



## The Threshold Centre

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Welcome to our second new-look newsletter. We hope you like the improved, colourful format and find it informative and easy to read.

We welcomed Rozzie to Nancy's cottage at the end of 2011, from Devon via Australia, just in time to produce some stunning props for the first (and hopefully annual) Threshold Centre pantomime. While Nancy and Vita have now moved to the Isle of Mull to be near Nancy's parents, Rozzie is busy thinking up ideas for changes to The Byre to put her individual stamp on the layout.

We have sadly said goodbye to Julz and her girls, but are pleased they now have a lovely new housing association property in Shaftesbury, near to Heather's school and with lots of children around for Carla to play with. We offer our congratulations to Julz and Eddie on their engagement and wish them a long and happy life together. As Julz vacated Oak Cottage, so Penny moved in. She moved here from Ireland and had been lodging in Andrew's cottage, awaiting a vacant property.

And what should happen next, but the first internal Threshold romance! Stephen had been living in the farmhouse, but now, lo and behold, has moved in with Penny (complete with train set – but that's another story). So congratulations are also in order to them. That freed up a room in the farmhouse and now we are delighted to welcome Paul back to take that space.

The swallows arrived this year a full month later than last and there are far fewer than there have ever been, which is sad. However, for the first time a kingfisher has been seen by Penny, overlooking the brook that runs behind the long barn. And Michael reports the woodpeckers are back with a baby, now frequent visitors to his feeder. There are also lots of the less exotic, but equally welcome, birds giving us superb dawn chorus' and serenades throughout the day.

After the unseasonably gorgeous March, like everyone else we have had more than our fair share of rain, giving some concern when the brook waters crept ever nearer the riverside properties. Disaster was averted, however, but we did decide to find out about sandbags – just in case! And of course the veg. garden has been an early washout, but never daunted we are re-sowing and re-planting, silently cursing slugs and snails, and thanking our lucky stars for rainwater collection and the polytunnel. Plenty of time remains for full cropping as the weather has now picked up which we are all very grateful for.

Gay

### Brand new website!

Our new website is a community based effort with everyone being a part of updating the site. We are all very excited about the possibilities that a community website may bring us both for Threshold and for individuals to learn new skills. Thanks to everyone for all the hard work put into this so far.

Go to our website to:

- Read the history of how we got here.
- Read about our members.
- See photos of our latest events.
- Keep up to date with courses
- See when you can visit us.
- Read the latest newsletters online.

You can now also follow us on Facebook and keep updated on latest courses and events by signing up to our mailing list.

The website team

[www.thresholdcentre.org.uk](http://www.thresholdcentre.org.uk)



## the May Fayre



Building on the success of our celebrations as part of intentional communities day in May 2011, some of you may have heard that we had our inaugural May Fayre on Saturday 19th and Sunday May 20th this year.

Family and friends came to join us for a weekend of barbeques, brunches, live music and dancing. There were also opportunities to experience the many talents of our residents from guided meditations to toning to 7 Words and Flower Essences.

What a delight it was to see everyone's relatives mixing together, with grandchildren making new friends and parents and children sharing stories about our neighbours that we'd never heard before!

As this was a May Fayre we had to have a May Pole and much gratitude and appreciation must go to Bill for manifesting Ceri and Stephen's vision! The pole is now safely stored away – until its next outing.

The whole event was gatecrashed on Sunday afternoon by the two rather unsavoury characters (aka Tina and Amanda) and "the seal of inappropriate behaviour." This roving piece of theatre enabled us to poke gentle fun at ourselves and act out in ways never usually seen at Threshold! Calls for future workshops on the "inner tart" have not yet been heeded....watch this space!



## COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWS

Our garden has been suffering – and I know we are not alone! – from the ups and downs of the weather this year. We've had problems getting our veg seeds to germinate due to the cold, and then when they do, they are eaten by a veritable plague of slugs and snails! So, much of the produce in our 20 raised beds is going to be a bit late this year, but the polytunnel has provided us with salad leaves for most of the winter and is now full of young peppers and tomato plants, as well as ripening strawberries. Everything is thriving on the two huge loads of horse manure we had delivered from our local farm, plus liquid manure made from a previous pile of chicken 'poo' and comfrey 'tea', as well as our own compost which we never seem to have enough of. Water looked as though it might be a problem this year (remember the hosepipe ban?!) despite our rainwater harvesting system on the polytunnel, but all our tanks, including the large ones collecting rainwater from our house gutters, are now overflowing again!

Our new medicinal herb garden is nearing completion, and the herb spiral is now well established though it had a few casualties over the winter. Most of the fruit trees in the orchard are doing well, having struggled with the cold wet clay soil and biting winter winds, and our newly planted native hedge (paid for as carbon offsetting by those residents who fly to far-flung regions of the world) should give them some protection in the coming years. We have plans to add more fruit and nut trees and gradually create a forest garden – though still leaving space for a dance space around the Peace Pole, our stone 'dolman', and even (hopefully) a labyrinth....to complement our beautiful yurt and of course the newly-built compost toilet!

