



Dorset Greener Homes*

We are organising an event to showcase ways of living more sustainably. We are looking for people who are willing to invite visitors to their homes*, to talk about ways we can lower our carbon footprint. Do you think you might be willing to take part?

(*Homes' here includes gardens, allotments, churches, schools, village halls – any venue where you have taken steps to save energy)

It will involve being open to visitors for a day (or perhaps two half days) on the 25, 26 September, or 2, 3 October.

We have run these events in West Dorset for nine years, and feedback from the visitors to the homes has been very positive – unbiased advice, inspiration, sharing experience, technical discussions, building networks... and many of the visitors have gone on to make changes to their homes and ways of life. [Here is a film](#) we made in West Dorset a few years ago to give you a flavour of what to expect. (tinyurl.com/ncm4m7s9)

Your Home

Some of these homes are quite technical, with heat pumps and ventilation systems, and have had a lot of money spent on them. But many of the most inspiring have simple low-cost solutions, repurposing materials, cutting down waste, growing vegetables or ditching the car. Visitors also want to see solar panels, batteries, electric cars and bikes, or heat storage systems in action

The main criterion is that you can inspire visitors, share your experience and give unbiased advice. Your home does not have to be perfect!

This is the first time we have attempted to run this across all of Dorset, and we will rely on local teams with their coordinators to research the venues and give support. Having somebody with you during the visits is recommended, and if you cannot find someone, your coordinator will be able to help. Your coordinator is your first point of call.

Covid

This year there is obviously uncertainty about whether or how we will be able to run this event. Many hosts will be nervous about agreeing to let people into their homes if the pandemic is still raging. For this reason:

1. If, nearer the time you change your mind, or feel that it is not safe to open, we quite understand if you pull out up to a week before. Nobody should feel under pressure to do things they are not comfortable with.
2. Many homes can be discussed and shown just as easily from the garden. Equally you do not have to let people into all the rooms of the house, only perhaps one well ventilated room. It is the interaction with you which matters.
3. We may ask you to make a short film introducing yourself and your home, which we will put on the website.



Insurance

You will be covered by a public liability insurance policy against accidents. It is recommended that valuables be put away. You may wish to inform your household insurance that you are taking part to make sure you are covered, but we have not had any trouble in the past.

What you need to do now

If you think you might be willing to take part (and remember your house does not have to be perfect!) then your local coordinator will need:

- Several photographs, preferably less than 1Mb in size.
- A description (see the [website](#) to get an idea)
- Opening times. We suggest each venue opens on **one** of the four days (or perhaps two mornings or afternoons)
- There are three formats for the visits. You should decide which you prefer: Either:
 - Booking on Eventbrite. This has the advantage that you can limit numbers, and you know who they are. However if you are in the countryside people turn up late, or don't come, and people arrive who haven't booked – would you turn them away? And some of the best visitors decide to come at the last minute. If you choose this option you need to decide the maximum number they can cope with.
 - Decide on tour times eg 10.00, 11.30, 2.00, 3.30, 5.00. Ideally people will arrive on time, and you won't have to repeat yourself. (Good luck with that!)
 - Visitors just turn up. If you have an assistant then they can gather people in the garden until you have enough for a tour, and then bring them round as a group. Or let them wander at will.
- Car parking instructions if appropriate
- If the place is difficult to find, then give brief directions. Assume people have google maps or satnav.
- If the place is particularly wheelchair friendly, or particularly difficult to access, then mention it.

We will provide signs, and the public liability insurance notice, nearer the time, and perhaps run a training session to help make the day a success.

The overwhelming feedback from hosts in the past has been positive, and many of them have been very happy to do it again year after year. I hope you will enjoy it.

Any questions? Talk to your local coordinator or email us:

[Sam Wilberforce](#) and [Colin Tracy](#): DCAN organisers

..... Local coordinator.