00 on orders up to £3.00 in value; £2.00 on orders up to £10.00; £3.00 on orders up to £20.00; £5.00 on orders over £20.00. Please send your order with a cheque payable to 'Common Ground' to the address below.

Other Water-related publications from Common Ground

Common Ground's publications relating to water and rivers include:

The River's Voice, an anthology of poetry chosen by Angela King and Susan Clifford as a celebration of our relationship with water. Published by Green Books in the UK (£9.95) and Chelsea Green in the USA.

Confluence News, the newsletter of Common Ground's pioneering project on the River Stour, to encourage an awareness of water conservation through music making activities. Back issues of all 13 Confluence News are available at 50p each or £5.00 for the set.

Rhynes, Rivers and Running Brooks, published in 2000, a 48 page booklet illustrated in colour and b/w which explores the

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Contact us for previous copies of this newsletter, or download them as PDF files from our [england-in-particular.info](http://www.england-in-particular.info) web-site.

www.commonground.org.uk
www.england-in-particular.info

Common Ground is a national arts and environment charity. We play a unique role in linking nature and culture, working to inform, inspire and involve people in enjoying and taking more responsibility for their own locality. Parish Maps, Community Orchards, the Water Market and Apple Day are a few of our projects. **Producing the Goods**, champions production and consumption that reflects and sustains locality, nature and culture.



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Charity no. 326335.