

# MESS news

Marple, Mellor & Marple Bridge Energy Saving Strategy

No.4 Winter 2012

*"An opportunity to face and plan, together as a community, the challenges that Climate Change will bring."*

Yet again it has been a busy few months for MESS. The grant we received from DECC enabled us to purchase energy efficient equipment to share with the local schools. The two Schools Boxes we have set up are packed with items that will enable the children to learn about, understand and have hands-on experience of solar panels, wind turbines, temperature gauges etc. MESS has also presented each of the primary schools with weather stations and solar battery chargers.

The feasibility aspect of the government funding also enabled MESS to arrange a complete energy audit of Mellor Country House which was experiencing a crisis with a dying boiler and no insulation. Mellor Country House offers respite breaks for families and vulnerable people and as a local charity is largely dependent on local support.

Having used some of our funding to purchase a thermal imaging camera MESS can now offer to image your home and find areas where you may be having insulation or other problems. (see overleaf)

Another ECO DAY on 10 November and our ever popular **Energy Efficient SHOWCASE** on **23 February 2013** are keeping MESS members busy contacting many new suppliers of energy saving products. Put the date in your diary.

MESS members are enthusiastic local people who are trying to offer ideas, knowledge and solutions to the challenges that we all face in these changing times. **Call on us if you think we can help or you have ideas to share.**

MM



**MESS**  
Marple, Mellor and Marple Bridge  
Energy Saving Strategy

**SATURDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2013**  
10.30am — 1.30pm

**ENERGY EFFICIENT  
SHOWCASE**

Save energy - Save money - Save the environment

**SENIOR CITIZENS HALL, MARPLE**

Free refreshments

## MESS MEETINGS

MESS meets every month in the Old School Room at the back of St Mary's Church, Hollins Lane, Marple Bridge SK6 5BB at 7.00pm

Next meetings are:

10 December 2012,  
14 January 2013,  
11 February, 11 March, 8 April,  
13 May, 10 June

## MESS Contacts

Email: [marplemess@gmail.com](mailto:marplemess@gmail.com)

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

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Stockport SK6 5PG

## Links with local schools

It is important to MESS to build good links with the local schools so we are delighted that Marple Hall School has been piloting one of our School Boxes (see overleaf) and we look forward to the outcomes of their work.



Sharman Barnes of Acorns School  
with Hilary Brooks of MESS

All the local primary schools benefitted from our government grant by receiving a weather station and solar battery charger as a gift.

Mellor School is the first of the local primary schools to borrow one of our Schools Joe Harvey of MESS and Boxes for the Mellor Headmaster, Autumn term. Jim Nicholson



## Beekeeping in Mellor



For a long time I had said 'I would quite like to keep bees\*', but it only happened when my wonderful wife bought me a hive! However there were a few more things I needed - like the know how, the bee suit, the smoker, a tool to prize open the hive, not to mention some bees. So twelve lessons and quite a few pounds later I was ready to go. I

bought a small colony of bees earlier this year from a very friendly beekeeper.

After a little while they were multiplying and obviously doing well - so well they decided to split their colony into two by swarming (if I had been more experienced I should have been able to stop them). But it worked to my advantage because I was able to capture the

swarm and put them in a small hive I had made with some spare wood. So I then had two small colonies. Since then they have multiplied and produced some honey (15 kg), which is not much for two hives, but I am very pleased with it as I only started with very small colonies and this year the weather has been very poor for bees. Beekeeping is a wonderful and gentle hobby that can pay for itself; the products (honey, beeswax, polish, cosmetics, candles) make lovely personal presents or can be sold, and the gardens and fields around you benefit from their pollination. If you are now wondering about doing the same as I have, look at the local Cheshire beekeeping website (<http://www.cheshire-bka.co.uk>) and/or feel free to get in touch with me via MESS.

\*Why did I want to keep bees? Many reasons really: I like honey, I like the idea of self-sufficiency, getting something for nothing appeals (I was born in Yorkshire after all) and I was aware that bees are struggling and I wanted to help our environment.

CB

**Marple Hall School Energy Strategy Group**



*Marple Hall School*

Following the work being carried out by MESS to identify areas of energy loss in buildings around Marple and from work done previously at the school to help provide energy generated sustainably, a new group was formed earlier this year to help tackle energy wastage in the school. The group consists of students from years 10 and 11.