The 'village green' which we are lucky enough to have in the centre of our buildings, is looking very established now with plenty of flourishing flower and herb beds in and around it, not to mention the hammock set up between the two central trees, and the brand new swing seat overlooking the brook at the far end. Even the raised beds in the car park (full of builder's rubble and clay and formerly a weedy jungle) are beginning to show the results of our efforts, although some of the trees will need some attention this winter.

Now at last a bit of warm weather has appeared and we can spend time eating, drinking and passing the time of day with our neighbours in the garden.

*Linda Philp*



### THE YURT

Our Yurt was re-erected in the spring on a brand new wooden dance floor and base. It is now being used regularly for meetings, meditations, movement and dance. It proved invaluable as a venue at our May Fayre. We had our first live music Klezmer dance and Soundbath in June. In August we started regular Chi Gong classes. All these activities have proved very popular.

The next Sound Bath will be on Saturday 8th September and the next Circle Dance on Wednesday 19th September. These events are open to all, please contact us if interested. The Yurt is also available for private groups to hire during the day or, for something different, can be booked for an overnight stay.



## PERMACULTURE COURSE

We aim to develop the Threshold Centre as a Centre of Excellence for Permaculture and to that end plan to register the site as one of the Permaculture Association (Britain) LAND projects. In 2011 we ran our first Full Permaculture Design Course led by resident permaculture teacher Stephen Nutt. Stephen has taught the course widely in both the UK and Europe (including France, Spain, Finland, Netherlands and Guernsey).

### Permaculture Introductory weekend 22nd - 23rd

**September 2012** (Cost £150)

This introduction to Permaculture will provide you with a taste of all aspects of Permaculture Design (including Permaculture ethics and principles; gardening; agriculture; woodland; agroforestry; water; buildings and communities).

### Full Permaculture Design Course

Six weekends (72 hours) leading to a certificate or just do single weekends of your choice (Total cost £480)

The full course will cover all of the above aspects in more detail and will also include a number of visits to local sites of interest and an opportunity to undertake a design project. Most weekends will involve some practical sessions.

The weekends are non residential although accommodation can be arranged. Concessions may be available.

### Dates

- 27th - 28th October 2012
- 24th - 25th November 2012
- 26th - 27th January 2013
- 23rd - 24th February 2013
- 23rd - 24th March 2013
- 27th - 28th April 2013

For more information and booking ring 01747 825477 or email Linda [lindascabbagepatch@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lindascabbagepatch@yahoo.co.uk)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**The courses and work weekends prove very popular, so please book early to avoid disappointment.**

### Community Experience Weekends

This year we are introducing a new way of learning about cohousing and life at the Threshold Centre.

We are inviting you to visit and experience life amongst us. The weekend will be an opportunity to meet residents, work with us, cook and eat with us and celebrate and play with us. Cost - £100 plus accommodation at the Threshold Centre/local B&B at £25/35 per night. These are residential and run from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon.

**14-16 Sept. 19 - 21 Apr.**

### Cohousing Workshops

The workshop provides an opportunity for individuals or groups to experience life in a cohousing community for a weekend, at the same time learning how to go about setting up a project. The cost of a weekend is £150 including lunch, tea/coffee; evening meals. Accommodation at the Threshold Centre/local B & B is £25/35 per night.

**Nov. 16-18 and Feb. 15-17**

### Gardening/Work Weekends

A great opportunity to experience the cohousing lifestyle and to work with us and get to know us. You'll meet interesting like-minded people and have a fun weekend - it's not all work! Arrive in time for Friday supper if you can, otherwise early on Saturday.

**Oct. 19-21**

### Afternoon teas for Visitors and Enquirers

These take place on the first Saturday of each month from 3.00 to 4.30 pm. An informal gathering with a chance to look round and meet the residents. Please let us know if you would like to come, and bring cakes to share.

### Open Meditation

The first Thursday of each month from 6.30 to 7.10pm followed by dinner (optional). We offer meditation and visualisation techniques suitable for all levels of experience. Please let us know if you would like to join us so we know numbers for meals. There is no charge, but donations are welcome.

## Cohousing Experience Weekend 20-22 April 2012

This was the first of our new courses designed to give people a taste of actually living in a cohousing community, as opposed to our regular Cohousing Workshop which aims to provide participants with the tools for setting up their own projects.

We designed the weekend to include as many as possible of the communal activities that take place here at the Threshold Centre – both work and play, such as meditation, collecting firewood for a barbecue, going for walks, gardening, maintenance, cooking and eating. But we also planned in some personal space for our visitors to get a feel of just being here on their own, which is one of the main differences between cohousing and full community: we can all go in and close our own front doors behind us whenever we feel like it!

