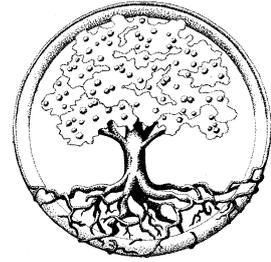


COLE STREET FARM COHOUSING COMMUNITY

THE THRESHOLD CENTRE
Cole Street Farm, Cole Street Lane,
Gillingham, Dorset SP8 5JQ



NEWSLETTER – July/August 2005

Open Afternoon, July 24: The rain poured down in the morning and evening but thankfully not a drop fell between 2 and 5pm! Huge efforts had been made to clear the timber barn (special thanks to Honza, a student helper from the Czech Republic) so we could put up the display material (special thanks to Juhi, a volunteer helper). Thanks are also due to Rob Buckley of the Dorset Centre for Rural Skills, who will be overseeing the conversion work, and to Richard Swann the architect, for attending and providing visitors with lots of information as well as a ‘virtual’ tour of the proposed development.

We had over 90 visitors who were all very interested and positive about our plans. These included neighbours, many local residents from Gillingham and East Stour, and some from further afield. Thank you all for coming and for the many offers of letters of support. Visitors had the chance to tour the site, find out about cohousing, pick up leaflets about our workshops, join in circle dance, model with clay, and enjoy tea and cake in the barn. The resident doves and swallows were somewhat bemused by it all!

Publicity: Cohousing seems to be at the fore just now. We have had some very helpful local coverage in the Blackmore Vale magazine and the Gillingham News, a mention in last Sunday’s Independent article, an interview due on Monday with the Sunday Times, and a proposed article in the Guardian in September. There is no doubt cohousing is becoming recognised as a sustainable and affordable way forward, a way of living offering many benefits.

We had our display in the community tent during the Gillingham Festival and will be present at the Shaftesbury and Gillingham Show on August 17th.

Planning Application: We expect to submit our planning application in mid to late August. Deep thanks to the range of people who have written a letter of support, ranging from neighbours through local group leaders to environmental experts like Jonathon Porritt. We want to include as many letters as possible with our application, so please contact us now if you’d like to help with this.

It is encouraging that the planning officers at North Dorset District Council recognise the potential benefits of this project, but want them validated. So our application will include evidence of how this meets local needs, how car traffic will be reduced, and how it will demonstrate sustainability.

Potential Phase 2 joiners: Once the conversions are complete, we will have some 2 or 3-bed units on offer here: hopefully by summer 2006. If you have expressed interest in Phase 2 and have not yet visited, you are invited to come here on FRIDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER, starting with a bring-and-share lunch and finishing around 6pm, with the option of staying for supper. This date is immediately prior to our 'Creating Cohousing' workshop (see below), and you may wish to combine the two.

You will have received our Outline document, setting out our aims and values, what is involved in becoming a resident, and the Questionnaire. Please complete and return this in advance. If you have already visited and would like to come again on this occasion, please let us know.

We do have a procedure of several visits to get to know each other before any commitment is made on either side, so it would be good to get this process under way as soon as possible if you are seriously interested in joining us.

Website - Our website is now up and running! We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to Arie de Vries for setting this up. See www.thresholdcentre.org.uk

FORTHCOMING WORKSHOPS

August 26/28 – **The Ancient Way of Council** with Pippa Bondy. Sitting in Council offers a way of communicating that encourages both attentive listening and heartfelt expression. Pippa has sat in councils of many types and is an experienced international facilitator. A must for anyone who is part of a group/team/family business where clear and measured communication is vital. See www.ancienthealingways.co.uk Cost £90. B&B available @ £25

September 16/18 – **Creating Cohousing** led by Threshold Centre members Alan Heeks, Michael Giddings and Christina Baines. Come and experience life in a fledging cohousing community and learn how to create a cohousing project. The content will be tailored to the needs of participants. Alan is one of the UK experts on cohousing and the course leaders have many years' experience of sustainable and community living. Cost £70 non-residential. Special B&B rate of £15.

October 8/9 – **Nurturing Break** weekend. Come and unwind in the peaceful setting of Cole Street Farm. Log fires and tasty food. Time to just 'be' or choose a relaxing therapy session during your stay. Cost £90 half-board, £100 with 1 therapy session.

October 22/23 – **Experiencing Community**. Come and join in our day-to-day activities and experience living in an informal cohousing community. Cost by negotiation. Guideline £30-40 per day, full board.

November 19/20 - **Becoming Bolder instead of Older** with Persephone Arbour. Could ageing possibly be the grand adventure? Are you prepared to break through conventional expectations of growing older? Have you enthusiasm and vitality to look at deeper aspects of yourself, courage and boldness to explore aspects of conscious ageing? Persephone has more than 30 years international involvement with

personal development. She has very rich life experience and is known for her creativity and insight and gears her workshops to suit individual needs.
Cost £90. B&B available @ £25

Circle Dancing and Taize Singing, ongoing from September with Christina.

Christina is a core group member and has led dance and music workshops for 15 years.

Taize Singing : Tuesday evenings at The Threshold Centre 8.30 – 9.30pm, starting Tuesday 6th September.

Circle Dancing; alternate **Thursday evenings** at The Slade Centre in Gillingham 7.30-9.30pm, starting Thursday 8th September with a free taster session.

Christina plans to hold a group in Shaftesbury on alternate weeks, time and venue to be confirmed.

NB: Introductory Circle Dance Afternoon at The Threshold Centre in the barn or garden on **Saturday 20th August, 2.30-5pm** for those who can't wait until September! Open to all – donations welcome.

Contact Christina on 01747 835298 for more information

Introduction to Meditation – Meditation has many proven physical, emotional and spiritual benefits and can be used for any or all of these. Caroline Sharman has led meditation groups for many years and will help you discover how meditation can benefit you. Contact Caroline to express your interest, and a timetable to suit participants will be arranged. This may be a 6-week daytime or evening course, or a weekend workshop.

A Booking Form is attached which can be used for any of the above.

Gillingham is readily accessed by train or coach. A 10% discount on B&B charges is available if you arrive by public transport and, with advance notice, we will meet you at the station.

For bookings and enquiries, contact Caroline or Gay at The Threshold Centre, Cole Street Farm, Cole Street Lane, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 5JQ. Tel : 01747 821929 or email – info@thresholdcentre.org.uk

Leaflets about The Threshold Centre, Eco-B&B and Group Space for hire – thanks to Gay, we now have a beautiful 3-fold leaflet about the Centre, and others giving details of the eco-B&B we offer and group space currently available. Let us know if you would like a copy of these. Posters of the workshops are also available and we would be grateful for offers to display them.

We look forward to welcoming you here, either for a visit or at one of our events.