

# Steward Community Woodland

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## Appeal for Support

Autumn 2007

Dear Friends

Our original planning permission has now expired and we have submitted a new application to the Dartmoor National Park Authority for permission to live here and continue the sustainable project for a further 5 years.

Letters and emails of support for the application are crucial in relation to whether we gain further permission or not. If you feel you support what we are doing at the woods and in the wider community, please could you write a letter or email to:

Dartmoor National Park Authority  
Parke, Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ13 9JQ  
hq@dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

Please remember to include your name & address, and quote the ref 0671/07  
(otherwise it will not be taken into consideration).  
Also, please send us a copy to our address/email above.

Your letter/email could simply say that you support the application. However, you may wish to include some of the following points:

- Your interest/concern about environmental issues, climate change, Peak Oil, social and educational issues, etc.
- Whether you know any of the people from Steward Community Woodland and how you appreciate the friendship, working relationship, etc you have with them.
- What you think about our ecological aims and what we have achieved over the 7 years the project has been running. We have, for example
  - inspired thousands of visitors to the woods, to our website and to our stall at events, passing on skills, knowledge and information on sustainable living and permaculture (and we, in turn, have learnt from and been inspired by many of our visitors)
  - demonstrated renewable energy systems, such as micro hydro power, solar and cycle power
  - demonstrated organic food growing, incorporating permaculture ideas such as growing perennials and forest gardens
  - demonstrated low impact building and living over several years
  - sold some timber and woodland products (such as larch trees to build a barn at Proper Job in Chagford, and split larch fence posts)

- Our contribution to the local community, through our involvement in various voluntary groups, running computer course at the Library, offering computer support, organising events for Transition Town Moreton, breastfeeding peer counselling, etc.
- The importance of our educational work – Forest School, running permaculture design and other courses, home education, etc.
- ***We have carried out a Carbon Audit which concludes that our carbon footprint is 23% of the national average.***

Consequently, we are a working model of sustainability and positive action for the benefit of people, animals and the Earth. We are an asset to the National Park and the local area.

Our planning application is available for viewing on our website and in hard copy (please ring and we can lend it to you). Also, if you wish to visit us in the woods, you'd be most welcome (please call to arrange).

#### **Key features of our new planning application:**

- We are applying for a further temporary permission of 5 years, which would continue to be subject to conditions guaranteeing that only environmentally benign, low impact development and activities take place on the land.
- Living on-site is essential for the continued viability of this sustainable project. Living on-site facilitates us to grow food and live without connection to any of the utilities (water, electricity, gas, sewage disposal). We provide all these services ourselves by ecological and sustainable means (filtered spring water, compost toilets, renewable energy, using wood from the land for fuel, etc). Living in conventional housing in nearby towns and commuting to the site could only be supported by having full-time (and well-paid) jobs elsewhere, leaving us with little or no time to carry out the project. Living in the woods enables us to dedicate our time to the project and be fully committed to it, and to home educate our children in a safe and nourishing environment.
- We aim to meet our needs from a combination of subsistence living, commercial activities on site and from other ethically based work (such as working at Proper Job, the local composting, reuse/recycle centre).
- We are applying for two more individual dwellings to allow our community to expand a little, a polytunnel to increase our range of food growing, and we would like scope to employ eco-build techniques such as cob and strawbale construction, turf and thatch roof (these techniques have been used in many other places for low impact structures).
- We are committed to reducing vehicle usage, sharing vehicles and only using biofuels in our vehicles.

Many Thanks.

Love,

Dan, Peter, Beccy, Merlin, Son, John, Marylise, Sef, Mel, Daz,  
Chris, Owen & all the children