The weekend was very low key, we all enjoyed working together and had a lot of fun in the process.

Our next Cohousing weekend is on 14-16 September so come and join us for a fun weekend while we get a lot of work done around the house and gardens.

## WWOOF

Although we are not currently welcoming WWOOFers to Cole Street Farm; our links with WWOOF UK are stronger than ever. Just over a year ago one of our residents, Amanda, secured a part time job with them, focussed around supporting the development of new WWOOF groups worldwide.

On 8-10 June we welcomed a party of 8 delegates here; some of them

sharing the yurt – the remainder staying in the farm house or as guests of residents.

The visit provided one of our newer residents Linda, with the opportunity to brush up on her catering skills and for the community as a whole to generate some additional income. The feedback was positive and we are hopeful that we shall see the Council return some time in the future.

## You Are Amazing!

This is the title of a series of popular classes run over 3 terms by Caroline and Amanda. These classes progressively develop deeper awareness and are designed to bring participants into their Highest Energy, so that life can be lived more mindfully and joyously. The first year has just come to an end and has been a profound experience for all involved.

To allow attendance from those further afield, the plan now is to run the course as a series of 3 two-day playshops. There would be a gap of two months between each to allow for assimilation and practice. It would be possible to attend either of the first two independently, but necessary to have done both as preparation for the final, third, session.

The classes cover the subtle energy system of the body - Life Force; the role of the Chakras; healing and balancing energy using Meditation, Light, Colour, Sound, Aroma; Earth chakras and healing. These are tools which can help us to understand and overcome the obstacles on life's path, to feel our connection with each other and all life and to reach a place of serenity within, whatever challenges there may be outwardly.

Weekend dates for 2013 : March 9/10: May 11/12: July 13/14  
Cost £100 per playshop, including light lunch and refreshments  
Accommodation extra, possibly on site or local B&B.

Contact Caroline or Amanda as soon as possible, without obligation, if you are interested at [info@thresholdcentre.org.uk](mailto:info@thresholdcentre.org.uk)



## Finding a new home in Threshold

Trying to find something when you don't know what you are looking for can be a bit of a challenge. In January 2011 I sat at my desk in Dublin working through a dilemma. I knew I wanted to move to SW UK but didn't know how to find the kind of home environment a group of us had developed in Dublin. I had lived in the same house for 24 years and in the small housing estate we had developed a kind of community where everyone looked after each other. We shared meals, lifts, babysitting and if someone needed to get to a doctor or for a hospital visit they would never have to go alone. Where could I find somewhere like that in the UK? I Googled 'community' a few times but realised that was not what I was looking for. Then one day I stumbled across 'co-housing' a term I had never heard before, and there before my eyes appeared a place called 'Threshold'. I booked myself on to a gardening weekend in May and promptly made plans to move in! I arrived in October 2011. I joke with my daughter that Threshold is like Domville (my Dublin housing estate) on steroids. It is the same in many respects, we have shared meals, shared lifts, help each other out but there is that little bit more. When we come to Threshold we opt in to a way of life that means we take time to make decisions, to listen to different perspectives. We commit to working together on the common areas and promote sustainability. I love it! It suits me very well. I know there will be times when it is not that easy, when I can't have things my own way or when we don't agree and I feel a little vulnerable. But I am prepared to take the good with the more challenging moments and see how I go.

Penny



## Recent news

Recent events have included Jane saying goodbye to her job and starting her new life. Everyone wishes her well in whatever comes next!

On August 11th, we had our first summer Threshold outing. Twelve of us plus two dogs headed down to Bridport to the morning markets followed by a picnic on the beach near Burton Bradstock. The day ended with fish and chips at West Bay. The weather was perfect and everyone had a great day.

Some brave people even managed a quick swim - the waves were quite big and we're happy to say that we returned with the same number that left that morning!

August has seen some major renovation work on our farmhouse roof. The builders have been working hard in searing heat as well as major downpours. It is now looking quite grand.

Everybody has been out and about over the summer at various camps, holidays and events. We are now looking forward to all coming back together in September.



**Congratulations to Linda and Alan on their big day. A beautiful wedding on one of the best summer days we have had. All the very best for your future together.**

## Keep in touch

To sign up to our mailing list, please email the office at:

[info@thresholdcentre.org.uk](mailto:info@thresholdcentre.org.uk)

To avoid disappointment, please phone before visiting.

We welcome visitors to our monthly

- Afternoon Tea
- Open Meditations
- Work and Gardening Weekends

and the various courses that are run here.

Please remember that this is also our home and we have busy lives, so turning up hoping to be hosted and shown round could end in disappointment - Thank you.

With best wishes from us all, Jane, Amanda, Peter, Monty the dog, Caroline, Susannah, Bill, Michael, Gay, Andrew, Linda, Ceri, Tina, Linda, Julie, Richard, John and Jamie, Rozzie, Stephen, Paul, Muriel and not forgetting the cats.