Our initial aim is to carry out a full survey of all electrical equipment used throughout the school identifying when machines are left on standby, how much electricity is being consumed while on standby, the cost of that electricity and the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere while that electricity was being generated. As there are in excess of 100 rooms in the school the project is still in progress. Machines which have commonly been found left on standby

include speakers each using 2W of power at a cost of £2.3 and 8Kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, small printers using 5W of power at a cost of £6.0 and 20Kg CO<sub>2</sub> per year, desk top computers using 24W of power at a cost of £27 and 105 Kg CO<sub>2</sub> per year and computer driven projectors using 5.3W of power at a cost of £6.5 and 21CO<sub>2</sub> per year. Whole suites of computers and large printers are often on standby overnight and weekends at a significant cost to the school as well as the environment.

Once we have completed our survey we should be able to calculate cost savings to the school and the environment of implementing systems to ensure that electrical equipment is switched off completely when not in use. How we manage this may require staff to become more environmentally aware and vigilant. In addition, the possible introduction of energy sensors may be useful especially when linked to room lights.

Once this project has been completed our group aims to turn its attention to the subject of heat loss around the school. We will be using infra red cameras for this purpose.

In the longer term we are planning a programme to increase the number of solar panels on the school from 24 to 48. This will require financial help from outside agencies.

Finally the means by which the school is heated is an area where changes could offer huge scope for making Marple Hall School a green and more environmentally friendly school.

GMcK

**Backyard hens**



*Hens on arrival*

Back in July we collected our three ex-battery rescued hens. The British Hen Welfare Trust organises regular pick ups of redundant layers from battery farms and luckily has no trouble finding homes for them. Our three looked ready to go in the oven with barely a feather between them, but after two months of TLC they are feathering up nicely. There are lots of websites and blogs for advice on how to keep hens and care for them.

At first they were very timid and fearful, but now they love exploring the garden, eating slugs and ants, having dust baths and scratching in the flower and vegetable beds.

Don't get hens if you like a pristine garden. Earth flies everywhere and of course they pooh a lot! Great for the compost, with the straw and shavings from the coop. We bought a flat pack coop and run for about £150. You can pay much more, or build your own if you are handy. You can keep them in the run all the time, but we love letting ours out to run free. We keep an eye on them as urban foxes are always a threat, but we have ensured that the run and coop are fox proof. They are happy to be handled, eat treats from your hand and make delightful pets. They are real characters, and very entertaining, and they give us delicious eggs. Our three lay between 12 - 15 a week, more than enough for us. If you think you would like to keep a few hens, come and see ours and we will do our best to answer your questions, and persuade you to adopt some of your own.



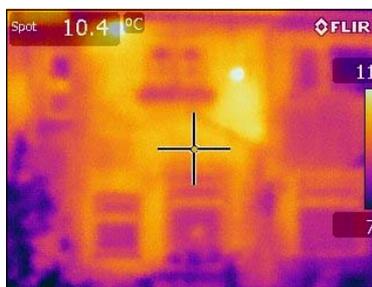
*Two months later*

GT

**Thermal Image of your home**

The camera is charged, MESS members are trained and the weather is cool enough to give accurate readings so if you would like a thermal survey of your home you can now apply to MESS.

A thermal image is a 'heat picture' of a scene and this can help to identify where you are losing energy and in a non-invasive and non-destructive way can pinpoint areas where there may be problems.



*Thermal image of local house*

MESS will not offer solutions to any problems that the survey identifies but will provide a report for you to take forward.

You will be asked to fill in an application form and an appointment will be made to do the survey. Two MESS members will perform the survey and look at any area in your house where you think there is a problem. The survey make take up to an hour.

Contact MESS to apply for a survey.



MESS meets monthly to discuss the scheme and matters arising and to plan the way ahead. If you would like to be part of the group and / or kept in touch with the group & other issues of Carbon Reduction in the area please complete this form and send to: MESS 116 Longhurst Lane, Mellor SK6 5PG Email: marplemess@gmail.com

YOUR DETAILS  
 NAME: .....  
 ADDRESS: .....  
 POST CODE: ..... TEL.NO: .....  
 Email: .....