



every action counts



2007
review

Being part of the Every Action Counts Consortium meant that 2007 was a busy year for the Educational Centres Association (ECA) which is a practise-based organisation concerned with adult education and lifelong learning. We collaborate with local projects, partnerships and wider networks & have a website at www.e-c-a.ac.uk where you can find out more about us and our commitment to increase understanding of the environment & issues of sustainability. Our involvement in the Consortium is based on the belief, with others in the third sector, that by taking quite small steps we can still make a significant impact & contribute to environmental sustainability. We thought that we would share some of last year's highlights with you so you can see how many people have been motivated to take action and to encourage you to get involved.

What is Every Action Counts?

Every Action Counts is an initiative designed to help voluntary and community groups, clubs & societies take actions to become more environmentally aware and sustainable.

It is based around the five themes of save energy, travel wisely, shop ethically, save our resources and care for your area.

Registering with Every Action Counts is free and gives access to ideas, resources and materials to help make changes.

We also encourage people to become community champions; volunteers who after training visit groups local to them to help them create an action plan of the changes they wish to make.



The Earth Event

We started promoting Every Action Counts in Norfolk at The Forum in Norwich in March. The Earth Event ran along side the Earth from the Air exhibition, which featured aerial photographs of our planet taken by Yann Arthus Bertrand. We took part in three strands of the event, Junk Wise, Go Green and the Alternative Energy Exhibition. By the time the event ended in mid April we had registered 13 community groups with Every Action Counts and recruited a community champion.



Third Sector Declaration on Climate Change

In July we joined other Consortium members at a meeting with David and Ed Milliband, then Ministers for the Environment and Third Sector, for the launch of the Third Sector Declaration on Climate Change. This statement of intent commits signatories to tackling the issue of climate change by taking action within their organisations and communities. The ECA then signed the Declaration and urges all other Third Sector organisations to sign up themselves and to start to make changes. The Declaration can be found on our website at www.e-c-a.ac.uk



Wild About the Wensum

In May we had a stall at Wild about the Wensum which was held at Pensthorpe Nature Reserve near Fakenham in Norfolk. David Bellamy the renowned botanist and conservationist opened the event. We were given the opportunity to meet David and present him with a Champion of Sustainability Certificate in recognition of all that he has done with regard to the environment and conservation. The event was very well attended with many stalls and activities provided for visitors. We registered 3 more community groups on the day. Wild about the Wensum in 2008 will be held at Pensthorpe on the 17th May. Please go along and show your support.

BBC Breathing Places Campaign Nationally

We are involved with the BBC Breathing Places campaign & attend the England Advisory Group's community workstream meetings.

Go Green at Gressenhall

Our most successful event in the year was the Gressenhall Green Fair at the Rural Life Museum in Gressenhall. The event was a family day to showcase environmentally friendly initiatives and get everyone involved in taking responsibility for their environmental actions. Two members of the ECA staff manned the Every Action Counts stall at the event and during the day registered 12 community groups and another community champion.

We can help you make every action count

By the end of the year eleven hundred community groups in England had decided to make every action count; 56% of these had registered through the ECA. In addition nine hundred people had volunteered to become community champions to help groups develop their action plans.

We are delighted that so many groups have registered with the initiative and are working to make a difference in their community.

If you are a member of any other group or know of any groups that you think would be interested in joining please let us know or give them our contact details.

If you would like to become or to have more information on becoming a community champion please contact us at info@e-c-a.ac.uk 0870 161 0302 or 21 Ebbisham Drive, Norwich, NR4 6HQ.

Wildlife Trusts Partnership

During the summer we developed a partnership with fellow Consortium member the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts and from July received money to work with their members in the three Eastern counties (see photo below). Active collaboration with the Trusts in Essex, Norfolk & Suffolk enables us to obtain wildlife advice for the region's community groups which are involved in Every Action Counts. So if you know of a group that would like to make their area more wildlife friendly, for example a village hall 's grounds that would make a good wildlife area or restoring some waste ground, please contact us and we may be able to provide free advice to the group.



People and wildlife conference

Our national chair was invited by fellow consortium member the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts to contribute to a workshop at their annual 'People and Wildlife' Conference in November. Bernard Godding was asked to jointly present the 'Sustainable Communities' workshop that focused on how to involve communities with Every Action Counts.

Eurostar launch

The ECA was the lucky recipient of a ticket for the first Eurostar out of the newly opened St Pancras station. The Every Action Counts consortium had been given a small number of tickets by Eurostar for the launch along with other green activists to celebrate the fact that the Eurostar was now 'carbon neutral'. One of these was then passed on to us at the ECA as thanks for our hard work on the initiative.

Wildlife Gardening Manifesto

The ECA is involved in 'The Forum for Gardening with Wildlife in Mind' which has produced a document called 'Let our gardens live! A manifesto for gardens, people and nature'.

Bringing together a wide variety of organisations which have interests in gardens and gardening, including horticultural, nature conservation and scientific bodies, it hopes to draw public attention to the importance of gardens for wildlife, for people and for the urban environment generally and the threats that gardens face. It sets out an agenda for future joint action.

Natural England has made a supply of free 'Gardening With Wildlife in Mind' CD ROMs available to us which have proved very popular at events. More information can be found on our website.

New website launch

We launched our new website at the end of 2007 including updated pages and information on the Every Action Counts pages. These include upcoming events, archived news stories, the gardening with wildlife manifesto, Norfolk green directory, third sector declaration on climate change and new features such as the monthly wildlife tip.

Please visit <http://www.e-c-a.ac.uk/every-action-counts/> to view these and keep in touch with other work the ECA is involved with.

Events

Other events we attended include –
Wymondham Environment Fair
Swaffham Volunteers Fair
Breathing Places Launch
Royal Norfolk Show
Fairhaven Green Fair
Inspire East People for Places conference
Wild About Norfolk
Norfolk Waste Partnership conference
Suffolk Creating the Greenest County conference
CEO meets with Hilary Benn Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
Transition Essex
The Forum Eco Fair



Could YOU be a community champion?

We would like to encourage anyone who enjoys getting involved to consider becoming a community champion. As such you would visit local groups to help them make their plan to implement the actions they have decided on.

You would receive free training run in conjunction with BTCV (British Trust For Conservation Volunteers) to teach you about Every Action Counts, how to use the 'community pack' to develop an action plan and related skills. Being a community champion is voluntary but expenses such as travel and childcare will be paid for by BTCV.

If you would like more information please contact us on info@e-c-a.ac.uk or 0870 161 0302